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New Year Resolutions in the Times of a Pandemic

Our first week into 2021 is coming to an end. Many were eagerly expecting this new year as the possibility of “a fresh start”. Governments around the world talk about vaccines, second waves, and new lockdowns, but frankly, people just want to feel they are in control of their lives again.

2020 has been a year of challenges. Some of them boosted individual fears, sadness, and anxieties. Others offered the possibility to explore, to grow, to change. During the year we are leaving behind, everyone experienced a degree of physical or mental stress at some point. Perfectly balanced new year resolutions lists were left aside as vulnerability and emotional openness reached their peak.

You probably think that the COVID-19 pandemic challenged you, but if you look closer, you might as well realise that not everything is bad and that you have learned something new about yourself. For instance, what your boundaries are in any specific situation. Understanding your needs, and accepting what you can and can't do is finding balance.

I believe that one of the valuable lessons that this health crisis has taught us is that it's possible to slow down, reflect, and be more empathetic with people and their personal circumstances (which present in all shapes and sizes). Realistically, you won't find the perfect life-work balance, work-love balance, mental health balance (or whatever harmony is meaningful to you) in one day.

A perfect example of this growth process can be seen in nature. If you take a seed and plant it, you will have to wait years until a sprout becomes a mature tree. Even in this case, many things may affect the growth process. We live in a fast-paced era where individuals seek instant results and tend to forget that slow progress is still progress. This is why I would like to invite you to celebrate yourself no matter what.

*Let's celebrate that we are here, on this planet.
That we can breathe and smile.
Let's celebrate life, nature,
all around us.
That we can move, dance, jump.
Do something, anything,
for yourselves or someone else.
Whether small or big
this action, the action
can be the start of a new ascent.*

As [Jeff Goins](#) says "clarity comes with action". I do believe this. Does clarity mean that all your issues will be solved, that you will reach the stars, or catch the carrot you were chasing? Indeed it can or not. But you most definitely won't know it if you don't take a step forward. In all certainty, clarity signifies overcoming an obstacle.

Are you thinking: easy to say but not to execute? It may be difficult, yes, but sometimes growing feels like breaking at first. Healing it's not linear and if you can't take a step today you can try tomorrow—practice self-compassion.

Embracing self-compassion refers to the act of attempting to be kind and understanding with yourself and your present situation. Sometimes you will undergo difficult things and you might suffer, but instead of critiquing yourself accept your feelings, acknowledge your pain and difficult thoughts without judgment.

May this new year bring you a fresh start, with loads of health, love, and strength to challenge old habits that may not be serving you!

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