

Hello

Spring...



How are you, really?

If your honest answer is, I'm great, thanks Debs - then that's fantastic!

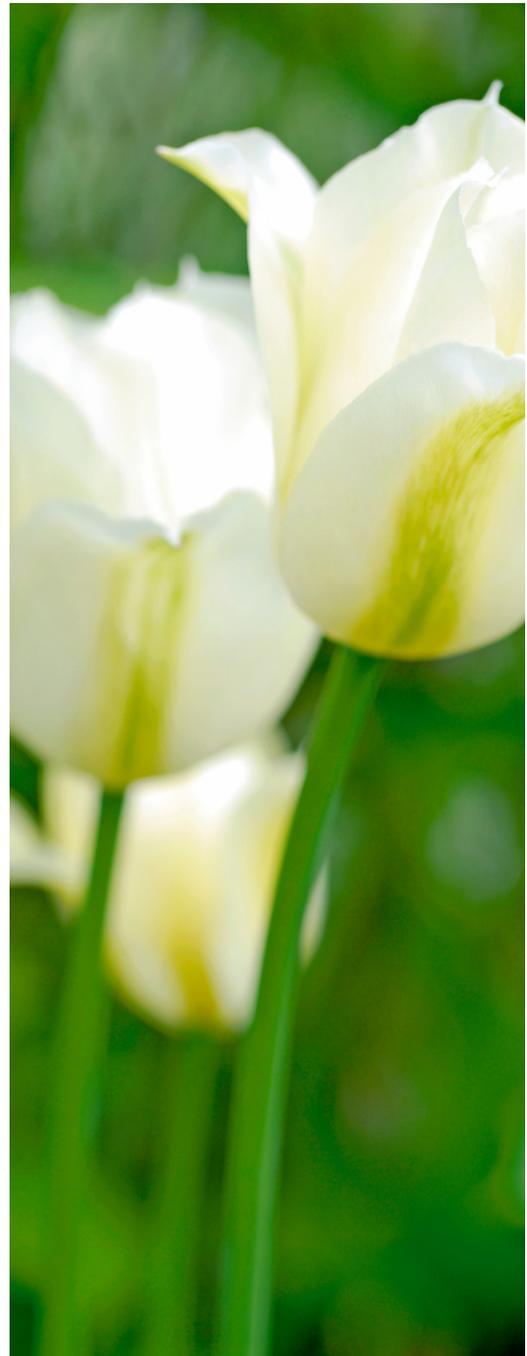
But I'm finding that when I ask people this question lately, the answer I get is a bit different.

Here's what people are telling me at the moment. 'I'm feeling a bit lacking in confidence. I want to be bursting with energy - but I feel apathetic, and frankly, I can't be a*sed!'

If that's how you're feeling right now, know that you're not alone. There's a lot of this around at the moment.

So if that rings true for you, then that's what this e-book is here to help with.

It's OK to be feeling, for want of a better word, a bit blah. Collectively we seem to be in something of a dip.



“

“Know that you're not alone.”

”

We're through lockdown and out the other side, Covid is still with us but it's not dominating everyday life the way it was this time last year, the world is opening back up and we're all getting back to normal - so why don't we feel like diving straight in?

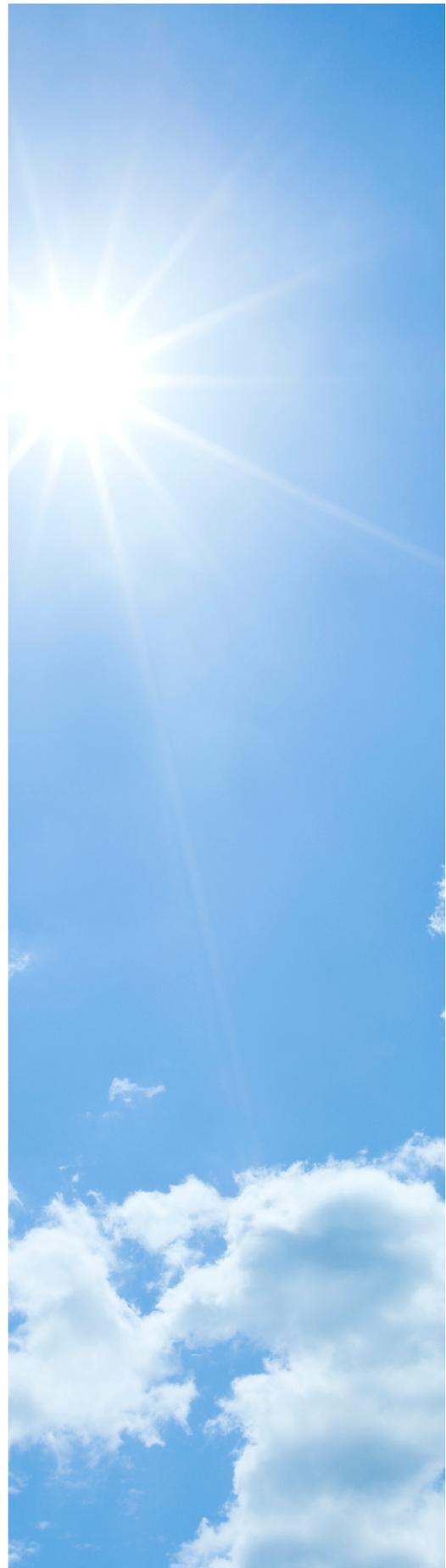
Let's face it, it's been a long winter. But now, the air is warmer, the sun is making its much-needed return, the evenings are lighter, the blossom's out and the dawn chorus is in full song. The world is waking up and it's inviting you to wake up too. And that's what I'm here to help you with.

Through this ebook we'll work on your confidence, on rebuilding your energy and on taking steps back into 'ordinary life' - whatever that is for you.

We'll have a go at some tried and tested practical exercises and we'll have a look at some ways you can harness the energy of spring, and put a spring back in your step.

Are you ready? Let's get started!

Love Debbie.xx



Rebuilding confidence

When we're feeling confident, we enter this lovely self-perpetuating cycle whereby the more we do, the better and more confident we feel, and the more confident we feel, the more we want to do!

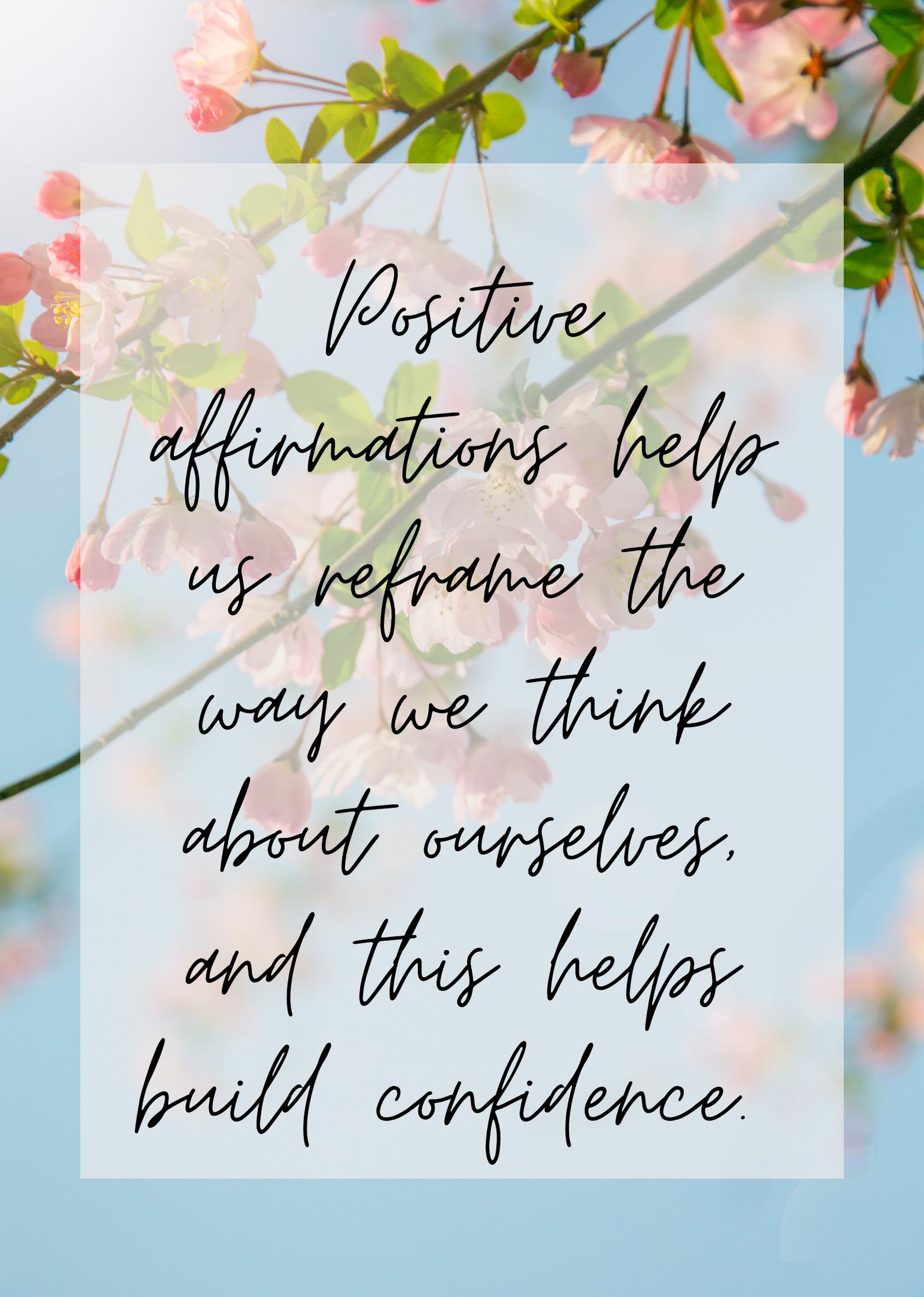
Conversely though, a lack of confidence can lead to shying away from trying new things or not doing the things we know we 'should' be doing, which leads to feeling rubbish about ourselves, which leads to less confidence and even less inclination to get starting.

It's OK if you're not feeling at your most confident right now. Collectively, there's a lot of frustration hanging around at the moment. Hybrid working, and remote working, means we're all missing that water-cooler chat and the daily social interactions that keep us ticking over.



On a more practical level, hybrid and remote working means a lot of waiting around on other people! Even something as simple as setting up a meeting involves endless emails agreeing a suitable time, sending out links - and all that waiting around for that last person to finally get back to you.

It's no wonder we're all feeling a bit frustrated. So if that sounds like you, here's a permission slip to give yourself a break.



Positive
affirmations help
us reframe the
way we think
about ourselves,
and this helps
build confidence.

Rebuilding confidence

A great way to get working on your confidence is to remind yourself of your strengths. What are you really good at? How have you been really resilient these last few years, and what have you learned about yourself?

Of course, sometimes it's hard to answer those questions because without a healthy dose of confidence, we can find it hard to think of anything we're good at. This little exercise is designed to help you create a 'strengths list', which is something you can use to build yourself up from within.

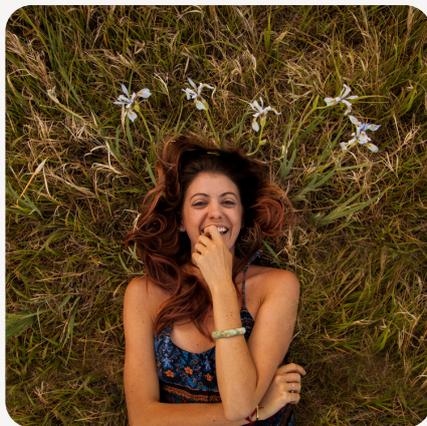
1. Complete the following sentence: 'I acknowledge myself for.....' List 10-15 achievements or things you're proud of, throughout your life.

2. Now consider how you made those things happen. What skills and talents did you use?

3. Write down a list of those skills and talents - however big or small - and then write 'I am' in front of each of them. Perhaps you've acknowledged how resourceful you've been - that becomes 'I am resourceful.' And so on.

4. Those 'I am' statements are now positive affirmations you can use every day, or every week. Look in the mirror at yourself and read them out loud - maybe lock the bathroom door first, just in case! Say each one out loud. 'I am resourceful.' 'I am resilient.' Positive affirmations help us reframe the way we think about ourselves, and this helps build confidence.





Spring moments ! ! -

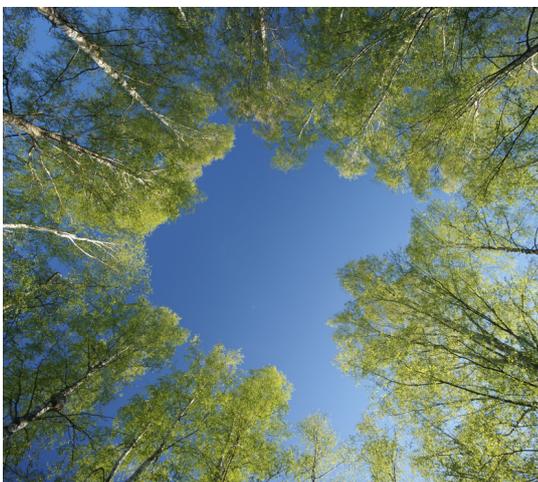
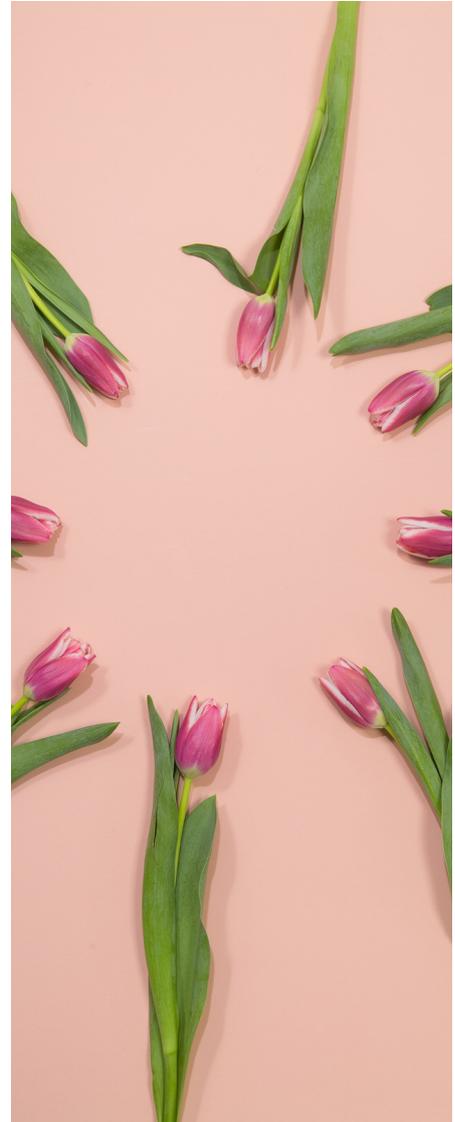
Stay within your circle of influence

There's a lot going on in the world right now – a lot – and much of it is out of our control. The war in Ukraine is terrible, the news is full of doom and gloom about rising prices and our old friend Covid, climate change is happening all around us and we can feel completely helpless when confronted with it all.

Stephen Covey, the bestselling author of the *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, talks about the difference between living within our circle of concern, and our circle of influence.

Our circle of concern is all the things that are worrying us – the cost of living, war, the economy, politics, how the kids are doing at school.

When we live within our circle of concern we spend a lot of time worrying, a lot of time scrolling and reading the news, and a lot of time feeling powerless because ultimately, all of these things are out of our control.



Our circle of influence is the things we can control.

Staying focused on your circle of influence means you feel more proactive, because you're addressing the things that you can actively do something about.

Stay within your circle of influence

You can't stop the war in Ukraine - but you can donate to the relief effort.

You can't do anything about the gloomy news - but you can apply for that job, ask for more support from your partner or family, and make sure you take the time to go for a 10-minute walk in your lunchbreak to help you reset.

Confidence is related to certainty. The more uncertain we feel, the less confident we are.

Staying focused on your circle of concern keeps you locked into uncertainty, and this will have a knock-on effect on your confidence.

But turning your attention to your circle of influence will help you feel empowered and build your confidence.

Make a list of the things that are bothering you that are in your control, that you can actively do something about. Remember, you can't change other people, but you can change how you respond to them.

Perhaps you'll decide to try listening to and empathising with your kids instead of nagging them for 'not working hard enough'.

Maybe you'll set aside the time to connect with your partner, and ask for more help to give you more time for yourself. Or maybe you'll commit to blocking out some time in your diary for you, and then following through and actually taking that time to do something you love.





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When, then

Often, the hardest thing to do is to just start. You know the thing you want or need to do, maybe it's taking up running again to get your fitness back, or perhaps you want to apply for a new job, but the thought of it is just overwhelming - so you do nothing.

As we've talked about, confidence works on a cycle of doing - feeling more confident - wanting to do more. But how do you actually get going to begin with?



1. Ask yourself, what's in it for me? If you do this one thing to start, how will that feel? For example if you go out for a short run, you'll feel a bit better.

2. Create a 'when and then' statement. 'When I go out for a run, then I feel better.'

3. Find the small quick wins, that give you an easy 'when and then' and aim to do that one thing by the end of the day. It could just be that 10-minute walk. 'When I've been for a walk, I'll feel energised and more grounded.'

4. It doesn't matter when you do it, as long as you've done it by the end of the day, and then acknowledge yourself for that. How do you feel now you've done it?

5. These small steps help build confidence and retrain your brain to go back to the little things that matter. They remind you how much better you feel once you've done it - then why would you not do it again tomorrow? Acknowledgement of the little wins builds the confidence to do more.

A person's hands are shown holding a bouquet of flowers, including yellow daisies and white roses, against a bright blue sky with light clouds. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white rectangular area in the center of the image.

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Connect, connect, connect

Online socialising and doing everything over Zoom has affected our ability to connect in person. I've spoken to a lot of people lately who have felt isolated but unable to reconnect with their social circles.

Research also shows that people really 'pruned' their social circles through lockdown and it can be hard to get people to come back out into the world, many are still scared or just feeling apathetic about it all.



We all know how to connect, we've just forgotten because it's been a while. But we haven't lost the ability - rest assured, it's still filed away there in your brain! If the idea of reconnecting feels daunting, here are a few ways to get back out there:

1. Think about what you love to do - what brings you joy and purpose?

Perhaps you love art. Could you join a local art class, and meet other people who have the same interests as you? If you're worried about feeling awkward, rehearse a list of questions you can ask people to get them talking. Why are they interested in an art class? What brought them there? Which artists do they admire? And have answers prepared yourself. Preparing will help make you feel more confident.

2. If your social circles suffered through Covid, instead of trying to reconnect with everybody all at once, take it one step at a time. Reach out to one person you used to spend time with, ask them how they are. Have they been in touch with the group? Would they be willing to meet with you one-on-one before you try and rejoin the whole gang? Chances are, they'll fill you in on what you've missed, and you'll be back in the fold again before you know it.

Remember to SPRING

I do love an acronym and this is a great one we came up with at Wishfish to help people with the process of getting their confidence back. If in doubt, remember to SPRING.

S: Stop comparing

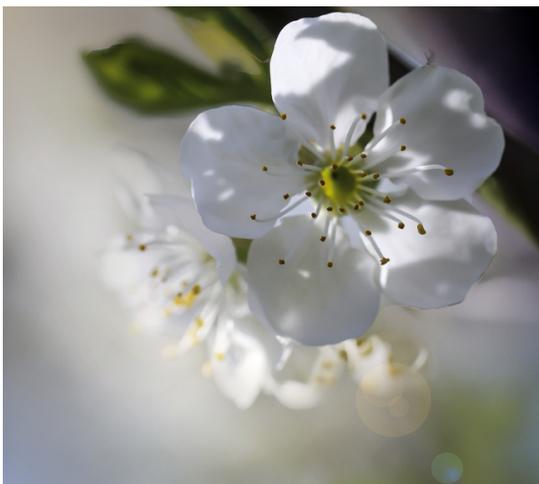
P: Practice positive self talk,

R: Reduce the urge for perfection

I: Invite feelgood moments into what you're doing

N: Nurture your body

G: Get out and about, get outside and do things.

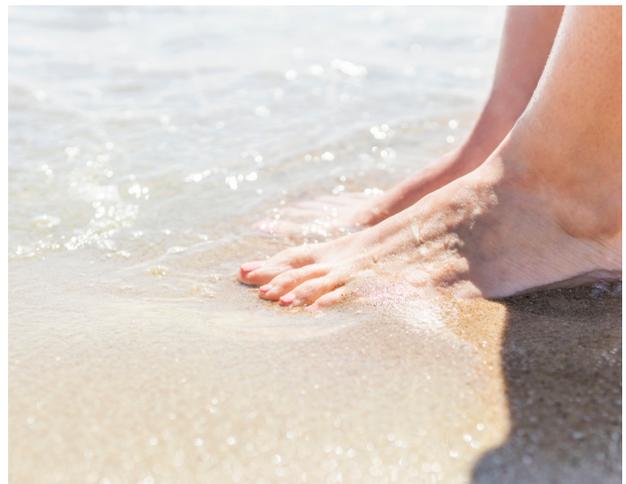




Summer moments

The sense of wonder

Spring is the perfect season to really tap into that childlike sense of joy and wonder. It's impossible not to be awed and amazed by the beauty of a spring day, by puffy candy-floss blossom and singing birds and walks through bluebell woods.



Keeping that childlike spirit alive within us is so important. A child has no preconceptions, no fear, if you watch a child at play you'll see they're completely immersed in what they're doing. We as adults could all benefit from getting back to that completely immersed, childlike state every now and again.

Last week I went to the beach on a beautiful day and I went paddling. I took a photo of my feet in the sea and sent it to my friend, and she said, there's your child coming to play. She was so right! Small things matter. Plant a seed and watch it grow, lie down and look at the sky. I hope you can take some time to let your own child, the one within you, out to play this season.

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A final note

Hopefully this guide has given you lots of inspiration and ideas for ways you can prioritise your wellness this spring and summer season.

But if you do find you need extra help and support, don't be afraid to ask.

Many people find lockdown and life more generally difficult for all sorts of reasons, and there is lots of formal and informal support out there. Samaritans helpline is available 24 hours on 116 123.



More Information

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