



Self love in self isolation

MY FIVE RITUALS TO KEEP YOUR BRAIN TICKING AND PROTECT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH ON YOUR SELF LOVE JOURNEY

♥ 1. KEEP YOUR MIND ACTIVE

It's really important to keep on top of your physical fitness (and we'll get to that) but it's so important to keep the cogs moving in our brains. I'm not sure about you but homeschooling is not coming natural to me, I am dyslexic and struggle with reading at the best of times and don't even get me started on maths! Therefore, I felt like I wanted to do something to stretch my brain. I have started doing brain training every morning, it only takes a few minutes, three short exercises a day. I'm not sure if there's a massive difference but I definitely feel more alert and ready for the day.

♥ 2. ALL THE TREATS

If you've read my book *Stretched* or are in my Self Love Detox support group you will know how I feel about dieting and how we don't need to restrict ourselves with food and that we can learn to trust our body to know when we are hungry and full which is a huge demon to battle, but if you are punishing yourself right now for tucking into a tub of ice cream, eating a whole bag of crisps or having seconds of dinner then step back and take a breath. Right now you need to start being kinder to yourself. What would you say to your friend? Would you call them "fat", "disgusting" or pick them apart for their lack of determination, or would you reach out, tell them it's all going to be okay and grab another spoon? Be your own best friend right now, understand that you may be over eating due to coping with your emotions, know that this will pass and if you put on weight that is okay. If you're really struggling and need to talk to someone please reach out to friends, family or call/text one of the phonelines who are there to listen. Crisis, Smaritans, Mind are all there to help.

♥ 3. **GROUND YOURSELF**

Take a step outside, breath in the fresh air, feel the grass between your toes, hug a tree (yep I said it), listen to the sounds around you, connect at a primary level with the world. Meditation, can be amazing but not everyone can get into it. Go back to basics, step outside or lean out of your window (sensibly!!) and notice 3 things you can hear, touch, taste, smell and see. However, if you want to try and get into meditation try the app Balance - I'm on day 16 and I have struggled to meditate before and have done it every single day, it's really simple, give it a go.

♥ 4. **TIME FOR YOU**

HAHAHAHAHAHA - I can hear your laughter ripple through the screens, it's 2020 we're on a world lockdown how on earth can you get time for you?! With four boys, including autistic twins I know how difficult this is, it's not easy and it doesn't always happen but if you can just grab a cup of coffee while it's hot in the kitchen and the kids are playing, a shower without any interruptions, if you live with another adult in the house take it in turns to go for a walk/run alone, just do something each day if you can, no matter how big or small a gesture it is, just do something for you.

♥ 5. **KEEP IT MOVING**

I know right now there is a lot of pressure to do exercise, you've got one slot a day to go out in the fresh air (if you're lucky!), but this doesn't mean you have to run and come back a sweaty mess because you've burn so many calories. If you enjoy running run, if you don't do something else, walk and explore your home area, find new things around you. There are also so many people right now doing fitnesses classes online, move your body for joy and find something you love!

And there you have it, five rituals that I am doing and encouraging everyone to do during lockdown and beyond.

You are worthy of the time, energy and effort to make yourself a priority.

With love & gratitude,
Ana Louise Bonasera

