



COWORKING

by Corro

A community to help you grow, scale and thrive.

MIGHTY MUSCLES – PARTNERED TO DO MORE



In theory, most of us know we should be prepared for anything, but the reality is we can sometimes feel woefully ill-equipped to handle all the curve-balls life throws our way. Sometimes it is difficult to be a grownup! We sometimes forget to use our most important skills.

In fact these skills matter most to your well-being. You rely on them, but like many of us you probably take them for granted. View these skills as your mighty muscles. Your ability to flex those muscles allows you to grow wiser and stronger from any situation, to transform it into an opportunity or something momentous to savour. This guide explores your mighty muscles and how to strengthen them.

Your Might Muscles Partnered to do More

When you are flourishing, you think more clearly and perform better because you are tuned into your core desires and character strengths. People want to work with you and learn from you. You are more fun to be around. When you are flourishing every experience presents meaningful knowledge, insight and something you can be excited about.

Enthusiasm, meaning or insight? How do you achieve that? The answer lies in enhancing the skills that matter most to your well-being. These skills should not be taken for granted:

1. Self-Awareness
2. Mindfulness
3. Courage
4. Curiosity
5. Self Care
6. Mind-set

Two of these skills, curiosity and courage, are also character strengths which are at the heart of life. One might consider both survival skills for the 21st Century. Your curiosity and courage are what makes the other character strengths and acquiring any capability possible. When you have higher levels of curiosity and courage you are not easily deterred by feelings of stress and anxiety and you are more resilient. These two strengths are valuable life skills.

In theory, most of us know we should be prepared for anything, but the reality is we can sometimes feel woefully ill-equipped to handle all the curve-balls life throws our way. Sometimes it is difficult to be a grownup! We sometimes forget to use our most important skills.

Rely on your Mighty Muscles

View these skills as your mighty muscles. It is vital to your well-being to develop and exercise these muscles because they are valuable, regardless of the industry you work in or situation that confronts you. Your ability to flex those muscles allows you to grow wiser and stronger from any situation, to transform it into an opportunity or something momentous to savour. You can count on these muscles to discriminate between right and wrong, find the strength to do what is difficult without giving in to impulses, maintain a positive attitude, and above all believe in yourself and your strengths and abilities – all meaningful to flourishing as an individual. Best of all, your emotional response, what you do, how you use these muscles, and what you learn are consolidated into your long-term memory so you are able to automatically retrieve the memory and the experience to savour it or mobilize those skills again when the situation arises.

These mighty muscles are more than intrinsic skills for flourishing they are interconnected with developing resiliency and your pursuit of learning, which are both essential to your growth and happiness. Let's explore these muscles and how to strengthen them.

Self-Awareness

Many of us rarely take time out from our harried schedules to become observers of our own lives and who we are being. We get bogged down in daily activities and do not make it a priority to determine what makes us happy and what gives us authentic purpose.

It requires self-awareness to identify what aspects of your life may not align with your authentic self. Self-awareness is about being in tune with what you know and understand about your own character, feelings, motives and desires. In your reach for authenticity and living a meaningful life, acquiring self-awareness is one of the biggest gifts you can give yourself. This is by no means saying that you look inward because something is broken and needs fixing or that you need to change your life. You look inward to get to know the “true you” to better understand how to live your life more authentically.



Internal and External Self-Awareness

There are two broad categories of self-awareness: internal self-awareness and external self-awareness.

Internal self-awareness leads to understanding with clarity why you think or feel a certain way. When you feel off-kilter, anxious or angry it could be because you haven't taken an inside look at what makes you feel that way. External self-awareness is your ability to clearly see how other people perceive you, your attitude and responses to them as individuals. Are you aware of how your tone of voice or choice of words affects other people? External self-awareness typically allows you to be more empathetic which is reflected in your abilities as a leader and in maintaining stronger relationships.

It is not Easy Looking Inward

Think of yourself as a garden, but imagine that up until now you are unaware if the garden is thriving or barely surviving.

The reason you do not know is because you do not know enough about the plants and flowers that grow there, or the garden in general. You do not know which plants grow where, how big and beautiful the plants might grow or what bears fruit, because you have never actually learned about their nature. Despite their importance, you do not even know their names! You've never looked closely at the leaves, petals, or the soil. You do not know if the plants self-seed, require pruning, need more sunlight, nutrients, or extra water. There could be an infestation of weeds choking the roots or pests chewing away at the leaves and blossoms. Maybe you need more bees and butterflies to visit. The soil could be leached dry of nutrients and cracked from lack of moisture. The fact is you have never been curious or taken the time to explore the various pathways in the garden to enjoy it or seek out the mysteries and marvelous secrets hidden there.

Your lack of knowledge about the garden could be due to your innocence, naivety, or inexperience. Maybe you got preoccupied and knowing or the needs of the garden were not high on your list of priorities. But, now you learn that your happiness may depend on your knowledge of that garden. You really want to care about the garden, and you should because it is after all the essence of you. Do you take the time to get to know every facet of that garden and become an expert on what is best for the garden itself? Do you delve into the mysteries and secrets that allow the garden to flourish beyond your wildest imagination? Or do you let the garden become a victim of the weeds, pests, and elements? We can count on you concentrating on the garden because it is one of the keys to your happiness?

When you decide to become more self-aware, you choose to see just the real you, apart from your work, home, or environment. You look inside yourself to pinpoint the emotions, motivations, and triggers that initiate both your positive and negative feelings.

Seriously, how often do you just sit and ponder the truth that is within you. Is it possible that you get so preoccupied with what others are thinking and doing that you fail to do yourself justice. Are you letting your awareness muscle atrophy by not recognizing yourself as a source of insight? When you are faced with an issue do you use Google or social media as your go-to guide for answers? Do you look to become more like heroes and business leaders who relate success stories?

Think about it. Knowledge is not insight. Insight is your ability to make sense of a situation, identify and distill what you learn, develop your own judgement, and figure out your own passions. While many iconic leaders have achieved great things, should your goals be about what is outwardly displayed by them? Instead of being preoccupied with one-click answers, carve out some time to listen to your inner voice. Your goal is actually simple – to be the best version of yourself.

Self-Awareness is not Fixed

Your self-awareness is not fixed. As you develop your personal character strengths, various abilities, and knowledge of the world, you will also always enhance your self-awareness to discover something interesting and exciting about yourself.

Each moment in your life is an opportunity to be introspective and listen to your inner voice. The insights you gain matter to everything you do, every relationship you have, how you feel about yourself, how these things ultimately affect you as well as others, and how you take responsibility for your positive emotions, your flaws and problems, and most importantly improve what matters to you and help you grow as an individual.

Give these next suggestions or questions about your self-awareness some serious thought and think how just one aspect of any relationship or one part of your day could be better or easier if you decided to apply just five minutes of more self-awareness to your daily interactions.

- Can you define your personal values or moral compass? People can live in disarray because they are unaware of their internal moral compass. They make choices that conflict with their personal values and it affects their emotions and ability to flourish. [Learn More about Personal Values](#)
- Ask yourself “what” questions and find good answers.
 - What am I trying to achieve?
 - What am I doing that is working?
 - What am I doing that is slowing me down?
 - What can I do to change?
- When we ask “why” we focus on the mistake which opens ourselves to negative, suspicious, or critical thoughts, that can be depressing and unproductive. Highly self-aware people ask, “What?” because it provides more productive focus on objectives and future goals rather than mistakes. Asking “what” guides you to recognizing factors that may be outside your control and may not align with your personal values or passions. This leads to you being able to strategize how to fix situations rather than ruminate on “whoa is me” negatives.
- Can you look at your feelings and behaviours from a third-person perspective and then make rational judgements on them? Make lists, a balance sheet, or a chart of your abilities, character strengths, weaknesses, limitations, liabilities, and problem behaviours.
 - You need a complete picture. You do that by getting different perspectives to get a true sense of how others perceive you. Listen to the important people in your life. Ask for input on what you might have missed or viewed differently. Assess what you can improve or learn, how, or from whom.
 - Allow yourself to be vulnerable, ask for feedback from people you work with, or lead.

- Anytime you make an important decision, assess it by noting your thoughts and motivations during the decision-making process.
 - Every time you gain a new strength diarize it. Track the progress of your character over time. You may employ other methods. The goal is to gain a deeper understanding of who you are, what you want, and how those things overlap or conflict with how you behave, think, and feel.
- Spend time with yourself in silence. It is exceedingly difficult to self-reflect when you are distracted by a television, phone, or friends. Practice mindfulness. Mindfulness allows you to be present with yourself and observe your thoughts in a non-judgemental way. What better way to become self-aware than focusing, non-judgmentally, on you?
 - Spending time reading, writing, meditating, or practicing other solo activities to connect with the authentic you.
 - Try to give yourself 30 quiet, distraction-free minutes a day. That may seem to be a big ask, but try.
- In trying to impress others, many people cover up their weaknesses and hardly ever admit a mistake. Sooner or later the truth comes out, so why do they continue to live in disguise and be labeled as unaccountable, fraudulent, or untrustworthy? When they live in that kind of fear and suppress themselves for too long, they end up ashamed which further complicates their lives and ability to be themselves.
 - Can you be candid about who you are?
 - Do you overcompensate to pretend you're not afraid?
- Everyone is afraid of judgement. It's how you respond that matters. Next time you make an error, just say so. It takes but a few seconds to say, "My bad," or "I misjudged the situation," and move on since there are many more minutes and hours in the day to deal with. Work and relationships are complicated enough, why add more obstacles like lies or guilt!

In summary, self-awareness is crucial to creating more opportunities to enhance those things that matter most to you. Without self-awareness, proficiency in the most other competencies becomes difficult to deploy consistently. As you become more self-aware, you'll be able to reach a new level of contentment. Self-awareness helps you manage your emotions better, helps you become a better leader, improve relationships and develop the uniqueness that gives your life more meaning.

Courage

Living a life of courage is not about signing up for extreme sports or slashing your way through a scary jungle, putting your life on the line like police officers or firefighters, or the overconfident cockiness to blindly rush in and take unnecessary risks. Courage is not the absence of fear. Tapping into your courage is about saying, “I can”, being willing to make bolder choices to do whatever you are afraid of doing, physically or emotionally to triumph over fear – asking for a raise, giving a stranger a compliment, establishing personal boundaries, confronting uncertainties about something unfamiliar, or engaging in complex, unfamiliar, and challenging concepts or endeavors. Courage can be an intelligent gamble, calculated through careful deliberation and preparation.



Brene Brown, popular author and research professor in social work, reminds us that the root word for courage is ‘cor’ –the Latin word for heart. For her, courage means ‘to speak one’s mind by telling one’s heart.’ Another researcher, Jonathan Lear, says, “Courage is the capacity for living well with the risks that inevitably attend human existence.” Winston Churchill said, “Success is not final, failure is not fatal; it is the courage to continue that counts.”

Shying Away from Fear does not Make it go Away

We all have fears and worries. Shying away from your fear does not make it go away. Actually, the fear becomes bigger in your mind. You can choose to act in spite of fear and be a hero to yourself. Identify your fears. Say them aloud, write them down. Then take a step forward, even if you feel a bit unsteady.

You can do Hard Things - Courage Shows up In Many Ways

The majority of us have to learn and build courage as we go along.

- It takes a courageous spirit to take the initiative. Sometimes it involves risk such as proposing a new idea or going beyond the scope of a job description. It might involve overcoming a fear. Personal courage and your ability to face what you fear can be daunting—especially if the personal choice to be courageous is not popular. A young person who wants to refuse to drink alcohol might fear what his peers will think or say.
- It takes courage to be decisive and make the difficult decision in the wake of adversity or challenge. Have you ever waited so long trying to make a decision that the opportunity itself was lost? Research shows that many people opt for making no decision even if logic would dictate otherwise. But the same research shows that even when decisions don’t go perfectly to plan, the very act of decisiveness emboldens us, fuelling personal power in ways that procrastination never can.
- It takes courage to sit down and listen.
- It takes courage to let go of the need to control outcomes or put your trust in others.

- It takes courage to acknowledge your shortcomings and take personal responsibility for your decisions. People often play the victim card without even realizing that they are making excuses because making excuses is part of the internal story people tell themselves. If you fail to assume responsibility and are quick to blame circumstances or other people when an outcome is not good, you are allowing external circumstances account for everything. Then how can you take credit for your successes! Mistakes are what you did not who you are. Courage to take responsibility is evidence of your honesty and trustworthiness.
- It takes courage to try new things, make mistakes, and keep going no matter what the outcome might be. Your very best lessons in life almost always come directly from your biggest blunders. So, instead of worrying about what might go wrong focus on the experience.
- It takes a courageous spirit to speak up. But speaking up is absolutely critical to making a difference and creating change and growth. Blowing the whistle on corruption – the CEO who pushes to invest in environmentally harmful practices. Blowing the whistle on lies – just because someone says something is true, or because it shows up on the Internet, or because “everyone” is repeating it as fact, doesn’t actually make it true.
- It takes courage to learn new things, ask questions, try new methods, or be a novice. It takes courage to be vulnerable, to be willing to shed your protective layer and let people see the real you. The openness and honesty that comes from being vulnerable fosters trust. You simply cannot have trust without vulnerability.
- It takes courage to stand by your values because you believe you are doing the right thing. Doing the right thing is often the hardest choice, but your conviction will see you through.
- It takes courage to admit when you are wrong. Getting back up when you have suffered a set back is one of the bravest things you can do.

Mastering Your Emotions for Courage

Courage is a human activity that requires you to master your emotions. The key is to think rationally about what you want to do and what is the right thing to do in the situation. Ask yourself:

- What am I actually afraid of? Is it the right thing to be afraid of? Should I be this afraid of it? Rationally, should I be less or more afraid?
- What harm can this thing actually do to me or others?
- What are the things that could happen as a result of my actions and/or inactions?
- What is the worst that could happen as a result of my actions and/or inactions?
- What are the risks to me and to others?
- Courage gives you the strength to evaluate an emotional response and then act rationally and rightly.

Curiosity

Curiosity is your desire to know or learn for the sake of knowing and to be fascinated with new information and experiences. Curiosity is at the heart of human endeavour; it keeps leading mankind down new paths to countless wonders. Research shows that consistent levels of curiosity are elemental to your well-being and life satisfaction. Furthermore, you tend to ask smarter questions, inspire others, solve problems, and avoid thinking that leads to faulty decision-making.

Does our Society Nurture Curiosity?

As a child you were naturally curious, asking, in one day, ten times the questions an adult asks in a week. Through curiosity you experienced some important moments in your life. As you entered adulthood did you continue to nurture your curiosity as a strategic tool? If not, why not? Probably because like most adults you have taken your level of curiosity for granted. When not used, the curiosity muscle withers.



We live in a society where curiosity is often not encouraged. We are vulnerable to automation. We have been programmed to think like machines, and we work with technology made to replicate the minds of incurious adults. Even at school they often fail to nurture a learning mind because the things that are easy to teach and test are precisely the kinds of things that are easy to digitize. In the workplace we are expected to fulfill a specific role or stick to the spoon-fed formulas. We are all acquainted with an organization that discourages curiosity by resisting new ideas or novel questions. At home, how many people take a back-seat to rely on spoon-fed answers from Alexa?

Father of computer science and artificial intelligence, Alan Turing said, “Instead of trying to produce a program to simulate the adult mind, why not rather try to produce one which simulates the child’s?” That did not happen. Now we treasure knowing, not the experience of learning. In this “one click away” machine-driven world where there is an unlimited availability of information, it takes a hungry mind to explore it, expand it, and use it.

Curiosity can be Learned and Fine-Tuned

Curiosity precedes learning and is the driving force behind your search for information and innovation. It is associated with your motivation, engagement and agility. Without curiosity even your most in demand soft skills of creativity, persuasion, collaboration and adaptability are more elusive. Fortunately, more and more experts are realizing curiosity is a skill rather than just a natural trait which leads more parents, educators, and organizations to encourage students and adults to become more curious and use that mighty muscle every day.

Albert Einstein said, “I have no special talent. I am only passionately curious.” That is intrinsic motivation – simply enjoying the opportunity to explore and seek answers to questions. You do not need to be a genius to be curious.

Curiosity can be learned and fine-tuned. When your brain is curious, it generates dopamine, triggering the learning that occurs. High levels of curiosity activate areas of your brain that are involved with other cognitive processes and benefits. That’s what happens with the stimulated mind of a child. Curiosity separates us from the robots, which is even more critical as artificial intelligence becomes more prevalent in our lives. You can be creative, innovative or intellectually curious; robots cannot. It’s worth carving out time each week to boost your curiosity. You’ll love where it leads you as it transforms into a natural part of your life and curiosity becomes instinctive.

Exercises to Spark your Curiosity

- Learn to think like a toddler; be curious about everything. For youngsters learning is not tied to any reward like acing a test. For them, curiosity is a way of life – playing and learning are innate, not imposed assignments. For children one question leads to another, and another. Spend time with young children and follow their lead.
- Question everything. Identify the gaps in your knowledge? There is a bottomless pit of fascinating possibilities. What do you know about wolves? Are bats really blind? How do I make my own paper? Press flowers? Can I see ice from the last ice age? Where? What are the masterpieces of world literature? Can I be a backyard meteorologist? Are there When you find an answer ask more questions about that topic.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions wherever you go, with whomever you meet. Some adults think being curious is “being nosey”. When someone is being nosey, they want to know something for their benefit. When someone is being curious, they want to better understand a person or situation. Phrase your questions accordingly.

- Learn to ask better questions. The skill of curiosity and questioning go together. To develop the skill of curiosity, we have to question why things are the way they are or why a person may do something a certain way.
 - Ask yourself tough questions such as, “Why do I believe that?” or “Why do I think my way? What would happen next if I tried_____?”
 - Learn to be fascinated by the person you are with.
 - The key is knowing what to ask and when.
 - Be comfortable with silence while allowing a person to respond to a question.
 - Listening intently and effectively.
- Reflect on how you engaged with the world in the last seven days. How many of the things below are true for you? Do this every week.
 - I got so absorbed in learning something new that I lost track of time.
 - I talked to someone who gave me a new idea or changed my mind on something.
 - I took the initiative to learn more about one of my interests.
 - I didn’t know the answer to a question; this didn’t allow me to rest until I figured it out.
 - I explored a completely new idea or topic—just for the fun of it.
 - I took the initiative to talk to a new person, just to discover what she was thinking
- Do not shy away from the unknown. If someone is not doing what we expect, be curious about what their outcome could be. You learn to see things from another perspective. It can be a learning opportunity for both of you.
- Embark on a curious excursion. You don’t have to go far. It is best if you go someplace new. You could choose a museum if that interests you, but you can bolster curiosity exploring a hardware store or tree nursery. The next time you go to supermarket, ask the produce manager the differences in the variety of tomatoes, apples or onions. When someone cannot answer a question, make note of it and explore the answer via a new route, such as a library.
- Fall in love with learning from new situations, experiences, and people. Go out into the real world because an office or classroom can pose limitations. You can learn from books, courses, podcasts, seminars and training programs for sure, but do not restrict yourself to taking data someone else presents. You can observe what others have done, but you learn more by experiencing it. Learn from direct interaction with the real world and experiment. Go out in nature and let your curiosity run wild.
- Learn something new that excites you. We all have random interests that we never act on. Pick one and pursue it. You can start with Wikipedia or TedTalks to get your curiosity juices flowing. There are dozens of free online educational opportunities through: HarvardX, Coursera, the Internet Archive to name a few.

Mindfulness

Days blend together. Months fly by, and before you know it, another year has passed. In that time, you have done thousands upon thousands of things, many of them without being mindful of how you spend your time. Just think about the number of times you googled something and for what reason. Think about how many meals you consumed and not savored the taste or acknowledged the effort that went into obtaining the ingredients or the skill to cook it? Think about the number of people you have talked to – colleagues, clients, strangers, friends – in your work week. Think about the number of times you were distracted and barely lingered to enjoy a fleeting thought. Were you mindful of every experience? Probably not! You actually may have been more mechanical.



MINDFULNESS

in the Midst of Many Things

Are you always on autopilot? It's estimated over 90% of our behavior runs on autopilot.

You do not stop and think about many of your habits, routines, impulses or reactions. It is not necessarily a bad thing because as part of your survival mechanism you have habits and routines or manageable short-cuts that guide you to easily get through the day. You do not need to consult a how-to manual every time you turn on a stove to scramble eggs or the water faucet for a morning shower. Mindfulness is the opposite of autopilot. It is executive control that enables intentional actions and decisions. Mindfulness is simply the practice of observing what is going on in your mind, body, and environment and doing it with focus and clarity.

Your mindful brain knows what is best for you. The autopilot brain does not. The autopilot brain relies on short-cuts that eventually deaden your willpower and decision making ability. When you operate on autopilot for so long that you get stuck in repetitive patterns, you do mindless activities or do not have mindful awareness of your own impulses and reactions, you are no longer in executive control.

The good news is you can exercise your mindful brain to awaken to experiences that will help you become more effective in life.

Mindfulness is a state of active attention on the present when you focus on the moment. In the midst of many things, you have to be intentional – and this is the tough part – to be more sensitive and perceptive, and listen better, to take the time to experience your life and environment with all of your senses. Though research indicates that engaging your senses outdoors is especially beneficial, do not ignore being mindful in your workplace, because when you feel more alive and present no matter where you are, you can still be productive, actually more productive.

Practice Mindfulness

Pausing to practice mindfulness for just a few minutes at different times during the day can help your days be better, more in line with how you'd like them to be. Mindfulness exercises can be as long or as short as you like. You do not have to make big changes. At least commit to one thing new each week that you can practice while in the shower, walking your dog, boiling the kettle, or walking to the elevator. Make opportunities to pause, be attentive to the present moment, and connect with yours senses. Even one minute of consciously connecting with one of your senses is classified as a mindful exercise. Here are others:

- Learn to soak up everything about a good moment no matter where you are. You don't need to close your eyes. You don't even need to be sitting down. Simply connect with what you are feeling through your body at any one time. Perhaps try to slow down as you walk to the lunchroom. Be aware as your heel and toes touch the floor. Listen to sounds – the chatter of your coworkers, the paper spitting out of the printer, unidentified noises, or the stillness. Pay attention to what you see out the windows – sunshine, cloud formations, busy traffic, trees swaying in the wind. Feel the cool steel touch of the elevator door, the warmth emanating from your coffee cup, the sugar granules between your fingers or the frost in the refrigerator.
- Mindful eating. Enjoy every mouthful.
- Use traffic jams to drive yourself calm, not crazy. It is an opportune time to put your mindful brain into practice. Breathe, scan your body for tension, stretch, adjust your position, look around you, recognize and accept the situation, smile with other drivers, sing. Repeat phrases of self-compassion. Breathe some more. Give yourself some love.
- Mindful pause. Focus on your breath with quiet eyes several times during the day. It is great for your state of mind and one of the most inconspicuous ways to practice mindfulness at work.
- Carve out time to think and dream. Allow yourself the opportunity to sit still and do nothing, to be motionless and gather your thoughts.
- Be more self-reflective. It is a core habit of mindfulness.

- Begin your day with intention. Assume a relaxed posture – sitting is fine. Take some deep breaths and ask yourself, “What is my intention today?” As you think about the people or activities that you will face, you can use these prompts to help figure out your answer.
 - How might I show up today to have the best impact?
 - What quality of mind do I want to strengthen and develop?
 - What do I need to take better care of myself?
 - During difficult moments, how might I be more compassionate to others and myself?
 - How might I feel more connected and fulfilled?
- Set your intention for anything you feel is important. For example, “Today, I will be kind to myself; be patient with my children and co-workers, and have fun at work.”
- Throughout the day, check that you are following through on your intentions.
- Pay attention to your repetitive thoughts. Of the tens of thousands of thoughts you have in a day, most of them are the same. In being mindful, you choose constructive self talk over exaggerated, irrational, or unrealistic chatter that may cause you undue worry.
- Slow down. Stop trying to multi-task – it has been proven to be inefficient and counter-productive. By slowing down and stopping to be mindful of what you are doing you become more efficient, productive, resilient, and in the end happier and healthier, too.

[Learn more about the No No's of Multi-Tasking](#)

Self-Care

Self-care is 100% about the things you do to make yourself happy, to refresh and renew your spirit and take care of your mind and body. There are several forms of self-care that should be incorporated into your daily routine:

- Regular sleep routine
- Fresh air
- Nutrition
- Physical exercise
- Seeking medical attention
- Nurturing your relationships
- Healthy boundaries
- Taking regular lunch breaks
- Making time for relaxation
- Asking yourself questions about your life and experiences
- Practicing compassion, kindness and acceptance to yourself
- Incorporating activities into your life that help you feel recharged
- Engaging in spiritual practices that you find fulfilling
- Face-to-face time with family and friends
- Keeping your mind sharp with activities that stimulate you
- Employing healthy ways to process your emotions
- Promoting curiosity to create wonder in your life
- Attending professional development programs.
- Engaging with a non-work hobby
- Nurturing supportive friendships
- Releasing pent up emotions
- Attending special events with family, friends.

You will identify personal self-care needs that are unique to you, making this list longer. There is no one-size fits all approach.

Self-care is unique for each person. You will practice self-care differently than another family member or friend. You do not choose one or three per day. Practicing “the best care for ‘you’ means you do most of them on a daily basis.



Self-Care is a Daily Necessity

Every aspect of self-care is ultimately very important to your well-being. Many people view self-care as something you do for emergency maintenance like taking a day off or visiting a doctor. Some people view self-care as an unnecessary indulgence or treat rather than a priority. An annual visit to a day spa is not adequate self-care. If you do not take steps to promote your own **self-care on a daily basis** you will mostly feel overwhelmed, tired, and ill-equipped to handle life's inevitable challenges. Self-care balances out all the stress and negative emotions that you feel.

Emphasize Saying “Yes” to You

The key to self-care is to make “you” the priority. You are the best person to monitor your internal state for signs of depletion. You are best to decide what area of your life needs more attention and decide what you need to care for yourself better. You need to make clear choices on your own behalf.

Exercise #1: Write a list of your current daily activities (work days and non-work days). Record how much time you spent on each thing. Include everything – making a bed, texting friends, playing games – no matter how mundane it is, whether it takes two minutes or two hours. In another column, list the things you do on a daily basis to care for yourself. Add the time. Is your list lopsided? Some self-care activities, such as sleep or exercise may appear on your list, but get too little attention. Some may not even appear on your list. Comparing your list to the one on the previous page, can you see where you can put more energy into caring for yourself better?

Exercise #2: Do you realize that every time you say “yes” to someone, you are saying “no” to yourself? Look at your list one more time and identify areas where you can say “yes” to you.

Only you can decide to make all aspects of self-care a priority. Only you can make time to care for your physical, mental and spiritual well-being. Once you make more aspects of self-care part of your daily routine, you will discover that many of things that you struggle to incorporate today will become effortless. Some will bring so much enjoyment and benefit you will do them many times a day.

Frequent Self-Care Assessment

Part of self-care is doing a frequent assessment in this manner. Adjustments may be necessary in the early stages of implementing new self-care strategies. A few tactics may be easier to implement on a daily basis, such as ensuring you get adequate sleep, nutrition, or fresh air. You can emphasize some aspects of self-care by fine-tuning your routine – time with friends, activities that energize you or keep your mind sharp, self-compassion. You may have to implement some forms of self-care in stages as you learn new strategies or adjust your schedule to make self-care the priority. As self-care strategies evolve into part of your daily routine, an assessment helps you determine which other aspect of self-care to incorporate. Perform an assessment when areas of your life change or when you need extra attention to make yourself feel good, show yourself love and compassion, or balance out stress.

Healthy Boundaries in Self-Care

One aspect of self-care that many of us struggle with is setting healthy boundaries, physical or emotional. That may be because we do not know what healthy boundaries look like. Let's start with the word "boundary". We might not carry around a giant "no trespassing" sign, but the word itself conveys the idea that we are barricading ourselves off from others. The opposite is true, because boundaries are actually healthy connecting points by which we navigate our relationships. Psychologists call them invisible bubbles. We could call them rules, guidelines, or personal limits.

Your personal boundaries can be intellectual, physical, or emotional.



Intellectual boundaries include respect for your ideas and an awareness of what you deem appropriate for discussion.

Physical boundaries include your body, sense of personal space, sexual orientation, and privacy. Examples of physical boundaries:

- Declining physical contact from a coworker is setting an important boundary.
- Equally crucial is asking the same coworker not to invade your privacy or make unreasonable demands on your time or emotions.
- Asking someone not to crowd you or invade your personal space.
- Say 'no' to something you do not want to do.

Emotional boundary invasions are things you do to yourself:

- Sacrificing your plans, dreams, and goals in order to please others.
- Not taking responsibility for yourself and blaming others for your problems.
- Not knowing how to separate your feelings from your significant other's and allowing his/her mood to dictate your level of happiness or sadness.
- Not recognizing when excessive use of social media or technology is causing you harm.

Recognize your limits to set Healthy Boundaries

Learn how to recognize your limits regarding: personal space, emotions and thoughts, stuff or possessions, time and energy, culture, religion, and ethics. Our bodies always give us signals when we are near a personal limit – clenched fists, tightened jaw, churning stomach, perspiration. When you feel anger or resentment or find yourself whining or complaining, you probably need to set a boundary. Explore your discomfort. Examine similar past experiences that may have occurred because your limits had been crossed. Determine what you need to do limit your exposure to feeling that way again.

- Once you know your limits, determine if your boundary will be loose or rigid. It is crucial to determine what consequences you can implement if your boundaries are crossed. Make sure you are willing to follow through or else the boundaries will not be effective.
- Communicate your boundary to the other person. Be assertive. Do it clearly, calmly, firmly, respectfully, and in as few words as possible. You are not responsible for the other person's reaction to the boundary you are setting. You are only responsible for communicating your boundary in a respectful manner. Here is an example:

“When you told our friends about what’s been going on with my family, I felt hurt and embarrassed. Please don’t share things about me without my consent. My privacy is important to me.”

- At first you may feel selfish, guilty, or embarrassed when you set a boundary. Do it anyway! While reminding yourself you have a right to self-care. Do not be surprised if some people react poorly. You can express your limits with compassion, but it’s not your job to make it okay for them by justifying or apologizing for the boundary you are setting.
- Respect the boundaries that others have set for themselves - parents, children, romantic partners, bosses, coworkers, etc.

10 ways to enhance self-care:

Like the character strengths, the elements of flourishing and the other key skills needed to flourish, there are exercises that help you to enhance self-care.

- Keep (or develop) a sense of humor. Lighten the mood of situations for yourself and others with laughter.
- Give daily attention to curiosity. In people of all ages research shows that high and consistent levels of curiosity correlate with mental well-being and life satisfaction. Curious people also seem protected from depression.
- Nurture your connections. Talk and listen to others and always live in the moment. Give people your time, your words and your presence.
- Make one lifestyle choice that affects the functioning of your body.
- Be active – do what you can and enjoy what you do.
- Recognize and minimize the adverse effects of too much social media and electronics.
- Allow yourself the opportunity to sit still and do nothing, to be motionless and gather your thoughts.
- Make time to play. Play gives you the energy you need to keep going.
- Take notice – remember the simple things that give you joy.
- Keep learning – embrace new experiences and seek new opportunities.
- Read books. There is very little difference between someone who cannot read and someone who will not read. Either results in ignorance. There is no excuse for ignorance when there is opportunity to learn more. Books are one means of rising above the ordinary, because all the wise insights and advice of mankind have been captured in writing. Read just one more book.

When you take steps to care for your physical, social, mental, spiritual, and emotional well-being you will feel empowered to meet your responsibilities and challenges with energy, vitality and confidence. You will equip yourself to embrace change and live your best life.

Growth Mindset

Have you heard this story shared by Shawn Achor in his TEDx talk, “The Happy Secret to Better Work”?

“A little girl falls from her bunk bed and lands hard on the floor. She might have broken her leg, and she’s in tremendous pain. As she is about to cry, her quick-thinking older brother tells her that no human could possibly have landed the way that she did when she hit the floor, and that can only mean one thing: she’s a unicorn.

Rather than giving in to the pain, the little girl’s brain begins to process the concept that she might actually be a baby unicorn...”

This story is an example of how re-framing your circumstances can allow you to achieve a positive happier mindset.

What is Mindset

Mindset is the established set of attitudes that adults tend to cling to. Basically there are two kinds of mind-sets: growth mindset and fixed mindset.

With a “fixed mindset” you assume that your character, attitudes, and behaviours are prearranged and carved in stone; that you cannot change qualities, intelligence, or creative ability in any given way. A negative or fixed mindset can sully how a person views the world. On the other hand, a growth mindset teaches you to be fascinated by emerging challenges, to be curious and willing to put in the effort to keep on learning. When you have a growth mindset you believe that you can do hard things and that basic qualities, attitudes, intelligence and abilities are things you continue to cultivate through learning, application, and experience.

Three Common Problems of a Fixed Mindset

1. People with a fixed mindset resist change. They take the path of least resistance within the boundaries of their comfort zone. When they resist change their fear zone expands and takes over their growth zone. That means they do not have a far stretch to float into the zone of fear where they let change or hardship overwhelm them. The zone of fear is where something is perceived impossible. But change will still happen and the world will be revolving around them as they loaf around until their next birthday.
2. People with a fixed mindset end up feeling constricted and stifled – basically frustrated – because it is contrary to their natural tendencies or hard-wired need to flourish authentically. Their mindset does not allow them to recognize anything other than they probably won’t get much better in their personality, character, relationships, or careers. The contradiction creates urgency for them to prove over and over again that he or she is not incomplete or imperfect or lacking. They put their energy into one consuming goal – that of evaluating and proving themselves. Will I be rejected? Will I feel like a loser? Will I fail? Will I look dumb?

3. People with a fixed mindset tend to be less curious, less inclined to learning new things, and less open to new experiences. Lack of curiosity combined with the previous two tendencies results in a person rigidly adhering to time-worn routines and opinions. When they stop asking questions or being interested in life, it negatively affects their mental health and vigor.

Acquiring a Growth Mindset

For more than two decades Stanford psychologist Carol Dweck has studied mind-set and the power of mankind's beliefs. She set out to prove that intelligence and personality can be developed rather than being immutably engrained traits. Her research has shown how changing even the simplest of beliefs can have profound impact on nearly every aspect of a person's life. She states that a growth mindset creates a passion for learning rather than a hunger for approval. She is quoted as saying:

"Why waste time proving over and over how great you are, when you could be getting better? Why hide deficiencies instead of overcoming them? Why look for friends or partners who will just shore up your self-esteem instead of ones who will also challenge you to grow? And why seek out the tried and true, instead of experiences that will stretch you? The passion for stretching yourself and sticking to it, even (or especially) when it's not going well, is the hallmark of the growth mindset. This is the mindset that allows people to thrive during some of the most challenging times in their lives."

Change your Brain's Neuroplasticity with a Growth Mindset

Neuroplasticity refers to brain's ongoing ability to adapt and develop. Neuroplasticity provides scientific proof that intelligence is not fixed, it develops throughout our lives. You make new connections and pathways on a daily basis as you adapt to new circumstances. When you learn something new, you change and expand how the circuits in your brain are wired. These are physiological changes. A person with a growth mindset believes that he or she can get smarter, better, or more skilled at something through sustained effort – which is exactly what neuroplasticity tells us on a broad level.

With a growth mindset you are willing to ditch arrogance or any hint of an "I-know-it-all" attitude and step out of your comfort zone to embrace the unfamiliar, live for a little while with uncertainty or not knowing. The growth mindset you employ for learning a skill applies to any changes you want to make in behaviour, attitude, or pattern in your life. These changes include enhance character strengths or positive emotions, or learning to be more self-aware or mindful.

There are many reasons why we do not achieve what we set out to do. Life has twists and turns, external forces, circumstances, the people (and distractions) we meet along the way. Many of those are beyond our control. However we can control how we think about these twists and turns.

Change Just one Thing to Adopt a Growth Mindset

Life has twists and turns, external forces, circumstances, the people (and distractions) we meet along the way. Many of those are beyond our control. However we can control how we think about these twists and turns. You can decide ahead of time to make one small change, right now, for yourself. Change your thinking pattern by used one word, yet.

What if instead of saying “I’m not good at this”, you said “I’m not good at this yet”?

“I don’t understand this yet. It doesn’t work yet? This doesn’t make sense yet”?

In essence the word means you realize that some things are worth waiting for, and striving for.

From Comfort Zone to Flourishing Zone

While in college, Gerald, lingered in disappointment that he did not achieve a dream he had held onto for quite awhile. At first he refused or was unable to explore the twists and turns of his life. He says he got bogged down with negative feelings and the idea that life isn’t fair. Then one day he asked himself why he not able to adapt to his new situation. After all he knew he was smart. Two curious insights came to Gerald. He discovered that the ambition he brooded over was no longer suited to the person he had become. All the expertise he had acquired was going to be “super useful”. Gerald had looked inward and decided to step out of his comfort zone.

**There are two options: step forward into growth or
step back into safety of the comfort zone.**

**You need to be out of your comfort zone
to expand your life in new directions.**

Your comfort zone is based on your memories of things you know and know how to do. We all gravitate back to what we know, but none of us limit ourselves to that zone. Well at least we didn’t as children. You are here today, able to talk, read, drive a car, or boil water on the stove. You do not have to crawl to the supermarket or boardroom. You may have no clear memory of the first time sat on a toboggan overlooking a steep hill or jumped off a diving board. There was a first time for every one of your experiences and many of them required you to step out of your comfortable zone. Now those historical experiences are the fabric of a much larger comfort zone. Every time you venture out of your comfort zone to learn and experience new things your comfort zone expands and the inner zone of fear and panic narrows. Your learning and growth zones can expand to narrow the zone of fear to a narrow sliver.





Children are naturally willing and excited to push out of their comfort zones. It really makes no sense that as an adult a person should want to remain in some comfort zone on a permanent basis. It takes no talent or ability to grow old there. What chain holds adults there? The answer is being stuck with a fixed mindset. Many of us fail to realize that every endeavor we undertake that brings us pleasure is the result of stepping outside our comfort zone.

Often that means learning new skills. We ask you to do that. Often that

means taking a leadership role – self leadership and leading your own life. We ask you to take one step to lead yourself out of your comfort zone to adopt a growth mindset to set you on a path to flourishing. We ask you to lead yourself out of your comfort zone to learn self-care, self-awareness, and mindfulness. In your learning zone and performance zone is where you will enhance character strengths, positive emotions, and personal connections, so crucial to flourishing. Step forward to experience engagement, achievement and a life of meaning.

The Learning Curve

Aspects of learning and growth are stressed in the science of flourishing. Learning is not always easy. As adults we tend to forget there is a difference between reading how something is done and actually putting it into practice. Too many of us become discouraged too early because we make one fundamental mistake. We confuse a lack of skills and knowledge with a lack of ability. Sometimes we experience a little anxiety and give up too quickly because we do not recognize where we are on the learning curve. It is a poor excuse for not completing our learning. By sticking it out, we might learn that anxiety is manageable and can even be enjoyable.



How many of us lose sight of the fact that we are all beginners at something when we first start? There is a learning curve and time element to everything we learn, or want to change in our lives. Sometimes we do not put enough time into learning or applying what we learn so we can move up the learning curve from the novice state to competency before becoming the experts.

Take charge of your happiness. Today is a new “Starting Point”: Accept wherever you are and start making solid strategic decisions to pursue your path to enhance your overall well-being. That begins with your readiness to learn, your readiness to acknowledge you may be a novice again while you learn different capabilities. Rushing the process by skipping steps or practicing what you have learned is detrimental to your success. Do not ignore the value of a step-by-step guide. The key is to start taking small steps and build up momentum.

If you approach learning with laser-like focus and training your mighty muscles you will move up the learning curve from being a beginner to being competent and advancing to the expert stage. You need to be prepared to put new learning into practice and be patient, because it may take several rehearsals to get it right before you can become the happiness pro you want to be.

Inspired and Committed, We Celebrate Your Journey

At Corro, we believe in the power of people. We are inspired to expand humanity's capacity for wisdom, compassion, and courage.

In our commitment to helping you achieve long-term personal development and use your organizational platform for positive impact, we celebrate the journey of lifelong learning while fostering an all-inclusive community driven environment of meaning, personal connection, and fun.

Corro is not just a Work Space – Our Aim is Helping the Community Thrive through People Success