



Looking after your mind to look after your future

Do you have the mind skills required to perform at your best during difficult times?

Here are 3 lessons we can learn from this pandemic that equip us create a thriving future

by Dr. Narjes Gorjizadeh

We are standing on a turning point in this unprecedented time now. The coronavirus pandemic has disrupted many of our life patterns and we don't know what the future will be like. We might feel fear, anxiety and uncertainty, but now it is important more than ever before to remain positive and look for ways to empower ourselves to go through this challenging time peacefully and to come out of it stronger and better prepared to create a thriving future.

Our future depends on us. We are standing on a critical point of time that the decisions we make now and the actions we take will set the direction to our future, both individually and globally. Future is uncertain, but it depends on what we learn from this pandemic and what we adjust in our mindset and our lifestyle to shape this future.

Now that our life routine has been put in a pause, it is a good time for us to take a pause in our mind as well and look into what lessons we can take and what we need to adjust in order to thrive..

Three lessons we can learn from this pandemic.

1 PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT TO PROTECT OURSELVES

With a large portion of the human population around the world in lockdown, the earth is thriving. This emphasises the fact that the way we human beings were interacting with our planet was not compatible with its harmony.

We are not separate from this planet: we are part of this complex organism on earth and our actions affect our surroundings and ourselves. As we can see from all the effects of global warming in the past few years and all the extreme natural phenomena that are happening, if we take our planet out of balance, we will face the consequences as well. By disrupting the balance of this organism we eventually disrupt our own life.

Create a thriving future for ourselves and our planet is our responsibility, both as individuals and a global community.

As individuals, we can make ourselves more educated about what are the simple human behaviours and daily habits that have negative impacts on the planet, and to avoid them as much as possible. We are more than 7 billion people, and our simple actions, no matter how small they are, add up and make a huge force which can hurt or heal this planet

2 LOOKING AFTER OUR MIND TO LOOK AFTER FUTURE

At this time, our immediate reaction might be fear, anxiety, anger, or frustration. But these reactions do not help us in this critical situation. We need to have a strong immune system to stay stronger and well protected against COVID-19 or any other pathogens; and feelings of fear, anxiety, frustration or anger weaken the immune system.

Staying calm, positive and at peace, on the other hand, enhances our immune system. There is increasing research that shows that our state of mind affects our body and our performance in life. Our body produces healing chemicals when we are calm, rather than in reactive mode. And our brain works at its best when we are in a peaceful and positive mode; we are more creative, more empathetic, and better decision makers.

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Staying calm in catastrophic situations is a skill that everyone can learn. It is in fact a quality of the brain that can be developed with simple mind exercises. Meditation is the most effective one.

Whether it is virus outbreaks or other catastrophes in life, unexpected things might happen at any time in anyone's life. Now is a perfect time to start practising the skill of being in control of our mind to help us stay calm, peaceful and strong in any life situation.

3 EMBRACING THE ME-TIME AS MUCH AS THE WE-TIME

During this outbreak, the majority of the population has been in some sort of lockdown. One of the things

that was most challenging for many people during this experience was being alone with themselves. Many of us have forgotten the importance of ME-time. We need some ME-time as well as the WE-time to be at our best. Socialising and having social support is part of being human and it is needed for our growth and well-being. However, there should be a balance between the time we spend with ourselves and the time we spend with others.

We got used to our minds being overstimulated by all the busy-ness of life that spending some time at a lower speed and with less contact seems scary. So many of us are not comfortable being alone with our own mind!

ME-time gets easily ignored in our busy lifestyle, but it is nurturing and a natural part of living a fulfilled life.

In the ME-time:


1 You can just sit, breathe and pay attention to your breathing. This lets your mind calm down and lets your nervous system relax. It decreases stress and anxiety, and increases focus and creativity.

2 You can meditate. Meditation is extremely helpful in reducing stress and anxiety and bringing peace to mind. It is a scientific fact that meditation calms the nervous system, reduces tension in the body and improves immune system.

3 You can reflect on the deeper meaning of life and connect with the blessings that are surrounding you. Life is a precious gift and we are on this journey on earth for a short time.

This journey, even if it were to be 120 years, is still short. It will pass with a blink of an eye. It is worthwhile to enjoy every moment of it and to be grateful for every

moment of it, even if it is a moment of pain. Yes, pain, because it can be guidance for us to move toward growth and transformation if we view it as a sign to show us our mistakes that are moving us away from growth and improvement.

Life is beautiful! Recognising the beauty of life and realising the importance of our time on this journey of life, we will be more encouraged to make the best use of our time to create a thriving future for ourselves, others and our planet. 



Dr. Narjes Gorjizadeh, is a PhD research scientist, a certified teacher of meditation and mindfulness based in Sydney, and creator of the G.R.O.W. program. She has trained with

internationally renowned master, Vikas Malkani, founder of SoulCentre.

<http://www.meditationmindfulness.com>.

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