30-DAY DOPAMINE BASELINE RESET

PREPARATION FOR THE 30 DAYS:

Hide your credit card and tell your friends you won't be responding to messages as quickly this month, if at all! Tell friends you will also not be doing any major socialising, other than one-on-one or in smaller, quieter groups.
Tell your TV you are giving it a holiday for 30 days!
There will be no shopping other than food shopping this month.
Socialising will involve books, walks in nature, manual creativity, more exercise of the slower, quieter variety, 7-10 hours of sleep and a regular bed- and waking-up time.

Give yourself a score out of 10 for your current general mood upon waking in the morning and also after following any morning routine you already use. Make a note of these two scores and keep them somewhere safe.

1 – Very low mood. Heavy thoughts. Depressed.
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10 – Ecstatic. Super energised. Highly enthusiastic about life and everything in it.

DAILY, NON-NEGOTIABLE ROUTINE FOR THE 30 DAYS

MORNING
Wake-up.
Glass of water with turmeric, sea salt and lemon (Stir with a spoon. Water in nature is never still. Moving water is better absorbed into the system).
5-10 minutes - relaxing instrumental music whilst meditating or a guided meditation for
5 minutes - ground outside in nature in bare feet or wearing socks or tights.
5 minutes – stretch.
Shower.

DURING DAY
3 x at least 10 minutes during day outside in the fresh air.
1 x 10 minutes - any other form of exercise (dance, gardening, yoga etc)

EVENING
Put phone away 1 hour before bed.
Shower or bath.
Book or meditation/relaxing music/journalling before sleep.

On the subsequent days in the 30-day period, the following tasks will be added (just the one per day!) to the 'Morning', 'During Day' and 'Evening' daily routine.

2 - Deep breathing with slower exhale - 5 mins at some point during day.

3 - Grounding full body on back - At least 5 mins at some point during day.

4 - Grounding full body on front - At least 5 mins at some point during day.

5 – Palm of hand massage and finger massage - At least 5 mins at some point during day.

6 – Sole of foot and toe massage - At least 5 mins at some point during day.

7 – Head, neck and shoulder massage - At least 5 mins at some point during day.

8 - Stomach massage (in an upward semi-circle from the lower right side of the stomach to the lower left side) - 5 mins at some point during day.

9 - Stream of consciousness writing (Just start writing and see what happens. It need not make that much sense!) - At least 5 mins at some point during day.

10 – Draw an image/some image(s) (They need not be works of art, just whatever comes to mind first) - At least 5 mins at some point during day.

11 - Dance to favourite uplifting music - At least 5 mins at some point during day.

12 – Hum (to activate the vagus nerve) - At least 5 mins at some point during day.

13 - Clean something – At least 5 mins at some point during day.

14 - Relaxing activity of choice (reading, crossword etc) – 5 mins at some point during day.

15 - Plant something - At least 5 mins at some point during day.

16 - Cook something new - At least 5 mins at some point during day.

17 - Stare at sky – At least 5 mins at some point during day.

18 - Call a friend for rather than messaging and explain why you are doing this – At least 5 minutes at some point during day.

19 - Lie down, close eyes and think of a place you love being in - At least 5 mins at some point during day.

20 - Sing/make music – 5 mins at some point during day.

21 - Hug/pet/stroke/watch an animal/your own pet – At least 5 mins at some point during day.

22 – Spinal movements in all 3 planes (frontwards and backwards, leaning down to either side and twisting across the body to either side). - At least 5 mins at some point during day.

23 – Read a book – 5 mins at some point during day.

24 – Light a candle and focus on the flame – At least 5 mins at some point during day.

25 – Create something of your choice (manually rather than on a screen) - At least 5 mins at some point during day.

26 – Hug a tree (any tree that you prefer) - At least 5 mins at some point during day.

27 – Release a favourite scent within your bedroom or living room (via spray, candle, perfume etc) and sit or lie down to savour it - At least 5 mins at some point during day.

28 – Lie down with your legs up against a wall - At least 5 mins at some point during day.

29 – Collect a few items for recycling/to give away to charity and place them in a bag ready - At least 5 mins at some point during day

30 – Take an extra long shower or bath – increase length by at least 5 mins.

REFLECTION ON THE 30 DAYS:

Give yourself a new score out of 10 for your current general mood upon waking in the morning and also after
following the morning routine you have followed over the 30 days.

1 – Very low mood. Heavy thoughts. Depressed.
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10 – Ecstatic. Super energised. Highly enthusiastic about life and everything in it.

Compare the new scores to the ones that you gave yourself at the start of the 30 days.

Consider which aspects of the activities you have undertaken during the 30-day period have felt most beneficial to you. Determine how you can continue to incorporate these into your daily life to keep your new dopamine baseline level where it now is or to move it slight higher still.

Share the '30 Day Dopamine Baseline Reset' with a friend or member of your family.

Claire Culliford