



The power of thoughts

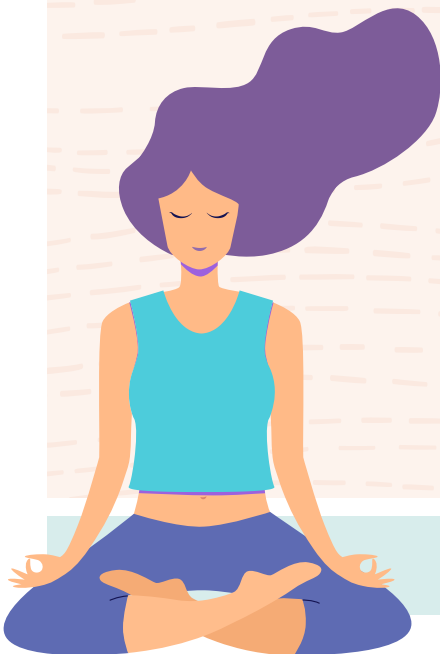
by Emma Symons

You might think that the most powerful thing in the world is probably a machine, a government, a prime minister or president, but the truth is that the most powerful thing in the world is a thought. Charities, salesmen and marketers know that if they can influence your thoughts, they can get you to donate money or buy products. On an individual level, your thoughts can empower you to achieve great things, or they can hold you back and cause you pain and suffering.

When people try to change certain areas of their lives, they very often start with trying to change a behaviour which is a bit late in the process. If you want to make changes, you need to begin with the thought process, that is behind the ways in which you behave. We all have around 60,000 thoughts a day and research has shown that most of these are negative, which isn't what you want or need. The trick is not to stop all negative thoughts, but to recognise the patterns of negative thinking and reduce the frequency and impact of them.

Thoughts are far more powerful than they are given credit for. Negative thinking can have a devastating impact on your life: it can affect your confidence, your decision making, your relationships, your health and the results you achieve.

Positive thinking, however, can increase your confidence, boost self-esteem, improve your health and make your relationships at home and at work, more rewarding. A great way to begin to change the way you think is the attitude of gratitude and there has already been some great advice from Andy on this. Until next time, happy thinking!



There is always something to be grateful for when you allow yourself to be fully present in the moment.

Quarantini time...

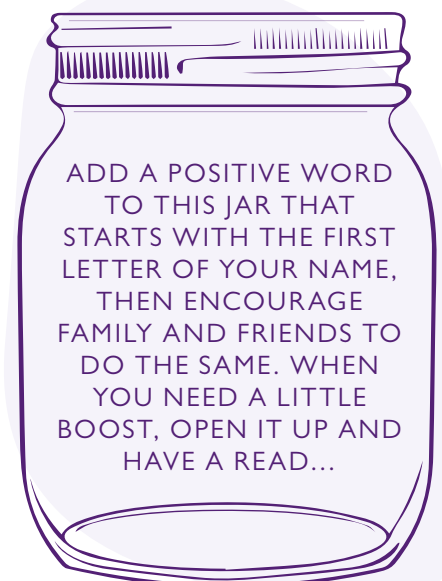
Watermelon Cooler

from Sherin Dervishis

Ingredients

- 4 cups cubed, seedless watermelon chilled
- 1/4 cup fresh squeezed lime juice
- 1/3 cup white rum
- 1 cup ice cubes
- 1/4 cup coconut milk

Add all ingredients to blender and blend until smooth. Fill glasses and garnish with a lime wedge or small watermelon slice. Enjoy!





Pack a perfect picnic

With restrictions easing allowing more socially distanced meet up and the weather proving the perfect backdrop, there's never been a better time to pack up a picnic and escape the house. It also happens to be National Picnic Week – so even more excuse to get involved...

For inspiration on what to make and pack, click on the link below:

www.jamieoliver.com/features/perfect-picnic-four-ways/

Eye health by Elaine Wiseman

We all need to look after our eyes as we get older and whilst we're going to experience changes in our sight at some point in our lives, there are some food choices we can make that will help to boost eye health. Lutein which is found in leafy green vegetables is known to prevent degenerative diseases in later life. Papaya and orange coloured fruits are especially rich in lutein and the usual culprits, oily fish and citrus fruits, are a good all-rounder for general health. Lutein supplements can be bought online or at Holland & Barratt, but please read the label before use!

Keep your eyes protected against the sun; it sounds obvious, but sun-bathing in direct sun without protection can cause cataracts later on in life.

Cold cucumber slices or peppermint teabags dampened in cold water can help the appearance of puffiness after a poor night's sleep or a heavy night on the town (after lockdown of course!). If you use eye drops, keep them in the fridge for extra freshness.



Will you miss it when it's gone?

There can be no denying the past thirteen weeks have been like no other we could possibly have imagined. But amongst the upheaval and uncertainty, many of the routines we've adopted may well be ones we come to miss as and when life slowly returns to some semblance of normality.

1. When else in your life have you ever actively looked forward to going for a run? Exercising has never felt less like a chore.
2. When you're home almost every second of the day, the chances of missing a delivery are next to none – oh the relief!
3. Talking regularly to random family members, long lost school friends and connecting with grandparents via technology (turns out it is possible), has been quite amazing.
4. Having the time every single day to check on and appreciate even the tiniest changes to your houseplants and veg seedlings.
5. You might have lived in your house for a decade or more, but how well did you really know your neighbourhood before exploring it in forensic detail on lockdown walks?
6. It may have taken a little while to adjust to the world shrinking to just our households, but getting to spend endless hours – despite the usual family bickering – with people you love, is time we might never have had in 'normal' life.

7. A nightmare for some, but for others, homeschooling has been a chance to bake and garden, make extravagant home chemistry experiments, be creative and learn stuff together as a family. Understandably though, you wouldn't want to do it forever!

8. People have been smiling at each other on the street while out jogging and walking – can we keep that going?

9. It's been so quiet – fewer cars and planes and construction sites operating has meant we've actually been able to hear the birds singing. It's been lovely.

10. Not feeling guilty about watching a lot of TV (when staying home, it's pretty much been mandatory). Once our social lives pick up again, bingeing boxsets, joining in live art sessions and catching Gardeners' World on a Friday night will be so much harder.

11. The opportunities for 'me' time have definitely increased for a lot of us. With no friends to meet, work drinks to attend, school runs to wrangle with, fitting in a bath, or half an hour with a book, cooking from scratch, calling a friend, and spending more than three minutes painting your nails, has actually been possible.

12. Through the Thursday night claps, getting to properly know our neighbours over the fence, supporting those in need, shopping for friends and relatives who can't get out themselves,

a sense of community has genuinely sprung up.

13. For people newly working from home, it's been quite the dream to get a lie-in, then just walk downstairs to 'work' rather than having to get up, get dressed and drive or catch a bus or train to commute. Plus, you can make yourself a nice lunch, rather than rely on plastic-wrapped, shop-bought sandwiches.

14. We've been able to collectively slow down, and focus on the day-to-day. Grand plans have been cancelled, life has paused – but it has for everyone. There's no FOMO (fear of missing out), or feeling like you're being left behind at work, or amongst fellow parents on the playground. In some ways it's been a relief, a moment to stop, think and recalibrate. One we might never get again.

