

5 mindful resolutions to have for the new year

The new year is a perfect time to take stock and reassess any areas of your life you'd like to improve on. Adopting mindful resolutions can help contribute to your overall well-being and personal growth.



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Here are five resolutions to consider:

Practice daily mindfulness

Resolution: Dedicate a few minutes each day to mindfulness practices, such as meditation or deep breathing exercises.

Why: Cultivating mindfulness can help reduce stress, improve focus, and enhance your overall mental well-being. Starting with a few minutes each day can make it a sustainable habit.

Mobile apps can help with mindfulness goals, assisting you to achieve a physical and psychological synergy that can help you reduce stress. There are many apps on the market that helps you manage stress through deep breathing exercises and teaches the fundamental techniques of meditation and mindfulness.

Cultivate gratitude and practice kindness

In the land of 'Ubuntu/Botho', where there is an age-old philosophy emphasising that you are because of others, being supportive towards others is part of our culture. Helping those in need is the daily focus of charitable organisations, however every one of us can contribute to a better South Africa, each in our own small way.

It starts with being thankful for who you are and where you are, says Dalit Shekel, key accounts manager at Relate Bracelets, a not-for-profit social enterprise that raises funds for charitable causes.

“Keep a gratitude journal and regularly jot down things you’re thankful for in your life. We live in such an unpredictable world that being grateful each day for what you have is a really worthwhile New Year’s resolution to adopt.”

“Exercising gratefulness brings about a more contented attitude. Focusing on gratitude shifts your perspective towards the more positive aspects of life and generates positive thoughts. It’s a mindset that engenders kindness towards others, as you are already being kind to yourself,” she adds.

Schedule breaks in nature

Resolution: Find time to take breaks from your everyday settings to relax and unwind in natural settings.

Why: Time in natural settings is great for your mental health.

Remember, the key to successful resolutions is to start small, be realistic, and integrate them into your daily routine gradually. Additionally, be kind to yourself and acknowledge that progress, not perfection, is the goal. Regularly reassess and adjust your resolutions as needed to ensure they remain relevant and achievable throughout the year.

It takes approximately 120 minutes of weekly exposure to natural settings, such as woodlands or coastlines, to boost well-being and a healthier mindset. A 2019 study of 20,000 people by the European Centre for Environment & Human Health at the University of Exeter, revealed that the two hours of time spent in nature could be spread out over the course of a week or done in one go.

“Being surrounded by nature encourages people to disconnect from their everyday tech devices and the need to constantly check their emails, messages or social media, which in turn gives them a chance to truly relax and recharge. This awe-inspiring untouched landscape inspires a deeper connection to oneself and nature too,” explains Anton Gillis, CEO at Kruger Gate Hotel.

Limit screen time and digital detox

Resolution: Set specific times to disconnect from electronic devices and engage in screen-free activities.

Why: Constant exposure to screens can contribute to stress and disrupt sleep patterns. Establishing boundaries with technology allows for more meaningful connections with yourself and others.

It’s important to remember the positive impact of less screen time and exposure to blue light on our sleep patterns. Experts have advised that limiting time on your laptop or cellphone two hours before bedtime improves the body’s ability to relax and can improve melatonin production. This could be replaced with activities such as a body-scanning meditation or time spent connecting with your family.

This is also true for reduced screen time during the day. To spend more time connecting with friends and family in 2024, consider embarking on more screen-free experiences with loved ones.

This could include booking experiences that include live entertainment, where your focus is on enjoyment of the experiences through your senses.

Prioritise self-care

Resolution: Schedule regular self-care activities, whether it's taking a bath, reading a book or engaging in a hobby.

Why: Prioritising self-care is essential for maintaining balance and preventing burnout. It helps recharge your energy and promotes a positive mindset.

“Self-care is the conscious participation in activities that improve a person’s overall well-being. In today’s world, many people work long hours and they may feel like they always need to be productive. This can take away from the opportunity to indulge in self-care. However, taking time for yourself to have some self-care has been clinically proven to reduce or eliminate anxiety and depression, lessen stress and increase joy,” says Lerato Tlhame, spa manager at Amani Spa & Wellness at Radisson Hotel & Convention Centre, Johannesburg, O.R. Tambo.

“There are many big and small ways for you to incorporate some self-care into your daily routine. You could take some time to find a new healthy recipe and learn how to make the dish, or you could try to write down some feelings, thoughts, and goals into a journal that will help you reflect on your well-being. You could also commit to a digital detox for a set period of time to give yourself a break from busy social media apps.

Every now and then, you could also treat yourself to a relaxing massage or spa treatment that resonates with your needs.

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