

2021: Playing the Long Game

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When I thought about what I would write to kick off 2021, the initial title was “2021: Hitting Reset” or a “Fresh Start”. Turning the calendar to a new year brings a new sense of hope and resolve - often times, resolutions or goals. However, in the midst of a seemingly never ending pandemic and the current political climate things are a little out of sorts.....*or maybe that's just me?*

Now don't get me wrong. I tend to err on the positive, seek the learning in most situations, and want nothing more than to hope that this will all turn out well. AND, I know there is work to be done. *A LOT of work* - and so: **the long game**. As we navigate our way through this pandemic, there is no “going back to normal” or what was - there is only a way forward, and within that way

forward lies great opportunity.

Over the past year, if I've learned one thing it is this: **your health is of utmost importance**. Not only to make you less susceptible to a virus, but also in playing the long game. Going forward, how do you want to live? You get to decide what would best serve you. Now is the time to develop habits for your optimal well-being.

As we move into this new year, three ideas to consider:

1). **How do you breathe?** Believe it or not, the breath is an excellent indicator of health. Over the years, many of us have developed the habit of holding our breath which results in tension in the body, and then in our lives, and so on. *How do you breathe?* Take some time and observe yourself throughout the day. Notice when you're stressed, exercising, or doing something new. Do you hold your breath? Does it get trapped in the body - do you scrunch up your shoulders or tighten your chest or back? Practice deep breathing and evening out your breath (ex., breathing in for four and out for four). This not only reduces stress, but also increases energy levels, boosts joy, helps with your sleep and much, much more. Breathe deep!

2). **Meet your body where it's at.** I don't know about you, but I have not kept up my pre-covid exercise routine. I am a shadow of my former self. That doesn't mean that I can't return to my previous level, but *jumping right back into what I was doing would lead directly to injury*. As much as I want to attend a power flow yoga class or do all of the push-ups that I once did, my body can't do that - and so I wind up swearing (in my head of course) at the instructor or cursing my body - which gets me nowhere. And so, slow down. Meet the body where it's at. Gains are made rapidly - take the time to rebuild and move with intention.

3). **Move, no matter what.** With life happening all from home, all the time, your schedule may not be what it was. It might be difficult to take a full hour for a class or a run. **Move anyway**. Go outside for a quick walk. Carve out 5-15 minutes between meetings for “exercise snacks”. This not only keeps you fit, but gives you a shot of energy, and a brain break. Plus, with everything online, there are all kinds of routines and trainers to follow! Find something that you like to do, and works for you and Move, not matter what.

Bonus tip: With everything out of balance, be sure and practice yours. We're not talking work/life non-sense but *actual* balance. Stand on one leg and slowly kick out the opposite leg in front of you and behind. Practice tree pose (<https://www.yogajournal.com/poses/8-steps-master-refine-tree-pose/>). Stand on a bosu ball and try to stay upright. Anything to develop balance in your foot and ankle will help as you navigate this wild world!

All the best to you and yours this 2021. Keep it moving and remember: play the long game. This is an opportunity to develop those habits that will keep you healthy one step at a time!!!

For more information and further reading on Health and Wellness, visit our [online library](#).



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Beth Cline is a movement coach specializing in the body and the mind. Her clients are people of all shapes, sizes, and skill levels. Some come for athletic movement, others come for movement in life (career, health, future, etc.). Either way, it starts with energy. Energy flow leads to ease, and life can be easy! Beth teaches people to pay attention, to listen and learn, instead of moving through pain.

Move, *with intention*. Follow her blog on her website at www.bethcline.com; connect on social media:

