

Ten Commandments to Help Recoup Your Sanity

Thou shalt...

Meditate or do some other contemplative practice twice a day, for 5 - 20 minutes a shot. Treat it like a prescription medication. Your mental and physical health depends on it.

Unhook from the internet. Unsubscribe from all those webinars that take up hours of your time. Chances are, you already know the information anyway. While you're at it, unsubscribe from all e-newsletters that aren't helping you reach your goals. Spend less time at the computer. It's overstimulating, and adds to mental and physical tension. Spend more time with loved ones, your pet, or just reading a good book and relaxing.

Conserve your energy. When you've got a big project on the horizon, plan to spend the day beforehand relaxing. If you're an introvert, you have limited amounts of energy to expend. So expend it wisely.

Recharge your batteries. When that project is done, plan to spend the next day recharging. Treat yourself to a cuppa tea, a fun movie, a snuggle with a loved one, or a stroll through nature.

Prioritize your activities. What is most important for you to pursue at this time in your life? Grab a pen and paper and a beverage of choice and spend an afternoon writing down your one big thing. Break it down into baby steps. Then let the other stuff go for now.

Sleep. Get to bed before 11:00 pm, and engage in a pre-sleep ritual, like reading. Get up eight hours later, if that's possible. Until you're stronger, you need to honor that schedule.

Eat mindfully. Take small bites and chew slowly, thoughtfully. Wolfing down your food isn't good for the digestion, and it tenses the muscles. Worse: eating while standing in front of the heater, or while writing a blog post. If you eat alone, put on some relaxing music, and savor the taste in each bite of food.

Let go of perfectionism. Remind yourself that whatever work you do, the results of your efforts may not be perfect. So be it. Let it go. Be gentle with yourself and others. Continue to do the best you can, given the information and abilities you currently have.

Unclutter your life and space. All those library books stacked ten deep: return them. It's only possible to read one at a time, so choose one book, three max, jot down the titles of the others, and return the rest. Toss, deal with, or defer any piles of papers. Ditto with any other mounds of clutter. Same thing with your calendar. Don't over-schedule yourself; rather, calendarize blocks of time to work on those baby steps. And leave space for downtime. Or jot down a to-do list for the week, keeping it reasonable, and do the tasks as time permits. One day a week, power through as many ten-minute tasks as possible in a one-hour slot (uh, that would be six, give or take), and then stop. Unclutter the brain, too. There's a time for thinking, and a time for clearing the mental chatter.

Trust yourself. You have the knowledge and information you need to move forward at this time. As you make progress, if you discover you need to learn more, then and only then will you seek it out. There's too much noise on the internet, and it's a false assumption to think you're missing

out if you don't take it all in. That kind of mental gorging will make your ears ring and your synapses fire like an express train at rush hour. Bottom line: you know most of what you need anyway, you're just looking for validation. So push back from the table. You're full.