
Vol 1 Issue 3

THE GO-GETTER THRIVE GUIDE

Rest & Reflect

by Recalibrate



December 2020

TOP OF MIND

from Gloria Chan Packer | Recalibrate

The end of year is upon us and as I sit down to capture my thoughts, I notice there's a lot. Was my 2020 more "the year of remembering what really matters" or "the year of surprise kicks in the nuts"? Was it more "the year of resilient growth" or "the year of existential crises on repeat"? While my personal, truest answer for this year is a little "all of the above", I also currently notice feeling something that I've termed "crispy"... aka not quite burnt-out, but, you know, gettin' crispy... and so, after a long, complex year, I'm ready and looking forward to making time to intentionally pause, rest, and reflect on all that was, all that is, and all that's to come.

This month, we're exploring the importance of rest and reflection at year-end. To open us up, I'll share what's top of mind for me, but as always, I want to recognize there are no one-size-fits-all answers and that everyone should follow their individual needs and perspectives. Y'all know I like to be rigorous in the science of mental wellness, but when it comes to the case for year-end rest and reflection, I take inspiration from a theory I find more compelling than necessarily proven. The TL;DR version is that our brains and the Earth run on an extremely similar electromagnetic frequency, which is a possible signal that humans are biologically wired to our natural surroundings. And, if our natural surroundings shift seasons regularly, such as into a period of rest in winter, perhaps that's a cue for us to more deliberately rest and care for our minds, bodies, and spirits as well.

Here's a more detailed dive for my in-the-weeds peeps: Electromagnetic fields are all around us, from our natural to human-built environments. Natural examples are thunderstorms, the way compasses point North to South, and even the way birds and fish navigate the skies and seas. Human-built examples are power sockets, antennas, and x-rays. The most predominantly studied electromagnetic frequency of the Earth is measured at ~7.8Hz. Interestingly enough, studies have found that the human brain's average alpha and theta wave frequencies are also measured right at ~7.8Hz. Alpha and theta waves are two of the five main categories of brain waves, falling in the middle of the scale. Alpha waves induce lucid calm and relaxed states like meditation. Theta waves induce an even deeper state of relaxation, where you're kind of falling in and out of sleep but not quite to sleep yet, like savasana at the end of yoga.

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I find it interesting that our brains align to the Earth's electromagnetic frequency, specifically in mental states of calm and rest. There's a lot of room for interpretation here (if you want to read further, see references at the end of this issue.), but I personally enjoy thinking that it's possible we are meant to follow the lead of our wise Earth and shift into a season of rest come winter. And even if that doesn't end up being scientifically true... I believe it IS scientifically true that most of us are on the "crispy" to burnt-out scale right now, having stewed in cortisol for far too long this year. Many of our brains and bodies are asking for rest, and I encourage you to listen.

Up ahead, in Expert Forecast, we're interviewing two expert go-getters -- Spike Jones, the General Manager of Strategic Services at Khoros and Kelli Brogdon, an HR Employee Relations Specialist at SHI -- on their favorite practices of rest + reflection and their tips to overcome the challenges that can get in the way of prioritizing either. In Emotional Vocabulary, Sophie Carothers explores self-compassion for the season and in Mental Love Tap, Rachael Swerdon guides us through a short, mindful yoga practice to jumpstart your season of rest. Lastly, I whipped up a little Recalibrate Gift Guide with my favorite picks to treat yourself or your loved ones to some healthy minded nourishment this season. ■



"Many of our brains and bodies are asking for rest, and I encourage you to listen."

EXPERT FORECAST

How our expert go-getters rest & reflect



Spike Jones, General Manager of Strategic Services at Khoros

Q: How do you view the importance of rest + reflection when it comes to mental wellness?

I think that is a very timely question with everything that's going on in the world and all the stresses of COVID-19, the election, being trapped in our homes, no travel. It's always been important to me, but now it's more important than ever. Really being thoughtful and making time in a way that benefits and making sure you're really getting something from it. It's always been a part of my health and the mental health part of it right now is more important than ever. It's up there with exercising and eating well and really that self-care that we all have to do.

Q: What is your favorite practice of rest to recalibrate your mind + body?

Exercise has always been one. I run, box and swim. It's always been an escape for me and always something I do in the mornings. I don't listen to music because I want to be alone with my thoughts. I want to organize them especially if I have a big meeting or hard talk scheduled for the day. It's a chance to go over it in my head to get my words and talking points straight, making sure that I'm on point. That way I'm not walking into things panicked or stressed. Exercise has always been that place where I'm able to find quietness in my head. Even more so than laying in bed. I don't know if it's because I have to be doing something active, but it's always been that escape for me... *(continued on next page)*



Kelli Brogdon, HR Employee Experience Specialist at SHI

Q: How do you view the importance of rest + reflection when it comes to mental wellness?

It's incredibly important and so necessary. There's often so much emphasis and pressure that is put on individuals to be the best of the best in all areas of life, but if you're not taking the time to refill your cup, or rest and restore your mind and body, or to reflect and understand what your needs are -- it becomes difficult and overwhelming to be the best that you can be. Not only for the ones around you, but for yourself.

I have that natural tendency to put others first -- doing whatever it takes to get the job done. In the long run, that doesn't lead to a good place for me. When I don't take time to rest and be good to myself, I wind up spending twice as much time feeling exhausted, overwhelmed, irritable, or unproductive. Truthfully, it's taken me a few years to figure that out, and I've learned it the hard way. I think I'm still learning and relearning in that space. And that's okay! I think one of the most important things I've realized is that mental wellness is ongoing, and it's a space where you're allowed to grow and learn. That process has allowed me to release some of that self judgement.

I think being proud of what we have done to adjust is so important too. Even though it might not always look perfect, look at what you've have accomplished. You can be proud of that for yourself too. *(continued on next page)*

(Spike Jones interview continued)

...and I really didn't realize it until I was in college when I started running. This is a great way to think about what I need to and clear my head.

Also, I play video games. It's a mindless activity that I'm terrible at, but enjoy the hell out of. Mostly the big adventure games and not those shoot'em up ones. There's some escapism there which is a good mental break to get away from your thoughts and problems for a little bit. Beautiful big worlds, good dialogue, and storyline that draws you in and helps you just kind of escape.

And then, when I was a kid, I loved playing with Legos. And during lockdown, I decided to start playing with them again. I started buying some of those huge big sets. And I've found so much joy and peacefulness in building those sets. It's been something I didn't know I'd enjoy this much. It's a time for me to be quiet and concentrate on something else. But again, all three of those things have been very important for me, allowing me to escape my thoughts and experience that escapism.

Q: How do you practice reflecting on your impact, experiences, and growth in life?

I think we have these joint experiences in our lives and I like to think of them as milestone years. And they don't necessarily need to be "good years." Not that this was a bad year, but we'll definitely all remember it. You'll tell your kids about it and they'll ask about it because they'll probably freaking learn about it in school! About a very contentious election... *(continued on next page)*



(Kelli Brogdon interview continued)

Q: What is your favorite practice of rest to recalibrate your mind + body?

Particularly at the end of the year, family time is huge for me. I feel fortunate to have my family close here in Austin. Spending time with them is always such a wonderful time for me to relax with them.

In general, I practice yoga often. That's always been my escape from the day-to-day stress. It's a healing medicine for my mind and my body. I also journal and meditate pretty regularly, especially now, when there are all these new and overwhelming feelings and experiences. I try to meditate as often as I can, and use it as a tool to understand what I'm feeling, what I need, and where I'm at in the present moment. I utilize journaling as that first step to processing those thoughts and feelings that come up for me during meditation.

I actually recently made a list of seven things I can do for myself regularly that makes me happy. There are certain things on there like drinking a certain amount of water each day or intentional movement. I have singing and dancing on the list. Maybe that's going for a drive and singing in the car or blasting music in the house and dancing while I do laundry. That one feels incredible! It's such a game changer. It has served as a reminder of those simple things we can do at any given time in a day and the difference that it makes.

I highly recommend thinking about what seven items should be on your list. Put it somewhere where you see it often, maybe a bedroom mirror. And see how it changes you.

"Everyone's got to find their thing. I think a lot of people think that to rest or relax, you have to be quiet and still. I think that's the biggest misconception."

(Spike Jones interview continued)

...the pandemic that affected the entire world and killed all these people. It's one of those life experiences, one of those memorable things. For example, I'll always remember when the space shuttle blew up and 9/11. We buried my aunt that day because she died of brain cancer, but my nephew was born later that day as well. I was on a plane coming into Dallas and that's when the first of the Twin Towers came down. It's one of those memorable things. I take years like this and compare them to other years in my life. Because 2020 is a more memorable year. In good and bad ways. Work-wise, you think about the impact you've had and the people. I'm so proud of how many people we were able to employ this year while millions lost their jobs. We were able to give people hope, happiness, and income. That's super important to me.

I think it's the little things combined with the big things. It's about impact as well. How I've impacted others and how they've impacted me. For example, Jack has been my boss for a year now and greatly affected the way I look at the business.

Also, being able to get closer to my wife during this time. Luckily we've not killed each other! We really enjoy each other's company. It's great when you're forced to spend a year with someone and naturally grow closer together.

Q: Do you face any common challenges with practicing rest + reflection, and do you have advice for our readers on how to overcome such challenges?

I'd refer back to the first question. Everyone's got to find their thing. I think a lot of people think that to rest or relax, you have to be quiet and still. I think that's the biggest misconception.

Resting or relaxing can be escapism. Like playing a video game or reading a great book. I struggle the most with rest on Sunday nights. They're so shitty for me! I go to bed and I start thinking about the week. I think about what conversations I need to prioritize and what things I'm looking forward to. I just can't turn it off. I've tried to stare at a blank sheet of paper, count, or meditate. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't but when I'm able to do those things that relax me, I can feel the tension leave my shoulders. It's a good way to remind myself to leave those to do's for the moment and come back to them tomorrow because what's important is that I need to get some rest in order to do those tasks. ■

(Kelli Brogdon interview continued)

Q: How do you practice reflecting on your impact, experiences, and growth in life?

Journaling and meditation are huge for me. I think in regards to my personal growth, being inquisitive with myself is vital, understanding where I want to be and who I want to be. I've also learned that it's okay if I don't have the exact, full answer to those questions right now. What I do know is what my values are, what my goals are, and what makes me happy. So as I go through different experiences in life, I ask myself questions like "Does this align with my values? Will this help me reach my goals? Does this make me happy?" It helps me understand where I'm at in that respect. And on the flip side, asking those questions to others around me helps me realize how I've impacted others and my community.

Q: Do you face any common challenges with practicing rest + reflection, and do you have advice for our readers on how to overcome such challenges?

One thing that helps me is making lists, like I mentioned earlier. Having something like that physically in front of me where I look often. I have a tendency to extend my work day when it's not always necessary, especially in this work from home environment where it's so easy to open up your laptop an hour before you have to be online or for a couple extra hours after work. I forget that I need to rest, and that I deserve to rest. It's easy in this environment to forget these fundamental things.

So with that, I'd recommend reminding yourself to regularly pause and reflect on what it is that you need. Understanding whatever those practices are, and what is the best suited for you. If you need to, set a reminder on your phone, write it on a mirror, put your break time on your calendar at work. Then treat the self love and restoration practices like a priority. Just like you would treat your family, work, yourself.

Q: Any last tidbits to share with our readers?

I hope this doesn't sound cliché because I really, truly mean it... I know I need this reminder so I imagine there might be few others out there too.

Remember that you are worthy and deserving. It doesn't matter how many hours you did or didn't work that day; how many errands you ran or boxes you checked off... You're always worthy of rest. You're always worthy of refilling your own cup. Remember that just as much as you want the people you love to care for themselves, they want you to care for yourself too. ■

EMOTIONAL VOCABULARY

By *Sophie Carothers* | *Recalibrate*

Definition of Self-compassion

Extending compassion to one's self in instances of perceived inadequacy, failure, or general suffering.

Compassion

The Latin root for the word compassion is *pati* which means "to suffer." The prefix *com* means "with." So the literal definition of compassion is "to suffer with."

3 Elements of Self Compassion:

Self-Kindness

Actively being warm and understanding towards oneself, rather than judging or being a self critic.

Common Humanity

Recognizing that suffering, and being imperfect is apart of the human experience.

Mindfulness

One has to be aware of their suffering in order to give it compassion. Acknowledging and being with one's suffering allows for problem solving.

We rest and reflect because both are essential to take care of our wellbeing and growth. But, despite our best intentions and efforts to rest, our minds often have a different agenda -- from to-do list distractions to anxious worries to self-criticism or self doubt. This is where we think self-compassion becomes important and why our team wanted to focus on it for this month's Emotional Vocabulary.

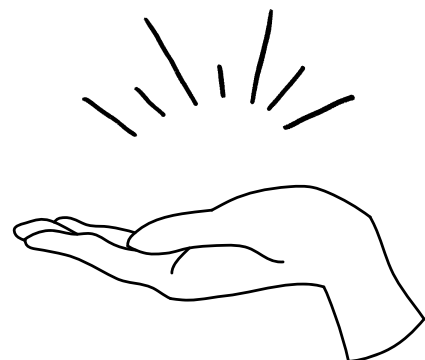
To be in a self-compassionate state of mind is to be in a loving, connected, and present state of mind.

When you lay down to rest, and different emotions or thoughts arise - I suggest taking a deep breath and if it's comfortable, taking a moment to be with the emotions that come up. Practice nonjudgmental awareness by engaging with curiosity, asking questions about where the emotions were learned and triggered and what you might need to process or respond. Try talking to yourself with the open-mindedness and understanding that you would show a friend or loved one in the same situation.

Remember, too, that self-compassion isn't just being soft and giving into any impulse that comes along. Self-compassion is understanding and supportive but guides us towards what is healthy and nourishing. If a friend has just broken up with someone who has consistently mistreated them and your friend has an impulse to go back: you, as a supportive friend, would not just give in and say "Yes, that's the easy thing to do, just go back!" You instead might empathize and understand, but with a tender firmness, tell your friend a boundary must be drawn and that it will not be healthy to go back. This is the kind of compassion we want to show ourselves too: understanding, supportive, and healthy in guiding us toward what is nourishing.

As you may take time to rest and reflect, we wish you the same open, empathetic, supportive, and nourishing self-compassion this season. ■

"Remember that if you really want to motivate yourself, love is more powerful than fear."
-Dr. Kristin Neff



MENTAL LOVE TAP

from Rachael Swerdon | Recalibrate



This flow is meant to ground you. To get a break from the daily distractions and allow for simple breath and movement. Practice this when you wake up in the morning, after a workout, or when you're experiencing that afternoon funk. Allow this to be your script to rest and reflect through intentional inhales, exhales, and movement.

Namaste, go-getters! ■



THE RECALIBRATE GIFT GUIDE

Gloria's Top Picks for Healthy Minded Holiday Treats

1. The O.G. of Stress Relief Aromatherapy



How funny is it to think that in 2001, in Bath & Body Works' hay day, that we were all collecting mini hand sanitizers because it was *fun* to?! Well, I'm here to help us dive deeper into that nostalgia because B&BW's Stress Relief lotion has been a staple I've liked more than any of the fancier, pricier, essential oil trend products I've tried since 2012 when I first discovered this gem -- it was actually in my consulting days, on a particularly tough project, when our team had a bottle of this in the middle of our table. If a bunch of stressheads like us were loving this before self-care was cool, I'm willing to bet my brownies you will too.

[Eucalyptus Spearmint Lotion, Bath & Body Works, \\$14](#)

2. Calm Coffee Table Vibes



One of my favorite mini books to find calm, author Harriet Griffey provides educational tidbits, bite-sized tips, and soothingly illustrated pages that I think help your mind feel even more at ease. Among the tips shared are some of my favorite deep breathing techniques. I currently keep a copy in the guest room of our home and we often get comments on how nice it is to flip through before bed. I'm listing the GoodReads link so you can choose your favorite place to buy books.

[I Want to Be Calm by Harriet Griffey, \\$13](#)

3. The Present of Presence



Stylish home décor, tech boundaries, and mindfulness join forces in this beautiful and intentional sculpture. In the vein of transparency, I'm not sure I'll be dropping \$120 on this right away but I love the form, function, and thought of it and at minimum wanted to share the inspiration. In creator Rachel Saunders' words: *"Regain rhythms and take agency over your time by putting your phone away in the evenings, or any time during the day when you need to disconnect. The Phone Home is shaped as a dome to function as an echo for your alarm so you can keep it outside your bedroom."*

[The Phone Home, Rachel Saunders Ceramics, \\$120](#)

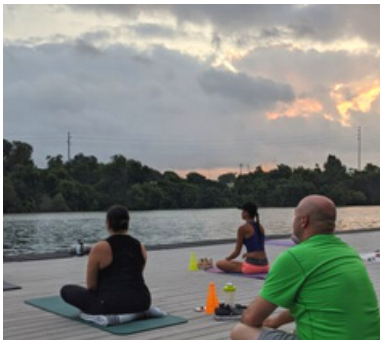
4. Soothing Scents to Unwind in Your Space



I received this as a gift from a friend and it has been a staple in our living room since. If you're not familiar with Palo Santo, it's an incense made from a wood native to South America and I personally really enjoy its earthy, calming, and not too sweet scent. After long days, both my husband and I enjoy the routine of lighting a stick and sitting down to unwind. Each holder is handcrafted by artisans in India in a fair trade environment and each holder comes with a starter pack of sustainably-harvested Palo Santo sticks.

[Copper Palo Santo Set, The Citizenry, \\$65](#)

5. Recalibrate Private Coaching & Experience Gift Cards



Treat the go-getter in your life (whether yourself or someone else) to the luxurious gift of individualized self-care, mindfulness, and mental thriving! You can purchase a gift card for a small-group, outdoor meditation for your quaran-team on the beautiful waters of Town Lake -- or you can choose from various gift cards for 1:1 private mindfulness and mental wellness virtual coaching sessions that empower minds to feel more calm, confident, and balanced.

[Recalibrate Private Experience Holiday Gift Cards, \\$95+](#)

6. A Year of Nature Escapes & Outdoor Adventures



Many of y'all know my favorite way to recalibrate is to lose my phone and dive into nature. Texas State Parks offers an annual pass that provides unlimited entry to the 89 state parks in Texas, discounts on overnight camping, and other member-only offers. I won one of these at the Banff Film Festival in Austin in 2019 and it led to so many special experiences and memories. From red-clay canyons to desert to lush forests and waterfalls, our state wildlife is a spectacular oasis waiting for you to digitally detox and recharge yourself instead of your devices.

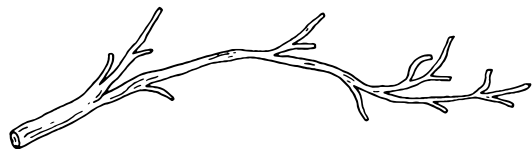
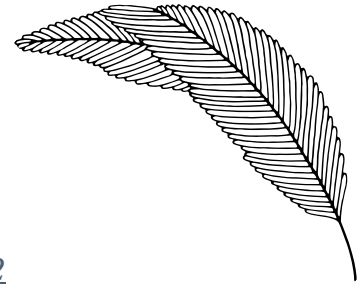
[Texas State Parks Annual Pass, \\$70](#)



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