

FINDING (AND KEEPING) THE SILVER LININGS

How to build resilience by reflecting on what you've learned during social distancing



Over the past several months, a lot has happened. And instead of a concrete resolution to the challenges we've experienced, much of what will happen over the course of the foreseeable future is still rather unforeseeable.

We're moving forward, but with disclaimers like "to be determined" and "we'll just have to see how everything goes" around nearly every aspect of our lives. Basically, we don't know when—or if—we're going to be able to get back to what our world was like before social distancing.

That can be frustrating, especially because it feels like we've missed out on so much already. And truly, we have. But it's not all bad. In fact, even though it might not seem like it, there is some good that's come out of this whole situation, too. We just need to look a little closer to find it.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO FIND THE GOOD IN THE BAD

Trying to find the good, especially when it seems like there isn't any, is a skill that helps us build something called resilience. The more resilient we are, the better we are able to cope with life's stressors—big and small.

[Research shows](#) that being resilient can help us prevent and better navigate mental health conditions like depression and anxiety. It can even help us be more productive at work! Basically, the more resilient we are, the more adaptable we are, and the easier it is to handle hard things.

We've shared [some ways you can build resilience before](#). But right now, we want to get specific and focus on how you can find the good in the not-so-good and use it to help you be more resilient when life doesn't quite go your way.

TAKING WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED WITH YOU

Regardless of what happens next, we can reflect on what we've learned and find ways to hold onto the good that's come out of the bad.

Try this exercise. All you'll need is a quiet space, an open mind, a piece of paper or journal, and something to write with.

1

Go somewhere you can think and reflect.

A quiet room in your home typically works best. If you have kiddos and a "quiet room" doesn't exist until after they go to bed, that's OK! You can do this exercise at anytime.

2

Practice a few minutes of deep breathing.

[\(Here's a video on the type of breathing we recommend.\)](#)

When you're breathing, try only focusing on your breath—the soft sound of your deep inhale and steady exhale as well as the rising and falling of your stomach. Doing this for several minutes will help settle your mind, making it easier to focus.

3

List out all the good things you've experienced so far during social distancing.

In this exercise, "good" simply means something you did that made you smile. Your list could include:

- Catching up with a friend
- Watching your favorite movie
- Cooking at home (with or without co-chefs)
- Going on a walk
- Spending time outside
- Hearing the rain
- Snuggling with your pet
- Getting to bed early
- Laughing at funny memes
- Hearing a good song
- Sleeping in

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4

Reflect on your list.

Read through the things on it and sit with each, recalling how it made you feel. Really take a bit of time to savor each individual experience. Write those feelings down next to each one.

Savoring positive moments helps us achieve lasting well-being.³

5

Thank each moment.

Really. It sounds a little silly, but do your best to give thanks for each individual moment and how it made you feel. If you can, express your thanks out loud. For instance, if you spent time listening to the rain, you could say, "I am thankful to the rain for helping me feel a bit calmer when I was feeling anxious." When you thank each thing on your list, notice the ones you feel most genuine in thanking.

Gratitude can help us sleep better and boost our self-esteem.

Right now, gratitude is more important than ever. [Check out this video from Todd for more on why.](#)⁴

6

Circle the three to five things that made you feel best.

In this exercise, you get to define what "best" means. Maybe it's the things that helped you feel the most relaxed, the most at peace, the most joyful, or the most connected with others or nature. Maybe the three to five you choose inspired different feelings. There are no right or wrong things to choose here.

7

Schedule time each week to engage in the things you chose.

You don't have to engage in each one every day. But scheduling a few moments into your weekly routine will help you continue to bring good into your life, and it'll remind you that you can find silver linings in other not-so-bright circumstances in life.

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KEEP LOOKING FOR YOUR SILVER LININGS

Any time you go through something hard, you can do this exercise and find the good moments amongst the not-so-good. Choosing to find light in the midst of darkness helps us become more resilient. It won't always be easy, but with a little reflection and an open mind, it is possible.

And it's always worth it.

Log in to www.naturallyslim.com/login from your smartphone or computer to watch this week's lessons.

Not a Naturally Slim participant? Visit our blog at www.naturallyslim.com for more tips and resources.



1 <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0149777>

2 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6125010/>

3 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232388032_Positive_emotion_regulation_and_well-being_Comparing_the_impact_of_eight_savoring_and_dampening_strategies

4 <https://www.forbes.com/sites/amymorin/2014/11/23/7-scientifically-proven-benefits-of-gratitude-that-will-motivate-you-to-give-thanks-year-round/#5c96a8b9183c>