



NEWSLETTER MARCH

How To COMBAT NEGATIVE THINKING

In the military, a stronghold is a place the losing side will retreat to when things get bad. It's a well-stocked area that has been tightly secured in case of attack. A mental stronghold is a practice that creates a stockpile of mental reserves you can always fall back on in challenging circumstances. **A daily practice of gratitude** is one example of a mental stronghold against stress, adversity or sadness.

Prime for optimism. | When you're having a particular tough day, think of three **good things** that have happened over the past 24 hours. Your brain will begin processing the positive again and provide much-needed reinforcement.

Create a power lead. | Research shows the first comment in a conversation often predicts the outcome. Instead of replying to "How are you?" with a complaint, answer with something **uplifting** like, "Today is actually going great."

Invest in mindfulness. | Meditation, yoga, journaling -- whatever method you choose, **daily mindfulness** is crucial for combating negativity.

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9 WAYS TO STAY PRODUCTIVE WHEN YOU WORK FROM HOME

Many of us are spending a lot more time at home right now. Including the workdays. When we'd usually be reporting to our desks, we're finding ourselves on our couches or at our kitchen tables, trying to complete to-do lists without the built-in discipline of the office. The expectations are the same, but the environment is not. And it's not always an easy transition.

The key to work-from-home success is to create an environment that allows you to focus on the tasks at hand. Whether you are working from home for the first time or just need a quick refresher, here are some tips for creating a functional but productive work area at home:

1. **Select a space based on your needs.** | Determine how you usually divide your day. For example, are you more creative in the morning? You may spend that time writing or brainstorming ideas for your latest project. The afternoons then could be a more relaxed time spent sifting through emails and completing the rest of your tasks for the workday.
2. **Declutter.** | Whether you work in a home office, kitchen or living room, if there's "stuff" around that reminds you of your household chores, you'll get distracted.
3. **Get ready for the day.** | Just like in an office setting, you have to set yourself up for success when working from home. **Set a morning ritual** of getting dressed (no loungewear!), making a cup of coffee and doing whatever else you need to get in the right mindset. You increase your chances of being productive when you set an intention.
4. **Put yourself in a good position.** | If you're not sitting at a table, make sure you've got a small one within easy reach. You might not have paperwork strewn out in front of you, but you will benefit from having the space to set a glass of water and your phone.
5. **Turn on the lights.** | Natural light through the windows can be lovely, but it can also cause glare on your computer screen and distracting views. Pull the blinds and flip on the light switch if needed.
6. **Create a home office ambiance.** | It's all about creating a cozy yet productive space that is perfectly suited to your individual working style.
7. **Set your schedule.** | Establish your start time, midday break periods and what time you'll clock out for the day. This will not only keep your workload on track, but it also sends the message to your co-workers that you have a relatively set schedule.
8. **Get out.** | Take a 10-minute walk around the block to freshen up and to encourage the flow of new ideas.
9. **Log off!** | Consider developing a phrase you say to yourself at the end of the day, to signal your mind that it's time to stop thinking about work. Just because you have access to work anytime doesn't mean you should be logged in 24/7.

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