

# The Journal

Intentional Joy:

Laying a foundation for fun this silly season

WELLBEING AND PERSONAL GROWTH

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NO. 2 // DEC 2021





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# Hey Bloomie



There's always so much hype around this time of year. How is it possible that we feel so much joy and stress at the same time? I guess that's why they call it the silly season...

I think that we put a lot of pressure on ourselves during the holidays that can leave us feeling tired and uninspired when we want to feel rested and connected.

The theme of December's issue of The Journal is JOY. It celebrates letting go of what no longer serves you and creating the space to welcome what does.

Make peace with the present, embrace the gift of gratitude and be inspired by the intentional art of gift giving to help you make the most of this time of year.

Enjoy the read,

*Maddie xx*

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# Conscious, Sustainable Gifting

All cards are hand crafted from recycled paper and embedded with seeds. They blossom into Swan River Daisies after they have been planted.

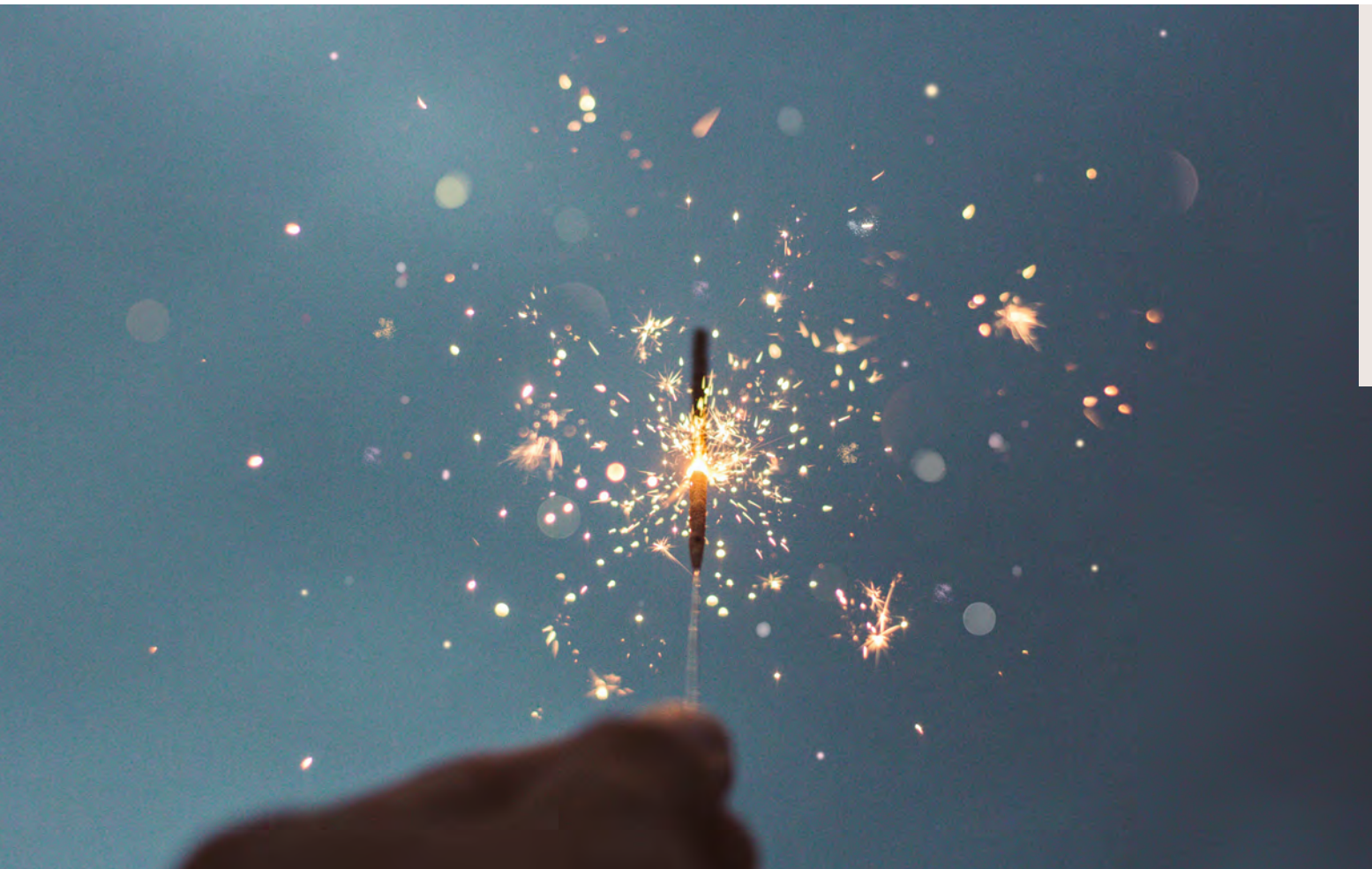
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# Intentional Joy

## LAYING A FOUNDATION FOR FUN THIS SILLY SEASON

Personally, I'm a big fan of Christmas and look forward to the holiday season with total glee. I love the decorations and classic carols playing in the shops. I love the ruckus around town of people buying gifts and enjoying long lunches. I love wishing people a *Merry Christmas* and observing the change in tune talking about the holidays with anticipation. I love taking walks around the harbour watching the city in full swing on a balmy summer evening. I love relishing in fresh seafood, mangoes, cherries and pavlova on Christmas Day, and of course spending time with my family and friends.

All of the excitement at this time of year can cause us to idealise what's in store for us over the next few weeks which may cause us to create unrealistic expectations for ourselves and others.



Now, I certainly don't want to be a party-pooper, but there are bound to be bumps in the road - Aus Post loses your parcel, your Airbnb host cancels your stay or the borders close... again.

It's only natural to let these mishaps upset us and potentially ruin the valuable time we need to recharge, reconnect and relax at this time of year. Ruminating over our setbacks can crowd out all the wonderful joys that are still around... as I know all too well.

A few Christmases ago I had worked extremely hard in the lead up to the holidays to the point where I was physically and emotionally exhausted. I arrived at our Airbnb by the beach up the coast to finally pop the Champagne and indulge in some fresh oysters... livin' the dream!

That evening not only the oysters, but my entire insides violently surged out of my body for eight hours or so, leaving me withered and defeated in a hospital bed on Christmas day. My entire holiday was wrecked. But that's when I discovered positive psychology.



As I lay in bed recovering from a weakened immune system over the next few weeks feeling sorry for myself, I realised how capable we are as human beings in cultivating our own happiness rather than falling victim to our circumstances (which are mostly out of our control).

I also learnt the importance of self-care, but that's a story for another time. Right now, I want to dive into my learnings about joy and how we can lay the foundation for more fun this silly season.

## PRESENCE (AND PRESENTS)

In our ever busy, complicated and anxious world, we need to make space to not just do less, but be less. When we first start practising presence it requires us to slow down, gather ourselves and ground in our awareness. It's tuning into our body, igniting our senses to see, hear, smell and feel the moment.

When we first start cultivating stillness and presence in our lives, it can be difficult, especially when we realise how stress and anxiety define so much of our daily lives, not to mention our identity (perfectionist, hard-working, diligent, etc.) I'm a planner (literally it's my job), and growing up I figured out that I could never get 'bored' (be still) because I could create stories in my head or plan in great detail for the future (hello generalised anxiety disorder). I had no idea how damaging and vicious that thought process would become.

One of my childhood friends told me once to *'stop planning ahead and just go with the flow', 'cruise in the slow lane for a while and stop to smell the roses'*. I thought her way of being was unproductive and wouldn't get me anywhere, but man I wish I took a page out of her book! For years I'd been strengthening my neuro pathways in my brain to connect with anything but the present moment. Over time this practice of 'not being bored' led to constant restlessness and discontentment. My stress levels increased and anxiety struck in panic attacks that absolutely scared the s\*\*t out of me.







I finally saw a therapist and was introduced to mindfulness in the form of mindful moments and meditation. This new concept drove me even more mad when I actually sat still and tried it. My brain was not going to stop, it was never going to stop! I had built my identity around planning and always being busy and that it was just so unnatural for me to sit and do nothing but focus on the elusive nothingness for ten minutes.

I guess the reason why I'm divulging these personal details to you dear reader is because I want you to know that I get it. Mindfulness and meditation is f'ing hard. I haven't worked out yet after nearly 8 years of practice if it actually gets easier but it does become tolerable and I can actually FEEL the difference.

So my advice to you is to first of all let go of your assumptions about what stillness, mindfulness or meditation is supposed to look like.

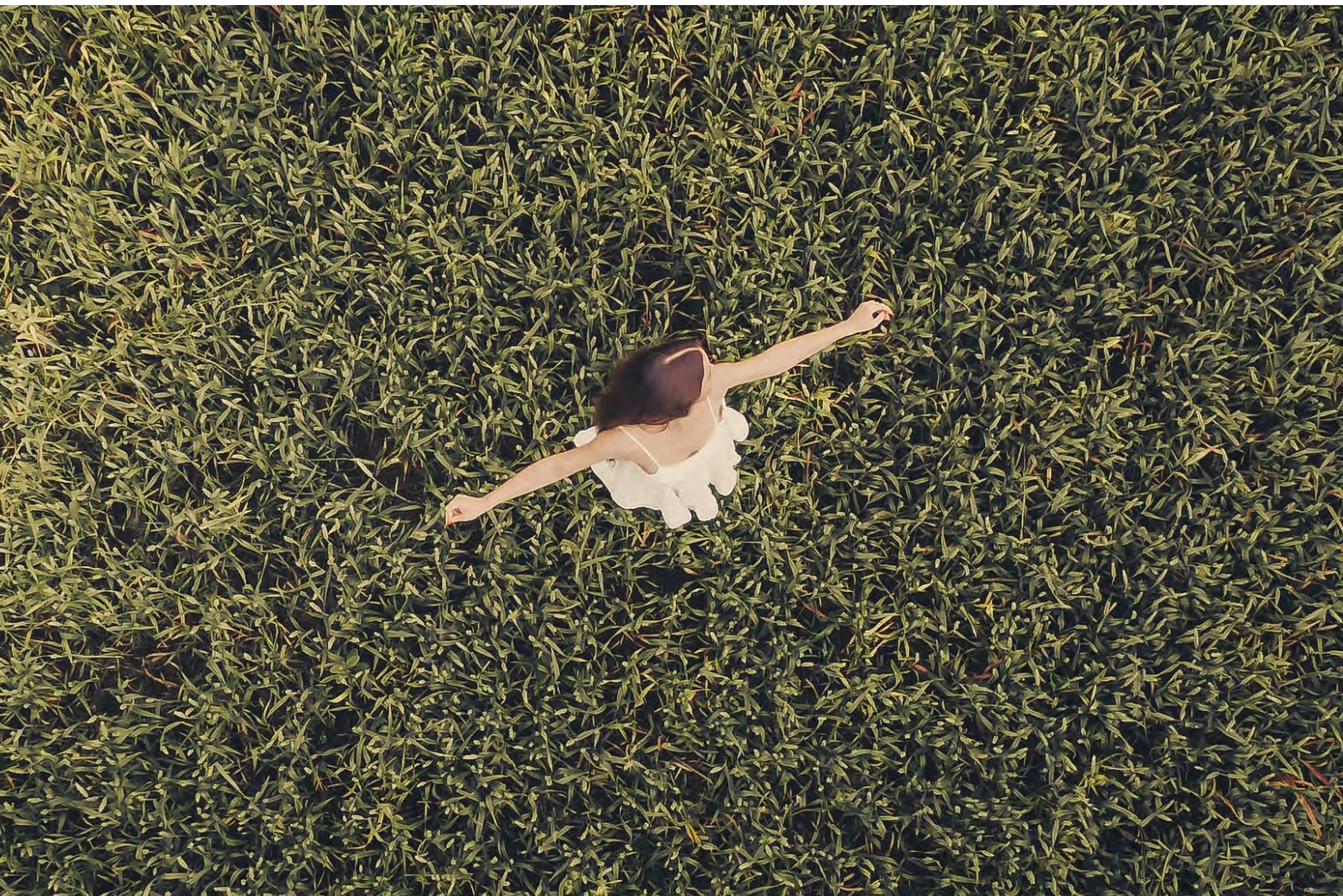
Find a way to create a clearing that works for you so you can stand a better chance of opening yourself up to confronting the next barrier to stillness: fear.

When I ask people if they meditate or what their thoughts are about meditation, they'll often say they've tried it and it doesn't work for them or they don't have time. I used to use these excuses too, but when I really think about it, like really being honest with myself, I'm scared. I'm s\*\*t scared.

When I stop long enough and hold myself in a quiet space, truth begins to surface and sometimes slaps me square in the face. I've had some pretty massive revelations during my meditation practice. These truths are tough pills to swallow but it's so deeply important to live out our lives with more meaning and fulfillment.

As my practice strengthened over time, anxiety has loosened its hold on me and I feel a sense of clarity and connection with myself, where I can lean into my intuition and trust my judgement. Meditation has also improved my focus including my capacity to listen deeper and empathise with others.

I can also better observe my negative or unproductive thoughts and correct them before they consume me. I've also been able to use mindfulness to capture joyous occasions and truly savour the moment while laughing with my family or connecting with a friend, thus enhancing my experiences.



And as for presents, well... they also make me happy.

## THE GIFT OF GRATITUDE

Happiness tends to be attached to external situations and events that ebb and flow as those circumstances come and go. My happiness was peaking whilst sharing oysters with my family and plummeting whilst my head was in the toilet bowl a few hours later.

On the other hand, joy is more of a constant state of being that remains relatively stable and is defined by our spirit and gratitude. Being joyful doesn't mean that I'm happy all of the time, but I can feel everyday joy and cultivate it through a gratitude practice. That's right, gratitude is not an attitude, it's a practice, and similar to meditation and mindfulness it too takes work.

So how can we become intentional about practising gratitude? I try to journal/brain dump and write at least a page in my notebook each night before bed. If nothing jumps out at me to vent about or process, I simply write "*Today, I'm grateful for...*" and let the small joys bloom.

In research done by Robert Emmons and Michael McCullough, those who wrote down at least five things they were grateful for, enjoyed higher levels of emotional and physical wellbeing.

Another way I lean into my gratitude practice is by savouring the moment and fully immersing myself in my experience. Savouring intensifies and lengthens the positive emotions that come with doing something you love and can be enhanced by using the following strategies:



## Share the moment with someone else

Enjoying a meal, walking in nature, taking a trip to a museum or watching a sunset are all the more wonderful when shared with someone else.

## Take a mental or physical picture

I have so many photos of the sky, flowers, coffee and other random things I've enjoyed (including a hundred photos of our family dog). Mental pictures are just as powerful when you tune into all your senses and fully immerse into the moment.



## Express yourself shamelessly

I'm a huge advocate for this one and people who know me will agree that I'm an open book. People who express their feelings rather than suppress them enjoy themselves more. When I'm watching an episode of Friends, I fully laugh out loud or when I beat my boyfriend in ping pong I get super excited and jump up and down (he finds it a bit odd, but the bystanders get caught up in my excitement and laugh and smile).

## Speak gratitude out loud

Think about what you're enjoying and how it makes you feel. *'This coffee is deliciously smooth and creamy', 'This dress is gorgeous and I feel beautiful', 'I appreciate our chat and feel more energised and connected to you'*. Affirming the moments solidifies the experience.

## Sharpen your senses

Purposefully focus your attention on specific features of the experience. When sitting by the ocean, close your eyes and tune into the sounds of waves crashing against the rocks. This will enhance your inner delight.



Professor of Psychology, Dr. Robert Emmons' research suggests that taking the time to consider our blessings strengthens our emotional resilience to combat day to day stresses and helps us bounce back from massive personal upheavals in the face of suffering, pain and loss.

Gratitude won't fix everything or make our trials and tribulations less painful, but it does shine a light on our lives as a whole, opens up our awareness and helps us care for ourselves in the face of adversity.



Reflect on your present blessings, on which all has many, not on your past misfortunes, of which all have some.

*~ Charles Dickens*





# Action Joy

DOWNLOAD THE INTENTIONAL JOY MINI PLAYBOOK

Download the *Intentional Joy Mini Playbook* to identify what joy means to you and be prompted on how you can schedule more joy into your day.



[DOWNLOAD NOW](#)





# The Intentional Art of Gifting

## PRACTICAL GIFT IDEAS THAT ARE THOUGHTFUL AND AFFORDABLE

Gift giving is engrained in our culture and is a universal act of generosity shared all over the world and throughout history. For some people, gift-giving is a joyful experience of providing a unique token of appreciation, whilst for others it can consume a lot of time and energy and even stir anxiety fussing over the 'perfect present' - tis the season to be anxious!

But let's remember that as the saying goes, *it's the thought that counts*. We need to find comfort in our own good intentions and ask ourselves about what the holidays actually mean to us. For me, it's spending quality time with my family and giving back to my community. What do these holidays actually mean to you? Presence or presents?

## A CONVERSATION

It definitely helps to put some parameters around the expectations when it comes to gift giving. Don't be afraid to have the conversation with your family and friends, and take into consideration each other's economic situation, cultural background, personal values and any other factors you think may influence the gift or whether it's even necessary to gift.

For example, my friend who is of Chinese heritage and I don't give each other presents because it wasn't a big part of her culture growing up. We instead go out for a nice meal together and share an experience which we both enjoy.

Whilst chatting, straight up ask them what they need. My brother and I are pretty open to letting each other know what brands we're into and products are on our list so we can both give and receive practical presents.

## ALTERNATIVES

If you're accustomed to giving lots of presents or expensive items and it's not within your means this year, have a think about alternative gift ideas that are more cost effective. A colleague of mine recently purchased a property and was feeling overwhelmed about the mortgage as his girlfriend's birthday was approaching. He would usually buy her a voucher for a spa day (lucky gal!) so I suggested that he have a look on Groupon for a cheaper alternative. You'd be surprised how many gorgeous 5-star day spas you can get for up to 40% off (if you visit outside their peak).



## INTENTIONAL GIFTING

If you intend on purchasing a gift for someone this year but don't know what to buy them, do not, I repeat DO NOT just go to the shops and browse aimlessly for a present. Not only will you buy something they probably won't appreciate, but you're more likely going to spend more than intended and feel frustrated in the process. The idea of intentional gifting is putting some thought into it, thereby adding benefit for yourself and the recipient.





## THE GIFT OF EXPERIENCE

In our consumer driven society, we're led to believe that our wellbeing and happiness depends fundamentally on obtaining more goods and material possessions.

Although consumerism is a phenomenon that fuels economic growth, it's actually leaving us feeling more empty and disconnected than ever before.

Dr. Thomas Gilovich's research concludes that people derive more satisfaction from experiential purchases than material purchases. There are a number of reasons why this is the case.

Experiential purchases enhance social relationships, form part of an individual's identity through the experience, are evaluated more on their own terms and evoke fewer social comparisons compared to material goods.

Therefore, give the gift of experiences and enhance the wellbeing of your recipient. There are so many experiences to gift, including restaurant vouchers, spa treatments, art classes (paint and sip), event tickets, or a handmade voucher for a weekend away or personalised activity. I love gifting theatre tickets to my mum and we make a day of going to a musical and sharing a meal together.



## CONSCIOUS CONSUMERISM

More millennials are shopping in ways they believe makes a positive social, environmental or economic impact by buying ethical products, avoiding unethical companies and sometimes not purchasing at all.

Have a think about your values as well as those of the recipient when choosing a gift for them.

Last year for Christmas, I gifted my brother an adopted koala (not literally of course). He was devastated (like the rest of us) of the effects of the bush fires, so I wanted to give him a present that aligned with his values. I gave him a box with a fair-trade toy koala inside, and once he saw the adoption certificate he was stoked.



## HANDMADE

Another thoughtful gift is anything handmade. It does take more effort, however creative play is proven to enhance our wellbeing and improve mental health.

Immersing ourselves in an activity is a form of mindfulness allowing us to tap into our state of flow (also referred to as being in the zone). Accessing this flow state of consciousness relieves stress and anxiety, and helps lesson shame, anger and depression. When we focus on something that is slightly challenging an/or fun, we create new neuropathways, increasing connectivity in the brain.

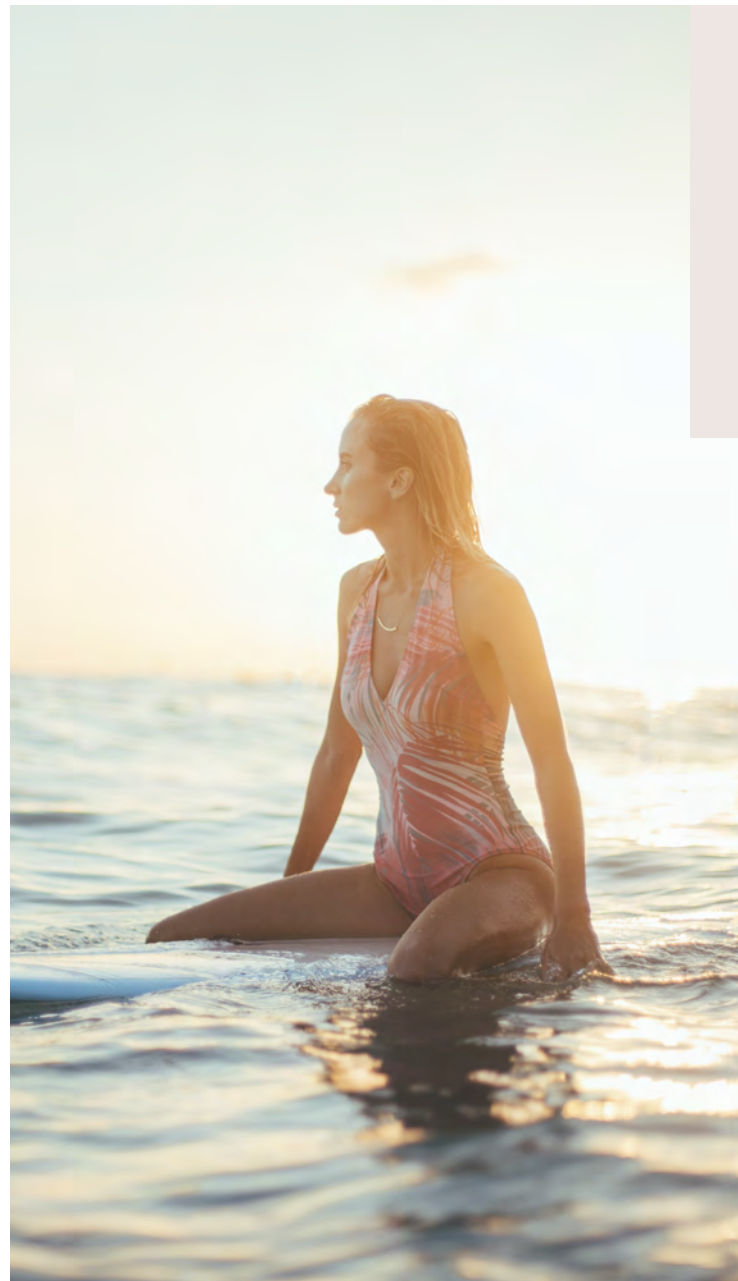
Clinical social worker, Laurel Healy, says that "Increased connectivity, especially in the left prefrontal cortex of the brain, makes us more emotionally resilient in a way that is similar to what occurs when we meditate. The release of dopamine brings an enhanced sense of well-being as well as improved motivation,".

I love making gifts because I genuinely enjoy the creative process and my unique present is more memorable for the recipient.

Recently I baked granola and popped it in a recycled jar for a friend's birthday. It's simple but he really appreciated the time I'd spent making him fresh homemade granola. I also know that my parents really appreciate handmade gifts (unless they don't and they're just being nice). No, seriously I brought my dad to tears one year when I made him a calendar with photos of his family and close friends. That was the best feeling for both of us.

## PERSONALISED

Personalised goods truly make the recipient feel special. From custom made jewellery to a monogrammed diary, personalisation makes any gift truly intentional. I highly recommend finding an artist on Etsy and ordering some personalised art. Our family loves the Simpsons, so I found an artist who could turn family photos into Simpsons couch gags and the results were amazing! It's so cool to see how we'd all look as Simpsons characters and my dad thought it was priceless.



## VALUES-BASED

At the root of intention are our values. Have a think about what your recipient is trying to cultivate more of and what products / activities they enjoy. For example, my partner values health and fitness, so in the past I've gifted him a surfing lesson, table tennis paddles and balls, a home chin-up bar, sports towel and foam roller. He appreciates simple and practical gifts that will enhance his wellbeing.



Theatre tickets



'Buy from the Bush'



Homemade granola



Pottery class



Lululemon underwear



Photo album



Sponsor a koala



Mediation App



Goodness Me box



Good Pair Days





## SUBSCRIPTIONS

Honestly, you can get a subscription for anything these days. It's a very smart move by companies to ensure multiple purchases, but it's also a great gift idea especially for consumable goods. One of my friends hates doing the grocery shopping, so I purchased her a monthly subscription for nutritionist-approved pantry staples and snacks, that gets delivered straight to her door. I'm also considering purchasing a meditation app for my brother this year (also so he can get off my account).



## QUALITY PRODUCTS

What do you have that you absolutely love and adore? I love high quality natural skincare and also beautiful lasting jewellery (hint hint nudge nudge haha). Gifting tried and tested quality products that have provided you with value is the essence of intentional gifting, knowing that they will love, need and use the product. I gifted my dad a voucher for Athletes Foot last year, so he could finally purchase some quality sneakers to stay safely active in his older years. They're not cheap shoes so we only paid for half of them, however he's certainly got his money's worth from all the steps he does in them.



@studioycreative

## VOUCHERS

As mentioned earlier, vouchers are good for when you want to give someone the gift of choice. If you know they love a brand, or activity, or you know the things they value, a gift voucher can end up being a very thoughtful and intentional gift. I gifted my friend a Merivale voucher for his birthday this year because he loves a long lunch. Who doesn't love a long lunch?

## PERISHABLES

Food, plants, flowers and candles are the go to gift for when you don't know what to get. Everyone loves at least one of those things or a hamper with them all. It can still be an intentional and personable gift when you consider the recipients favourite foods, colours, flowers, scents and brands. P.S. I love donuts, soy candles and sunflowers.

## WORDS

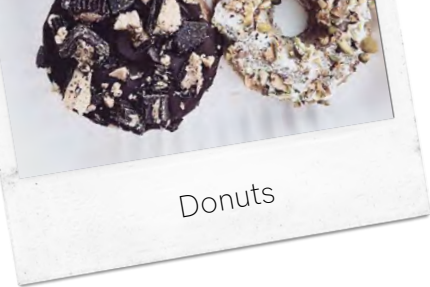
Usually we open the card first, but I think we should save the best for last! My favourite part of the gift giving experience is gifting 'words of affirmation'. Can you guess what my love language is? I know that other people find this the most challenging part of the process and may even avoid the card all together, but I believe that it enhances the gift giving experience tenfold. Dr. Lynda Shaw's research shows just how important it is to send and receive greeting cards. The process of writing a thoughtful message activates the frontal lobe that processes our thoughts and memories. Handwritten cards are intimate because they express emotion and reveal personality thus deepening our connections. Equally, time is the most precious thing we have to give, so if we spend time choosing, writing and sending a card we are making our loved ones feel valued and worthy.

## TIME

There's nothing better than spending quality time with loved ones. My heart goes out to families who are still unable to get together, and it's awful that we still can't see each other. If we have learned anything over the past couple of years, it's how to appreciate slowing down and soaking in the company of our friends and families. Connection nurtured through quality time lowers levels of anxiety and depression, heightens self-esteem, develops greater empathy, strengthens trust in humanity and as a result we are more open for people to trust and connect with us.

When National Geographic conducted a study on the longest-living populations of the world, the common thread that ties world centenarians together is a sense of belonging and connection to each other. *"Time is the most precious gift you can give to someone, because if you give someone your time. It's a part of your life that you will never get back."* – Gloria Tesch.





Donuts



Silk Pajamas



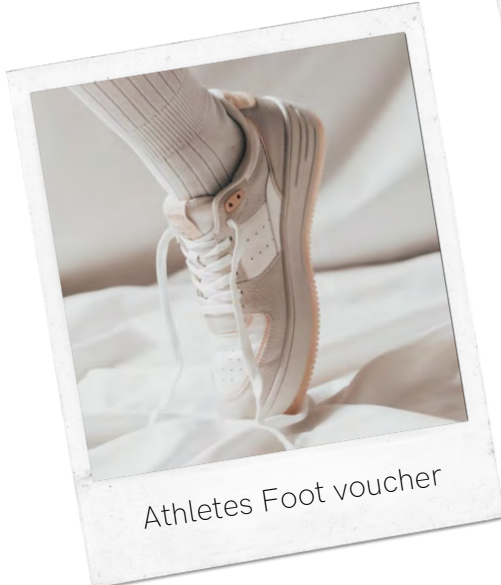
Biologi Skincare



Daisy seeded cards



ToniMay Jewellery



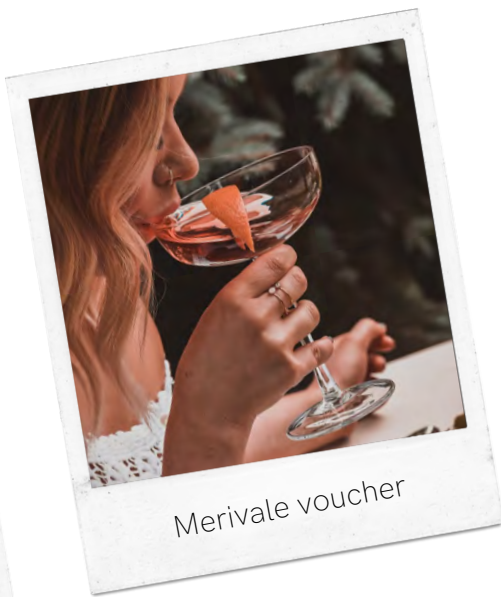
Athletes Foot voucher



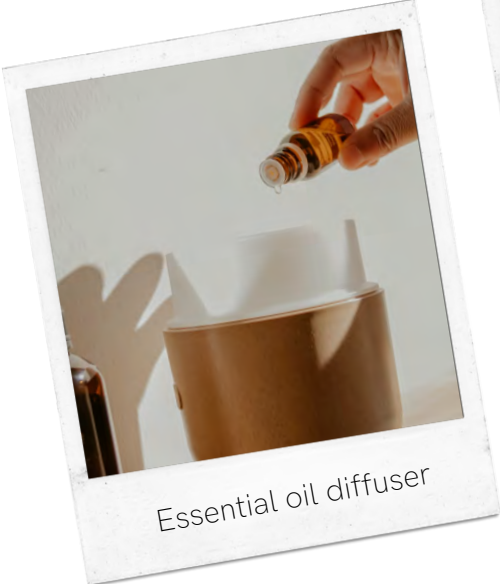
Spa voucher



Soy Candle



Merivale voucher



Essential oil diffuser



## PRO TIPS

I was purchasing some gifts for my family on The Iconic during the Black Friday Sales period and did a quick Google search to find the exact same item for \$50 less on another website. I sent them a link to the website in the chatbot and they were able to send me a discount code to price match the item! #moneywin!

Keep an ear out for potential gift ideas for your loved ones all year round. I'll write a note in my phone and save it to a list of gift ideas I've created in Notion and refer back to it when I need to organise a present.



**Regardless of what presents you'll wrap this year, it's the intention that counts.** So relax into the process, create memories and have fun! I literally gifted my brother a lump of coal last year which was hilarious. I'm sure he'll remember that one for years to come.

Reflect on your present blessings, on which all has many, not on your past misfortunes, of which all have some.

*~ Charles Dickens*





## ASK MICHELLE

Our resident psychologist (and my bestie), Michelle Dal Cin helps us manage all the feels this time of year. If you have a question you'd like Michelle to answer, slide into my DM's [@projectbloom\\_au](https://www.instagram.com/projectbloom_au) or email [maddie@projectbloom.com.au](mailto:maddie@projectbloom.com.au).

### WHAT CAN WE DO TO MANAGE OUR MENTAL HEALTH DURING THIS TIME OF YEAR?

We expect Christmas time to be an enjoyable time of year, but for many of us it can be quite the opposite. During this time of year we see the highest demand for mental health services, especially on Christmas day. Some of us finally get a break from work, catch up with friends and family, and do all the things we wish we could do during the year but never have time to do. However, for many of us, this period can bring up a great deal of anxiety, stress and feelings of loneliness. If this sounds like you, I've put together some tips to help you get through this overwhelming period of the year.



### RESPECT YOUR BOUNDARIES

Family events can be a big trigger for a lot of us. If gathering with your family makes you feel depressed, anxious or angry, it is very important to consider your boundaries.

Boundaries define what we are willing (or not willing) to accept or tolerate. If family get-togethers feel overwhelming, try reflecting on your boundaries before you get there. Think about the conversations you'd like to avoid or topics that make you feel anxious or might lead to conflict. If your boundaries get crossed, know when to change the topic or disengage by leaving the room to grab a drink of water or go to the bathroom.

This will help the occasion remain pleasant and enjoyable for everyone, but most importantly for you.

### FREE YOURSELF

If things get too much, know that you can leave. You don't even need to give them a reason. If you're asked why you're leaving, you can use the broken record technique. For example, you could say *"I'm going to have to get going now"*. If they ask why, you repeat yourself, like a broken record, *"I wish I could stay but I've really got to get going"*. If you feel more comfortable providing a reason you could say something like *"I'm exhausted, all that food really took it out of me, it's been great seeing you all"*. You do not have to feel guilty for caring for yourself in the way that you need, even if others don't understand it.



## MAINTAIN SELF-CARE

If this time of year triggers anxiety, you might want to exercise some self-care. I don't just mean getting a massage or taking a bath (though these are great practices).

Diet, sleep and exercise are the three pillars of health, and although this period is often the time where we finally take a break and let our hair down, try not to let yourself go too far because these things help us remain resilient.

Try to maintain some routine; sleep in but not too late, slow down on the exercise but don't cut it out completely and eat all your heart desires but try to get some nutritious meals in amongst the junk. Your body and mind will thank you later.

## CONNECT WITH YOURSELF, OTHERS AND THE WORLD

Feelings of loneliness or depression are also common this time of year. If this resonates with you, I'd encourage you to reach out to some friends and let them know how you're feeling. Connection helps to calm the nervous system.

If you're alone or unable to connect with your loved ones, there are other ways to connect with others or yourself to help shift your mood. Try reading a book in the park surrounded by others, going on a new walk you've never tried before, or engaging in one of your favourite hobbies - something that brings you a feeling of joy and accomplishment.



## WRITE IT OUT

Journaling can also be a useful technique when we're alone or something's been bothering us. It's not only cathartic but it helps us identify how we're feeling and reflect on what we need. Start by writing whatever comes to mind. It doesn't even have to make sense. This can help slow our spiralling thoughts and allow us to externalise these thoughts and feelings so we can reflect on them. Negative emotions are not inherently "bad". They're often telling us something important and they're there for a reason. Journaling is a self-care technique that connects us with ourselves and be our own support.

## DO WHAT YOU ENJOY

If you feel lonely, maybe it's time to connect with an old friend or join a new sport. If you're feeling bored or flat, try something new and fun like joining a sports team or a new workshop.

If you're feeling depressed, you can do something that makes you feel good, like listening to music, reading or exercising. Try doing something you're good at to foster a sense of confidence and feelings of accomplishment.





## BE SELF-COMPASSIONATE

Considering we've just come out of a three-month lockdown, it's also completely normal to be experiencing some social anxiety. We've been isolated from the world and confined to our homes where we feel safe and comfortable 24/7.

It's been quite some time since we've been out and about every week and connecting with people face-to-face, so for a lot of us it feels like we've almost forgotten how to be social. It can feel a bit overwhelming to all of a sudden have to adjust to getting up early and traveling to and from work every day, or having social events planned every weekend. It is completely normal for it to feel unfamiliar, because it is, at least for now. Give yourself time to adjust. It will all feel normal soon. Go slow and be patient with yourself.

## GET INTENTIONAL

Working as a Registered Psychologist, the number one theme that comes up in my sessions following the holiday break is that clients either feel as though they either didn't do anything over the break or that they did too much. If this sounds familiar, you might want to think about writing a description of your "perfect break". What would you be spending each day doing and with whom? How much time would you like to spend being active or productive versus resting and giving yourself some self-care? What do you like to do to enjoy yourself and how would you like to spend your self-care and rest time? How would you like to feel at the end of this break and how can you achieve that feeling? This exercise will help you connect with and identify what you really want to experience over the Christmas period so you can be more intentional about how you spend your time.

Download the Intentional Joy Mini Playbook to get started.



## WRITE A LIST

If you can already identify what you really want to get out of this holiday period, you could also simply write a list of all the things you would like to do and see. Writing things down makes them feel more real. They're no longer just thoughts passing through your awareness, they feel more actionable.

It's also important to keep your goals realistic and remember they're just "goals" not things we *must* achieve. After the break you can reflect on the things you may not have accomplished and use that as motivation for the future, rather than beating yourself up for not ticking them off.



## CULTIVATE A MORE MEANINGFUL 2022

Many of you like to set new year resolutions. If this is something you enjoy, I would highly recommend Maddie's Intentional Living Playbook which is a very useful tool to identify your values, and set realistic goals for the year ahead. The playbook can help you live with more intention thereby creating a more rich and meaningful year ahead.

[Download the deep-dive Intentional Living Playbook](#)





### **YOU'VE GOT THIS**

It can be really useful to reflect on how you feel during this period; what your triggers are, your needs, your boundaries and your goals. You can utilise this insight to care for yourself in the way that you need in order to make this time more enjoyable and fulfilling for you.

# WANT TO TALK?

Using a holistic approach, Michelle facilitates a safe, open and trusting relationship with her clients where they can be guided through a process of self-exploration; learning about their needs, triggers, values and strengths. Her goal is to support clients in building resilience, cultivating strong and genuine relationships and creating a rich and more meaningful life.



She utilises evidence-based treatments such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), Mindfulness, Schema Therapy, Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing therapy (EMDR), Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) and The Gottman Method.

Michelle offers therapy for a broad range of issues including:

- Mood disorders such as depression or bipolar disorder
- Anxiety, panic attacks and phobias
- Obsessive Compulsive disorder
- Substance and behavioural addiction
- Trauma
- Work related stress and burnout
- Adjustment difficulties
- Marriage and couples therapy
- Low self-esteem or self-confidence
- Perfectionism
- Time management, planning and study

Michelle's services include:

- One-on-one psychotherapy
- Couples therapy
- Treatment for WorkCover and Motor Vehicle accidents
- Forensic reports
- Work and Development Orders

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Michelle Dal Cin

BPsych BPsySc (Hons) AMAPS

For booking information please contact: [michelledalcinpsychology@gmail.com](mailto:michelledalcinpsychology@gmail.com)

# The Intentional Living Playbook

Discover your gifts, align with your values and set intentional goals, to better connect with yourself, others and the world.



FREE DOWNLOAD

[projectbloom.com.au](http://projectbloom.com.au)

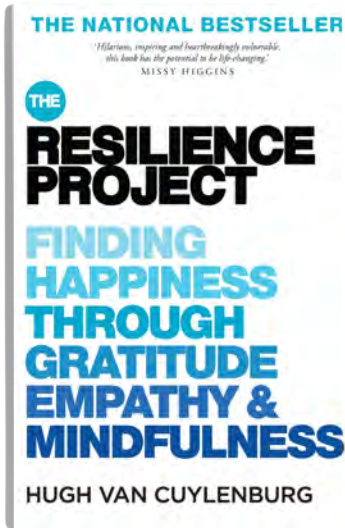




# Recommendations

WHAT'S BRINGING ME JOY THIS MONTH



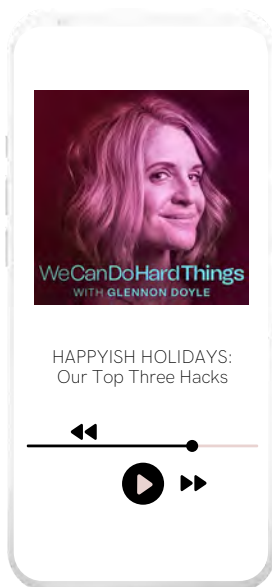


## Read: The Resilience Project: Finding Happiness Through Gratitude, Empathy and Mindfulness Book by Hugh van Cuylenburg

I've listened to this audio book 3 times now and recently with my mum and brother on a road trip. Hugh is a great storyteller and super engaging. He takes you on a journey through his experience teaching kids in India, his community at the local cricket club and his sister's battle with mental health. He created *The Resilience Project*, initially for school kids but has been adopted across Australian Cricket, Netball and Soccer teams, all NRL clubs, AFL and the A-League.

## Watch: Old People's Home for 4 Year Olds

This show has honestly brought me so much joy over the past month. A group of pensioners living in retirement homes get together with preschool children and engage in activities that have a profound effect on both their physical and mental health. This show is guaranteed to warm your heart, and you can stream it on Netflix.

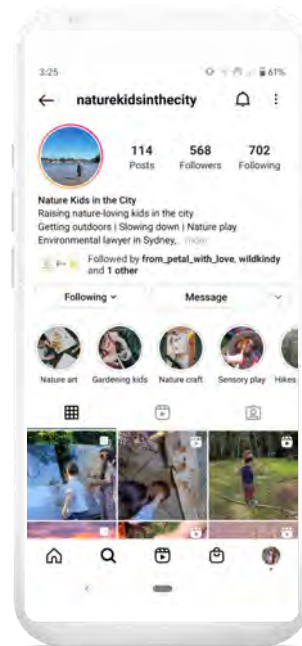


## Listen: We Can Do Hard Things with Glennon Doyle - HAPPYISH HOLIDAYS: Our Top Three Hacks

If you tuned in last month, you'll know I'm a huge fan of Glennon Doyle. Her podcast episode on getting through the holidays is so relatable and reminds us of the true meaning of Christmas day - it's a lot! If you want to feel more human and need a bit of a pep talk on your way to Christmas lunch, I'd recommend this episode.

Follow: [@naturekidsinthecity](#) and [@from\\_petal\\_with\\_love](#)

If you have littlies and need some inspiration on activities away from screens, [@naturekidsinthecity](#) and [@from\\_petal\\_with\\_love](#) have you covered. They're passionate about nature play and post regular content on fun activities to keep the kiddies entertained.



**Do:** Visit your local produce or craft market

One of my favourite activities on the weekend is to visit my local produce market and craft market. I love chatting to the stall holders and purchasing organic, fresh produce directly from the farmers. I also love the Kirribilli craft markets and seeing all the thoughtful, handmade projects locals have produced.

**Underrated:** Reformer Pilates

I've always been a yogi (and will always be), but I also love reformer pilates. It's so dynamic so I never get bored, and the springs on the reformer can be adjusted to suit all fitness levels. I go to Vive Neutral Bay and it literally feels like you're stepping into a nightclub with all the flashing lights and incredible sound system. The atmosphere is amazing!





# Checklist

## DON'T FORGET TO

- ✓ Follow [@projectbloom\\_aus](#) on Instagram for in-between content
- ✓ Download your free [Intentional Living Playbook](#) and enjoy the self-reflection and discovery
- ✓ Forward this email to a friend who might also enjoy this content

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### Disclaimer and Ethical Care

The advice shared by Project Bloom is general in nature and does not consider your personal circumstances. Project Bloom exists for entertainment purposes to guide and support you on your self-care journey. Please contact your local health professional if you need help.

### Acknowledgement of Land

This work was created on Gadigal land of the Eora Nation. In the spirit of reconciliation Project Bloom acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. I pay my respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.