



The DJC Newsletter

Inspiring
Meaningful
Workplace Cultures



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Resilience and Renewal: Strategies for Personal and Professional Rejuvenation

Welcome to the September Edition of the DJC Successful Thinking Newsletter!

As we transition from the vibrant summer into the reflective autumn season, this month's edition of the DJC Successful Thinking Newsletter invites you to explore the themes of "Resilience and Renewal: Strategies for Personal and Professional Rejuvenation." During this time of year, when nature itself turns towards renewal, it's an ideal opportunity for us to reflect on our own paths, assessing our resilience and preparing for rejuvenation.

This issue is packed with insights and strategies designed to help you bounce back stronger from challenges and to embrace change with a renewed spirit. Whether you're recovering from professional setbacks, seeking to rekindle your passion, or simply looking to refresh your daily routine, this edition aims to provide you with the tools and perspectives necessary to thrive.

In our feature article, we dive deep into personal stories and professional insights about resilience, highlighting the transformative journey from burnout to balance and impact. Additionally, we explore groundbreaking research on rejuvenation strategies that can dramatically enhance both your mental clarity and physical vitality.

Join us this month as we uncover the secrets to maintaining high performance and deep satisfaction in all areas of life through resilience and renewal. Let's embrace this season of change together, recharging our commitments and refreshing our perspectives, to make the remainder of the year as fulfilling as possible.

Bouncing Back Stronger: Harnessing Resilience for Growth

A few years ago, I made a decision that would redefine my professional life and personal well-being. As a county HR director, I was deeply entrenched in the dynamics of office politics and the overwhelming pressure of caring for others' needs. This intense environment, while rewarding, also led me to bring my work home, blurring the lines between personal and professional life. The consequence was a significant toll on my health and relationships with those I loved. This experience was my wake-up call, a stark realization that something had to change.

The Turning Point

Burnout is not just about feeling tired. It's about reaching a point where your every day feels like a battle against your own aspirations and the very reasons that inspired you to choose your career path. For me, the decision to step away from my role as an HR director was not about quitting. It was about choosing to prioritize my health and happiness over a position that no longer served me or my well-being. It was a tough decision, fraught with uncertainty about the future. Yet, it was necessary for my journey towards renewal.

Building Resilience Through Passion and Purpose

The path to resilience began when I decided to channel my efforts and passion into something that truly resonated with my core values. Transitioning from a structured corporate environment to the uncertain world of entrepreneurship, I focused on leveraging my expertise in HR to help organizations enhance their cultures. This shift wasn't just about making a living; it was about making a difference. I wanted to impact organizational practices in a way that supported not only the professional growth of individuals but also promoted a healthy work-life balance.

Finding Balance

Learning to find balance was crucial. As an entrepreneur, the lines between work and life can often become even more blurred than they were in corporate life. I had to learn to set boundaries for myself, recognizing when to step back and recharge. This involved cultivating hobbies outside of work, spending quality time with family and friends, and allowing myself moments of rest without guilt.

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Lessons Learned Through My Journey

Throughout my journey, several key lessons have emerged that continue to guide me and shape my approach to life and work. These insights are integral to anyone looking to navigate their own paths with intention and grace.

The Importance of Self-Reflection

One of the most pivotal practices I've embraced is regular self-reflection. This isn't simply a routine check-in with myself; it's a deep, thoughtful process where I contemplate what truly matters both in my personal life and my career. It has been instrumental in keeping me aligned with my core values and goals. More importantly, it ensures that the path I'm on is not just one of success but also of personal fulfillment. There were times in my career when I faced dilemmas, such as being asked by my boss to act against my core values. It was through self-reflection that I reaffirmed my commitment to my principles and found the courage to uphold them, even when it was challenging.

Welcoming Change

Another crucial realization has been the importance of embracing change. In life, as in business, change is inevitable. It can often be disruptive and uncomfortable, yet it also carries with it the seeds of growth and renewal. Each challenge, each shift in circumstances, has taught me something valuable. Learning to accept and adapt to these changes has been essential for my personal and professional development. It has built my resilience, enabling me to face new challenges with confidence and a readiness to learn. Embracing change was particularly daunting when I decided to leave my role as an HR director—a decision that was scary yet ultimately liberating and aligned with my true self.

The Value of a Support Network

Lastly, the significance of having a strong support network cannot be overstated. The journey through life's highs and lows is not a solo venture. The support of peers, mentors, and loved ones has been a cornerstone of my success and well-being. My husband, as my greatest advocate, and the opportunity to be with my children and grandchildren, have

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reinforced the necessity of balance and the power of strong personal connections. Being open with friends when I'm not okay and asking for help has also been crucial. These relationships provide more than just guidance and advice; they offer emotional sustenance that is crucial during times of stress or uncertainty.

These lessons form the bedrock of my approach to life and leadership. They remind me that the path to true success is woven through with threads of introspection, adaptability, and communal support. As we move forward, let us carry these lessons with us, applying them to both our personal endeavors and our interactions with others.

Moving Forward with Greater Impact

Today, as I reflect on my journey, I realize that stepping away from my role as an HR director was not an end but a transformative beginning. This decision has opened up unparalleled opportunities to influence not just one organization but tens of thousands across various sectors. From delivering keynotes at major conferences to conducting workshops and training sessions, I now have the platform to touch many more lives than I ever could have in a single role.

My work spans across all levels of government—federal, state, and local—as well as in corporate settings, non-profits, and educational institutions. This wide-reaching influence allows me to impart knowledge and foster change on a grand scale, ensuring that the principles of effective human resources management and compassionate leadership permeate many corners of the professional world

What I find most fulfilling about this phase of my career is the ability to take the essence of what I loved as an HR director—being a resource to fellow humans—and magnify it to impact individuals one soul at a time. Each session I lead, each keynote I deliver, is an opportunity to make a tangible difference in someone's professional journey, to kindle a passion for fair and mindful management, and to advocate for workplaces where people feel truly valued and supported..

**"THE GREATEST GLORY IN LIVING LIES NOT
IN NEVER FALLING, BUT IN *RISING* EVERY
TIME WE FALL." – NELSON MANDELA**

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The path I have chosen is rich with opportunities to effect meaningful change. It's a reminder that sometimes, the boldest steps—the ones that require the most resilience—are the ones that lead to the most profound fulfillment. As we all navigate our personal and professional landscapes, let's remember the power of intentional change and the potential each of us has to influence not just our own lives but the lives of countless others.



The Science of Rejuvenation: What Works and What Doesn't

In today's fast-paced world, the need for rejuvenation is more pressing than ever. As we navigate demanding careers, personal commitments, and an ever-connected digital landscape, the toll on our mental and physical well-being can be significant. Thankfully, research has shed light on a range of strategies that can help us recharge, refresh, and return to our peak performance levels.

Mindfulness: The Key to Mental Clarity

Mindfulness practices, such as meditation and focused breathing, have garnered significant attention in recent years, and for good reason. Studies have shown that mindfulness can reduce stress (Grossman et al., 2004), improve focus (Jha et al., 2007), and enhance overall well-being (Brown & Ryan, 2003). By cultivating a present-moment awareness and non-judgmental acceptance of our thoughts and feelings, we can create mental space and clarity, even in the midst of chaos. The practice of mindfulness encourages us to observe our thoughts and emotions without getting entangled in them, fostering a sense of calm and equanimity even in challenging situations.

Strategic Breaks: More Than Just Time Off

While taking breaks might seem like common sense, research suggests that the type and timing of breaks can significantly impact their effectiveness. Short, frequent breaks throughout the day have been shown to improve focus and productivity more than longer, infrequent ones (Ariga & Lleras, 2011). Additionally, engaging in activities that are different from your primary work tasks during breaks can help you return to your work feeling refreshed and ready to tackle new challenges. This could involve taking a short walk, listening to music, or engaging in a quick mindfulness exercise.



Lifestyle Adjustments: Fueling Your Body and Mind

Beyond mindfulness and breaks, certain lifestyle adjustments can play a critical role in rejuvenation. Regular exercise has been shown to reduce stress, improve mood, and boost energy levels (Penedo & Dahn, 2005). Whether it's a brisk walk, a yoga class, or a gym session, incorporating physical activity into your routine can have profound benefits for both your body and mind. A balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains provides the nutrients your body needs to function optimally. These nutrient-dense foods provide sustained energy, support cognitive function, and contribute to overall well-being. And adequate sleep is crucial for both physical and mental restoration (Walker & Van Der Helm, 2009). During sleep, your body repairs itself and your brain consolidates memories, making quality sleep essential for optimal functioning.

The Power of Disconnecting

In an era of constant connectivity, the ability to disconnect from technology is becoming increasingly important for rejuvenation. Research suggests that excessive screen time can contribute to stress, anxiety, and sleep problems (Thomé et al., 2011). Setting boundaries around technology use and carving out time for activities that don't involve screens can be crucial for mental and physical well-being. Engaging in hobbies, spending time in nature, or simply enjoying the company of loved ones can provide a much-needed respite from the digital world.

What Doesn't Work: The Myth of Multitasking

While it might seem like multitasking is a way to get more done in less time, research suggests otherwise. Multitasking has been shown to decrease productivity, increase errors, and contribute to stress (Ophir et al., 2009). Focusing on one task at a time and giving it your full attention can lead to better results and a greater sense of accomplishment. This approach, often referred to as "single-tasking" or "deep work," allows you to fully engage with the task at hand, leading to improved focus, creativity, and overall performance.

The Journey to Rejuvenation

The science of rejuvenation offers a wealth of insights into strategies that can help us recharge and thrive. By incorporating mindfulness practices, taking strategic breaks, making lifestyle adjustments, and disconnecting from technology, we can create a sustainable path to sustained high performance and overall well-being. Remember, rejuvenation is an ongoing journey, not a one-time event. By prioritizing self-care and making conscious choices, we can cultivate a resilient and energized self, ready to face whatever challenges life throws our way.



September Success Activity

Reflective Journaling for Growth and Rejuvenation



Daily Reflections

01

Dedicate 10-15 minutes each day to write about your day. Focus on experiences that were particularly impactful, whether positive or negative. Describe what happened, how you felt, and why it was significant.

Weekly Assessments

02

At the end of each week, review your daily entries to identify any patterns or recurring themes. Look for insights into your behavior, reactions, and the outcomes of your interactions or decisions.

Monthly Planning

03

Using the insights from your weekly assessments, set goals for the upcoming month. These could involve strengthening certain relationships, seeking new opportunities for growth, or implementing strategies to enhance your well-being. Define specific, actionable steps that will help you achieve each goal. For example, if your goal is to improve your work-life balance, one action could be to schedule and commit to downtime activities that rejuvenate you.

Quarterly Reviews

04

Every three months, take a broader view of your journal entries to evaluate your progress towards your long-term goals. Assess what strategies have helped you build resilience and promote rejuvenation.

- Adjust your goals and actions as necessary based on your reflections to better align with your desired outcomes.

Tips for Effective Journaling:

- **Be Honest:** The more honest and open you are in your journaling, the more valuable your reflections and plans will be.
- **Stay Consistent:** Regular entries provide more data and richer insights into your personal patterns and needs.
- **Focus on Learning:** Use your journal not just to vent but to learn from your experiences and to plan changes that lead to personal growth and professional development.

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