

The Stop. Start. Continue. Checklist

The Stop Start Continue Checklist offers you a moment to reflect on what you've learned from your recent experiences and then a way to capture this and take action.

I don't know about you but I have had moments during lockdown when I've breathed a secret sigh of relief when certain things were cancelled. Life was becoming more and more hectic with too many balls in the air, and if I'm honest, sometimes I found myself wondering how productive I was really being and how present I was for my children, my friends and my colleagues.

This quote from Dr Adam Grant eloquently sums up what many of us have been feeling,

‘What I am observing currently is that people are fighting for and grieving a world that made them freakin’ miserable. During this crisis, don’t just pivot, rather take the time to evolve the way you are living your life in a more meaningful and connected way’

Dr Adam Grant, Author of Strive

As we start to come out of lockdown, we have a great opportunity to rethink how we do life, to move from being overwhelmed and exhausted to living a life which energises us.

The impact of the COVID crisis has been felt in all areas of our lives, good and bad so this is a chance to take stock and re-evaluate both work and home life. Join me in working through this simple exercise which will help you to capture the great stuff and let go of the things that were just not working.

So how does it work?

Find a 15 minute window where you won't be disturbed. And take some time to reflect on life since March 23rd when lockdown was announced.

The purpose of the Stop Start Continue exercise is to gain clarity on what has happened and its impact on you and make changes for the better, rather than allow yourself to drift back into old habits and behaviours.

Why don't you start by writing a letter to yourself 12 months from now?

What would you tell yourself about how this experience has impacted you and changed you?

Example letter:

Dear Future You,

In these past 3 months you've learnt that solitude is both lonely and engaging, it's about perspective.

You've felt deep rooted fear at both invading viruses and the management of this pandemic. You've also learnt that neither of these are in your control. Your personal responsibility to the humans around you is part of your control and you have helped to keep them safe and well.

You've lived through the greatest crisis humankind has faced unilaterally. This has taught you that survival is a mental challenge as much as a physical one. Don't make life harder in times like this by putting unrealistic expectations on yourself.

You've enjoyed some back to basics and back to nature pleasures.

Remember to take a morning coffee listening to the early morning birdsong, this makes you feel peaceful.

Remember that your homemade cakes don't look as pretty but taste much better than shop bought ones. And the smell of baking in your house always makes you feel homely and happy.

You've forged stronger relationships with your family, remember to stay connected with them more regularly.

You've realised that some relationships are more fair-weather, learn to let go of these and preserve your time for those that bring you joy.

You've learnt that sleep is a great salve, remember to keep to your new found routines even when things are busy and stressful.

You've experienced a great sense of community, remember to check in on your neighbours, it's not a nuisance, they quite enjoy it.

Read this letter in 12 months time and write yourself another one!

From,

Your past self.

Alternatively, you may want to reflect on these questions :

In Life.....

What has made you happy?

What has made you sad?

What have you seen differently as a result of lockdown?

What things do you place real value in?

What did I take for granted before lockdown?

What will I remember most from the lockdown experience?

Which relationships gave me the most support and joy during this time?

Did I feel fearful at anytime, how did I respond to this feeling?

In Life.....

What surprised me the most either in the community, or within myself from this experience?

What have I learned from lockdown regarding my need for routine, and what spontaneous activities do I value the most?

What are the things I've learned or honed, and strengths and talents I've discovered, during lockdown. How can I integrate them into the rest of my life?

What mindsets, habits, and relationships are adding the most joy to my life, and which are draining the most life out of me? What can I do about these?

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying the right two-thirds of the page. It is intended for the user to write their responses to the four questions listed on the left.

In work.....

How did I show up
at work through
lockdown?

What did I find
easy to do? What
was more difficult?

What was my work
life balance like?

How can I find a
great work life
balance going
forwards?

What about team
communication
worked well? And
what didn't?

What did I miss
most about the old
ways of working
with my team?

What has been the
most difficult
about the new
ways of working?

And what has
made things
easier?

Did I feel valued as
a member of staff
through the crisis?

How is that
different to
normal?

A large white rectangular area intended for handwritten responses to the questions on the left. The area is completely blank, providing space for the user to write their answers.

In work.....

How did I communicate with my boss and my direct reports? What worked well in one-to-ones, and what did I miss?

Am I more productive in the new ways of working or less? What has helped me focus? What has distracted me and stopped me being productive?

What about my physical working environment has been helpful? And what hasn't?

How have I felt supported by my colleagues? And what has made me feel bad?

How have I supported others?

How isolated have I felt? What has been helpful? And what has been less helpful?



Once you're happy that you've examined your life in lockdown experience well enough, it's time to take each of these findings and assess whether they need an action. Write this action in the 'actions' column below.

For example; you've realised that too many meetings cause you stress. How can you manage this better going forward?

Do you find that you're a better communicator on video conference than in person? Is this something you want to change or develop?

If it seems like too much to manage you can group your actions into categories; work, family life, finances, etc. And prioritise them according to your needs.

Ultimately, this is an exercise in taking control of what you can control. We've just experienced and continue to live through a period of huge change so take one action at a time and make small changes, Shaping your life going forward isn't a sprint, so take any undue pressure off yourself.

Start with writing down your top 3 actions that you want to remember below....

Actions for life.....



Actions for work.....



About us

Dr Rachel Morris



The Shapes Toolkit is a breakthrough programme of productivity and resilience tools and training created by Dr Rachel Morris, a GP, Speaker, Executive Coach and host of the You Are not a Frog Podcast for GPs, doctors and other busy professionals in high stress jobs. It helps people go from stressed and overwhelmed to calm, in control and thriving.

The Shapes Toolkit can be delivered face to face or online and is ideal for healthcare teams, GP training hubs and other professionals leading teams in high stress jobs.

We are fully focussed on providing as many resources as we can to help you get through the Coronavirus crisis. If you have any suggestions or requests, then please get in touch and if you'd like to receive more resources about thriving at work then you can [sign up here](#)

For more details please visit our website www.shapestoolkit.com or email

rachel@wildmonday.co.uk

www.shapestoolkit.com