

The benefits of bucket lists for our mental health

Many of us have a schedule that looks very similar: work, family, eat, sleep, repeat. Keeping a bucket list helps us remember what is truly important regarding our own sense of self-fulfillment. Our health is positively impacted when we spend time doing things that bring us joy.

A bucket list doesn't literally need to be a list of things to do before you die. It can be a list of things to do this summer.

Sitting down to write the bucket list will make you think about what you really want to do. Not what you need to do or what you think is expected of you by someone else. It's about what you want. It's not selfish, it's necessary.

So, grab a pen and a piece of paper and start to think about what you'd like to do as I work through this list. You don't have to answer every question but if a question sparks an idea then write it down.

- Is there something you've fancied doing but too frightened to try?
- What is your favorite kind of scenery? (sea, mountain, woodland?)
- Is there something you have always wanted to learn?
- What kind of event or party have you always wanted to attend?
- What food have you never tasted? (go to a restaurant or look up the recipe and give it a shot. Don't be picky!)
- Can you think of a way you would like to volunteer your skills and time?
- Did you love to read as a child? (make it a goal to read a new book every month)

- Were you previously artistic? (consider taking an art class, or showing some of your pieces)
- Would you benefit from some regular humor? (find a buddy to go to a comedy club with you or catch up for chats and giggles with friends).

The truth is that a bucket list is not about dying but about living. Take note of how living your bucket list has positively impacted your life and acknowledge that sense of achievement, no matter how far through the list you are.