



Mental Health Awareness Week

THIS WEEK, THE LONDON & SOUTH EAST
REGIONAL TEAM ARE TALKING ALL THINGS
MENTAL HEALTH, BOTH ON AND OFF THE
COURT.

Body Confidence

Pre & post lockdown body confidence

'Find your lockdown Formula'

The start of 2019 was a bit of a rollercoaster for me. Over the course of a few months I became very self-conscious about the way I looked and felt like I needed to make a change to better look after both my mind and body. The only way I can describe it is that I felt myself 'slipping downhill' both physically and mentally, and the root cause of this was down to the way I looked. So, I decided to create myself a 'formula' to help me get back on track and give me a solid structure to stick to, and hopefully help improve both my mental and physical health. I want to share this with you and the reasons behind why it worked for me.

My Formula: My mission + my body = my rules

PRE-LOCKDOWN

MY MISSION

My ultimate mission was to lose weight and to fit back into my netball dress again! I would dread the post-match photo on Saturday mornings, so I needed to find a way of losing weight that worked for me. My will power to stick to anything was questionable, especially when it came to losing weight and diets - I have a busy lifestyle so have previously always come up with excuses. Not only was my self-confidence and self-esteem slipping, but my netball fitness and agility was also on the decline, and I could feel it taking its toll on my joints at just 31 years of age. I desperately wanted to get back to the old me, so this mission was go go go! I set myself regular target dates and joined the gym (scary). I also made sure I pencilled in my regular pub evening with friends and the odd bottomless brunch as a treat, but learnt that I didn't have to say yes to everything and the key was about finding a healthy balance.

MY BODY

This is simple - we only have one body, so look after it. I had to check-in with myself from time to time to remind myself that it's okay to make mistakes or to have bad days. I was lucky enough to have a job I loved and a great support group around me, which made me realise it's progress over perfection and I didn't have to struggle in silence. Small wins can make huge differences to your mental health.

MY RULES

You have to get control of your mind or it will control you. Easier said than done, hey? I set myself small but achievable rules which helped me towards my mission. It's important to say that these rules don't always have to be harsh, or negative. For example, every Friday morning after I had been to the gym, I would pay my favourite coffee shop a visit - and that was a rule! Although a part of regaining control over my mind and body was centred around rules and cutting back, you also need to reward the small victories along the way in order to remain motivated and retain a positive outlook.

This formula worked for me. In total, I lost 22kg and was finally able to last a whole game at GA. When lockdown happened my formula stayed the same, but as you can imagine, my mission changed!

DURING LOCKDOWN

MY MISSION

My new mission was to try and maintain my current weight, as the only exercise I seem to be doing was a brisk walk to the biscuit tin and back to the sofa!

MY BODY

I have taken up 'animal flow' (which is a bit like yoga) and the odd dog walk. Remember, your body and mind is trying its best to carry on through a really scary and uncertain time. It's okay to give it a break!

MY RULES

I've set myself the rule to practice my animal flow 3x a week, finish reading my book, and learn how to make pasta from scratch. Oh, and to stop making so much banana bread!

It's okay if the most significant thing you do during this lockdown is to just get through it. No one has prepared us for anything like this, so make sure to reach out if you are struggling.

I would love to hear what your 'Lockdown formula' is.

April 2019

January 2020

