

## Celebrating the little wins in a pandemic

As parents, our lives can seem so topsy-turvy and sometimes we can feel out of control. Maybe our head is in a spin and we're struggling to find focus and clarity in this season. Heading into another year of uncertainty and strain on family life may be unsettling us, and making us feel irritable, fed up and unmotivated.

Does this resonate with you?

If it does, it's good to recognise why our emotions may be all over the place right now and to be kind to ourselves.

I thought of the title for this article when I recently heard an interview where a mum was sharing the difficult time she was facing with home-schooling, while trying to keep up a full-time job at home. And she had four children all under the age of ten!

She explained how finding a routine of celebrating 'little wins' had helped her. Firstly, it had helped her to get out of bed to start the day. But it had also helped her to focus on the day ahead, rather than being overwhelmed as she saw seven days of a new week in front of her.



She described how on day one of this approach, her first win was simply to get out of bed – and she celebrated that! She then managed to feed all the family breakfast before logging onto her work laptop. A second celebration! It didn't mean that the whole day was plain sailing, but celebrating the little things made such a difference – for everyone.

On day two, even though none of the children were dressed by the time she needed to start work at 8.30am, she celebrated how they were all playing happily together in the living room building a makeshift tent. A definite celebration in a house of four siblings!

As each day developed, she was able to notice 'the little wins' – whether it was teeth brushed, a picture painted or simply being able to take the children for a walk during her lunch break.

It's easy to feel like you need to be 'supermum' and have your children up, dressed, sat down and ready for a one-hour lesson on the anatomy of a rabbit. When in fact, getting them to feed the pet rabbit and keep it alive is a more important win!

Taking one day at a time, or one step at a time, is enough.

We are moving into spring. I love the spring season and everything it represents: new life, sunshine, the beautiful change in colours around us, plants starting to peek through the ground, life starting to seem brighter than the cold, wet days and nights we've left behind. As I step into my garden, I am thankful for the flowers I planted last year. I'm no Charlie Dimmock, so it's quite a miracle that they have survived and are starting to shoot again. As I walk in the park or by the river, I'm so grateful for the beauty of spring everywhere. For me, remembering to be thankful is my 'little win'.

Maybe those 'little wins' for you, are to give thanks for something that has happened that day. It might be sending a friend in need an encouraging text, dropping a chocolate bar or flowers to someone's doorstep or telling a family member how much you love and



appreciate them. But in all of that, remember to be easy on yourself too – don't pressurise yourself into feeling you have to be everything to everyone – just see the 'little wins' and celebrate!

*Written by Helen Lock*

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