



This leadership development series contains tools, tips, inspiration and mindset resources for not only surviving, but thriving in these challenging times. It would normally be distributed in a 5-part series, one article for each section of BUILD. Due to the current extenuating circumstances of a global pandemic and at-home-shelter, I'm distributing the whole series as one full-length article. That being said, some of you may enjoy reading one section of BUILD at a time. Thank you for your time.

Who could have dreamt that our world would be in the current state with at-home-shelter and the fear of continual global spread of the Corona Virus?

The long grocery lines, closed businesses and social distancing recommendations, coupled with the President and Governors urging the country to shelter

Let us **BUILD** during this time:

- B**e Mindful with Yourself, Family, Colleagues & Community
- U**nderstand that Change is Constant and Can be Positive
- I**nnovate at Work and Home
- L**ive in Harmony with your Highest Self
- D**etermine Who You Want to Be at Work and Home

at home feels like a surreal scene from a disaster movie.

In the past week, I've spoken with clients, neighbors, enjoyed observations of the mundane with family members (though it seems much more interesting now) and connected with my work communities. We are concerned, frustrated and yet hopeful. More than ever, we need to BUILD during this time and learn new habits that we can apply when we get through this difficult time in our history. I have developed for you a quick guide and resources for viewing this situation in a new way and building habits and mindsets that will benefit you far after this crisis has resolved (God willing sooner than later).

Be Mindful with Yourself, Family, Colleagues & Community

Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not being overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us.

<https://www.mindful.org/what-is-mindfulness/>

When you can first get centered and mindful, it will help you then take care of those around you. You can become centered by taking a walk, observing the nature around you, listening to music, journaling, taking [nature photographs](#), [reviewing positive quotes](#), reading, meditating, spending time with your loved ones and pets and repeating a positive mantra, for example, "This too, shall pass," or "We will all be OK."

Being mindful with your children. If you have children, be mindful of how you ask them to give you space to work. The younger kids may feel like it is a weekend or holiday and want to enjoy their "bonus" time with you. On a recent video call with a client, his two children under five kept coming in and jumping on his lap. How my client responded in the moment, several times, was a testament to how he is working on his patience to be mindful to his children's needs. "Daddy is on a work video call now and I can't play with you. Can you go in the backyard and I'll meet you there in little bit? Thank you!" He made sure to stay present and rather than let himself get upset, he kept gently redirecting them until they got the message.

Being mindful with your isolated friends and family members. There's those of us who are home with family and multi-tasking work and children and then there are those who are isolated on their own. Take the time to check in at least once a day to chat about life with one another. Though I typically speak with my family members every day or two, it's now once or twice a day. During these calls, we give each other comfort, talk about things we are doing around the house and just laugh. It tickles me that I can still laugh out loud during this strange time and it reminds me that I am able to be centered and in the moment.

Being mindful of those who are still serving us. As we are going through this time, I take the time to be supportive of and thank those who are out there, working and serving us, while the majority of us are at home. We are blessed to have our frontline healthcare workers to screen, advise and serve us. Grocery store and restaurant employees deserve our respect and gratitude. I make sure to ask



how they are doing and thank them. I thank my City Council Woman Barbara Bry ([and hopefully future Mayor of San Diego](#)) for consistently providing information and support on local resources.

Being mindful of our fellow Americans. As I take my dog for walks, I'm greeting those I pass to acknowledge my fellow neighbors and remind us all that we are resilient and in this together.

Understand that Change is Constant and Can be Positive

We should expect to grow, expand and experience transition throughout our lives, according to the Cycle of Renewal¹, a wonderful transition model you can learn about in [Life Forward: Charting the Journey Ahead](#). Some of these changes may be predictable such as developing our professions, growing in our careers, expanding our families and helping our parents and community, while some transitions can come as a surprise such as natural disasters, the unexpected illness or passing of family or friends, or in the case of the world today, a global pandemic.

You may have been in the Go for It Zone, living your best life and now, suddenly, everything has stopped. Your work project you were excited about is on hold, the new hire that would complete your team is on standby, your kids are running around the house, you are worried about how long they will be out of school and the only place you can really go is the grocery store. At some point, you may feel like you are in the Doldrums, perhaps depressed and hopeless. You may be feeling anxious, frustrated and like the world is coming to an end. Perhaps, you've slowly come to accept the new current new way of the world and you have gone into Cocooning, where you explore new ideas, new books, think about what you may want to do differently when this crisis passes and life returns to normal. Will you spend more time with your kids? Will you encourage virtual work for your teams? Will you redesign your company's philosophy on working from home and perhaps downsize your corporate space? The Cocooning stage is a time to ponder what could be next. You can experiment and discuss your ideas with your colleagues via Zoom and other technologies at this time.



As you begin feeling better and gaining your footing, you may find yourself in the Getting Ready phase. This can entail preparing for new projects that resulted from virtual brainstorming sessions that otherwise would never have taken place. You may decide that you want to join your child in taking tennis lessons. The smallest actions can help you prepare mentally while you are in the Getting Ready phase. This can include researching books you want to read, classes you want to take, thinking about what new

¹ McClean, P. 2016. Life Forward: Charting the journey ahead.

skills you want to learn for your career, asking your children what new things they would like the family to do together going forward, etc.

Know that throughout your life, life will present itself in this cycle and there will learning and unlearning along the way that will help with your growth. The darkness of the Doldrums and Cocooning will lead to the light of Getting Ready and Going for It.

Innovate at Work and Home

Yes, innovate. One of the areas that my coaching clients typically want to work on is bringing new ideas to their business, revising existing methods of doing work and seeing things from a fresh perspective. And there is never enough time.

- “We had too many fires to put out”
- “I don’t feel comfortable putting a note on my door that reads that I can’t be disturbed for 90 minutes”
- “It’s hard for me to focus in my environment”

Well, here’s your moment. More than ever, we have the opportunity, at this moment, to be still, be mindful and to think. You can take the time to consider how you can meet your clients’ needs under the current circumstances and in the year ahead.

You can pose questions to your team and discuss during a Zoom video meeting. Following are some places to start. You don’t need to wait until you design the perfect questions. I am an example of this. I have thought about what my clients may need (the knowledge in this article) and am working quickly on it – and not waiting to have 10 revisions and 5 reviewers, per my normal perfectionist style).

- What do our customers need from us right now?
- What do we anticipate that they may need in the months to come and going into 2021?
- How can we reach out to them to learn about their evolving needs?

In terms of innovating at home, creating a clean, uncluttered space can lead to more clarity and ease in your home and space. Some of you may be wondering, “Where do I even begin?” One step at a time, room by room. [The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up](#) is an amazing book that shares the big picture. For now, here is a great [summary](#) to get you started: [Tips for Decluttering - Summary of the Japanese Art of Tidying](#)

What Else Can I do?

Let’s say you went room by room and tidied (making three groups: Keep, donate, trash) and you’ve scheduled a virtual brainstorm session (good onya!). Fair enough. Check out [USA Today’s 100 Things to do While Stuck Inside Due to a Pandemic](#). How funny and clever that there is an article for this.



Live in Harmony with Your Highest Self

Prior to this situation, I had ordered [The Little Book of Stoicism](#). What perfect timing. Greek philosophers who studied stoicism several hundred years BC believed that nature wants us to become the highest version of ourselves, flourishing, happy, healthy and prosperous. In Greek, the best version would be the inner daimon, an inner spirit or divine spark. **To live in harmony with our ideal self is to close the gap between who we're capable of being (our ideal self) and who we actually are in this moment².**

Stoicism Cheat Sheet		
Beliefs	Strategies	Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you are unhappy it is your fault• Everything is temporary• We are social beings, with a social duty• Fatalism• Hedonism is not the path to happiness• Fame & fortune are overrated• A philosophy of life must be lived	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rephrase goals so that they are entirely within our control• Have nothing you are not prepared to lose• Live simply• Negative visualisation• Exercise self-denial• Resist materialism• Accept what cannot be changed• Refuse to consider yourself a victim• Practice misfortune• Live in accordance with nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be satisfied with your current situation• Maximise positive emotions, minimize negative emotions

Learning stoicism is about being able to take on an obstacle with the right mindset. It is about redirecting your negative emotions. If this reminds you of emotional intelligence, positive psychology and resilience practice, that is because these concepts are rooted in stoicism. Here's an overview to get you started: [Ten Principles of Stoicism](#).

We've talked about being mindful, understanding that change is constant and can be positive, innovating and living in harmony with our highest self. Last, take the time to think about who you want to be during this time and beyond.

Determine Who You Want to Be at Work and at Home

At work

- Energy, energy, energy. What energy do you want to bring to your team? Your positive energy and words have a greater impact than you realize. I literally am checking in with the manager of my local grocery store to give him energy and tips on how he can do the same for his workers.
- How can you be there to support your teams? Simply asking what you can provide them at this time is a big step. Or just make moves and help out, as Sheryl Sandberg shares in her book Plan B. I know frontline healthcare workers who are ordering pizza for the staff to simplify their lives, bring sustenance and enhance camaraderie.

² Salzgeber, J. The Little Book of Stoicism: Timeless wisdom to gain resilience, confidence and calmness

- How can you support your clients in supporting their families? All it may take is a touch base and listening.
- How are you creating community and touch-base opportunities to bring everyone together, learning, growing, sharing, empathizing, etc.? I've had two Zoom calls with my coaching communities and it made a difference for me. Can you arrange a simple check-in with everyone? You can ask in advance ask some interesting questions for people to think about such as:
 - What new things have you observed about yourself and others during this crisis?
 - What has been one positive thing that has come out of this?
 - What is one thing you are looking forward to when this is over?

At home

I mentioned being patient with kids early on, here are other considerations:

- What energy do you want to bring to yourself and your family? How can you make some parts of this unique and fun?
- How can you start each day fresh? This commencement speech by a U.S. Navy Seal talks about how making your bed will lead to other small important actions throughout your day:
 - [Short version \(6 minutes\)](#)
 - [Entire speech \(19 minutes\)](#)
 - [Book: Make Your Bed: Little Things that Can Change your Life...And Maybe the World](#)
- What can you learn from this time and how can you help change the lives of others?
- How do you want your spouse and kids to remember you? Were you resilient and resourceful? Did you do you make the best of the situation? Or did you sometimes moan and groan, complain and respond with annoyance? *Sorry, but as a coach, I have to create awareness*

Here's to better times for us all and to practice **BUILDing** right now and for the good times that are ahead. Along with wishing you safety, health and wellness, here is to tapping into your **Wisdom, Power, Resilience and Grace** during these times.

Sherry Nooravi, PsyD
sherry@strategymeetsperformance.com
 312.286.0325

