

A vibrant, multi-colored striped sock hangs from a wooden clothesline. The sock features a rainbow pattern with bands of orange, yellow, green, light green, white, dark blue, light blue, purple, and pink. The background is a clear blue sky with soft, white clouds at the bottom. The title text is overlaid on the upper right portion of the image.

Stretch, Grow, Thrive

Part One

Janice Taylor

Stretch, Grow and Thrive Part One

Hello and Welcome

Hello and welcome to part one of the Stretch, Grow and Thrive™ series.

My name is Janice Taylor and as a career coach I run my own business, Blue Sky Career Consulting. I created this mini-series, to encourage all women to look beyond their immediate struggles with life, career, family and seize the opportunities for change and growth that are available to them.

It's time to see all women empowered to 'stretch their wings and fly'.

So, for all women juggling and struggling with the demands of family, work, career and life in general, this is for you.

Introduction

This mini-series has been created to offer an approach that will help you to Stretch, Grow and Thrive™, in today's busy world and each part of the series will focus on a specific area:

Energy

Time

Focus

Emotions

Community

Space

Stretch, Grow and Thrive Part One

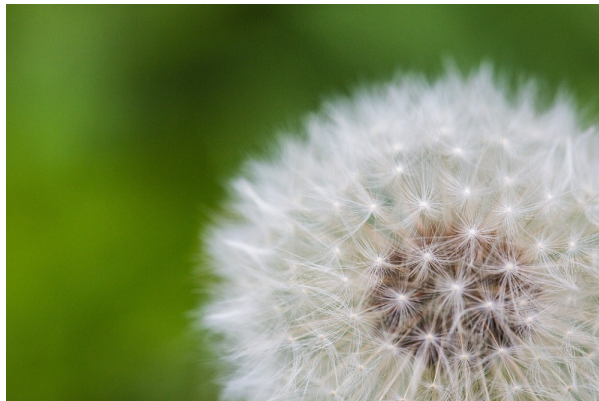
Each one of which will help you to assess where you are, currently and suggest practical ways to make positive changes in your life. Because the problem with being constantly in survival mode is that in general there is little or no time, or energy to do anything other than put one foot in front of the other.

My aim is to change this.

So, how is your Energy?

“Do not draw your sword to kill a fly”

– Korean proverb



Are you expending your energy as effectively and purposefully as you could be?

In most dictionaries the word energy is used to describe the idea of vigour, movement and vitality. Something that has power to exert and make change. Does this feel true for you?

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I also think that there is something about having a ‘spark’, that extra ‘zing’ in your step, which can appear and disappear without warning. Without this spark or your ‘mojo’, you might feel like you are ‘wading in treacle’ with just enough energy to cope with what’s on your plate right now.

So, what can you do?

Take a few moments now to reflect on what metaphor or image you would use to describe yourself when your energy is high, and you have your ‘spark’. Use paper and coloured pens to write out or draw your image or metaphor.



Also take a moment to reflect on what image or metaphor you would use to describe yourself when your energy is low and your ‘mojo’ has simply gone missing, draw or write this out as well.

What do you notice? Are there any similarities? Are they completely different? What might tip you from one to the other?

How wisely are you using your energy? How might you be squandering the energy you have? Are you fighting battles that are no longer relevant?

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When is your energy at the right level? What do you notice about yourself? Where do you feel it physically, emotionally? My stomach is usually a good indicator for me, that's where I will feel it when I'm not operating at my peak.

In my early twenties, I had bags of energy and ran around, climbing all sorts of 'mountains' simply because they were there, and I had the time and energy to do so. Today, I am far more aware that my time and energy are a finite resource and that I need to strategically choose where to direct my energy and focus to best advantage. Sometimes this will involve me simply saying no to requests from family, friends, colleagues and putting myself first.



So, when was the last time you said 'no'?

Energy Boosters

- * Daily time out, physical change of scene.
- * Make it a priority to get outside and appreciate the outdoors.

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- * Even if it's a ten-minute walk to the shop
- * Take regular breaks
- * Find a hobby, an alternative focus that absorbs and engages you
- * Make a list of energy drainers – start with five, do something about them, then and only then draw up another list of 5.

A cluttered desk, wardrobe full of unworn clothes, piles of stuff, unfinished jobs are energy drainers for me.

- * Make sure you are eating a well-balanced and nutritional diet

So, in terms of your energy:

1. What do you need to let go of? – are you using your sword to kill flies?
2. What do you need to take on? – what activities, people will help recharge you?
3. What are you going to do, now?

“You only live once, but if you do it right, once is enough.”

Mae West

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