



# G & G Collective

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What are your  
successes for  
2016?

Busy is  
not a badge  
of honour...

*"surviving & thriving  
this holiday season"*

top 5 tips to survive this Christmas!

# FROM THE EDITOR

**HELLO MY LOVELY G&G** tribe and welcome to December! Wow, what a year it has been. I feel like every December arrives even faster than the last. It still blows my mind at how quickly time can pass us by. It is always a busy time of year for everyone but I like to take this time to reflect on the year just gone and all the amazing things in my life.

Too often we miss some of the fabulous things that happen in our lives and we don't celebrate the huge achievements we've made. I wanted to share a couple of my big achievements for 2016 and I hope to hear from you with your amazing stories.

Of course the most major achievement in my life this year has been starting this beautiful business I call "Grace & Grind". I always had this desire in my heart to truly serve people in a way that aligned to the real me. Fortunately for me the stars aligned and when my big corporate employer restructured I was able to take an amazing opportunity to leave and start up on my own. This took an enormous amount of courage and of course an element of risk, but I am so proud of where I have come and the path that has now unfolded before me.

This path then led me to study at the Beautiful You Life Coaching Academy, run by the truly inspirational Julie Parker. I was already armed with Executive Coaching qualifications however my heart drew me to new learnings in a more holistic space, which was the BY Academy.

This journey has equipped me with some excellent tools for my business but even more important than that, led me to a group of amazing women that are the most supportive and beautiful women I could ask for. To know that these are my new "work colleagues" is such a wonderful gift. It's not often we get a workplace filled with such passionate people that cheer each other on so wholeheartedly.



**My last day with my gorgeous colleagues in the big corporate world**

As well as the big milestones in our lives often the most memorable are the little things. Some of these amazing moments for me this year include going on my first ever hot air balloon ride with my husband for his birthday, being surprised with a private band whilst holidaying with friends in Bali and sitting in our newly renovated and landscaped backyard taking in the beautiful place I now live in.

**Beautiful Beryl  
(my Nanna)**



**Right up high in the hot air  
balloon in the Hunter Valley**

**Surprise private  
band in Bali**



Reflecting on the year past also brings a mix of sadness and pain, as I lost my dearest Nanna during the year. My Nanna Beryl was a larakin, she was cheeky, adventurous and lived a full and long life which makes me happy. I know she was also a huge advocate of mine and always encouraged me to learn and grow. I take comfort knowing that she is in a better place now and I know she would be proud of what I have achieved. So in honour of cheeky Beryl, I dedicate this issue of the G&G Collective.

So, I look forward to hearing your stories from 2016 and I hope you enjoy this month's edition of the G&G Collective. As another year draws to a close and the social scene heats up with family, friends and loved ones hopefully you can take away a few tips to have a relaxing and rejuvenating break.

Merry Christmas and a safe and happy holiday time to you all.

*Suz x*

Suzanne Williams  
Career, Leadership & Lifestyle Coach



*DON'T DRAG YOURSELF TO WORK IN 2017!*

*If you're struggling with having confidence in yourself,  
the ability to say no, asking for what you want and  
taking control of a career you love;  
then start the new year right with a complimentary  
CONFIDENCE KICK START SESSION*



**new year...new you,  
take control of your  
career, confidence  
& happiness!**



**BOOK AT**

*[www.graceandgrind.com.au](http://www.graceandgrind.com.au)*

# Surviving this holiday season

Wellbeing

IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Get some fresh air...why not try a little bit of outdoor yoga these holidays?

**ANOTHER YEAR HAS** raced away before our very eyes. For most of us we look forward to holidays and time out over Christmas, but ironically, we can end up more exhausted instead of relaxed after the Christmas period. So how can we enjoy this time of year but look after ourselves in the process? Here are my top 4 tips to help you not only survive, but thrive this holiday season!

## BE REALISTIC

The reality is that we simply can't do absolutely everything that is going to be on throughout the holiday period. Be clear with yourself that in order to have a relaxing and restorative Christmas holiday that you won't run yourself into the ground by attempting to go to every social event known to man.

## PLAN, PLAN, PLAN

Get your diary out and look at what you have chosen to attend and what you have scheduled in. Christmas parties, lunches, end of year functions, play dates for your kids, new year celebrations, catch ups with extended family.... all of them. Write them all into a planner so that you can put it up on your fridge (or somewhere you look at regularly) and visually see what you have coming up.

## SCHEDULE NO SOCIALISING DAYS

After reviewing your planner, schedule in your no socialising days! Having some time either on your own or with just your closest loved ones is key to your rejuvenation. The days when you can sleep in, have a lazy morning together, read a book and just be in your home without anywhere to be.

## COMMUNICATE

One of the biggest conflicts over the holiday period often comes when families and friends don't communicate effectively with one another. So, when your favourite aunty invites you to yet another Christmas party, say no, but let her know that your calendar is already so full and as much as you would love to come it just isn't possible. Suggest that maybe a time in the new year could be suitable to catch up instead?

## GET SOME FRESH AIR.....EXERCISE

It's easy to feel like we have no energy over this time to fit in exercise. Exercising (even only 15-20 minutes per day) can improve energy levels by strengthening the circulation and the heart muscle, and in return improving energy levels. Scientists have concluded that one of the best ways to beat fatigue and boost energy is to exercise more, not less.



# HEALTH ALERT



## “BUSY” IS NOT A BADGE OF HONOUR....WHAT HIGH LEVELS OF STRESS ARE DOING TO YOUR BODY AND CAREER

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**HOW OFTEN DO** you catch up with a friend, a work colleague, a parent at your children’s school or someone in your family and when you ask them how they are, their response is “I’m so busy!”. It seems that being busy is something that we aspire to these days. And at this time of year we are busier than ever, saying yes to social events galore and running ourselves into the ground. Somewhere along the way we have perceived busy as equating to being successful. To the contrary, “busy” is a red flag and a warning sign to us all. As the world becomes more connected and overwhelmingly busier it’s not surprising that this will lead to one in two Australians developing a mental illness in their lifetime. \*

### WHY?

With the increase in accessibility, competition, doing more with less and the “need” for more material things in our lives, the levels of stress that people experience are at an all-time high. Now don’t get me wrong stress can be a good thing...but in small doses. The stress we are talking about is constant, every day stress, the long-term stress that is silently killing us.

### SO WHAT IS LONG TERM STRESS DOING TO US?

When we are stressed cortisol is released in our body, and in small doses cortisol is great. For example – when we are presenting to an audience, when we are preparing for a sports competition, or when you are hiking in the woods and a not so friendly bear comes your way.

The problem occurs when the cortisol is present in our bodies over a long period. Chronic stress triggers the fear centre of our brain (the amygdala). As the neural connections in this part of our brain rise, the hippocampus’ ability deteriorates (the brain centre that helps us with learning, memory and stress control). Even worse however, is that long term presence of cortisol causes our brain to shrink thus losing synaptic connections which results in reduced concentration, decision making and social interaction.

### SO WHAT DOES ALL OF THAT MEAN?

Well, with a brain that is shrinking and being impacted in all the regions mentioned above this chronic stress ultimately leads to depression, anxiety and even Alzheimer’s, thus impacting a person’s life and career substantially.

## SO WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

Thankfully there are ways to combat this. Firstly, from a scientific point we can actually reverse cortisol in our body by using two simple methods (1) exercise and (2) meditation. Research has shown that both of these methods can increase the size of your hippocampus and thus help you to combat stress more effectively.

Secondly, we can consciously choose to eliminate the stressors in our life. Some suggestions that everyone can implement include:

## ONE

Allocating time each week that is your “down time”. Just half a day even on the weekend where you don’t have to be anywhere or doing anything. This is your relaxation time to simply be

## TWO

Set boundaries. In order to have your down time you need to have clear boundaries and say no to others when they want to take that time from you. Your health is a priority and setting boundaries around this is vital.

## THREE

Declutter your life. Look around the room – how many things do you have that don’t serve you or simply fill a space. Research has shown the calming effects of having less. And remember the mantra less is more.

## FOUR

Practice gratitude. When you are more thankful for the amazing things in your life you will begin to 1) gain more perspective and 2) be happier with what you have. Both of these outcomes help your brain centre in terms of its reaction to stress and keeping those cortisol levels at bay.



\* Australian Bureau of Statistics (2009). National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing: Summary of Results, 4326.0, 2007. ABS: Canberra

*Food for thought  
these holidays*

**You know you've grown  
up when none of the  
things you want for  
Christmas can be  
bought at a store...**



# WHAT'S IN STORE NEXT MONTH?



## WHERE WILL YOU TAKE 2017?

ISSUE 06

JAN '17

How to find the job you love and how to leave the one you don't!