

# Moving from Digital to Analogue and Creating a Spectrum for Self-care



By Eve Menezes Cunningham

**The more we can do to support ourselves, the more quickly we can get back on track**



**I**n NLP, we talk about analogue as being on a spectrum. Imagine the hands slowly moving around the clockface, step by step. On the other hand (geddit? Sorry), digital is either on or off. There are fewer shades, levels, stages or gradients.

When it comes to self-care, people often take a 'digital' attitude to it, beating themselves up for not doing the things they *know* are good for them. Telling themselves they're *bad* at it or can't do it.

In many ways, we live in a digital world. These are polarised times. Either/or rather than both/and. Right or wrong.

Some people even talk about *cancelling* other people. As if they're being exterminated. Can you imagine if we had more models for people being properly held accountable and ensuring consequences while also being able to work through some kind of pathway to rehabilitation?

Bruce Springsteen recently told Ryan Tubridy (on *The Late Late Show*) and Trevor Noah (on *The Daily Social Distancing Show*) that he sees being able to hold two conflicting thoughts as a sign of maturity. For example, his music is often critical as well as proud of his home country.

We can be more like Bruce by recognising what we're doing well as well as what we would benefit from giving more attention to. Taking a more old-

fashioned, more 'analogue' approach to self-care might help you bring this both/and attitude to the many choices you make each day and build up to doing even better.

An all or nothing, digital approach to exercise might look like either working out *or* complete indulgence. By bringing in a more analogue approach, you might create levels of activity to support you working out gently on rough days and more intense workouts when you have the time and energy.

For example, you might go for a run or long bike ride on 'good' days. A long stroll might be good for 'medium' days and a short two-second dance around the living room enough for 'bad' days.

When you think about your own health and fitness levels, the obstacles to consistent workouts and some analogue stages, what would be your ideal exercise for good days? Medium? Bad? How does it feel to be giving yourself more options?

When it comes to eating well, a digital approach might lead you to think, "There's no point even trying to rein myself back in," after indulging in something less healthy and then eating or drinking much more of it.

An analogue approach might involve figuring out your ideal food and drink for 'good' days, being honest with yourself about 'bad' days and creating a medium or even a few mid-level stages where you can

have some room to manoeuvre, honouring your needs on any particular day.

When it comes to sleep, a digital approach might have you declare that you can't sleep. Nothing works, you're doomed and everything's hideous (insomnia sucks), so you might as well not even *attempt* any of the self-care practices that might help you sleep better.

A more nuanced analogue approach might remind you that you're simply exhausted. And you're OK. You *will* sleep better another night and you can build on that. You might create an ideal sleep routine for 'good' days, going to bed at a certain time, building in sleep supporting rituals to help you wind down and so on.

And, of course, be honest with yourself about 'bad' sleep nights. What contributes to you getting less/more disturbed sleep? How might you create 'medium' day rituals?

You can adapt this approach for anything related to your self-care – your morning meditation practice, ensuring you have enough time with loved ones, prioritising the projects that are close to your heart and so on.

Habits are wonderful *and* we are humans, not robots. The more we can do to support ourselves on the days things start to go a little pear-shaped, the more quickly we can catch ourselves and get back on track. ■

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