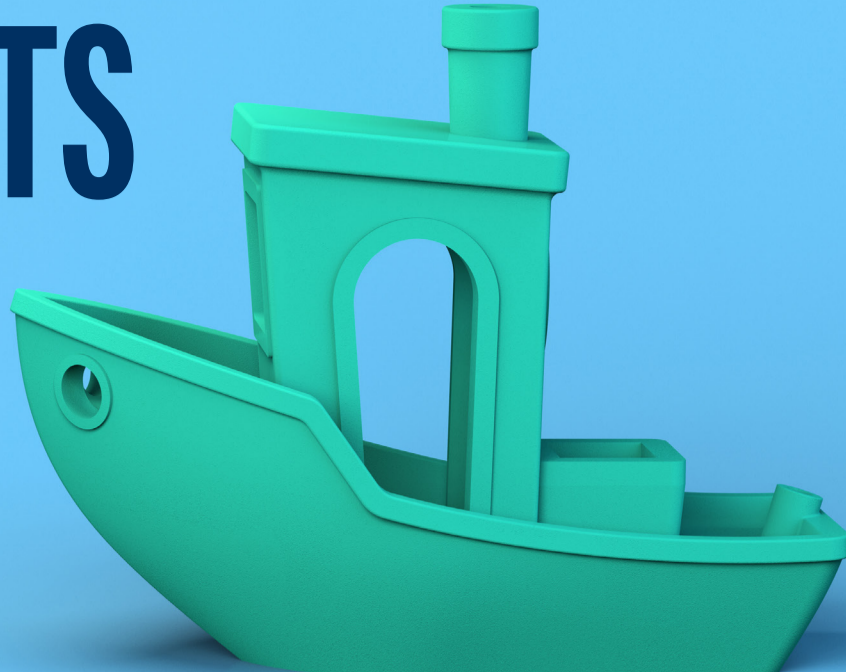


# FIND YOUR ANCHOR POINTS

When the tides change, ground yourself in the habits that keep you strong.



It's not really a stretch to say that the last few months have been strange. We've adapted as best we can to new rules, schedules, and realities. We've started new routines, redirected our attention to new things, and maybe even picked up some new hobbies and habits along the way (fresh-baked sourdough bread, anyone?).

But guess what? More changes are coming. In fact, change is the one thing we can count on coming again and again. In order to weather those changes well, we need to anchor ourselves in the things that keep us grounded day after day, no matter what happens around us.

## Changes Keep Coming

As the logistics of our realities continue to shift and evolve, it may feel like we're running into a series of interruptions to the routines we're trying to establish or have finally established. And with so much changing in our daily lives, it can feel like grasping at straws to ground ourselves in anything steady and stable.

While we can't always control what comes next, one thing we can control is what anchors us in the midst of constant change.

## What's an Anchor Point?

We've all done what we've had to in order to adapt to social distancing. Some habits that've formed haven't been the healthiest (one too many glasses of wine on a weekday, for instance). But other rituals and habits we've started and clung to have been beneficial during our time at home. Maintaining those positive, grounding rituals will be essential during our transition into this next phase—and every next phase into our new normal.

You may not even notice what those rituals are. But it's probably safe to say that you do notice the difference when they DON'T happen!

We call these rituals **anchor points** because they help to keep us centered when life is anything but normal. These are the habits or rituals that help set the tone and make our days feel "right."

So how do we identify these rituals and habits before life throws us another curveball?

## Finding Your Anchor Points

One way is to take note of what your schedule looks like and what habits fill your time. Keep a paper and pencil handy or start a note in your smartphone. As you move throughout your day and week, make a note of the things that you catch yourself doing regularly—good and bad.

You'll find things you enjoy doing, like having a quiet cup of coffee in the mornings, taking a walk, or talking to a friend on the phone. You'll also probably find a few things in your schedule that don't serve you well, like spending more money than you wanted to shopping on-line or extended social media scrolling.

These notes will give you insights into habits that build you up and habits that you may want to let go of or replace.



## What Grounds You?

You probably already have an idea of what some of your anchor points are. But if you need some help figuring out what they might be for you, here are a few thought-starters:

1

### Waking up early

Many people find that waking up before they have to wake up makes a big difference in the rest of their day. Whether it gives you time to meditate or to drink your coffee in peace, starting the day off early on your terms is a ritual that [many of the most productive people on our planet swear by](#).

2

### Morning meditation

Taking a few minutes first thing in the morning can help you reflect on the day ahead. What do you hope to accomplish? What is something you are grateful for?



3

### Spiritual practice

Making space in your day or week that is devoted to religious practice can prove to be a strong anchor point. Whether that is allowing yourself time to study a spiritual text or setting intentional worship time outside of religious gatherings, protecting that time can help to keep you grounded.

4

### Artistic outlet

No, this doesn't mean you need to become the next Vincent Van Gogh. Having an artistic outlet can be as simple as doodling in a notebook or coloring in a coloring book. It doesn't have to be professional-level art, but the mere act of creating something can help to give you a sense of peace.

5

### Musical expression

Allowing yourself some time every week to make or enjoy music has a [significant effect on the brain](#).



6

### Regular exercise

We all know that exercise is good for our bodies, but there are scientifically-proven benefits for our brains, as well. We sleep better, are clearer-headed, and have more energy. Exercise is a non-negotiable anchor point for many people.

7

### Reading for pleasure

While it's common to have to read for work, making time to read for fun can give the mind a much-needed escape from the realities of our unpredictable world.



8

### Meal prepping

It's a time saver and can be important when it comes to making sure that you have healthy choices available to you.



9

### Getting enough sleep

It may seem like a no-brainer, but so many people struggle with getting adequate sleep. Prioritizing your sleep schedule can go a long way towards keeping you grounded and centered.



There's no end to the things that can become your own personal anchor points. This list is just the tip of the iceberg. The things that help to hold you together in times of crisis may surprise you! Take the time to discover what helps keep you stable and able to handle major life changes and interruptions.

## Making Time

These rituals don't just make themselves happen on their own. You have to be proactive about making them a part of your life. Some anchor points are a little easier to protect than others, and some will require not only commitment, but protection.

Here are a few ways to protect time for your anchor points:

- Add your anchor points as an activity in your shared family calendar.
- Communicate with your family members, roommates, and colleagues so they know not to disturb you during those times.
- Set alarms that remind you to tend to your anchor point.

What anchor points work best for you? What things are you doing already that help keep you centered? Don't be afraid to get creative and find what works best for you as you begin the transition back into life outside of the walls of your home.

If you're in the Naturally Slim program, log in to [www.naturallyslim.com/login](http://www.naturallyslim.com/login) from your smartphone or computer to watch this week's lessons. (Or post in NSTown if you have questions for your health coaches!)

Not a Naturally Slim participant?

Visit our blog at [www.naturallyslim.com](http://www.naturallyslim.com) for more tips and resources or email your plan sponsor and ask them to offer the program.