The more you practice tolerating discomfort, the more confidence you'll gain in your ability to accept new challenges. --Amy Morin

How to Prepare Your Nervous System for New Goals

As January begins to sunset into February, it's not uncommon for New Year resolutions to lose their luster. About 80% of people who make such resolutions feel like they've failed in the first few months. Could this year be different? UC Berkeley's Greater Good Science Center highlights research-backed tips to help propel our 2024 intentions into sustained practice. It turns out a deeper awareness and proactive responses to the impulses of our autonomic nervous system (ANS) can supercharge our paths to personal transformation. "Our brain and nervous system are constantly scanning for cues of threat/danger or for cues of safety," explains clinical psychologist Beth Kurland. "When there are more cues of threat, our ANS goes into protection mode." In such a state, our bodies go into modes of flight-or-fight or freeze. However, when we 'neurocept' more cues of safety than threat, our social-engagement system gets turned on, which puts us in more optimal states to think creatively and approach goals. To find ourselves in such states more regularly, Kurland offers 3 tips: frame goals that feel 'safe', make specific action plans, and prepare for inevitable obstacles. She notes, "When we can remember this secret ingredient of paying attention to our autonomic nervous system, we create the conditions in which our seeds -- our dreams, goals, intentions can take root, grow and flourish."

Be The Change:

Observe moments of stress, anxiety, or fear as they arise, and practice reframing them into something that holds a sense of possibility.