A Thousand Cuts

A good and sexy life has hard weeks too

Jul 25, 2025

Hi there,

I’ve had a hard week. It wasn’t bad necessarily, just a series of frustrating moments that has left me drained and disheartened. Weeks like this happen—they are part of a very good life—and they suck.

I have some skills and some go-to moves that I break out on weeks like this that I want to share with you.

This may contain: two people are sitting in a coffee cup with a book on the inside and one is reading

Before I go any further — lets do the housekeeping.

First, if you are not already a subscriber and you resonate with any of the following descriptors, consider joining the cooperative: (1) Early-career professional; (2) Feminist; (3) Do-gooder; (4) Former Gifted Kid; (5) Overachiever; or (6) Capitalism-hater.

Second, if you like what I am saying and it makes you think of someone in your family/office/friend group, send it their way.

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Third, I say some personal and vulnerable shit every week. Say some vulnerable shit back. It’s called a community.

Leave a comment

Okay — back to it.

First things first—do less. This starts during the bad day, preferably at work, but it applies across the board. Figure out how much you need to do in order to not be totally behind tomorrow. It’s probably three things really. So do the three things and then hooray! you’re all set. Breathe. Respond. Just be a human for a second.

Several times today, I stopped and worked on a crossword puzzle. I recognize that might not be your thing, so I encourage you to try some screen-free hobbies to find what works for you. When I spend some time on a paper crossword, I can feel the buzz of anxiety and stress disappear. I take my headphones off and just exist in my head. I like the focus that I get to have. I don’t multitask when I do my crosswords. It takes too much focus to think about whatever is bothering me at work. So I sit there and I realize that I know absolutely no trivia and I am very bad at crosswords but sometimes I get a word and that’s exciting, so I keep going. After about 10 minutes, I go back to work and it’s just a bit easier.

Okay, so you made it through the work day. Close the laptop. Walk away from the desk. Go stare at the ceiling. Do not under any circumstances look at your phone for at least five minutes. It’s the same thing as the crossword. Let the buzzy feeling in your head fade away.

Five minutes is up. Go do that thing that you’ve been wishing you were doing instead of working. Maybe it is playing a video game or making yourself a drink.

I have been in the midst of a battle with cooking recently. Mostly, I don’t like doing it and I resent that I have to prepare three meals a day (plus snacks!) every single day. I want to like cooking though. I really like food and eating good food. There is simply a gulf between me and my vision of myself as a person who cooks. To start to address this gulf, I bought a cookbook. I want to actually invest in the ingredients needed to make these meals. This is important because I hate spending money and will do nearly everything I can not to do it. That includes not buying all of the ingredients for a recipe because I probably have something that could work at home.

There have been periods in my life where cooking a fairly complex meal after a hard day at work has been a great way to refocus my mind and energy. My friend and I spent a summer living together at her home in Oakland and we went through a pretty intense Hello Fresh phase. Those were awesome because you had everything you needed in front of you and you could practically guarantee an outcome that you could be proud of.

Alternatively, consider switching out cooking for learning about at-home mixology. Identify a drink that you love and go to the liquor store. Buy all necessary ingredients. If you are like me, the price tag on this purchase might scare you; you will get more than one use out of these if you buy it for a drink you know you like. Have a cocktail summer—or a mocktail summer.

Finally, go the fuck to bed. You will wake up to a new day (or to the weekend if you are lucky!)

Good luck. You got this.

Best,

Zoe