

Going Beyond 'Back to Normal'

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You've been waiting... and waiting... and waiting for this amazing, magical day when you could return to "normal life."

For many people in the U.S., it feels like that dim light at the end of the pandemic tunnel is becoming brighter. My 12- and 14-year-old daughters now have their first shot, with the second one soon to follow. I was euphoric when the kids received their vaccinations, choking up under my mask at the relief that my family was now unlikely to get sick or pass the coronavirus on to others more vulnerable than we are. Finally our family could start returning to so-called normal life.

But what should those of us fortunate enough to be vaccinated return to? I didn't exactly feel euphoric each day in my normal life pre-COVID-19. How should you choose what to rebuild, what to leave behind and what new paths to try for the first time? Clinical psychological science provides some helpful clues for how to chart your course out of pandemic life.

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