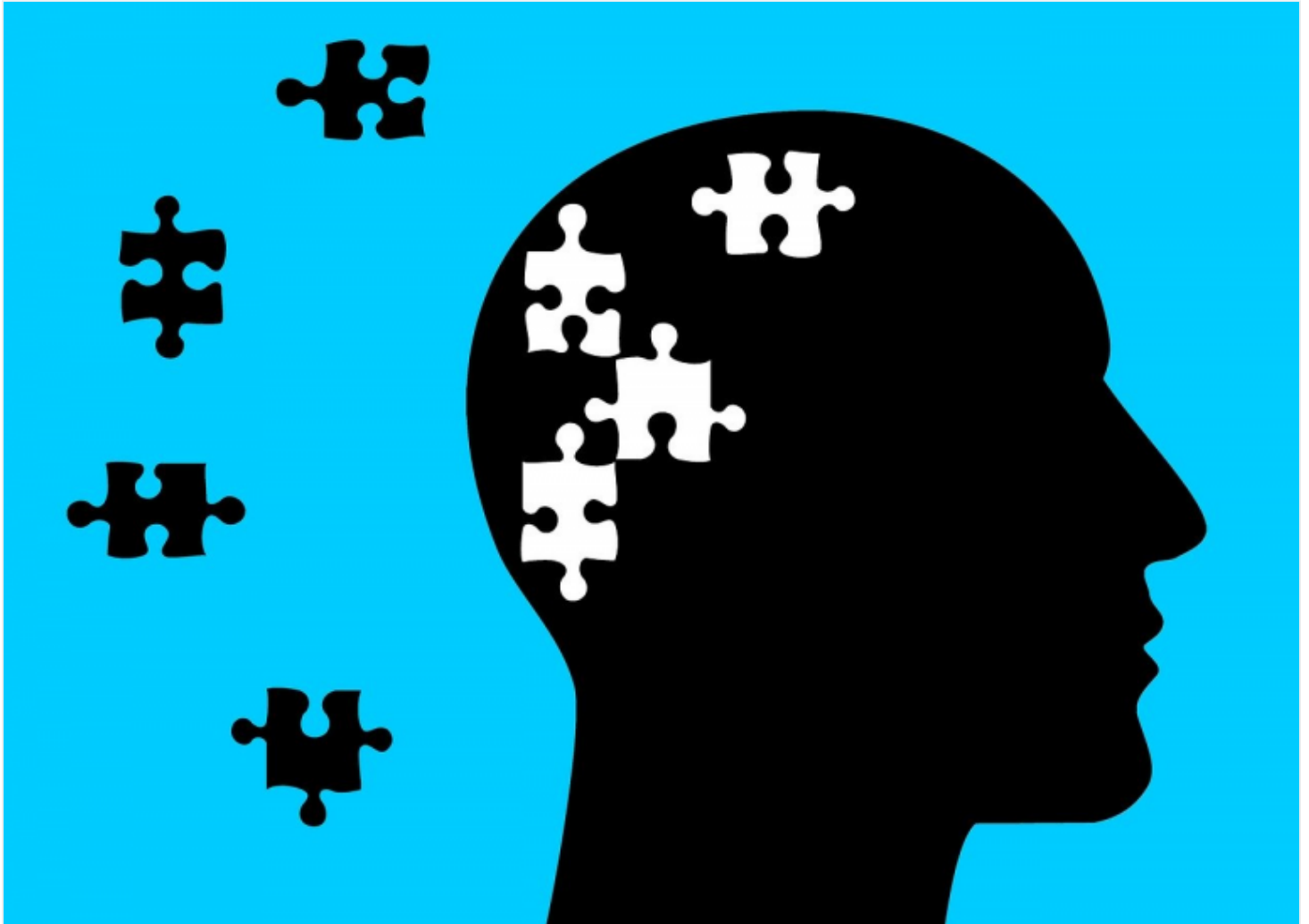


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There's no denying that the holiday season is going to look a whole lot different this year. Without widespread immunization from Covid-19, which is still months away at minimum, mass travel and large gatherings will be limited. However, just because our holiday calendars look different, doesn't mean the holiday spirit needs to take a year off. In fact, two characteristics of that spirit, expressing gratitude for others and showing a little **care** for ourselves, are more needed than ever—especially with regards to our professional lives.

Since at least March, this year has been one of tumult, stress, and unprecedented

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Similarly, I'm willing to guess that you've been extra hard on yourself this year, burning the candle at both ends and doing everything possible to ensure the livelihood of your business. In these moments, it's easy to overlook the essential activity of self-care. Now, with the holiday season upon us, at a time when we traditionally slow down a little, it's time to do something nice for yourself and those you work with.

Gratitude for others

All too often, when we thank our coworkers for their efforts, we do so without much thought. We say thanks in passing or as a matter of social etiquette, not taking the time to really express how much the contributions of others have a positive impact on our own work and the work of our businesses. This year, when so many workers have sacrificed so much, it's important to go out of your way to make your team members feel appreciated, even if it has to be over [Zoom](#), Slack, or email.

To do so, I recommend going with the Thanksgiving standby of asking yourself what you're thankful for this year. Ask the question in light of each team member being as specific as possible. Telling somebody you value their work is one thing, but mentioning how they managed to soothe a client during the middle of their child's temper tantrum is much more resonant. If you have a small firm, consider creating personalized messages for each team member. If you're a larger organization, have team leads handle the responsibility. Oh, and if you can, maybe consider throwing a couple of extra days off everyone's way. They've probably earned it.

Self-care for you

While you're in the act of lavishing praise, don't forget to spare some time for yourself. Just like your team members, you've had a difficult year. It's more than likely that you've cut out some of your favorite activities in order to juggle working from

home, dealing with your family, and all the other tasks that have been thrown out of

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The holidays will be different this year, but that shouldn't stop us from taking the pause and truly having gratitude for all we have accomplished, persevered through and the people that have supported us along the way.

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Amy Vetter is a CPA.CITP, CGMA is an accomplished c-suite executive and board member with deep experience in cloud technology and transformation, creating go-to-market (GTM) strategies to scale businesses nationally and internationally.

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