2026

has been a year
of growth and grit...

...so slow down, soak up the holidays and give yourself credit for all you've done this year.



Ake



Ease in

Map out your first week back before you go, so 2027 starts with a plan, not a pile-up.

Reset

- **Hand over the keys.** Brief your team before you go, then trust them to handle it. Giving them room to step up is good for everyone.
- **Clear one niggle.** Fix the small thing that bugged you all year, like a messy folder or a clunky process. Future you will be grateful.
- **Get outside.** Swap the screen for fresh air, whatever the weather. A walk, a swim or time in the garden clears a busy head.
- **Do something just for fun.** Pick up an old hobby or try a new one. No goals, no targets, just enjoyment.
- **Thank your people.** Send a quick note to a client, colleague or friend who made your year easier. It takes two minutes and means a lot.

Rest well now, so 2027 starts on your terms.

Festive Drink: Cranberry & Aperol Spritz

The classic spritz with a tart cranberry twist and a rosemary “Christmas tree” garnish.



Ingredients

- 60 ml Aperol
- 90 ml Prosecco, chilled
- 30 ml cranberry juice, chilled
- 30 ml soda water
- 6 fresh or frozen cranberries
- 1 rosemary sprig
- 1 orange slice
- 1 cup ice cubes

Method

1. Fill a large glass with ice and drop in the cranberries.
2. Pour in the Aperol and cranberry juice.
3. Top with Prosecco, then a splash of soda water. Stir gently once so you don’t lose the fizz.
4. Tuck in the orange slice. Lightly slap the rosemary between your palms to release its aroma, then add it as a garnish.

Tip

For an alcohol-free version, swap the Aperol for a non-alcoholic bitter aperitif and use alcohol-free sparkling wine.

Books to Read With Your Feet Up



To Be Honest

Dom Thurbon

Why truth-telling is the most undervalued skill in leadership, and how to build a culture where honesty thrives.

Speakership: The Art of Oration & the Science of Influence

Matt Church, Col Fink & Sacha Coburn

Learn to speak with purpose, so you don't just inform people but inspire them to act.

Mindset

Carol Dweck

How believing you can grow, rather than being fixed, shapes the way you learn, lead and bounce back.

New Traditions to Try This Christmas

1. **Highlights and hopes**
   Go around the table and share one highlight from 2026 and one hope for 2027. Celebrate the moments that brought joy or success, and think about how you could support others' hopes.

2. **Gift of time**
   Instead of another present, give someone an hour of your time: cook them a meal, teach them something, help them finish a job they've been putting off, or simply go for a walk together.

3. **Give-back gathering**
   Choose a local cause as a group and pitch in together, whether that's a food bank drop-off, a beach or park clean-up, or a donation everyone chips in for.

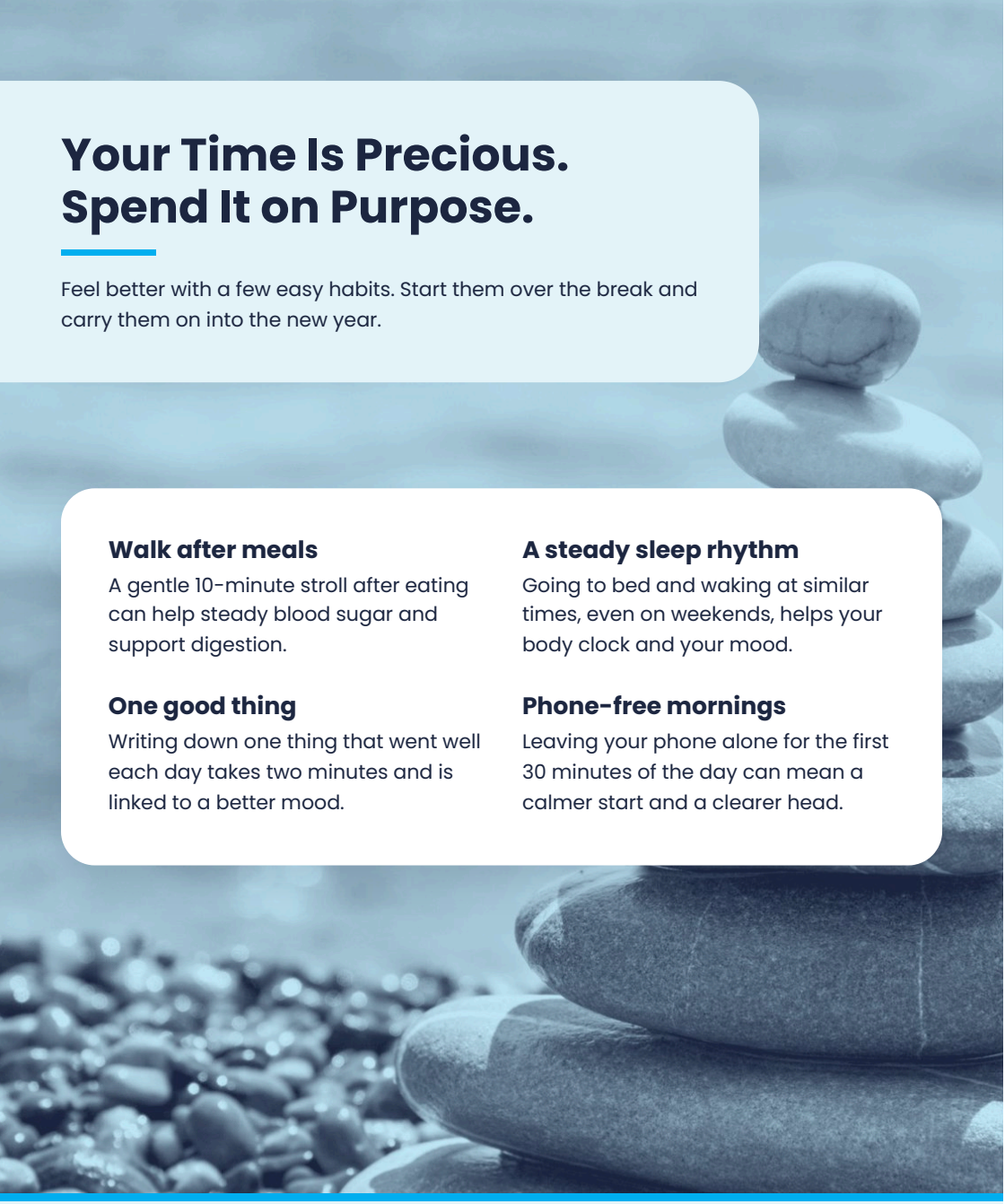
Podcasts for Long Walks and Slow Mornings

Unbreakable Entrepreneurs
Episode: Olly Bridge, sport and exercise scientist, on staying well in a demanding career.

The Imperfects
Honest, funny chats about vulnerability and mental health.

Working Hard, Hardly Working with Grace Beverley
Real talk on ambition, productivity and avoiding burnout.





Your Time Is Precious. Spend It on Purpose.

Feel better with a few easy habits. Start them over the break and carry them on into the new year.

Walk after meals

A gentle 10-minute stroll after eating can help steady blood sugar and support digestion.

A steady sleep rhythm

Going to bed and waking at similar times, even on weekends, helps your body clock and your mood.

One good thing

Writing down one thing that went well each day takes two minutes and is linked to a better mood.

Phone-free mornings

Leaving your phone alone for the first 30 minutes of the day can mean a calmer start and a clearer head.

Be intentional with the habits you keep, and cull the ones that hold you back.

Make Memories That Last

Easy ideas that get the creative juices flowing and bring everyone together in one room.



Create your own ornament

Have everyone make one decoration that sums up their year. Write the year and their name on the back, then share the story behind it as it goes on the tree. As the tradition grows, so does a tree full of memories to look back on.

Gingerbread build-off

Buy or bake gingerbread, then set up stations with icing, lollies and sprinkles. Award categories for most festive, most wonky and most likely to collapse. Bake, create, eat and have fun!





Family recipe swap

Have each household bring a dish with a story behind it. Collect the recipes and put them together into a whānau (family) cookbook, adding to it every year.

The best recipes come with a story.

Your Freedom Plan for 2027

Take stock of the freedom your business gave you this year, and where you'd like more of it in the months ahead.

"This year I want the business to work for me, not the other way around. More time with the kids, fewer 3am worries and the cashflow to say yes."

The **Three Freedoms** are what most business owners are really working towards: **financial freedom** to fund the life you want, **time freedom** to enjoy it, and **mind freedom**, the peace of knowing your business can weather any storm. Most people have plenty of one and not enough of another. Your health sits underneath all three. Money means little without it, and energy decides how well you use your time.

What you want	How we can help	The freedom
Grow sales Lift margin & profit Improve cashflow	Annual business planning Annual forecast Cashflow coaching	**Financial Freedom**
A sustainable, scalable model Clarity on who does what A more efficient business	Organisational review Monthly coaching App advisory & training	**Time Freedom**
Compliance done on time Tax minimised Regular ongoing support	Outsourced compliance Annual tax review Regular reporting	**Mind Freedom**

As the new year approaches, ask yourself: which freedom do you want more of in 2027, and what's your first step?

Let's talk about it in the new year: kiaora@akeaccounting.co.nz · (07) 307 0099



Cranberry Almond Chocolate Bark

Simple to make, easy to gift and a well-earned treat after a long year.

Ingredients

- 400g dark chocolate (good quality)
- 100g white chocolate, for drizzling
- 100g almonds, roughly chopped
- 80g dried cranberries
- Zest of 1 orange
- 1 tsp flaky sea salt
- Optional: freeze-dried raspberries to garnish

Method

1. Line a baking tray with baking paper.
2. Melt the dark chocolate in a heatproof bowl over barely simmering water, stirring until smooth. Remove from the heat.
3. Stir in the orange zest, half the almonds and half the cranberries.
4. Pour onto the tray and spread to about 5mm thick.
5. Melt the white chocolate and drizzle over the top. Scatter on the remaining almonds and cranberries, then the sea salt and raspberries if using.
6. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour, until set.
7. Break into shards and store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 2 weeks.

Box it, bow it, give it, or enjoy it yourself!



Switch off, enjoy the festive season and spend time with the people you love most.

Meri Kirihimete me ngā mihi o te tau hou

Merry Christmas and happy new year from all of us at Ake.

Our holiday hours

Our office closes at 12pm on Wednesday 23 December.
The team is back on Tuesday 5 January, and our doors reopen on Monday 11 January.

Ake

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