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Publisher's Message

How well do you love how you act, think and feel? If you live in Finland, chances are really, really well, considering Finns earned the title of the happiest country in the world for the fourth year in a row. Plus, in 2019 they ranked as the fittest country globally. A whopping 56 per cent of adults in Finland get a minimum of one hour of moderately intense physical activity DAILY. Canadians, on the other hand, are on a fast-track to heart disease. In 2017, a mere 16 per cent of Canadian adults met the measly 150 minutes of moderately intense physical activity per WEEK guideline.

And if you suffer from couch potatoism and are concerned about your health, think about your kids. During lockdowns only 4.8 per cent of Canadian children, and 1 per cent of teens met the daily physical activity guidelines. It's no wonder our health officials are warning heart disease levels will spike.

So, what edge do Finns have that North Americans don't? Some might say tenacity. In the 60s Finns were ranking among the unhealthiest in the world, so, in great 'sisu' style, they decided collectively to leave fatness behind and usher in fitness. They didn't just tell people to eat more fruit, they gave money to farmers to switch from dairy to berry. They tempted people into cycling, Nordic walking, skiing and ball games by loaning out bikes and equipment, making activities free – so no one was excluded. What does it take for a country to do a complete turnaround? It takes a government that actually cares about the health of its population. Since we don't have that, the ball's in your court. Choose wisely. It's not the common cold you have to be worried about. Enjoy this issue, chock full of ways you can age successfully.

Yours in health,
Sari Huhtala

A NEW ANTI-AGING TARGET: THE IMMUNE SYSTEM

by Lisa Kowalyk, CNP, B.Kin(hons)

When we think of antiaging, we usually think of how to look younger with cremes, serums, and facial treatments. But what if we told you one of the best anti-aging strategies is to focus efforts on the immune system? See, outward expressions of aging such as wrinkles, dry skin and hyperpigmentation are reflections of what's happening inside the body. The same factors that impact external signs of aging, such as free radicals, oxidative stress and inflammation, impact the immune system. In addition, when the immune system is underfunctioning it creates an environment that makes us age faster. Keeping the immune system vital - helps look and feel younger.

What Happens When the Immune System ages?

The job of the immune system is to fight infections, turn off disease promoting processes and clean up damaged cells. When the immune system ages, it can't find pathogens effectively, increasing susceptibility to infections and increasing the severity of them. The immune system is also responsible for programmed cell death, preventing cancer and regulating inflammation.

Providing the building blocks for a healthy, resilient immune system greatly reduces the risk of chronic illness throughout the lifespan, and a pleasant side effect is the external anti aging effects. By providing the immune system with the nutrients it needs, we not only improve the classic signs of aging, but quality of life is also drastically improved!

There are nutrients we can use to protect the immune system from the effects of aging that results in a slower aging rate in general. In fact, the top nutrients for immunity have skin specific anti aging properties!

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GLUTATHIONE

The immune system relies on glutathione to create healthy cells and for protection. Glutathione is the main antioxidant in the body, it's made in every cell but the production goes down as we age.

When production of glutathione is low, risk for chronic illness and infection increases because
a by-product of a healthy immune system is free radicals.

Glutathione disarms these free radicals ensuring they don't harm the body. The problem arises when internal glutathione production declines. These free radicals are free to roam around the body unsupervised and they damage healthy cells such as immune cells. In addition to protecting the immune system, glutathione stimulates certain immune cells known as natural killer cells and lymphocytes.

In terms of overall aging, glutathione has been shown to reduce discoloration of the skin, wrinkles, and increase elasticity and hydration.

VITAMIN C

An essential vitamin, vitamin C is an ally in antiaging. Vitamin C is used in over 20 functions in the immune system and like glutathione, vitamin C neutralizes the free radicals brought on by immune activation. Vitamin C concentrates in immune cells and therefore directly protects them, and increases their lifespan. Vitamin C is also needed for the creation of several immune cells and it tells the body when to get rid of defective and damaged cells while protecting DNA and cellular mutations!

Through its actions on the immune system, vitamin C reduces risk for several chronic illnesses, but vitamin C is also needed for collagen production. Collagen is often associated with reducing wrinkles and improving the appearance of skin. While this is true, collagen also protects the joints and blood vessels, keeping the entire body youthful!

VITAMIN D

Actually, a hormone, vitamin D, is the foundation of the immune system. It modulates and harmonizes the immune system based on what is happening on a moment to moment basis. It works to strengthen the communication network in the immune system to ensure that nothing gets missed. Vitamin D, directly inactivates viruses and it tells the immune system when to make chemicals that destroy other microbes.

When it comes to aging gracefully, Vitamin D is a given. Not only does it protect against many age related illnesses because of its immune properties but vitamin D is also known for its protective effect on bone, thereby decreasing risk for osteoporosis and it has been shown to reduce skin aging by protecting it from UV damage.

When the immune system is working great, there is less room for illness, inflammation and oxidative stress all of which accelerate external aging. These key nutrients taken regularly, offer support to the immune system, promote the esthetics of aging and overall reduce the risk for chronic illness across the board. The truth is, the body does age, but we have the tools to slow down this process and enjoy the ride. Using targeted nutrients help us to look good on the outside, feel good on the inside and enjoy a high quality of life for years to come.

YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM

The New Anti-Aging Target

VITAMIN D

VITAMIN C

GLUTATHIONE

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... ask a Naturopath

Do you have this sneaky metabolic issue?

By Dr. Yasmin Snippe, ND RN

When you hear insulin resistance, do you think… diabetes?

The truth is, that you, the person reading this, likely has insulin resistance.

It's a sneaky, metabolic problem that most of the population is suffering from, but don't realize it. Your medical doctor won't know you have it either, because in Ontario, they don't order the right tests to identify the early stages of insulin resistance.

Most common symptoms of insulin resistance:

- Trouble losing weight
- Energy crashes and fatigue
- Feeling hangry or lightheaded, if you don't eat every few hours
- Sugar cravings
- Hormonal imbalances and menstrual concerns
- Fatty liver
- High blood pressure

Ok then, what is it? Insulin resistance is a problem with how much insulin your body makes, in response to food. When you eat, your body releases insulin. Insulin is a hormone that signals your body to shift into "storage mode," causing your body to store sugar as fat. The problem in insulin resistance, is that your body makes way too much insulin, in response to most foods, especially sugar.

Insulin resistance occurs over time, when you regularly eat insulin-spiking foods, like sugar and processed flours. Not eating enough fibre also causes insulin resistance and the standard North American diet, is strikingly low in fibre.

Dr. Yasmin Snippe is both a naturopathic doctor and a registered nurse, which gives her a unique and common sense approach to natural medicine. Watch wellness videos, or reach out to her at https://linktr.ee/dryasmin

As we age, and continue to eat the wrong foods, the body will produce more and more insulin, in response to those same foods. This means, the sandwich you used to eat in your 20s, will produce a much larger insulin spike in your 40s, 50s and 60s. Eventually, insulin resistance turns into type 2 diabetes and becomes dangerous to your heart, kidneys and liver.

Problem foods that spike insulin:

- Refined sugars - ie candy, white sugar
- Natural sugars - ie maple syrup, honey, dried fruit, high sugar fruits
- Fruit juices
- Refined flours
- Processed grains - ie white rice, white flour pasta, white flour bread, processed corn
- Large amounts of protein - ie meat protein, whey protein
- Strong sweet tastes - Zevia pop or diet pop, artificial sweeteners

Signs and symptoms of insulin resistance are easy to notice:

- Fatigue, 45-60 minutes after eating.
- Feeling lightheaded if you haven't eaten in 2-3 hours.
- Sugar cravings and having a strong desire for sweets.
- Feeling of being "hangry", which means feeling irritable when you haven't eaten in a while.
- Eating food fixes the hangry feeling.

As a naturopathic doctor, I like to test for insulin resistance. I use either a Fasting Insulin test, or I order a full Insulin/Glucose Challenge Test, which is the most sensitive test for identifying insulin resistance.

So, if you're eating crackers and chips all day, fighting sugar cravings, and suffering from energy drops, then you likely have insulin resistance.The good news, is you can reverse this easily with diet and lifestyle changes.

Lowering refined carbohydrates, increasing high-fibre carbohydrates and increasing your healthy fats is the best way to heal this disease. To find out how to do this on an individual level, work with your naturopathic doctor or holistic nutritionist.

A good way to get started is to add healthy fats to your diet and notice how healthy fats help reduce your hunger and keep your energy more even. Next time you feel hangry, try eating a quarter cup of olives (a healthy fat) and notice how you feel in 30 to 60 minutes.

Healthy Fats:

- Olives, olive oil
- Avocados, avocado oil

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>> Do you have this metabolic issue?

- Coconut oil, full fat coconut milk/cream, shredded coconut
- Nuts, seeds and their butters
- Pasture-raised meats and eggs
- Grass-fed dairy
- Cacao butter

Observing your own hunger signals will help you understand how food is effecting you. A balanced meal should keep you satiated for four to six hours, easily. Our bodies are designed to go many hours or sometimes even days without eating.

Feeling hungry one to two hours after a meal means your metabolic hormones are out of balance and the problem will only get worse.

Healthy aging, requires understanding your own insulin balance. Insulin resistance will age you more quickly, because it's so damaging to your metabolism. You have the power to change this and the power lies in your everyday food choices.

EXERCISE CORNER

1-MINUTE MORNING MOVER

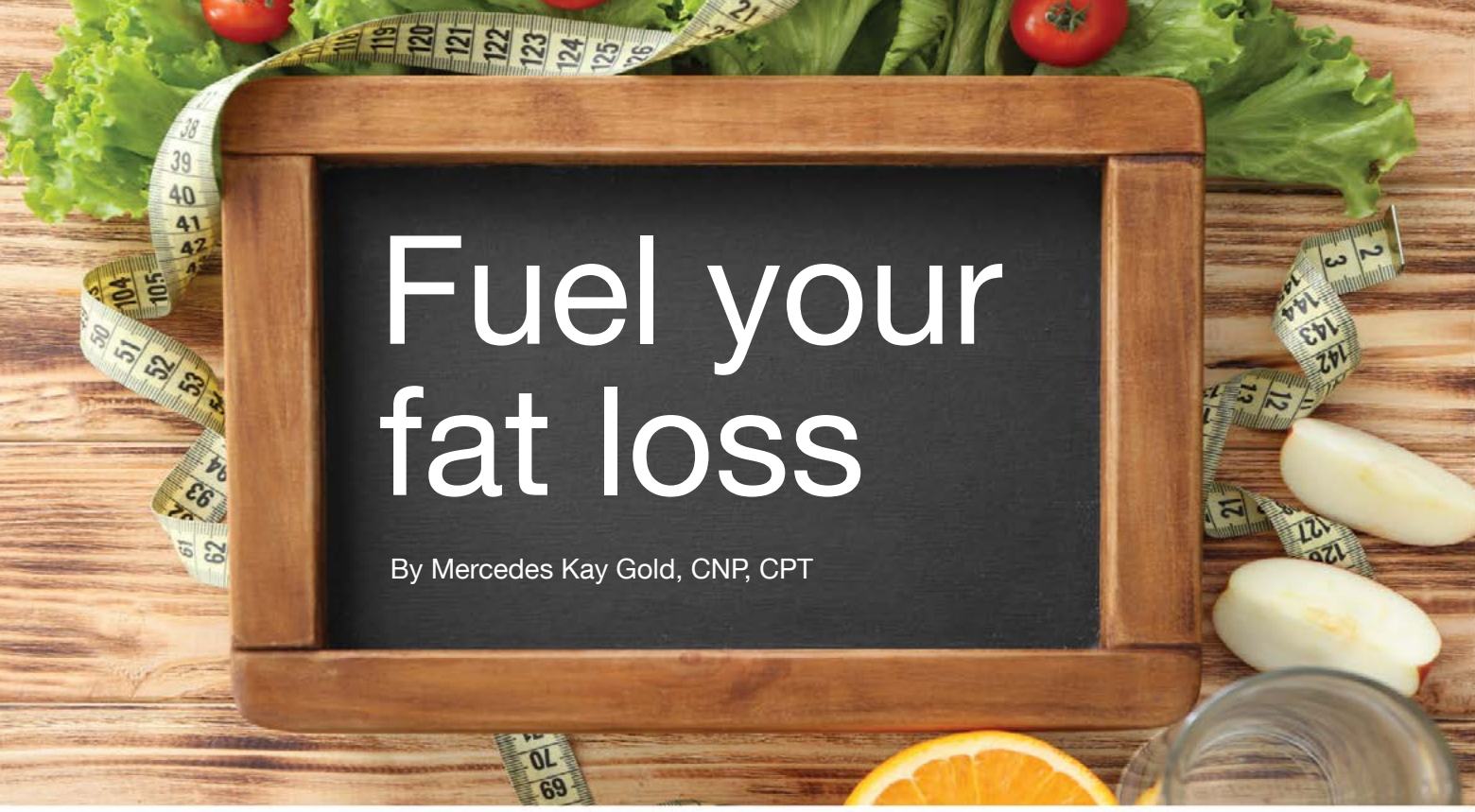
By Heather Wallingford

Why not be kind to your muscles and wake them, and your brain, up slowly before you get out of bed? These simple exercises can be done before rising, or, if you are having difficulty falling asleep, go through this routine once or twice counting 1-2-3-4 slowly, making sure that you relax for the full four counts after each exercise.

Each exercise can be done lying in bed, on your back.

1. Curl your toes under. Hold 2-3-4. Relax 2-3-4
2. Pull your toes up. Hold 2-3-4. Relax 2-3-4
3. Point your toes. Hold 2-3-4. Relax 2-3-4
4. Flex your feet (point toes up). Hold 2-3-4. Relax 2-3-4
5. Press back of knees into bed. Hold 2-3-4. Relax 2-3-4
6. Squeeze your seat muscles. Hold 2-3-4. Relax 2-3-4
7. Make a fist. Stretch your fingers. Hold-2-3-4. Relax 2-3-4
8. Push your arms into the bed. Hold 2-3-4. Relax 2-3-4
9. Squeeze shoulder blades together. Hold 2-3-4. Relax 2-3-4.
10. Tilt ear to shoulder, left, right. Turn head left, then right.

Heather Wallingford is a retired Physical and Occupational Therapist. working nearly 60 years with children, adults, elderly and workers in heavy industry. For a free exercise booklet send name and address to hjwallingford@gmail.com.



Fuel your fat loss

By Mercedes Kay Gold, CNP, CPT

Healthwise

The importance of self-love is paramount, paving the way to a positive mindset. Most people would never talk to family and friends using the words they repeat in a daily loop to themselves. Too many people focus on all the things they hate about themselves and often these traits, habits or body parts are the ones others adore. It is a learned skill to stare in the mirror and talk lovingly to oneself.

The moment you truly fall in love with yourself, you become beautiful inside and out to your new number one fan, you. The world effortlessly aligns, vibration raises and confidence overflows, but self-love at what cost? Respect yourself. Admire yourself. Nurture yourself. Does self-acceptance mean ignoring the link between weight and health risks? Are we so self-accepting that our daily health choices include living a sedentary, sugar-stocked existence? If any number on the bathroom scale translates to a beautiful body image, what is the point of eating healthy and exercise? Does society glamorize body images that are putting our wellness on the backburner? Life expectancy is linked to a healthy body mass index. Like it or not, the choices we make today impact our quality of life in the future. Being overweight increases the risk of developing a fatty liver, diabetes, high blood pressure, and a laundry list of other diseases.

There is nothing glamorous about filling a prescription. Sickness is not sexy. Offsetting health risks early in life supports aging gracefully.

Food is fuel. Yes, love yourself at any weight, but also enough to make the leap to a healthier food plan today. Bullying, body-shaming and self-loathing are undeniably toxic behaviors. Accepting others and ourselves at any weight is kindness, but it should not translate into throwing health out the window. Lifestyle changes are not easy, but in the end, they are life changing and ultimately influence how many candles we may blow out on our birthday cake. Genes play a part in overall health, and of course there are health issues that a nutrient-dense diet may not conquer. Scads of serious diseases also run in families because bad eating habits can run in families. Healthy food! Healthy life!

Tricks of the trade for a healthier you

~ Buddy system ~

Two people sharing a common goal is a game changer. Challenges are expected, making trouble-shooting as a team helpful. Choose a diet buddy who is positive – a personal cheerleader you are comfortable sharing your journey with. Talk daily; support is strength. Share strategies to stay on track. Remind each other to hydrate, prep meals and move after sitting for extended periods. Tracking measurements, pictures and even keeping the number on the scale quiet until reaching an agreed landmark date is buddy support. Do not forget to celebrate the small victories. Being part of a dieting duo is key when the chips are down. Some days will be a struggle. It's not easy to say no to a little nibble, snack or sip with temptation lurking at every corner.

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One-minute exercise snacks matter

Let's face it. Killer high intensity interval training (HIIT) workouts are not for everyone, but exercise snacking is. And, believe it or not, even the most mundane activities, like lugging heavy laundry up the stairs, can become a game-changer for desk-bound individuals.

Researchers previously asserted that a minimum of 10 minutes of continuous exercise was required to experience positive cardiorespiratory results. But new evidence suggests even incidental exercise makes a difference. Research in the British Journal of Sports Medicine touts the benefits of high intensity incidental physical activity (HIIPA), which includes activities like sprinting up the stairs throughout the day, for sedentary individuals.

Even one minute of HIIPA daily can improve cardiorespiratory fitness for the inactive person, researchers say.

It's no secret that exercise matters. Physical inactivity is the major cause of most chronic diseases, according to a researched article in the journal Comprehensive Physiology. By 2025, one third of the world's population will be obese, according to a World Obesity Federation report. In 2015, 61.3 per cent of Canadian adults were overweight or obese, according to Statistics Canada. And those numbers just keep climbing.

While HIIPA can provide modest improvements to cardiorespiratory fitness, kicking activity levels up a notch – by adding even two minutes of daily rebounding to the fold – not only flushes out the whole lymphatic system, but provides a much-needed muscle-maintaining routine.

After the age of 35 adults lose one-quarter to one-third of a pound of muscle every year, and gain the same amount in fat, according to Tufts University aging researcher and scientist, Miriam Nelson, PhD.

Since the 1980s, NASA scientists have hailed the benefits of rebounding for holding on to muscle, and its ability to restore rapid loss of muscle and bone mass in astronauts in space.

They dubbed rebounding as the most efficient, effective form of exercise devised by man.

Two minutes of rebounding also flushes the entire lymphatic system, and strengthens and cleanses lymph nodes, according to MedFit Network. The lymphatic system is critical to the immune system and the circulatory system. Two minutes of rebounding also triples white blood cell count, giving the immune system a boost.

Rebound exercise is simply non-impact vertical motion exercise on a rebounder – a specialized mini trampoline. Not all rebounders are created equal though. Most are designed for recreation rather than regular fitness use. Price points vary depending on quality. Cheap rebounders are made with low-quality springs or bungees that can be jarring on the joints and leave the knees and back feeling worse than before beginning exercise. If regular use for therapeutics or fitness is the aim, invest in a high-quality rebounder that has springs specifically designed to absorb the impact of a bounce, to protect the joints. Some rebounders also offer a stabilizing bar to hold on to.

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Advertorial

Swapping recipes, books and adorable motivating memes help inspire to thrive holistically.

~ Green thumb ~

Greenspace is beneficial to the earth and your health inside and out. Whether you have a balcony, planting pot, window box, greenhouse or a designated dreamy dirt plot, playing in the mud is fun at any age. From seed to sprout, growing your own food helps connect the human spirit to nature on the most fundamental level. Fast food is exactly that. In a rushed world, we dine and dash, losing sight of the farm to table aspect. Bringing back a touch of green to your life raises health benefits. Herbal happiness is possible even with the smallest space, but provides a daily dose of chlorophyll, the reason behind the vibrant green glow of little lush leaves. Adding cilantro, heavy metal detox delight or blood boosting parsley, plus heaps of other herbs to salads, juices and culinary creations ups the health value. A garden of goodness is not just a backyard plot of dirt, today's versions are bougie pots, crates, shelves, recycled pallets and raised garden boxes. Even the busiest bees can stop roadside, choosing to support health through the goodness of local farmer's markets. Winter will soon be on the way. Sprouting and hydroponics are indoor green goodness, the perfect reminder of summer all year long.

~ Awesome Apps ~

A huge obstacle in the world of losing unwanted pounds is understanding portions. Restaurants compete for your money and use serving sizes to tempt your taste buds and wallet. Most people overestimate their level of activity and underestimate their daily caloric intake. This creates a huge problem when trying to lose or maintain a healthy body weight. Picking, nibbling or a spoonful while cooking is often forgotten, but apart of your daily total. Alcohol is another add-on that is chocked full of calories. Tracking the consumption of food and drinks can certainly help people understand their eating patterns. Charting food also highlights caloric intake at different meals, showing when you consume the most calories. Using a diet-tracking app is helpful for self-monitoring and goal setting. It also makes counting carbs, fat and protein a snap whether it's homemade or from a well-known restaurant chain or brand. Tons of apps also tout extra funky features. Many support barcode scanners and even sync with other health apps or devices. There are also apps for specific support. It can be tricky to navigate a keto, vegan, paleo, low sugar, carbohydrate or sodium diet. Apps also chart your progress, presenting changes on an easy-to-read graph. Apps store information, making it a fabulous tool to look back months and understand success and failures along the way. One app takes it a step further by allowing you to track your food intake and portion sizes by simply snapping and submitting a picture. Another available app helps people with diabetes keep track of their symptoms, medication and blood glucose in addition to the standard diet and exercise expectations. Apps offer community, tips and tools to increase motivation with fewer dieting downfalls. A couple of minutes a day and seeing your personal numbers and compiled data may put you on the path to wellness. A weekly double, shot no-sugar caramel latte costs more than a typical app, so please, save the excuses.

~ Food prep ~

Planning healthy meals and stocking the fridge and freezer helps prevent temptation. Prepping equals accountability, preventing a diet disaster and avoiding drive-thru drama. Planning meals equals instant portion control and tailormade carbohydrate, protein and fat grams. Sugar and sodium are easy to manage. It's simple to get stuck in a rut, eating the same meals over and over. Prep prevents boredom, saves money and eliminates food waste. Menu planning has you in complete caloric control, helping you achieve your long-term health and weight-loss goals. Meal planning can also be left to the experts. Fabulous fare can be delivered directly to your door. Choose the type of box by making it goal and allergy specific. Experts deliver fresh ingredients, recipe cards and just like that, you are an overnight culinary superstar. If cooking is not for you, there is always top-notch take out and companies who deliver individual fresh or frozen portions. Vegan and organic home-based businesses are booming during Covid. Take it one step further and decorate your eating space. Eating off a lovely plate, special bento box or cute cutlery, anything that makes you want to sit and eat slowly. Pass on multi-tasking. Mindful eating is a must.

~ Try something new! ~

Losing weight is not hard for most people. Most plans are low calorie, lack flavor, flair and fun, but the number on the scales goes down quickly. Unfortunately its water weight. They are often favoured by the famous or a friend with an upcoming event. Whether it is a water fast, cookie, grapefruit or rice diet, these simply restrict calories. Trendy diets are not the answer. Quick fixes are not sustainable.

> Long-term lifestyle changes translate to a slow and steady loss, and the only sure way to lose fat while maintaining muscle mass.

Keeping a food dairy for a few days highlights the times you eat, foods favored, water, and alcohol intake. Make a note of hours slept and log exercise. After a few days, read your journal. Notice the times you nosh and the foods you repeatedly eat. Are you a carboholic? Do you eat enough protein? Are you a carnivore or plant lover? Are you a sugar fiend late at night? Do you skip breakfast? Do you graze on little meals all day or eat one huge meal late in the day? Are you a liquid lover? All these answers are clues leading you to potentially a long-term lifestyle that works like a charm. Allergies and food intolerances are a fast track to determining which diet may work best. Is dairy an issue?

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This may make going plant-based an easy transition. Eat once a day? Intermittent fasting is a lifestyle where you eat in a specific window. Most people drink water or black herbal tea and coffee outside the four- to six-hour dining window. Some choose to fast one day a week for 24 hours and others 18 to 20 hours everyday. Eating a plant-based meal plan with a focus on raw is healthy, full of fibre and easy to stick to anywhere anytime.

Wintertime welcomes warming up the inside with the addition of steaming produce or adding hearty soups. Kicking white sugar, rice or flour, all processed foods, sugary drinks and alcohol is the fastest and easiest way to begin.

Do not forget plant-based can be unhealthy, too. There are overweight vegans.

Quinoa crusted desserts, processed frozen foods, chickpea brownies and coconut-based ice creams are all processed. Going fresh offers an immediate jump-start at weight-loss, while promoting on-the-spot health benefits.

Everyday is a new start and every small change can bring big changes to overall health. Switching from pop to water aids digestion, hydrates skin and joints, plus promotes fullness, supporting weightloss. Cutting down on sugar helps offset the rollercoaster of mood swings, likelihood of diabetes, fatty liver and cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure and inflammation throughout the body. Adding a rainbow of fresh produce is an easy way to naturally boost cells with vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients. Losing weight adds energy, aids balance, increases mobility, and takes pressure off joints. Extra weight is not unattractive, it's unhealthy and the number one reason to drop the extra pounds once and for all.

Mercedes Kay Gold is a Certified Holistic Practioner and Certified Mobile Trainer living & working in Toronto. Her writing has been featured in various publications and has appeared on Daytime with Jacqueline Betterton. Her spare time is spent blogging all things healthy & enjoying time with her sons.

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-Annie

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Eat away painful arthritis

by Sari Huhtala

Power story

Standing in the parking lot at a local Wal-Mart, Tracey Gosnay froze as her two-year-old daughter slipped away from her grip and began to run between cars. Bystanders shouted profanities as they watched her stand immobilized, but the gripping pain in her joints was a stark reminder that running after her was out of the question.

Perhaps it was being shamed that pushed her to find a way to get her life back. Or maybe she had just grown tired of not even being able to lift herself out of bed in the morning. Whatever the motivation was, she would come to realize that living pain free was so easy to attain, even for someone like Gosnay, who, at age 34 was diagnosed with psoriatic arthritis – a painful, inflammatory condition that effects large joints, particularly in the lower extremities, and spine, and can permanently damage joints.

"My daughter had darted out and started running and I couldn't run after her," Gosnay recalls. "People were yelling at me, saying things like 'Why aren't you running after your daughter? You're a horrible mother. What are you doing?' All of these people were yelling at me. Someone even said "Don't you feel ashamed parking in a handicap parking spot?'"

"That was the turning point. It was the next day that I decided I was going to get my life back."

"I had suffered for two years and then one day I just had enough, and said 'I can't take this anymore,' and decided I would start with healing my skin."

The following day she wandered into a local health food store, seeking some resolve for the psoriasis that had plagued her since the age of 30. She had developed psoriasis shortly after getting breast implants, then, six months after her daughter was born in 2004, she developed symptoms of psoriatic arthritis.

While in the health food store, on a mission to find psoriasis relief cream, a book had fallen off the shelf, and as she stooped down to pick it up, the title caught her eye – *How to Eat Away Arthritis.*

That's when she began to make the connection between the food she was consuming, and the pain she was living with.

"In the book it said to listen to your body; you're going to feel the pain within 20 minutes of eating something that is causing the inflammation."

These common foods aren't necessarily junk foods. They can be healthy foods too, she says.

"I always made homemade meals, but we ate lots of carbs, potatoes, dairy, red meat and rice.

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I drank milk, and ate yogurt and cottage cheese," without any consideration that these foods may be fueling the inflammation, which then causes pain, she says.

"I became bed ridden. My symptoms were getting worse. I couldn't even roll over into another position. I needed my husband at the time to help pull me out of bed. I had to use clothing with zippers because I couldn't do up buttons."

"Bending forward was impossible.There would be days when I would be crying because the pain was too much."

Yet, not once did any medical professional mention a dietary intervention could be the path to a pain-free life, she says.

> "Doctors didn't ask me any questions about nutrition; they just gave medication. I suffered for two years because nobody told me it was connected to my diet."

How to solve the mystery of which foods are fueling inflammation? Simple. Start with a bland diet of only green lettuce and chicken for two weeks, says Gosnay. Then begin adding one potential food culprit at a time. One would be surprised at how pain levels plummet just by eating a bland diet, she says.

"I felt the best I ever felt. I wasn't as stiff, or in as much pain, and I was much more mobile" after two weeks of sustenance on chicken and lettuce, says Gosnay.

Then, she introduced one other food item per week to see how her body reacted to it. Since foods can cause inflammation in as little as 20 minutes, or even a day or two later, she says, based on the advice in the book, it is recommended that individuals continue eating a bland diet, such as chicken and green lettuce, for a week after introducing a new food item into the fold, then experiment with another food.

She added tomatoes into her diet, and realized that 20 minutes later her fingers were cramping – a sign that tomatoes were inflammatory culprits for her.

The same reaction occurred when she added green peppers, but not when she added yellow or red peppers.

When she added red meat into the fold, she experienced the same inflammatory response, and when she added back milk, cheese and yogurt, she immediately developed symptoms. It took four months to figure out which foods were at the root of her inflammation, she says.

"I believe our diet contributes to a high percentage of our ailments. If people can just figure out that connection, then they can get to the root of their issues."

Raw green peppers, raw tomatoes, red meat and dairy are her biggest culprits, followed by gluten, as it upsets the gut, along with processed foods.

Months later, she visited a natural practitioner to have a live blood analysis scan, and discovered she had candida – a clue to ongoing fatigue in her life. Sugar is the number one source of candida's fuel, so eliminating sugar, is key. Her final dietary intervention was to become vegetarian, she says.

"My diet has changed dramatically. I eliminated all the inflammatory foods and got my life back."

"Before, I'd sleep for eight hours and feel tired all of the time. People think it's just stress causing sleep issues, but it's all connected. I don't feel like I'm suffering anymore. I have more energy, my skin's better, I wake up a lot earlier and feel well rested. "

What does it take to be ready – ready to heal your life? A desire for a better life, not just for yourself, but your family as well.

"I was just so determined that I didn't want to live like that anymore. I had the inner strength to do what I needed to do to heal, and I had decided I was going to do it."

"I wouldn't have been a fun mother had I not healed my pain. I wouldn't have been doing activities with my daughter and travelling the world."

Someone had suggested to her she spend time stretching out her muscles and joints, so she started practicing yoga in 2004, improving mobility and further reducing her pain.

Becoming a yoga teacher was a natural transition for Gosnay, who was a rehabilitation assistant. She travelled to India to study yoga – completing an 800-hour professional yoga teacher training in an ashram.

It was there she learned about ayurvedic practices, like cleanses, as well as meditation, that support overall wellness.

"I had never thought of spirituality until I started doing yoga. I now meditate every morning before I start doing anything so that I have a fresh, virgin brain, with no habitual thoughts – first thing in the morning."

Twice a year, in spring and fall, she does an ayurvedic cleanse – a kitchari cleanse (click link to learn more). Kitchari is made of easy-to-digest foods, split mung beans, white rice and spices, intended to give your body a break. For two weeks she consumes only kitchari and liquids. She also takes ayurvedic detox supplements, which includes spices like turmeric.

She later studied suspension yoga – sometimes referred to as aerial yoga – and that was the final step in living completely pain free, she says.

"When I did everything, got my life back and was pain free, there was still this little bit of pain in my low back that I couldn't get rid of – a nerve pain that would shoot up my back at times when I was doing simple tasks like loading the dishwasher."

"I actually wanted to try something fun and different, and never even thought of the connection to pain relief. My pain was totally gone once I started doing the suspension sling," says Gosnay, who is a certified and registered yoga therapist and owner of Yoga Revolution in Greater Sudbury.

"It's like working out in a pool – the water supports you so there is no strain. The gravity supports the body. When you're going upside down, you're decompressing your spine, while strengthening your hips and core."

RIDICULOUSLY EASY

****

Power perogies

by Sari Huhtala

No matter how addicted you are to cheese, I am certain these cheese-less wonders will leave you craving for more. They are well worth the effort. Set aside time to roll up your sleeves and get cracking on these half-moon dumplings.

THE HEALTHFUL PIEROGI

Ingredients for dough: (Makes about 30 perogies)

- 3 cups spelt flour
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 cup butter
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp sour cream
- 1 egg, whisked
- 3/4 cups tepid water
- Garlic and onion powder

Blend flour, salt, butter and oil in bowl till crumbly. Add rest of ingredients and mix until smooth.

Prepare filling: Cut and boil 3 large potatoes and 2 sweet potatoes until soft. Drain, reserving about 1/4 cup of the liquid. Mash the potatoes in pot. Add 2-3 tbsp of liquid. Adding too much liquid makes it more challenging when shaping the pierogi. Add 1 tbsp of butter if desired, or a touch of olive oil. Add 3/4 cup nutritional yeast, 1/2 tbsp of garlic and onion powder, and salt to taste. Cool in fridge.

On a well-floured surface, roll out a quarter of the dough to an 1/8-inch thickness. Using a large-mouth cup as a cookie cutter, press circle cut-outs onto dough. Take one cut-out into your hand and add about a heaping tablespoon of filling to the centre of the cut-out. Fold edge over to create a half moon shape and pinch edges closed. Once you have a batch ready, bring a large pot of water to boil. Drop about 10 perogies into the boiling water and cook until they float - about three minutes. Remove with a slotted spoon, then continue cooking the remainder of the perogies. Allow to cool and dry off on a platter. Once cooled and dry, freeze if desired or store in fridge for up to four days.

To prepare perogies for a meal, heat olive oil on medium low, add chopped onions, and perogies on top. Cook until onions are soft and lightly browned. Add chives if desired.

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Peace love and Kesim

A brand created courtesy of Mother Nature, overflowing with holistic happiness and a touch of magic!

Covid was the end and the beginning, creating a dramatic detour and an unknown path ahead. In the darkness, light was revealed. I found personal balance escaping outside, walking endlessly on nature's treadmill. Everyday, I felt peace, falling in love with Mother Nature up close and personal. The great outdoors reconnected me to childhood memories. With a warm heart, I relived hunting frogs amongst rows of sunflowers with my beloved cousin Michael, picking produce in my grandpa's garden and skipping rocks in the pond by a beaver dam. To this day, nothing makes me smile more than going for "A Walk in Nature" with my three sons, finding inspiration in their camping trip tales and adventures.

Peace love and Kesim is a Canadian female-owned candle company bringing the allure of outdoors indoors. Conventional candles compromise health. Paraffin or a paraffin-blend of wax is unfortunately the conventional go-to ingredient used by the majority of brands. Paraffin is an inexpensive biproduct of the petroleum industry and often paired with scary synthetic scents and colors. Once lit, toxic toluene, benzene, formaldehyde and a laundry list of chemicals can cause headaches, intensify asthma and even linked to cancer. Peace love and Kesim candles are vegan and chemical-free. We use 100% soy wax, essential oils and a lead-free cotton wick. Peace love and Kesim loves all creatures, big and small, choosing to give busy bees a break! Peace love and Kesim brings holistic happiness to your whole family. Peace love and Kesim candles evoke emotions, elevate life and add ambience to any setting. Lavender offers a relaxing escape from day-to-day stressors. Peppermint energizes, myrrh magnifies meditation, and pine is a wonderous wilderness escape in your happy place!

EVERY LABEL HAS A STORY

Each candle is a stunning piece of home décor. Every label has a story. Some of the animals, I simply took a snapshot, some I rescued and some I did bear witness to. Peace love and Kesim candles are adorned with stunning scenery or adorable animals, brought to life on one-of-a-kind labels created by local Canadian artists.

Each labor of love gives back. Peace love and Kesim supports the conservation of Canadian animals and landscape with each purchase of any premium hand-poured soy wax candles. Visit us at www.peaceloveandkesim to see which non-profit organizations we proudly support, and follow us on social media @peacelovekesim. Don't forget to tag us on your outdoor adventures and burning our beloved brand of candles!

Photo Credit: Prabin L. Manandhar

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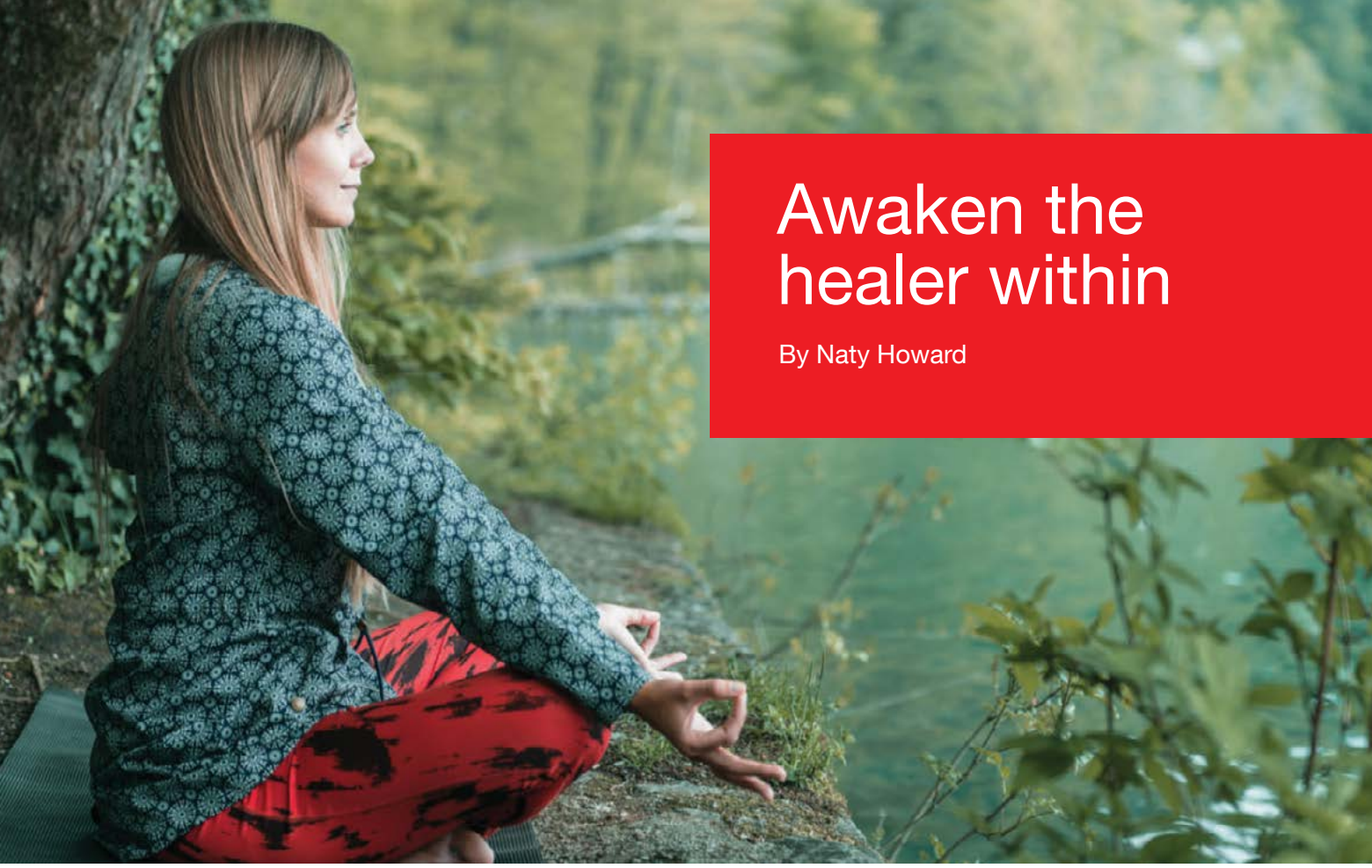

Awaken the healer within

By Naty Howard

Soulful living

As your body shifts, changes, and you find yourself feeling your age more and more, do you ever pause to think...Is there a better way?

Is there a way to feel more deeply connected to my body temple as a living sanctuary, more deeply connected to my truth, values, courage, inner space of refuge, resilience and my capacity to thrive and feel whole again?

Maybe you have, or maybe this is the first time these words are finding their way to your heart. Perhaps you have heard the call within you to align your habits to create the body and the life you desire in order to age gracefully, but you have no idea of what that really means or how to go about it.

I get it, I have been there.

The journey of aging gracefully invites you to redefine a new relationship with your body, your mindset, your past, your vision of yourself in the future, with the story you tell yourself and the space both within you and around you, you give yourself to digest, process and transform it all as you awaken to your opportunity to nurture all aspects of your wellness.

Where do you begin to nurture all aspects of your wellness? What does that mean? And how can you get there?

Begin by bringing your awareness to your body, to your needs; to honouring them. Bring your awareness to your vision of yourself and if you don't have a vision of yourself in the next year, three years or five years, make one.

Energy flows where the mind goes. So where is your mind going? And are you the one offering guidance to your mind that is in alignment with your heart, needs and desires?

I would begin the quest to create a vision for yourself with a simple question: how do you want to feel?

And after you answer that question begin to unravel yourself with great honesty. What are the baby steps I need to take to feel that way? Write them all down.

> "Your vision of yourself is the tip of the arrow that aligns your day-to-day actions to the future you want to create."

It is a powerful practice that cuts through our self-sabotage and ego. Remember, as you shift your actions, the ego or as I rather call it, the place of evolution-going-on, will come out and 'play.' So, be ready for it.

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When you nurture yourself deeply and take the step to align your actions with your needs and desires to build a great space within yourself of deep healing, inner strength, beauty, radiance, wellness and belonging, you also begin to change your bio-chemistry and the way you feel in your body.

You begin to change your relationship with yourself, with that which gives you form, with your heart and the layers of trauma that you carry, with Spirit and the ways you allow your life to be touched by grace, with your mind, by anchoring into your inner wisdom, and with the space of Soul within, which allows you to awaken into sacredness and awaken the powerful healer within you.

My question to you is, how are you nurturing yourself now? And how do you need to nurture yourself to be able to feel the way you want to feel?

Along my spiritual healing journey, I've discovered five steps that I would like to offer you, these are tools and rituals you have at your fingertips that will help you age gracefully and awaken to your power.

The five steps to nurture all aspects of your wellness and connect with the divinity within you in order to age gracefully and with greater vitality are:

1. Honour your body through ritual
2. Anchor your mind
3. Nourish and detox
4. Transform your story
5. Root into sacredness

Step 1: Honour your body through ritual

Honouring your body, by aligning your rhythms with the daily rhythms through self-care rituals to belong to yourself again, will allow you to shift your relationship with yourself, create greater intimacy with your body, move beyond your resistances, story and false belief systems much faster into creating the body, mind, and connection with your soul you yearn for.

Step 2: Anchor your mind

Anchor your mind to transform the stress, overwhelm, fragmentation and anxiety you feel so you can create a safe and sacred space within you and age gracefully. As you reset and downregulate your nervous system, your body will begin to change.

As you anchor your mind, you will find greater inner freedom and stillness.

Step 3: Nourish & detox

Discovering how to nourish and detox your body deeply to ignite your healing will allow you to let go of the obstacles in your way and give you a clear slate to nourish yourself back to the life that you desire.

Your body will only detox when it is nourished. The way you nourish your entire being will help you create a stronger and more stable foundation to thrive again more quickly. I want you to think of nourishment from now, far beyond what and how you do it, but rather as radical self-care and how you nurture all aspects of your wellness.

Step 4: Transform your story

Transforming your story through inner questing so you can step into your power will allow you to know yourself better, have a clear vision of your personal path, refuge into inner freedom, become the author of your journey, step into deep alignment with your soul, and lead an empowered life.

Step 5: Root into sacredness

Rooting into the inner space of sacredness, refuge and resilience will allow you to be your own revolution, live an embodied life, evolve your habits, align your actions and change your life as you unlock the gateway into deeper levels of healing and vitality.

Rooting into sacredness is the very act of reclaiming your divine self and creating spaciousness for deep healing.

If you want to recall these key steps quickly, they are: honour, anchor, nourish, transform and awaken.

Do you see how powerful these five steps are to age gracefully, regardless if you are 25 or into your 70s?

The layering of these five steps allows each and every one of us to belong to ourselves again, to heal our fragmentation and weave ourselves into wholeness again, regardless of our age. They allow us to transform our challenges into a spiritual healing journey that brings us closer and into a more intimate relationship with ourselves.

If there is one thing that I can leave you with is this, be radically honest with yourself about how it is you want to feel and carve a vision of and for yourself forward that deeply honours and nurtures all aspects of your wellness.

How you nurture all aspects of your wellness is the path to wholeness, and aging gracefully.

Photo credit: ©[microgen] via Canva

Naty Howard is an energy healer, shamanic practitioner, yoga teacher and author of Your Mighty Inner Healer.

Naty's offerings include: New and Full Moon Healing Circles, Juice Feast Alchemy, Spirit Medicine Healing Sessions, Wild & Sacred Woman Retreats and the 21 day Self Healers Challenge.

Naty helps people accelerate their spiritual healing journey towards vitality and thrive as they align themselves with their deepest desires and create the inner structure they need to root into the space of refuge and resilience within themselves. She will be guiding a one year Pachakuti Mesa Tradition of Shamanism Apprenticeship staring in Fall 2021. Stay tuned.

To learn more about Naty and her offerings visit www.natyhoward.com.

... ask a Nutritionist

B vitamins vital for body, brain health

By Nonie De Long, ROHP, CNP

Dear Nutritionist,
I wanted to know can you tell me which vitamins are needed for energy? I have struggled with energy dips for years and suspect deficiencies.

That's a great question, that a lot of people will benefit from! As long as we have adequate macronutrients to be converted into energy we should not experience problems with all the energy we need. But lack of energy is a common complaint today and there are a couple reasons why.

The first is insulin resistance from consuming too many starches, sugars, and carbohydrates for too long. Our bodies are not designed to handle those macros in the quantity we are now consuming. This overburdens our insulin regulation mechanisms and the cells become intolerant to insulin when it signals that sugar needs to be taken in. They essentially tell it to go away. So the body becomes more insistent and produces more insulin to get the sugar into the cells. The cells then can't ignore insulin. So insulin is being pumped out all the time and that is anabolic. It is a hormone that causes us to gain mass. Fat mass to be specific. And in its presence the body cannot break down the fat cells for energy. So you get all this energy in the fat cells stored as a backup, but this block to using it. It's all there and your body can't access it. So the body screams for more carbs or sugar because it feels it has no energy. This is insulin resistance. Over time it develops into type II diabetes, which is quickly becoming epidemic in our society.

Nonie De Long is a licensed orthomolecular nutritionist (ROHP, CNP Hons.1st), currently finishing a degree in homeopathy. She has a clinic, dispensary/ apothecary in Bradford, ON. She has a special interest in holistic mental healthcare and serves clients in person and online.

https://www.hopenotdope.ca/

That is one major reason why we have no energy. Another, as you pointed out, is deficiency state. The vitamins that are most responsible for energy in the body are the B vitamins, of which there are eight. They are:

- B1 (thiamin)
- B2 (riboflavin)
- B3 (niacin)
- B5 (pantothenic acid)
- B6 (pyridoxine)
- B7 (biotin)
- B9 (folate)
- B12 (cobalamin)

The absolute best source of the B complex vitamins, hands down, is meat. Beef liver, other organ meat, fish, chicken, and egg yolks are the best sources. Many nutritionists will include fortified soy and dairy on that list, but fortified means they have had the vitamins added into them after production, so they really aren't a good natural source of these vitamins. Raw dairy is dense in these nutrients but we aren't able to access it here. Nuts and seeds, beans, and oats contain some B vitamins, but anti-nutrients in them make the vitamins in them less easily absorbed and used by the body. Anyone with digestive issues or inflammation may find it hard to extract their B's from these foods. Spinach is also high in B vitamins and you might think well spinach is great, there is nothing wrong with leafy greens! But spinach actually contains oxalates that make it inflammatory for many people.

The role of B complex vitamins

Vitamin B1 (thiamine):

B1 is essential for cell growth and function. Low levels are linked to type 2 diabetes and it's often depleted in those with alcoholism and can cause alcohol-induced brain damage. Thiamine is responsible for helping to convert carbohydrates to energy and for healthy liver function, so it only makes sense that it is impacted by overconsumption of carbs and alcohol. It's also important for healthy hair, skin, eyes, and nails. The recommended daily intake for adults is 1.1-1.2 mg. Under stress or with more exercise we likely need significantly more. Some people do not absorb it well, and may need more accordingly. It's a water soluble vitamin, so the body eliminates any that is taken in and not needed. Nutritional yeast, seaweed, beans, and beef liver are a great source of this vitamin.

Vitamin B2 (riboflavin):

Vitamin B2 is necessary for energy metabolism and growth and development. It helps us extract energy from proteins. It helps in the production of red blood cells and is important for proper cellular function. Cracking and reddening of the lips and mouth ulcers or chronic sore throat can be related to a deficiency of this vitamin. It can also cause iron deficiency anemia. It's been shown to decrease the risk of developing cataracts and to help with PMS symptoms. The recommended daily intake is 1.1-1.3mg for adults.

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Vitamin B3 (niacin):

Vitamin B3 is incredibly important in the body. It creates a compound (NAD) that is needed by over 400 enzymes, which then conduct many cellular activities, including DNA repair and gene expression.

> "In addition, it has been shown to be useful in reversing alcoholism, schizophrenia, post surgical psychosis, cholesterol problems, and atherosclerosis."

It also plays a role in a nervous system, healthy digestion, and healthy skin and some studies show it can be neuroprotective - helping to protect the brain in Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases. A deficiency in this vitamin can lead to memory loss, fatigue, depression, psychosis, headache, digestive issues, disorientation, burning easily in the sun and a rash from the sun, and a large, red, swollen tongue. In extreme states it leads to pellagra and even death. The recommended daily intake for vitamin B3 is 14-16mg for adults. I have used and consulted colleagues who have used upward of 10,000-20,000mg daily safely for the effective treatment of schizophrenia. I have witnessed it used safely in erectile problems of the circulatory nature, as well.

Vitamin B5 (pantothenic acid):

Vitamin B5 is important not just for energy, but also for hormone production. It's also essential for cholesterol production and regulation and the breakdown of fatty acids. It's been shown to reduce inflammatory marker C-reactive protein that is involved in chronic inflammatory states like atherosclerosis. This, coupled with its role in cholesterol management make it an important supplement for those with vascular disease risk factors. The recommended daily intake of vitamin B5 for adults is 5mg per day.

Vitamin B6 (pyridoxine):

Vitamin B6 is essential for a healthy nervous system and for blood sugar management. Clinically those who need it often have social anxiety, depression, and/or blood sugar problems, often with mood swings. It helps produce the neurotransmitters serotonin and dopamine that help us feel good! When taken with B3 and tryptophan it can really help clients with depression.

A deficiency of vitamin B6 can lead to a lesser known condition called pyroluria. It manifests as a mental health condition where the person has difficulty handling stress and social situations, with poor mood regulation, and very poor energy metabolism. For more information on this disorder, visit https://www.truefoodsnutrition.com.au/pyrrole-disorder-signs-and-symptoms/.

I have had many clients that suffer from this symptom set and respond very well to targeted supplementation with a complete reversal of symptoms on treatment.

B6 is also important for antibody and hemoglobin production. As such, it's needed in greater amounts in those with food allergies and intolerances.

The recommended daily intake for vitamin B6 for adults is 1.3mcg per day. It is one of the B vitamins that should be monitored by a health professional if taking in higher doses.

Vitamin B7 (biotin):

Vitamin B7 is involved in the breakdown of fatty acids and the management of cholesterol in the body, in conjunction with vitamin B5. It's often used as a supplement for healthy hair and skin and can help in blood sugar regulation with type I diabetes. It can help lower fasting glucose levels. It can be displaced by consuming raw egg whites, but I have rarely seen a deficiency. The recommended daily intake for vitamin B7 for adults is 30mcg per day.

Vitamin B9 (folate):

Vitamin B9 is essential for cellular division and DNA health. As such, it's one of the supplements recommended during pregnancy. However, it's often folic acid found in prenatal supplements, and that's the synthetic form.

Folic acid has been shown in some studies to help fight Alzheimer's disease by improving verbal IQ and reducing beta amyloid plaque, which is involved in brain and memory deterioration. The recommended daily intake of folate for adults is 400mcg per day. The need is increased during pregnancy and lactation. Professional help with this supplement is recommended to get the proper form and dose for optimal benefit.

Vitamin B12 (cobalamin):

Vitamin B12 is unique among the B vitamins in that it can be stored in the liver. That is an indicator of just how important it is! We need it to form red blood cells and for energy metabolism and for a healthy brain and nervous system. Low levels are associated with fatigue and poor brain function, as well as anxiety, depression, and inflammation. It has been shown to lower homocysteine levels and thus protect against heart disease and clot formation.

Many supplements contain the synthetic form of the vitamin: cyanocobalamin. The natural form is called methylcobalamin. Some people can use the synthetic form, but some absolutely need the methyl form. Some people can't tolerate methylcobalamin and in those cases adenosylcobalamin and hydroxocobalamin can help raise B12 levels better. A professional is needed to help determine which is right for you, especially if you are vegan or vegetarian or don't eat red meat regularly or if you have fatigue symptoms or heart disease risk.

The recommended daily intake of vitamin B12 for adults is 2.4mcg per day.

It's important to note that all the B vitamins are depleted at greater than normal rates by increased stress (including lots of exercise). As such, anyone coping with a lot of stress or those on a vegan or vegetarian diet might want to consider consulting a professional to get tested and get guidance supplementing with this vitamin complex.

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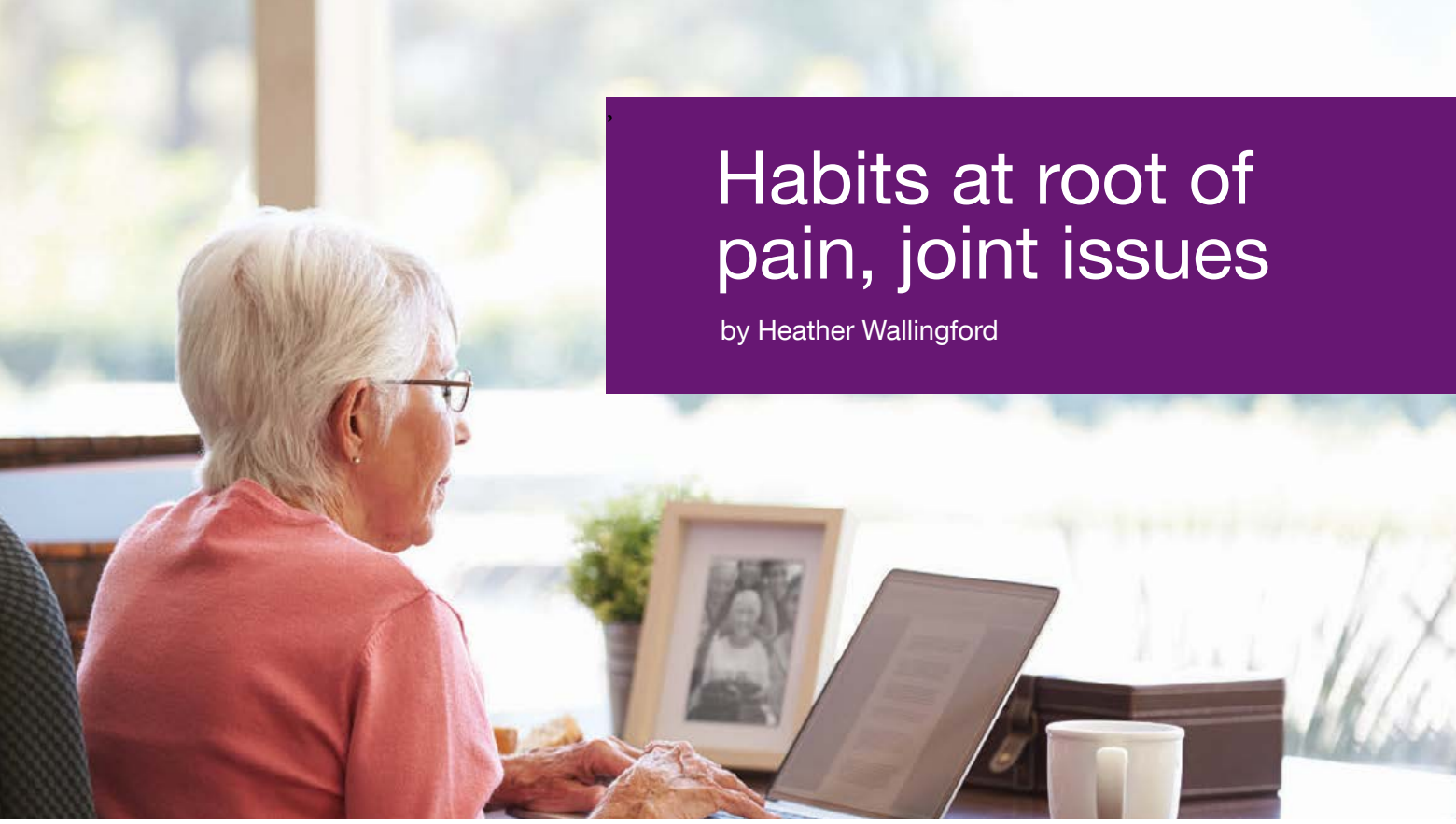

Habits at root of pain, joint issues

by Heather Wallingford

Successful aging

Studies show that about 80 per cent of pain is from muscles and joints. Much of this is caused from muscle imbalance. Even osteoarthritis of the joint, often due to a previous injury, can also be caused by muscle imbalance. This muscle and joint pain, due to muscle imbalance, occurs in middle age, with physically demanding repetitive jobs or hobbies, and then as we age. This muscle imbalance can also cause structural changes to our body.

As we age it could be that our habits are contributing to our aches and pains and impairing our growing old successfully.

When we are young our body is very forgiving. But as we age our habits that we may have had for a long time and are comfortable with have caused muscle imbalance, uneven wear on our joints and often misalignment of our body without us realizing it. They may now be causing or contributing to our aches and pains and premature aging, even though they haven't caused us any trouble in the past.

> One thing to keep in mind is that our body likes to be straight and it likes to move.

Any habits that constantly take one or more parts of our body out of line or put a twist on them needs to be addressed to help treat or prevent muscle joint pain or dysfunction. We need to identify these and change them and exercise muscles that aren't being challenged.

Take a break from sitting

Sitting is considered the new smoking as far as our health is concerned. Too much sitting increases the chance of heart problems, diabetes, stroke, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and forgetfulness. It also contributes to muscle joint pain and back and neck problems. Not only do we sit too much and for too long at one time, but we sit on sofas and easy chairs that add to our muscle imbalance and muscle, joint pain.

Sitting can cause poor posture/round shoulders. Avoiding round shoulders isn't just a matter of appearance. This posture causes changes in the alignment of the arms and neck and upper back and the vestibular system in the liner ear.

Poor posture is usually caused by sitting in a slouched position or leaning forward while doing an activity and not doing enough activities that use the muscles of the upper back.

Adverse affects of round shoulders

Headaches, neck and arm pain often occur because when the head/neck accommodates the position of the shoulders it leans backward putting more stress on the neck muscles and stress on the facet joints of the vertebrae, putting stress on the nerves to the arms . Balance is affected.

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When we are round shouldered our head has to change its position to accommodate our stooped position, putting the balance receptors in our inner ear on a different angle. Instead of our balance responses being automatic and efficient, our brain has to make the recalculation and the split second that that takes is often enough to cause us to fall.

Round shoulders make it easier for us to look down rather hold our head up to look straight ahead. We then start to rely on our visual system for our balance, which is slower to calculate and respond than the vestibular systems automatic response, leading to falls.

Shoulder function is impaired. Over time the stooped position leads to tightening of the chest muscles and stretching and weakening of the muscles of shoulders and upper back. The collar bone actually changes its angle from horizontal to a 30-degree angle. In this position our shoulder joints are forward and working at a mechanical disadvantage.

Our pelvis often changes its angle, especially if we cross our legs. This affects the back and the muscles of the legs and often one leg appears to be shorter.

Tip: Sit on a dining room-type chair with arms with feet flat and knees and hips at right angles. A little padding on the back is fine and a lumbar roll if comfortable. Interestingly enough, a guy's favorite position of sitting on a kitchen chair backwards, leaning on the back is good. Even in a good chair we still need to move often.

Avoid sitting cross-legged

Crossing your legs is a no, no. If you cross your legs like a man even though you appear to be sitting straight you are actually rounding your lower back and leaning it to the side of the leg doing the crossing. If you cross your legs like a girl, not only are you doing the above to your back, but you are also putting a twist on it.

The effect varies depending on how often you cross your legs and is much worse if you always cross the same one.

Tip: If you feel that one of these positions makes your back feel better, put your foot on a little stool or box that is four inches to six inches high. This will make your knee just a little bit higher than your hip This takes the twist off your back and only bends it to one side slightly. Alternate feet.

Using a computer

Sit straight in a good chair looking straight ahead at the monitor to decrease stress on the neck. Upper arms should be snug to your body to minimize stress on the shoulders. Arm rests are a good idea. If not the right height or too far apart to rest your elbows on while keeping them close to you body use pillows to make the adjustments either draped over the arm or on its edge between the arm and you.

Bifocals are a disaster for a computer as you have to lean your head backwards to see through them. Get glasses where the whole lens is right for the distance you are from the monitor.

Using a device follow the above for seating, but make sure that it is positioned high enough so that you are not leaning forward. Find a way to support your arms, but not leaning forward. See suggestions under computers.

With both computers and devices, be careful with computer games and e-readers. Make sure you are in a good position for your back, shoulders and neck and have the right glasses as they are very engaging and we tend to stay at them too long. This is where a timer set for 30-minute intervals to encourage you to move for a few minutes would be helpful.

> The characteristic or habit of sticking to a task until it is done was really a good characteristic when we were young, but a detriment as we age when it is necessary to move and change positions or activities every 30 minutes or so.

It can be as simple as doing a simple exercise with the muscles opposite to the ones that we are using.

Prevention is the way to go because once we have postural changes there is a new pattern in the brain for straight.

Tip: Stand and walk with your shoulders back. Putting your hands on your hips or clasped or folded behind your back may help. Make sure your chin isn't forward, but tucked in a little and your neck is pushed back and stretched.

Our body likes to be straight so change any habits that put a twist on the body or limbs or keeps then in a bent position. Get in the habit of using a timer and change positions often.

Do exercises for the muscles opposite to the ones used often. If you wait until you have aches and pains it will take longer to get rid of them. Our body is still rebuilding as we age but not fast enough to keep up with all the repairs unless we stop aggravating it.

Heather Wallingford is a retired Physical and Occupational Therapist who has worked for nearly 60 years with children, adults, the elderly and workers in heavy industry. She has had an interest in neurophysiology for the last 45 years. For successful aging, she emphasizes the importance of including movement in one's lifestyle throughout the day For a free exercise booklet send name and address to hjwallingford@gmail.com.

Join the movement!

What the World Needs Now is Love… Self LOVE.

Introducing the Rethink FIT World Symposium where expert minds unite to share the secrets they discovered that can help you Rethink FIT too.

Why "Rethink FIT"? Well, Loving How You Look is One Thing. Loving YourSELF is Key! Being FIT goes beyond muscles and appearance. Being FIT requires that we take action for our mental, emotional, functional and spiritual selves too.

The Rethink FIT World Symposium is the first of its kind, uniting individuals from around the globe to collectively make a difference. Focusing on inclusivity, the event is both live and online, featuring speakers from Australia, South Africa, Mexico, Europe and North America.

Each "star" was hand-selected based on their wisdom, lived experiences and discoveries. Many have sought solutions for years, even decades. The event is their opportunity to unleash their passion and fulfill a sense of purpose. By sharing their stories — information, inspiration, insight and innovations —with you, and outlining simple shifts, each believes you too can help yourself be more FIT: happy, healthful, confident, passionate, productive and purpose driven.

If, in fact, following their guidance becomes life enhancing in any way, you and that star can even be recognized and rewarded! (Yes, even HERE in this very magazine!).

Choose Your Adventure: Good, Better or Best?

Good implies following along to learn from the stars of the Rethink FIT World Symposium. Good means giving them a safe space to make their voice heard, their messages known and their innovations appreciated. Good means that you're enjoying yourself, getting inspired and learning new things.

Better means that you choose to pursue action steps issued by the stars of the show. You get actively involved and support those who resonate with you. And, as a result, you come to realize you are having your own breakthroughs, AHAs, mindset shifts, proud "ME" moments, transformations and triumphs. Better implies that you are supporting the stars — and yourself — by sharing what made you smile and your stories of gain on social media, tagging the star who inspired you. Better also implies that you attend the event, live or online. However, rather than purchasing tickets at full-price you choose use the discount code of the star who most resonates with you, and who you wish to support.

Best is you too stepping forward to make your voice heard. Best is when you apply to be strategically aligned with the Rethink FIT Initiative. You are ready to be authentic and feel honoured to unleash your wisdom, creativity, and innovations. This is when you use your insights to uplift and empower others. Best is choosing not only to attend the Rethink FIT World Symposium 2021, but also to actively get involved in the series. Best also makes you eligible to win prizes such as a spot in the Rethink FIT MediaScape — podcasts, interviews, red carpet features — and the ability to attend or host live retreats! (That includes Alive & Fit Magazine's soon to be unveiled one!)

Bonus. Did You Know?

1. Sari Huhtala, the publisher of this very magazine, is also speaking at the Rethink FIT World Symposium. That's right! You can even choose to support her by using code: SariH. This also saves you $200 when you purchase your ticket.

2. Sari is looking to feature YOU! Readers who take action steps that she — or ANY of the Rethink FIT stars — outline have the opportunity to be featured right here! All you have to do is share your resulting smilemakers and tag her on social media (along with the star who inspired you). To get her attention be sure to use hashtag #ALIVEandFITmag.

3. The Rethink FIT World Symposium is not just one event. It is a series designed as a journey to help you authentically experience transformation and mindset shifts along the way. Each of you are invited to come along for the ride.

With the intention to help you love better how you think, feel, act, look, inspire and dream, anyone who attentively attends The Rethink FIT World Symposium is bound to leave with a shift in mindset, a cool AHA or uplifting motivation.

#rethinkFIT

Rethink Fit World Symposium - Nov 12 -14, 2021

Hilton Hotel - Markham, ON (& Virtually, globally)

To get involved, click and visit www.rethinkFIT.social

Advertorial

Effortless probiotic oats

It's no secret beneficial bacteria is good health-promoting gut food. Probiotics, and their role in health and longevity, were discovered by Nobel Prize winner and Scientist Elie Metchnikoff of the Pasteur Institute in Paris in the early 1900s after observing the lifestyle of centenarians in Bulgaria. He noticed villagers living in the Caucasus Mountains, who tended to live healthy into their 100s, consumed a daily fermented yogurt drink, and began to study the effects of healthy bacteria on human health.

A 2018 study in the Journal of Science and Technology found oats to be ideal for creating functional fermented foods. The study looked at the health benefits of fermented beverages made from oats. They found the prebiotic fibre in oats act as probiotic boosters for the gut, making them a good choice for fermented foods.

This easy probiotic breakfast takes very little time, and doesn't require dairy.

LACTO-FERMENTED OATS

- 2 cup of steel cut oats, plus more for feeding the fermented oats
- 2 cups of purified water, plus more for feeding the fermented oats

Sterilize a glass jar and lid. Place 2 cups oats and 2 cups water in jar. Cover jar lightly with lid, not fully sealing jar. Let sit on counter for two days. Stir with a clean, sterilized spoon on the third day. Remove half cup or one cup on the fourth day to eat, warming it lightly in a pot, without cooking it. After removing a portion to eat, add half cup of fresh oats to the jar, and just enough water to ensure the oats are emersed under water, and stir with clean, sterilized spoon. Cover lightly, and set aside on counter.

Every day eat half cup of fermented oats, and add half cup of fresh oats, and a little bit of water, and stir, then set aside. Repeat daily for up to two weeks. By the end of second week, empty the oats into a clean jar and place into refrigerator to consume while beginning the whole fermentation process again with a fresh batch in a new, sterilized jar. Add extra health boosters like fresh ground flax, chia seeds, hemp seeds, nuts and fruits to your breakfast bowl just prior to eating, to increase satiety, and to add a nutritional punch.

Canada's food supply poisoned with glyphosate

Here's a not-so-fun fact – if you are consuming chickpeas, lentils or oats and other grains, or any other number of food products grown in Canada, you are getting a dose of glyphosate with every bite.

Sad, but true. Canada produces foods with the highest levels of glyphosate in North America. The U.S. is not far behind. What's glyphosate? Most know it as a pesticide/herbicide ingredient in RoundUp, and farmers globally are dousing crops with it. RoundUp is found in 90 per cent of food products in the U.S., including honey.

According to a 2016 researched article in the journal Environmental Sciences Europe, the consequences of glyphosate exposure on humans, including the risk of cancer, metabolic disorders, as well as adverse effects on the liver and kidneys, are well documented. The International Agency for Research on Cancer classified it as a "probable human carcinogen" in 2015.

So, what to do? Shop smart. Shop organic. Do your homework. Countries like Thailand and Vietnam banned glyphosate, along with California and other states. Stay tuned! More to come in the winter issue!

Start an energetic health plan

by Heidi McLarty

You may have heard the sayings "Thoughts become things" or "Where attention goes, energy flows," which both allude to the fact that our energy is pliable and can be transformed.

Is it possible that we have power and potential to shift our reality - from the inside out?

Quantum physics says that we are made up of energy, and so is the rest of the world. A musical note vibrates as energy of sound. A human heart is made up of electrical pulses that connect to the brain and body. What makes us biologically feel happy, sad, excited or mad at their basic core starts as a series of physiological reactions between our body, mind and heart. What we do with that energy or how we decide to respond to these emotions can cause profound change in our relationship to the world. Energy is at the fundamental core of our existence.

Tuning into your own energy field can help you to begin to see how your behaviours, daily activities, and environment can interact with how you feel internally. For example, you may notice that you don't feel as calm and relaxed when someone who is angry comes into your space. It can feel like there is tension in the air, their energy is heavy and as a result, causes your muscles to tighten. You may notice that your body and insides feel "jumpy" even hours after watching a scary movie. Or you notice how listening to upbeat music energizes you and wakes you up. These are all examples of how different energy experiences can affect your energy field and your corresponding physiology.

Our body's 'energy field' can vibrate at a high frequency, like when we feel love. Or it can cause us to feel scattered, unfocused, anxious or even feel heavy or sticky when we feel emotions like fear, anger, guilt or shame. Have you ever met a person you instantly felt uncomfortable with, without even speaking to them? It may be that you sensed their energy field was low, or they were angry, sad or just not matching your 'energy frequency' at that moment?

David Hawkins, a psychiatrist and multiple book author, was very interested in the correlation between energy and emotions. His metaphysical framework correlated a 'level of consciousness chart' mapping out emotions with vibration frequency in a hierarchy. (For more information about frequency levels related to emotions and levels of consciousness please see the Levels of Consciousness chart at https://tiffanyhouston.org/power-vs-force/)

Over the past year and a half, our world has been completely turned upside down due to the Covid-19 pandemic. From an energetic and quantum perspective, we are all connected via a universal energy field. This energy field is thought to connect us all together like a big active spider web. Through this network we can begin to understand that we have a "collective consciousness." Essentially, the frequency/energy of humanity is sweeping past us, like the WiFi signal in our home.

Due to all the fear and anxiety related to what's happening in the world, the collective consciousness can be dense or heavy. As a result, it can affect how people are feeling, either relaxed and grounded/balanced or anxious and stressed out.

As I discussed in a previous article (Alive and Fit Summer Edition 2021), there are theories related to how our body's stress system works (i.e. Stephen Porges' PolyVagal Theory). This stress system is directly intertwined with the external world and energetically affects our body's feeling of safety. Have you have felt yourself struggling to maintain an internal state of equilibrium? Taking great effort to feel both calm and alert? Could the energy of others around you be playing a role? Could other's dense energy be affecting you?

Energy can be "absorbed" from others around you or from the information you are taking in through the news, videos, and social media. When you feel "off," unusually moody, tired or drained, or just not like yourself, this may be a sign that you have "picked up or absorbed" energy from someone else. If this happens, there are a lot of things you can do to help yourself regain your balance and rid yourself of these feelings. Tuning in to how you feel is the first step to shifting your own energy field. One method is to talk to your body! Awareness is critical. If you have no idea that the collective consciousness energy can affect your own energy, then how will you change it?

You can begin to increase your awareness and shift things in a positive way by becoming aware of how your body and energy feels.

Energy shifters

1) Tune into your body – You can do a body scan by focusing into each area of your body to notice if there are sensations of lightness or heaviness. Does one area feel different? For example: If you are feeling heavy or a certain restriction or pain in an area, you can ask "Is this mine?"

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Sometimes just bringing awareness to it will release it.

According to Access Consciousness, which is a compilation of tools and techniques to empower people to create a life they desire, a truth will make you feel lighter and a lie will make you feel heavier. So, with this in mind, if you ask that question and your body feels heavy and what you are feeling isn't yours, you can choose to release it.

2) Tune into your thoughts and beliefs – Awareness of what your inner voice is telling you is the key to being able to shift your reality. You always have the choice to think more positively and to focus on the things that are good in your life. It is a process of paying attention to your inner voice and thoughts. It is not always easy, but it will be worth it. For example, if you are constantly thinking and believing that nothing is going to go your way, you can't do anything right, life isn't fair, etc., this becomes your reality. What we create in our energy field is shared with the outer world, and also creates a perspective that we live through. It changes our perception, and as a result, you will continue to see proof of those beliefs showing up in your life. Repeating positive affirmations and mantras can be helpful to shift these beliefs.

3) Letting the energy go – If you discover that you have taken on energy that isn't yours, you can say something like: "Whatever energy I have taken on from others, I release" or "Heavy energy, I release you now." You can imagine large magnetic plates all around you that are pulling all of the energy that isn't yours out of your energy field and body, or any other visualization you find helpful.

It would be ideal to tune in regularly as part of an energetic health plan, in order to safeguard your energy and raise your frequency.

Practices for raising your frequency

1) Engage in grounding exercises – Imagine your feet are tree roots that are growing into the earth. Or really focus on the feeling of your body sitting or lying on the surface you are on.

2) Place a bubble of protection around yourself – Imagine that your energy and body is surrounded by a translucent bubble which doesn't let other people's energy in. Energy just bounces off the outside of the bubble. Another idea is to imagine that you have become this magnificent big beautiful energy by imagining a ray of love beaming from your heart, share it with those around you, and see what happens.

3) Choose your company wisely – Be extra aware of who you spend time with. It would be ideal to surround yourself with people with positive, optimistic and uplifting energy. When you spend time with these types of people, your body and mind will generally feel more grounded and safer. Their energy affects yours. These people can help you to feel "safer" in the world.

4) Consciously choose what you watch and listen to – Be aware that much of what is shown on the mainstream news is negative and not high energy. This can easily lead to developing feelings of fear and anxiety. Taking in too much of this information can cause you to feel very down, depressed and depleted.

5) Practice gratitude – Spending time being grateful for things in your life helps to increase your frequency to love and joy. Simply being grateful for the food you eat, the roof over your head, and the people in your life, can significantly help to shift your energy frequency into high gear.

6) Spend time in nature – Being outside helps us to ground and connect our energy and raises our frequency in a natural way.

7) Exercise – Regular exercise can positively impact your energy field as well as keep your physical body healthy.

8) Eat whole foods and Less processed foods – What we put into our bodies as fuel is an important consideration for your overall health and wellness. Consider eating less processed foods and figuring out which foods are good for your body. These have an effect on our energy frequency through the electrical processes. This happens inside our body when the food is transformed to fuel. Imagine how well your car runs on dirty low-quality fuel versus clean, better quality fuel. It's no different for our bodies.

9) Drink lots of filtered or natural spring water – Our bodies are electrical and need to be well hydrated for our whole internal systems to function properly.

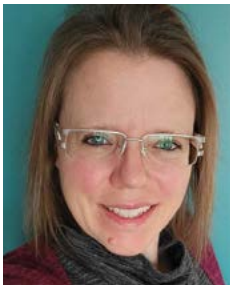
10) Listen to "feel good" music – Music can have a profound effect on our mood, energy and health. Find music that makes you feel good and play it as often as you'd like.

Despite all the chaos and changes that are currently happening in the world, you always have a choice in what you can do to help yourself feel better from a body, mind and energetic perspective. You have the power to create and change your reality as you experience it.

A method suggested by Access Consciousness includes going within. Ask yourself questions without expecting answers. Be open to possibilities. There are some questions to ask which open up our ability to receive information. For example: How does it get any better than this? Opens you to the possibility that things can get better than they are. What else is possible? Is about being open to what else might be possible.

It is my hope that this article has inspired you to delve into these concepts and tips and apply them to your life.

Photo credit: ©[halfpoint] via Canva



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Everyday detox for everyday toxins

by Dr. Nathalie Beauchamp

Detoxifying your body has very little to do with magic potions or fad celebrity diets. As the science behind detoxification shows, the toxic elements in our lives come from the everyday products we use, the food we eat and our environment.

While the onslaught of toxins we face on a daily basis can feel overwhelming, with the right information and actions, you can get started with detoxification and better health today.

Everyday toxins all around you

Regardless of your body's ability to process toxic chemicals, or how much of a tolerance or sensitivity you personally have, the sheer number of environmental toxins we're all exposed to does add to one's toxic load. Over time, these toxins accumulate and interact, stressing or debilitating the organs in charge of detoxification. According to Dr. T. R. Morris, N.D., there are nine toxic chemicals known as the "toxic bunch," including:

- Heavy Metals (lead, mercury, arsenic, and cadmium) — Found in the foods we eat, due to pesticides, lead pipes, ceramics and glassware, batteries, dental fillings, and older imported toys.
- Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAH) — Can come from charred meats, exhaust fumes, smoke, trash incineration, and forest fires.
- Phthalates and Phenols — Found in consumer products that use plastics, car interiors, mattresses, nail polish, processed foods, and more.
- Organochlorine (OC) Pesticides — Specifically found in foods from countries where OCs aren't banned for growing produce or raising livestock.
- Organophosphate (OP) Pesticides — Same as above.
- Polychlorinated Dibenzo-dioxin and Furans (PCDDs and PCDFs) — Found in high-fat foods, as well as PVC production, paper production, and bleach products.
- Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) — A toxic chemical and known endocrine disruptor found in farmed fish, also called "Atlantic salmon."
- Polybrominated Diphenyl Ethers (PBDEs) — Used as flame retardants in furniture, foam, bedding, toys, electronics, and plastics.
- Polyfluorinated Compounds (PFCs) — Used to make fast food grease-resistant and used in products like shampoos, and denture cleaners.

3-step plan to detox your body (and life) today

The long-term effects of these accumulative toxic chemicals in the body span everything from an increased risk of diabetes to hormonal imbalances, neurological and cognitive impairment, cancer, and the list goes on.

The only way forward is to try to limit your exposure to toxins the best you can and help your body detoxify itself. Here's a three-step plan to help support your detoxification system:

1) Detoxify your organs

Even as you get a better understanding and fuller picture of your "toxic load," you'll need to address the organs in your body that are responsible for processing waste in the body.

These crucial organs are often the sites of hormone breakdown and production, so any disruptions to their functioning and pathways could lead to double trouble: the symptoms of a hormonal imbalance and the harmful effects of toxic chemical build-up.

3 organs you need to focus on:

- The liver — Acting as the body's processing plant, the liver breaks down anything that you consume. It is your liver's job to keep the nutrients you need to absorb (like vitamins and minerals) and eliminate dangerous or unnecessary substances out of your bloodstream (like drugs or alcohol). The pathways of your liver also process excess hormones like estrogen and insulin. To support the liver, eat a nutrient-rich diet to facilitate the liver detoxification pathways. Focus on limiting alcohol consumption and decreasing your overall toxic load.
- The gut — The gut is known as the "second brain" because it controls so many different aspects of our internal systems. Exposure to heavy metals such as mercury, aluminum, and lead can damage the gut mucous membrane and tissues, causing it to become more permeable and allowing toxins to spread throughout the body. This leads to allergies, food intolerances, and potential immune reactions. It also puts you at risk for leaky gut syndrome, in which the toxins found in the gut get recirculated in the body because they weren't properly processed and excreted. To support the gut, be sure to drink plenty of water and eat a high-fibre diet which is both important for a proper bowel movement and elimination of toxins. Eat foods rich in pre and probiotics and consider taking a daily probiotic to maintain a balanced microflora.
- The kidneys — These two connected organs play an important role in detoxification. They extract waste from our blood, help balance our bodily fluids, and form urine so we can excrete toxic waste.

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To support the kidneys, avoid excess protein, drink a lot of pure filtered water, and eat foods rich in potassium like avocados, spinach, and coconuts.

2) Choose foods that support overall detoxification

Your diet plays a huge role in detoxification. First off, simply turning to a whole-food diet complete with fresh, local, and organic produce, as well as responsibly-raised meat (hormone-free, milk-fed or grass-fed) can do absolute wonders for your body's nutritional needs.

Secondly, there are specific foods that can actively detoxify the body and that you'll need to support organ detoxification. As much as you can, focus on a plant-based diet high in phytonutrients. Eating lots of plant-based foods can help induce or inhibit specific enzymes, provide soluble and insoluble fibres, and ensure the consumption of antioxidants.

Start to incorporate:

- Foods high in sulphur like garlic, legumes, and onions
- Good sources of water-soluble fibre like apples, oat bran, and legumes
- Cruciferous vegetables like Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, kale, and broccoli
- Artichokes, beets, carrots, and dandelion greens
- Herbs and spices like turmeric, cinnamon, and licorice
- Green leafy vegetables, green tea, wheatgrass juice, chlorella, and spirulina

3) Clear your lymphatic system

Your organs are one way in which the body detoxifies itself. The other is through lymphatic system function. The lymphatic system is a vital part of the immune system consisting of vessels and nodes that carry a fluid called lymph from tissues and organs to the bloodstream.

You need lymph to allow the body to filter and clean toxins, debris, and pathogens that accumulate in our circulatory system as a result of toxic environments, medications, and an unhealthy diet. To support the lymphatic system, use daily movement and exercises, diaphragmatic breathing, stay hydrated, make sure you sweat often and use a regular lymphatic points drainage routine.

The next time you use a steel wool scrubber to clean a non-stick pan, or buy a memory foam mattress, reconsider both your actions and the products you buy. Detoxification plans only work as well as you do at eliminating these environmental toxins from your life and replacing them with healthier, natural, and sustainable alternatives.

While it's certainly not an overnight change, every little bit counts when it comes to detoxification. After all, chemicals accumulate over time — and everything you do to detoxify your life will help your overall well-being.

Photo credit: ©[Olga Kriger] via Canva

Dr. Nathalie Beauchamp, B.Sc., D.C. is an international speaker and author of the book Hack Your Health Habits, Simple, Action-Driven Natural Solutions for People On The Go. Her mission is to educate, lead and empower people to live their best lives.

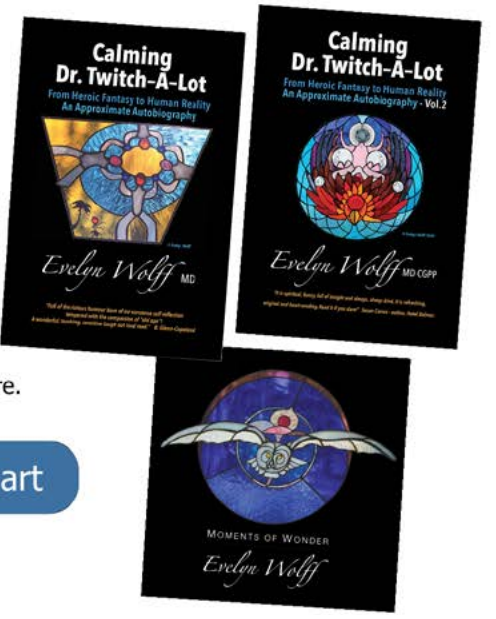
Birth of an Artist & Healer

Evelyn Wolff MD (Retired) Designer for Wolff Glass Studio

1 Art Book, Moments of Wonder, 2015-21 beautiful Glass Images, & the stories of how each was inspired.

2 Memoir -Calming Dr. Twitch-A-Lot, Vol 1- childhood wounds, to medical school,to Kundalini awakening that births the artist & healer in her.

3 Vol 2 of Calming Dr. Twitch-A-Lot will be available this spring- & tells of her apprenticeship in Stained glass, training in psychotherapy & initiation into Buddhist Practice deepen the process of healing herself physically, emotionally, & spiritually. Then, she shares that understanding in groups touring many small villages in the near north without holistic care.



Click here to browse Evelyn's inspirational books & art

www.wolffglass.ca

Emotions at the heart of healing

by Sylvie Lessard

Radical remission

What do emotions have to do with anything?

In fact, just about everything. The word emotion comes from the latin word 'emovere,' which means stir up, stimulate. Every day we experience a range of emotions that can move us anywhere from shame, fear and anxiety to love, joy, ecstasy.

The first time I came across the fact that emotions are "energy in motion," it literally was an aha moment for me. It opened up a whole new way of looking at something that impacts every one of us all of the time. Let's ponder this idea of energy in motion for a minute or two. If emotions are energy designed to move, to dissipate, what happens when they cannot be fully experienced the moment they arise? Where does the stirred-up energy go?

One of the 10 key healing factors that Dr. Kelly Turner uncovered in her research, which led to her publishing Radical Remission (2014) and Radical Hope (2020) is: releasing repressed emotions. Turner defines repressed emotions as: "any emotions you are hanging on from your past, whether positive, negative, conscious or unconscious." As a survival mechanism to keep us safe, the human brain is physically wired to focus more on negative emotions.

Repressed emotions are particularly tricky, because they arise from both the conscious and unconscious parts of our beings. Science now understands that 95 per cent of our brain activity comes from the unconscious, and only five per cent from the conscious. How then do we deal with repressed emotions?

One of the most underlying beliefs, that radical remission survivors and their healers expressed over and over again during Dr. Turner's gathering of information, was that illness, be it cancer or other degenerative diseases, is the result of blockages at the physical, emotional or spiritual level. They firmly believed that these blockages need to be identified, then addressed, and finally released in order for the body to heal. Easier said than done.

Since breakthrough research in 1991 found that holding on to stress makes you more susceptible to developing colds, hundreds of other studies demonstrated a correlation between stress and different illnesses including heart disease, autoimmune disorders and even cancer. However, "it is difficult for researchers to prove whether stress by itself can cause cancer, mostly because it would be unethical to make one group of people purposefully stressed and the other purposefully relaxed and see which developed cancer," according to Radical Remission. What science knows for sure is that "stress weakens the immune system, and the immune system plays a key role in detecting and removing cancer cells from the body."

It is necessary to understand the role of neuropeptides with regards to emotions. Every cell in our body has the ability to produce and receive neuropeptides. These are chemicals released when we experience any emotion. Some weaken the immune system, like the stress hormones cortisol or adrenaline, whereas dopamine and serotonin strengthen it.

When the body is in stress or in fear, it is in fight or flight mode, and our sympathetic system is on. In order for our innate self-healing capacities to kick in, we need to activate the rest and restore mode, that is, our parasympathetic system. This is key to understand. The two operating systems are mutually exclusive. You can only be in one or the other; never in both at the same time.

Learning techniques or modalities to put yourself in rest and restore mode is therefore an essential part of the healing journey. Luckily, there are many avenues to explore in order to find one or several that work for you. Both of Dr. Turner's book lists several of them, which include journaling, trying hypnosis or EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing), enrolling in a course like Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, or doing self-love mirror work as explained by Louise Hay, author of You Can Heal Your Life.

Many radical remission survivors find this healing factor the most challenging to tackle, myself included. I am still in the process of addressing some repressed emotional issues and am presently exploring what is called EFT, emotional freedom technique.

I've come across EFT many times, be it through summits organized by Nick Ortner or the teachings of Dawson Church. But I am discovering the true power of this modality by working with a local practitioner, one on one. The difference is huge! While the teachings of well-known practitioners who need to appeal to a wide audience are quite valuable, I now better appreciate the impact of a personalized approach. The practitioner listens to you, uses your own words in the set-up statements, and encourages you to participate fully in describing the emotions that come up as we tap along on the meridian points.

My best advice to you regarding this healing factor is to stay curious and continue exploring the many ways available to address emotional issues. Persist until you find the practices that best suit you. Emotions are part of the human experience. Might as well work with them in a way that will benefit your health, your well-being, your life. It is a well worth investment of time and money.

Sylvie Lessard is a certified Radical Remission Instructor in Sudbury, ON and IIN Heath Coach who empowers people ready and willing to actively participate in their healing process. sylvielessardrrt@gmail.com

Most colds, flu due to rhinovirus, studies say

by Sari Huhtala

PCR testing of children in the late 80s found that 8.9 per cent of children tested positive for COVID. You likely had coronavirus, which causes common colds, at one point in your life, since it's been around for over 50 years. But a greater concern for this fall's cold and flu season is rhinovirus. Rhinovirus causes 80 per cent of colds and flu in the fall, along with pneumonia and bronchial problems, studies show.

Both human rhinovirus (HRV) and coronavirus (HCoV) are linked to the common cold and lower respiratory tract illness (pneumonia), according to a 2016 review in the American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine. In fact, 50 per cent of common colds are caused by these two viruses.

A study cited in the 2016 review found, among hospitalized patients, 5.7 per cent had coronaviruses. The 47 different coronaviruses were responsible for 10.5 per cent of all the respiratory viral infections. Epidemiological studies show that COVID outbreaks occur every two to three years, and "reinfections are common," according to the review.

In fact, PCR testing of children in the late 80s found that 8.9 per cent of children under age two tested positive for COVID, according to a 2009 study entitled, *The pediatric burden of human coronaviruses evaluated for 20 years*. For 20 years, researchers followed a "large cohort of healthy children" who tested positive for COVID. They found that 51 per cent had been diagnosed with an acute ear infection. None of the children who tested positive for COVID were hospitalized. Of the upper respiratory tract infections (common cold) samples tested over the 20-year period, 4.7 per cent of the common cold was found to be attributed to COVID.

Testing positive for COVID in the 1980s could result in positive PCR test results at present, as the PCR test will detect genetic material, scientists say.

"The PCR assay may detect viral transcripts from viral sequences stably integrated into the genome rather than infectious virus," scientists involved in an in-depth study entitled SARS-CoV-2 RNA reverse-transcribed and integrated into the human genome, conclude.

A 2004 study in the European Journal of International Medicine found that rhinovirus (HRV) accounts for 30 to 50 per cent of common colds, while COVID accounts for 10 to 15 per cent of common colds.

HRV viruses, with over 100 identified, are "the most common cause of upper respiratory tract infections in all age groups," scientists in the study found, noting each fall season 80 per cent of the infections are due to HRV, which was discovered 1956. HRV infection in asthmatic children and adults can lead to severe, and longer-lasting pneumonia symptoms. About 9.5 per cent of Canadians have asthma, according to the Lung Association.

Influenza virus accounts for approximately five to 15 per cent of common colds, while respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) accounts for five per cent. By the age of two, 95 per cent of children will have been infected by RSV, and reinfection is likely, scientists say.

One study, Rhinovirus Outbreaks in Long-term Care Facilities, Ontario, Canada, reported, of the 297 respiratory disease outbreaks in 2009 in Ontario's long-term care facilities, H1N1 and parainfluenza-1 virus represented seven per cent and six per cent, respectively, while 59 per cent of the pathogens were found to be HRV.

A "major cause of death among elderly people," particularly those in long-term care, is respiratory tract illness, according to the 2016 review in the American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine.

A 2002 study in the Journal of Infectious Diseases found that HRV causes community acquired pneumonia, and in the case of respiratory infections among immunocompromised patients, HRV is the most common virus detected.

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Time to rethink fitness

Jeffrey Kippel and Mindy Blackstien are a husband-wife best friend duo who founded the Rethink FIT Initiative. It wasn't a spur of the moment decision. Rather, it took over a decade of research, development and strategic alignments.

The evolution of Rethink Fit

Mindy and Jeffrey launched the fitness model culture, and shifted the bodybuilding scene, pioneering the birth of a niche industry. They created World Natural Sports Organization, produced the FAME World Tour, published FAME Magazine, ran The FAME Agency, launched Fit Connections with Robert Kennedy of Oxygen magazine, provided content for TSN's top-rated show, and initiated the BodyPROUD movement.

People from all backgrounds, starting points, life obstacles, ages and ethnicities successfully transformed into bodybuilders, models, athletes. Some went on to become cover models, sponsored athletes, world champions and celebrities. They became inspirations to many, as did everyone who chose to step on stage.

From this Mindy and Jeffrey witnessed firsthand how looking like a superhero doesn't equate to feeling like one. Becoming an artist to your physique, while commendable, does not mean you are happy, healthful, confident nor an expert on fitness.

In fact, competitors are often nutritionally unbalanced, emotionally unstable and mentally exhausted. Yet those same athletes can become overnight sensations. Suddenly they attract fans! Suddenly they find themselves being celebrated, not just for their acts of self-determination, but also for their knowledge on holistic health! And for some, the extra body-attention causes a reverse spiral-effect dampening self-worth.

Guided by a vision Mindy and Jeffrey set their sights to become solutionaries and improve that. They took a "short" hiatus to course-correct. The result was a 10-year journey of strategic relationships, mentorship from the world's best, personal growth, professional guidance and a system to self-assess and rethink their FiT so that they too can LOVE better how they think, act and feel.

Testing phase

In 2008 Jeffrey and Mindy experimented with the BodyPROUD Showcase, a Rethink FIT event where international models and professional bodybuilders spoke about their obstacles, transformation and triumphs. Tears were shed. Tough-as-nails bodybuilders allowed themselves to become authentic and vulnerable. For many this was the first time they shared their story and they themselves were touched by it. It filled the auditorium with love-inspired emotions.

As a result, competitors stopped sizing themselves up to each other, and instead became cheerleaders to those they were competing against. Instant success!

However, at that time, the world didn't seem fully ready. Self-love as a topic seemed taboo. People felt uncomfortable to speak about it. They did not want to dive deeper than skin. Nor did they realize it was a possibility.

The solution

Years later, it was discovered the co-chair of the World Organization of Natural Medicine (WONM), Brian Gangel had similar aspirations. It made sense to unite. So he stepped forward as the architect of the initiative.Through Brian comes a MediaScape, a world tour of affiliated events and transformative retreats.

Based on a gamified system of pathways and platforms people are empowered to step up to their own plate, self-assess, dream their dreams, take their power back and uplevel their own lives.

Now, rather than focusing on bodybuilding, we focus on body-building (from the inside out, head to toe, mind to heart). Rather than being associated with ego, it's associated with growth. Meaning, we focus on our holistic selves, not appearance alone. We take action not just for our body, but also for our mental, emotional, functional and spiritual wellbeing.

How is this done? Through insights, innovations and information shared by the very athletes who also came to realize that there is more to being fit than looking like their own version of a superhero. The same people whose passion for fitness training earned them trophies, magazine covers and cash prizes who are now passionate about being fit in a different way — where self-actualization comes into play — and they are going to share their discoveries with you!

Learn from their life lessons. Embrace their experiences. Challenge yourself. Set new goals. Take action. Make simple shifts. Discover your passion. Tune into your talents. Hack your habits. And most importantly, learn to love yourself fully!

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