

MindBody Optimizer

A man and a woman are jumping joyfully in the air on a beach. The man, on the left, is shirtless, wearing sunglasses and light-colored shorts, with his arms raised high. The woman, on the right, is wearing a white and blue bikini and sunglasses, also with her arms raised. They are both smiling and appear to be having a great time. The background shows a clear blue sky and the ocean waves.

Volume 1

Top Trending Tips for Enjoying
a Healthy, Fit and Happy Lifestyle

by JOSEPH R. GIOVE

MindBody Optimizer

Volume 1

Top Trending Tips for Enjoying
a Healthy, Fit and Happy Lifestyle

by
JOSEPH R. GIOVE

www.JosephGiove.com

© Copyright 2016 Joseph R. Giove

Reproduction or translation of any part of this work beyond that permitted by section 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act without permission of the copyright owner is unlawful. Requests for permission or further information should be addressed to the author.

Any names used herein have been changed to protect privacy.

The ideas, concepts and opinions expressed in this book are intended to be used for educational purposes only. The book is sold with the understanding that the author and publisher are not rendering medical advice of any kind, nor is the book intended to replace medical advice, nor to diagnose, prescribe or treat any disease, condition, illness or injury. The Food and Drug Administration has not evaluated the statements contained in this book. It is important before changing any program or beginning any new dietary or exercise program, including any aspect of the materials presented herein, that you receive medical advice from a licensed physician. The author and publisher claim no responsibility to any person or entity for any liability, loss, or damage caused or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly as a result of the use, application or interpretation of the material in this book.

First Published, 2016

Printed in the United States of America

MindBody Optimizer Vol 1

Welcome

With this book you are given exclusive understanding and top trending tips for enjoying a healthy, fit and happy lifestyle. You also have access to a special Resource section to obtain unique products and services for optimizing your health, fitness, lifestyle and happiness

This book is organized in 6 sections:

- How the mind and body work together to create optimized health and fitness
- Exclusive tips and guidance on optimizing health
- Exclusive tips and guidance on optimizing fitness
- Critical lifestyle tips and guidance that support health, balance and fitness
- Unique tips and understandings of what can make happiness an integral part of your lifestyle
- A special resource section to obtain unique products and services for optimizing your health, fitness, lifestyle and happiness

I encourage you to read the Preface and the section on how the mind and body work together first. Then feel free to read whatever topic interests you after that in whatever order seems right.

While ***MindBody Optimizer, Volume 1***, may not be modified and is protected by copyright laws, I encourage you to share it freely with anyone you care about. Health, fitness and happiness are gifts to which we all are entitled.

If you received this book as a gift, please visit

www.JosephGiove.com

to receive a free premium subscription to the

[MindBody Optimizer eNewsletter](#).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	6
How the Mind and Body Work Together for Optimized Health and Fitness	7
Remembering Wellness	8
Stop Dis-ease Now	9
Stress Less for Health, Vitality and Fitness	9
Take a Mini-Vacation.....	10
Nature's Imperative	11
Optimizing Health.....	12
The Word Diet Means Way of Life.....	13
Top 3 Mental Attitudes for Successful Weight Loss	15
Natural Ways to Sleep	17
Natural Sleep Aids	19
What's the Difference Between an Addiction and a Habit.....	21
Optimizing Fitness.....	23
How To Get Motivated for Morning Workouts.....	24
Resetting Your Set Point	26
Best Time of Day to Work Out.....	28
How Your Level of Activity Affects Your Metabolic Rate	31
Speeding Up Metabolism.....	34
Lifestyle	37
How to Live the Good Life.....	38
The Stress and Addiction Connection	40
Best 5 Ways to Create Daily Work-Life Balance	43
How to Think Like a Millionaire	45
How Prolonged Stress Can Lead to Anxiety	47
Happiness	50
This is Your Brain on Happiness.....	51
This is Your Brain on Anger and Frustration	53
The Chemical Messengers of Love	55
How Exercise Helps Mood and Motivation	57
The Five Best Natural Anti-Depressant Supplements	59
Resources	62
About the Author	63

PREFACE

Early in my career as a biomedical engineer, over 30 years ago – designing and building medical instruments and clinical trials for such – I came across this amazing thing called the placebo effect.

I was astounded to find out how strong this effect was, often as high as 50% of the efficacy of many drug and device therapies. The power of suggestion, otherwise known as the placebo effect, has been studied copiously over the last hundred years: scientists measure it, document it, compare it to “real” therapies and no therapy, and unequivocally acknowledge its effectiveness.

In fact, every drug and device on the market today has been tested against the power of suggestion. Far from being, “just in the mind,” placebo research has documented that the power of suggestion can reverse nearly every illness known to man.

What is almost as astonishing, however, is that this great power to influence disease recovery is then entirely discarded when it comes to helping a patient in clinical practice. And even worse, a doctor’s well-intentioned prognosis can quickly form an extremely effective negative suggestion – a nocebo – that can make matters worse, possibly much worse.

Of course, you cannot patent or license someone’s own healing capacity, so there is no economic incentive for the medical system to promote the power of suggestion and self-healing.

Nevertheless, I became enamored with understanding the mechanism of the placebo effect and how this might actually be used intentionally to empower the patient by activating his or her own healing mechanism. I set myself on a course to understand it. If a person’s belief and expectation had the power to

heal, then it is imperative that we should figure out what’s going on.

Having been impressed by the potential of the placebo effect and its influence on human neurology and physiology, in 1989 I changed course in my career and later opened up my mind-body clinic as a Clinical Hypnotist.

After all, the clinician may have fooled the patient with his sham treatment, but it was the patient herself that actually, unconsciously performed the healing, whether it was from ulcers, asthma, cancer or depression. Let me make myself clear, the success of the healing was not merely “in the head” either: physical and measurable effects are always documented.

I found that the secret to using this powerful mechanism lay in the poorly understood realms of consciousness, as it applies to human wellness and performance.

In studying and applying various mind-body techniques that initiate the body’s own creative energies, which often lie dormant in the subconscious, I found I could guide a person to activate this powerful mechanism. This forms the basis of much of my work, whether it is helping people master stress, recover from addiction or illness, sleep better, lose weight, enhance performance, succeed in a venture or discover their life meaning.

I offer these practical insights through the pages of the ***MindBody Optimizer*** book series, the ***MindBody Optimizer e-Newsletter***, and through ***my private practice in the San Francisco Bay area***.

This ***MindBody Optimizer Volume 1*** eBook offers the latest tips for leading a healthy, fit and happy lifestyle.

Let’s get started.

HOW THE MIND AND BODY WORK TOGETHER FOR OPTIMIZED HEALTH AND FITNESS



All healing is self-healing. We have within us a wise physician.

Albert Schweitzer, M.D.

Did you know that you can use the power of your mind-body (mindbody) to heal almost all kinds of disease from cancer to hypertension, asthma, ulcers, diabetes, depression, chronic pain and even osteoarthritis?

It's true. Medical research has proven this repeatedly over 40 years of clinical trials through the Food Drug Administration's requirements for drug and device manufacturers to demonstrate safety and effectiveness.

Most drugs and medical devices on the market today are tested through double-blind clinical trials, where a real drug or device therapy is tested against the power of the mind—the power of suggestion—otherwise known as the placebo effect. The notion of using the mind to heal the body is woven into the very fabric of modern medicine.

The mind is a powerful healing inner resource. Everyone has the ability to remember and activate, deep within their bodies, the natural condition of wellness and optimized fitness. This process is not a mystery, although it may seem magical that someone can reclaim their health by addressing both the mind and the body in an optimal way.

While it might be tempting to dismiss this potent healing tool as simply "in your head," plenty of proof backs the belief that it helps people recover from physical maladies – *in the body* – when given placebo therapies or hypnotic healing suggestions. This fact should awaken in us the need to remember wellness.

Remembering Wellness

Herbert Benson, MD, a former professor at Harvard Medical School, offers a simple explanation for why the mind can be so effective in healing and health. Dr. Benson coined the term, "relaxation response," to describe the ideal mindbody posture for encountering stress, one of the primary causes of illness and disease. In other words, respond with relaxation rather than stress when situations or people challenge or threaten you.

After decades of clinical research helping people manage stress, he developed a profound understanding of how a placebo, which embodies the power of the mind and suggestion, can create a positive healing response. Understanding Dr. Benson's simple explanation may require suspending certain beliefs regarding health and wellness. This small shift is easier than you might think.

It begins here: ***Wellness is your natural state.***

What we call dis-ease is physical, mental and emotional embodiments of *disruption* of this natural state.

While this notion may be unfamiliar, your very existence is a testament to it.

Do you realize what an amazingly successful product of nature you are? There is an unbroken genetic chain between you and the first spark of life. Embedded in your genetic code are the survival and thriving successes of all your ancestors, many of whom survived saber-tooth tigers, ice ages, famines and millennia of holy wars.

“ *Nature has endowed us with wellness and balance as natural conditions of our existence, a function of our most basic level of survival.* ”

Nature has endowed us with wellness and balance as natural conditions of our existence, a function of our most basic level of survival.

Today's most common maladies: heart disease, stroke, and cancer, didn't even make the top 5 one-hundred years ago. That's because we have over *one-thousand* times more individual stressors each day than our ancestors had just one-hundred years ago!

Yet many people fear or even expect that these challenges are a "normal" part of life. Just as a positive suggestion can foster positive results, this negative expectation of future illness suggests to

your entire mindbody system that it *will* occur. But disease is not inevitable; wellness is, provided we stop disrupting our natural propensity for it.

Stop Dis-ease Now

We must do all we can to remember our innate wellness, which is our birthright. We must learn to process the challenges of modern life differently. That is why in the pages that follow you will be offered tips for optimizing health and fitness that include lifestyle issues and matters that can affect our happiness in life. Truly, the term I am using as one word herein, mindbody, should really be mindbodylife. This is because the mindbody dynamic, which is our very selves, is embedded in the context of our lives, and our lives interconnect and interpenetrate other lives and the living environment in which we all live.

Positive suggestions and the placebo-effect work because a properly crafted, delivered and received suggestion, or a sham drug, momentarily suspend the *interpretation* of the disruption in the mindbody as disease, dysfunction or discontent.

This interpretation is in itself a mindbody phenomenon, as explained by Peter Lambrou, PhD., consulting and clinical psychologist at Scripps Memorial Hospital in La Jolla California. Dr. Lambrou explains that in the instance of pain relief, a hypnotic or placebo suggestion produces relief quicker compared to the time it takes for the brain to deliver endorphins and squelch the pain. Why? Because thoughts, i.e., interpretations, are networks of neurons, which are connected to other neural networks, which are embedded in and influence every cell in the body on a continual basis.

“ *The activity and consequences of your thoughts and feelings are inseparable from the activity and function of your body.* ”

The activity and consequences of your thoughts and feelings are inseparable from the activity and function of your body.

Reinterpretation can be instigated by a shift in attitude, positive suggestion, re-patterning beliefs, re-evaluating belief in the cause, or a placebo. In this instance, the potency of your remarkably efficient healing machine, your mindbody, *remembers its natural condition of wellness*. This momentary reinterpretation allows the flood of natural neurobiochemical substances to affect healing and return the body to its natural state.

This is why Dr. Benson refers to the placebo effect as **Remembered Wellness**. Thinking about wellness as a natural and normal condition of the mindbody will not only help you heal illness but enjoy wellness and fitness long into the future, without the many harmful side effects of drugs.

Stress Less for Health, Vitality and Fitness

Let's make practical use of this knowledge and examine what typically causes the disruption of wellness in the first place. Simply put, it is stress.

Stress is our automatic, instinctive internal reaction—manifested as psychological, physiological and behavioral responses—to things that challenge or threaten us. It is a relic of a bygone era otherwise known as fight-or-flight. This fight-or-flight self-protective instinct, which kept our ancestors safe, is killing us today.

Everyone knows that stress is a major modern blight, at the root of 80% of all doctor visits and nearly all chronic disease. It also costs Corporate America over \$300 billion per year in increased absenteeism, tardiness, loss of worker talent, lack of productivity and loss of competitive edge.

To make matters worse, burnout—too much high stress for too long—affects peak performers disproportionately greater than average performers, robbing individuals and companies of their best talent and assets.

Considering this massive burden on our health and the bottom-line, why does stress still plague us? One would think that with its immense impact, sufficient resources would be directed towards managing stress and mitigating its damage.

“ *Considering this massive burden on our health and the bottom-line, why does stress still plague us?* ”

Many people are ill-informed about the accumulative and insidious nature of stress, resulting in its management being improperly approached. By the time we notice the scattered thinking, stiff neck, pit in the stomach, hypertension, sleepless nights, mood swings, agitation, anxiety or shortness of breath, we are already ensnared in the stress response.

Our response to stress *precedes* our awareness of it because it is an instinct and therefore automatic. Stress must be dealt with at its source—inside us, as stress is our internal response to things that challenge or threaten us—*before* it adversely affects the mindbody. Otherwise, we remain burdened by our fast-paced modern lives, where our health and performance are under excessive burden, and we find ourselves deprived of happiness and creativity.

This is why in the pages that follow you are encouraged to be mindful of the issues and circumstances in our lives that can interfere with your natural functioning. We must endeavor to intend and optimize health, fitness, and happiness by crafting a lifestyle that allows these features of modern living to exist in equilibrium and complete balance.

Take a Mini-Vacation

How do we stop this unconscious response to stress? More tips are given in the pages that follow; however, in essence, it is by gaining awareness of four key areas that are affected simultaneously by this automatic stress response: the body, the mind, the breath and the emotions. Additional resources are also available in the store at JosephGiove.com. [link to store at site]

To illustrate, let's take a virtual mini-vacation to the beach on a warm sunny day. Read the next paragraph, then sit back in your chair, close your eyes and lose yourself in your imagination...

You are on the beach looking out toward the warm, shimmering water, the sun warming your skin, the brightness filling your eyes, bringing a smile to your face. You inhale the moist, fresh air deeply, and as you exhale, relax into the rhythmic sound of the waves gently caressing the shore. The azure sky is clear, save for a few billowy clouds lazily drifting by. Find a cozy spot in the sand to sink into, but as you do, you notice the warm, soft sand gently bristling against the bottom of your feet, between your toes. Using your hands, dig out a shallow trough in the sand to make a cozy recliner to sit in. Feel the warm sand in your hands as you do this. Pick up a handful of sand and toss it in the air, watching the wind breeze it away, and the seagulls screaming and swooping in eager hopes of finding discarded morsels. Take in another deep whiff of the sea air, filling your lungs with this calming nectar. Lie back in your cozy nest of sand, feeling the warmth of the sand deeply penetrating your body, the grittiness of the sand against your back, while warm, safe rays of sunshine gently warm your skin. Breathe in deeply again as you close your eyes there on the beach, feeling yourself becoming heavier with each breath, sinking into the earth in safety and release. Take a two-minute or more nap on the beach right now.

Do this now. If you believe that you are too busy to take this three-minute vacation, it's a sign that you are on the slippery road to unhealthy stress accumulation.

When you have finished the mini-vacation, consider where in the body you feel the effects of this relaxation. Is your chest more relaxed and does it feel lighter? Has the tension behind your eyes released slightly? Did you relax your jaw or stop clenching your teeth? Is your breathing deeper, smoother, and more rhythmic? Do your finger tips and toes feel warmer? Has the scowl on your brow become a smile on your cheeks? Has the incessant stream of thoughts slowed or dissipated?

“ *Your deep, subconscious mind cannot distinguish between the real and imagined. To your subconscious mind, imagining yourself being on the beach is identical to being on the beach.* ”

Your deep, subconscious mind cannot distinguish between the real and imagined. To your subconscious mind, imagining yourself being on the beach is identical to being on the beach. Once there, your mindbody remembers similar past experiences and emulates the same physiological state of actually being there.

That state translates to slower, deeper respiration, a reduction in heart rate and blood pressure, a decrease in stress hormones, normalization of digestive acids, the release of achy muscle tension, an increase in creativity and optimism, and a multitude of other benefits too lengthy to include here.

As you experienced in the mini-vacation, thoughts lead to emotions, which are physiological states, which you interpret as feelings,

in this case, they were pleasure and relaxation. These feelings trigger new thoughts, connect to new emotions and feelings and instigate a cascade of positive mental, emotional and physiological effects that lead to a "relaxation response."

This is the opposite of a stress response. If a drug could be produced to achieve these remarkable results without side effects, it would corner a multi-billion dollar market. Amazingly, this regenerative power lies untapped within you until activated by your imagination.

The goal of various mindbody techniques is to stimulate this imagination while releasing non-supportive actions and beliefs, regaining inner and outer balance, helping you remember wellness and reprogramming your neurobiology to turn these changes into new responsive habits. Some very effective techniques are meditation, hypnosis, self-hypnosis, neural reprogramming, thought field therapy, energy psychology, yoga, conscious breathing and creative visualization.

Nature's Imperative

Ultimately we can all learn to make the choice for wellness and fitness at will: to experience relaxation over stress when navigating the twists and turns of modern life. By the time this becomes a habit, you should be able to release what obscured your living memory of what you thought wellness was in your mindbody, and begin to thrive truly. We become masters of change, embracing it consciously while optimizing our personal potential for health, fitness, and happiness.

Ultimately this is nature's imperative for us. This is exactly why it is more important than ever to remember what wellness truly is so that we may indeed bring our unique gifts to the world.

OPTIMIZING HEALTH



A wise man should consider that health is the greatest of human blessings, and learn how by his own thought to derive benefit from his illnesses.

Hippocrates

THE WORD DIET MEANS WAY OF LIFE



The word “diet” from the Greek *diaita*, originally meant “way of life, regimen, dwelling,” related to *daitasthai*, “lead one’s life.” Today it connotes restriction, doing without, and struggle. Often you hear people mention a diet as a weight loss program intended to be followed for a specific amount of time for specific results. But it is actually meant to be a lifestyle including healthy eating habits that improve the quality of life in general.

We lose ourselves chasing after ‘miracle’ diets that promise exceptional results, feeling lost if they don’t work. But the word diet means much more than that. The only way that you can lead a fulfilling, healthy life is by making healthy eating habits a part of your everyday lifestyle.

So how is it that you can take this and implement it? Yes, the word diet means way of life, but how is that useful? Below you’ll find some ways you can make healthy eating a part of your lifestyle:

• **Strike a balance**

When diets ask you to give up certain foods they just become harder to follow in the long term. It’s not easy giving up your favorite food for too long. The better thing to do is to strike a balance. Eat what you want but remember to balance the meal out during the rest of the day.

If you’re eating steak for dinner, stick to a salad at lunch. Make sure that whole grains, leafy vegetables, and colorful fruit are a part

of your meal. This way you can enjoy what you really like eating without giving ever eating unhealthily.

Another way you can continue to enjoy eating your favorite unhealthy foods is by going for healthy alternatives. There are plenty of ways available nowadays that allow you to cook healthy French fries or cakes.

• **Colorful vegetables are your best friend**

Since the word diet means way of life, remember that colorful vegetables are your best friend. Each color has a different phytonutrient, so including a variety of different colored vegetables in your diet is highly recommended. High in fiber, these veggies are great for the health of the digestive tract as well.

It is said that vegetables should make up half your meal. You can have them raw or cook them; that is entirely up to you. Another great thing about vegetables is that they are quite filling and therefore reduce your tendency to overeat.

• **Don't forget the protein**

Protein is vital for you to maintain a healthy life and is thus necessary with every meal. It provides amino acids to the body which are essential for muscle repair and building. You need a healthy intake of protein to ensure that the body keeps functioning properly.

“ Protein is vital for you to maintain a healthy life and is thus necessary with every meal. It provides amino acids to the body which are essential for muscle repair and building. ”

Protein is also necessary for keeping blood sugar in check. It counters the rapid digestion of carbohydrates and gives the feeling of being full. Your satiety will last longer, and you won't feel the need to eat to keep your energy levels up.

• **Carbohydrate intake**

In following the mantra of the word Diet means way of life, you need to figure out what kind of carb intake is best for you. Aim for high energy, low weight, and low hunger. Aim for balance.

It takes some time to understand how much carbohydrate is good for you, but once you do, you'll realize how eating the right amount of carbs actually makes you feel good about yourself. This should help you implement a low carbohydrate diet into your lifestyle easily.

• **Drink plenty of water**

Now as far as lifestyle goes, drinking water and lots of it should be on top of the things to do. Your water intake should reflect your activity levels throughout the day. The more active you are, the more water you need to stay properly hydrated. A lot of times, the human body does not understand the difference between hunger and thirst causing you to eat when you actually need to drink. By drinking adequate water not only do you eliminate extra eating but it also plays a huge role in burning fat and removing toxins from the body.

• **Keep Active**

Enjoy your favorite exercise, but if you are like some who don't like to exercise, stay as active as you can in your day-to-day life, and find activities you enjoy like walking or gardening.

TOP 3 MENTAL ATTITUDES FOR SUCCESSFUL WEIGHT LOSS



Losing weight is as much about the mind as it is about the body. With that being said, here are our top 3 mental attitudes for successful weight loss.

- **Understand why you eat**

The first of our top 3 mental attitudes for successful weight loss is being mindful of why is it that you eat. Understanding this will enable you to control what and when you eat and lose weight quickly and successfully.

When you ask someone why they eat, you'd be surprised to find that hunger is one of the least likely reasons that they eat. In fact, eating without feeling hunger is so common that many people no longer know what real hunger feels like. We are often trapped in our routines, eating at fixed times or eating when we crave certain foods. In one sense we are lucky that we aren't going hungry. But it also means that we are spoilt for choice which makes it harder to control what we eat.

One of the top reasons why we eat is because of emotional reasons. Stress, anger, sadness, boredom, etc., have all been associated with overeating. The fact is that most of us eat to feel better about ourselves. It has very little to do with hunger. And since it is linked to emotion, it is incredibly hard to control. It has been conditioned into our way of life. It takes some doing to unlearn it.

Ask yourself why you eat? What triggers it? Note down when you feel the urge. Next time whenever you feel something like the urge, make a conscious effort not to eat. Deal with it in some other way. Keep telling yourself that what you're feeling isn't hunger. Unlearn your default response. The more often you do this, the more likely you are to break the habit.

• Temper your expectations

One of the things that often leads to unsuccessful dieting or weight loss regimens is you having too high expectations of the results. A lot of times you start doing something to lose weight but give up quickly since you feel it's not working. Most diet plans are not short term. They require quite a bit of persistence and patience. It is just not practical to expect quickfire results.

“ You exercise regularly and watch what you eat. You push yourself expecting to drop pounds. But the next time you step up on the scale, it just doesn't back you up. You feel demoralized and give up. That's not the way to do it. ”

You exercise regularly and watch what you eat. You push yourself expecting to drop pounds. But the next time you step up on the

scale, it just doesn't back you up. You feel demoralized and give up. That's not the way to do it.

Remind yourself that you need to have the willpower to succeed. It is all in the mind. Set yourself up for success by tempering your expectations. Success just isn't going to come overnight. You have to keep at it. Think of it as taking baby steps towards your ultimate goal. There is no use panicking if things are seemingly not going your way. You have to believe what you're doing is right and will fetch you results. Keep motivated and success is sure to follow.

• Inform yourself

Our top 3 mental attitudes for successful weight loss would not be complete without this one. There are plenty of weight loss programs out there, each offering results that are bound to astound. We are not going to say that all of them overstate the truth, but it is vital that you find out the truth.

The truth is that most weight loss programs do offer benefits, but they take the results and blow them out of proportion. These 'fad' diets raise your expectations and along with them the chance of disillusionment. You need to program yourself to study what you're getting yourself into. Investigate the science behind each step you take. The myth behind high protein diets, for example, has already been busted. These diets have impressive short term results but are not really sustainable in the long term. Educate yourself, and weight loss should be a breeze.

NATURAL WAYS TO SLEEP



To nourish your body and mind, sleep is absolutely necessary. After getting a good night's sleep, you'll notice you can handle even the most difficult days with a bright smile on your face. Yes, that is the miracle of sleep. It helps to make us fit and healthy.

People who fail to get adequate sleep on a daily basis are at a greater risk for severe health defects, including diabetes, anxiety, depression as well as obesity. Surprisingly, a Swedish study has discovered that even one night of inadequate sleep can cause glucose intolerance, which is a precursor to diabetes. The unfortunate thing is that almost half of Europeans and Americans say they fail to get the right amount of sleep.

For those people who are struggling to sleep and do not wish to turn to medications, I have gathered a list of wholesome and natural ways with which you can get some good sleep. Let's take a look at them:

Improve the Environment

A proper environment is essential for sleep. Many of us own a TV, set in the bedroom. So, at night, which is sleeping time, you usually watch late night talk shows, serials, or news in the bed. Mental stimulation and light from the TV can inhibit sleep. The bed and bedroom should only be used for sleep and sex.

You also need to consider what kind of mattress you are using, what kind of pillow you are using, and whether any types of noise are disturbing you.

You can try and experiment using various bedtime rituals.

“ *Keep your room temperature between 58 and 68 degrees Fahrenheit, which will provide your body the opportunity to cool down. This is a natural sign which gives signals to your brain that it is the time to sleep.* **”**

Keep your room temperature between 58 and 68 degrees Fahrenheit, which will provide your body the opportunity to cool down. This is a natural sign which gives signals to your brain that it is the time to sleep.

You can try an eye mask which will help you to stay in the dark.

Avoid the Late-night Snacks

Avoid late-night snacks and desserts before bedtime. Don't consume anything less than 2 hours before your bedtime as this activates digestion and can cause reflux or heartburn, which will make you uncomfortable as well as keep you awake.

Exercise

Studies show that exercise between 15 and 30 minutes a day can assist you to get to sleep more quickly at night. According to Dinienberg, daily physical exercise and performing a bedtime ritual will improve your quality as well as the quantity of sleep. But don't exercise within

2 hours of bedtime as this can stimulate you and make it harder to get to sleep.

Prop Your Body

Use a firm pillow to elevate your upper body by 3 or so inches. You can also elevate the head of your bed by a few inches. This technique enables your body's gravity to put less weight on your diaphragm, help you breathe easier, and allows stomach acids to stay in your stomach to avoid reflux or heartburn.

Make a Sleep Schedule

Make a sleep routine and always stick to it. Staying on a sleep routine is not only necessary during the workweek, it is also important on the weekends.

Calm Your Mind

You can apply one of these quieting pursuits: listen to calming music, meditate, write down your ideas and dreams in a journal, or read a beloved book that doesn't stimulate you. A calm and quiet mind provides good sleep.

Keep the Bed Only for Sleep

Don't do any work on your bed such as replying to emails, using your laptop, or paying your bills. Keep in mind that your body will know the bed is only for resting and sex.

NATURAL SLEEP AIDS



About 40 million people in the US experience trouble sleeping. As natural as sleep should be, many individuals find getting a good night's sleep not so easy. Regular stress, noise, work pressure, pain, or simply getting older can have an adverse effect on your sleep.

Our modern fast-paced lifestyles have compounded the problem which has now become very common. You fail to understand the reason why you cannot sleep well at night; you only know that you cannot.

If you feel like getting a good night of sleep has become problematic, or if you wake up multiple times during the night, or wake up exhausted as well as unenergetic, you may need to think of a way to avoid this and get proper sleep.

Here are some natural sleep aids that can help you to get back to sleep.

Nuts & Seeds

Consume some almonds, hazelnuts, sesame seeds, or peanuts. These nuts are loaded with tryptophan, an amino acid that helps to produce the hormone, melatonin, which regulates our sleep.

Additional foods that are also loaded with tryptophan include dense fruits such as dates and bananas, dairy products, and poultry like turkey.

Valerian

Valerian is known as an herb that is commonly applied to treat various sleep disorders. It is the root of the herb that is normally used for this purpose. According to medical research, it is mild sedative plus pain reliever. It is also used for relieving headaches, stress, menstrual cramps, and anxiety.

It is an excellent herbal choice for those who are suffering from insomnia. It will have you feeling sleepy in no time as well as improve the quality of your sleep.

It is suggested that you to talk to your doctor before taking any herbal supplements. The dosage ranges from 400 mg to 900 mg valerian extract, every 2 hours before bedtime for 28 days.

Special Snack Recipe

Knock out your insomnia with this snack recipe:

Take some Medjool dates and heat them in a microwave for a short period of time, just so much as to simply soften them. Now carefully start cutting them along on one side. Then remove the pit and replace it with a little bit of goat cheese. Now seal the date with the other side.

“ *Our modern fast-paced lifestyles have confounded the problem which has now become very common. You fail to understand the reason why you cannot sleep well at night; you only know that you cannot.* ”

Melatonin

Melatonin is a natural hormone that is normally made by the pineal gland of our body. When it is dark outside, the melatonin in the body starts increasing and you start feeling sleepy. On the other hand, when it gets light out, the melatonin in our body begins to fall and you start feeling mentally alert and fresh.

Melatonin supplements have proved to be quite reliable and effective. A standard dose is from 1 mg to 4 mg of melatonin but this could be too high for some. Something like 0.25 mg to 0.5 mg, and no more than two days a week, should do the trick in most cases.

Melatonin supplements are usually easily available in your nearby health food store.

Enjoy Chamomile Tea

Try some chamomile to improve sleep. The tea is healthy, soothing, delicious, and calming plus it will help relax you. Just sip your thoughts away before climbing into bed for a good night's sleep.

Lavender

Lavender is an herb which is used by many natural health advocates to help people with sleeplessness. It is also regarded beneficial for the treatment of anxiety or depression.

You can use dried lavender in your tea. Also, you can use aromatherapy products that contain lavender oil. Use a few drops of lavender oil in a warm Epsom salt bath, 30 to 60 minutes before bedtime and you will start feeling sleepy in no time.

Carbohydrate Foods

Eat a small, wholesome snack that is rich in carbohydrates such as whole grain toast, oatmeal, or half a banana. These foods will temporarily help to stimulate the brain to produce serotonin and encourage sleep

Magnesium

Magnesium is known as a vital mineral in our body. Normally, it is found in almost all our tissues and brain. Make sure you receive sufficient magnesium by eating foods such as quinoa, kale, whole grains, and fish to avoid magnesium deficiency as its side-effects include insomnia. You can take a magnesium supplement with calcium, and also get magnesium by soaking in an Epsom salt bath for 20 to 30 minutes before bedtime.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN ADDICTION AND A HABIT



While most of us often use the words addiction and habit interchangeably, the fact is that the two are entirely different. Addiction is a compulsive dependence on something, whether it is a substance or action that hinders your life in a major way. Habits, on the other hand, can be both negative as well as positive and aren't usually accompanied by a physical dependence.

So just what's the difference between an addiction and a habit?

First of all, you should know that habits and addictions are both born out of actions that you perform regularly. A negative habit can lead to addiction but what separates the two is that the addictions are mostly related to some deep lying emotional problem and recovery from them is a much more painful experience.

Addiction to a substance or activity occurs when your mind and body associates a great sense of temporary pleasure from it. These feelings are just manifestations of your mind to overcome some sort of emotional or psychological problems while covering up the harmful consequences of the addiction. Think of it this way. When you're taking drugs or alcohol, it becomes an addiction the second you start doing it to cover up some difficult emotions.

The release of dopamine in the brain's reward pathway is what triggers the formation of both habits and addictions. Dopamine gives the feeling of pleasure, thus when it is associated with an action or substance, you just have to do it again. The brain just associates the action with pleasure, and it becomes a default action for feeling better.

“ A good way of telling the difference between a habit and addiction is that if you think your mental condition is dependent on doing something, chances are you are addicted to it. ”

A good way of telling the difference between a habit and addiction is that if you think your mental condition is dependent on doing something, chances are you are addicted to it. Negative emotional symptoms are also quite common in addictions. For instance, if you're addicted to drugs, you may feel anxious and grumpy if you can't have any.

Everyone has habits. They are mostly just learned responses that build up with time due to overuse. In other words, they are kind of like reflex actions. Neuroscientists believe that they are formed in an area of the brain called the basal ganglia containing the dorsal striatum. The thing with habits is that they are hard to change. But they are not addictions. Bad

habits may share similar traits with addictions, but they are different.

As far as brain activity goes, the difference between the two is subtle, to say the least. Addictions are similar to habits in the sense that they are learned responses. But they involve an extreme amount of dependence on an action or substance for e.g. drugs. They also lead to craving and lack of impulse control. Addiction also involves the basal ganglia but affects the prefrontal cortex, a part of the brain associated with self-control. It also affects the mesolimbic dopamine circuitry, which increases motivation levels for the drug one is addicted to.

It is the intensity of craving for something that differentiates a habit from addiction. As far as addiction goes, craving for the substance goes way beyond just wanting. Addiction leads to powerful emotions, even physical feelings that focus on getting the substance. The mind and body are so used to the substance that its absence leads to imbalances in brain function which end up creating withdrawal symptoms. These withdrawal symptoms don't happen for habits. At worse, if you miss out on a habit, you may get the feeling of missing something, but there would be no withdrawal symptoms at all. In addictions, intense cravings are a must.

At the end of the day, it comes down to this. A habit is not hard to beat. But if you're addicted to something, it becomes very hard to identify and accept the fact. You may need professional help. If you feel that you are too dependent on a substance and that its overuse is harming your life, if trying to quit it causes physical and mental withdrawal symptoms, you probably have an addiction and need professional help.

OPTIMIZING FITNESS



I do it as a therapy. I do it as something to keep me alive. We all need a little discipline. Exercise is my discipline.

Jack LaLanne

HOW TO GET MOTIVATED FOR MORNING WORKOUTS



How to get motivated for morning workouts? That is a question that anyone who has ever tried to get out of bed early in the morning to exercise needs answering. You go to sleep all pumped and ready to wake up early the next day and workout, but when the alarm goes off your body just doesn't seem to back up your earlier enthusiasm.

While it is a tough one, motivating yourself to wake up and workout, working out in the morning sets your body up for success for the rest of the day. It improves metabolism, energy lev-

els and will brighten your mood. It is well worth your while to do all you can to get up and do it.

Here are some tips on how to get motivated for morning workouts:

- **Sleep Well:** Make sure you go to bed on time. Switch off your TV or iPad or whatever else could distract you. Keep your cell phone some distance away so that it isn't within arm's reach. Try and get the proper amount of sleep every night, so that when it's time to wake up your body doesn't fight you as much.

- **Get Sunlight Into Your Room:** If you live in a place that has exposure to natural light, try and make sure that this light reaches you early morning. Sunlight has a biological effect on the brain that tells it to wake up. It will refresh you and give you the energy to get up and feel motivated enough to go workout.
- **Be Prepared:** One thing that often feels like a pain early in the morning is the thought of packing and arranging your gear before leaving for the workout. It is best to be prepared beforehand. Pack your things the night before, sleep in your gym clothes if you have to, just save time in the morning.

“ *Remind Yourself Why You Do It: At the end of the day, the reason that you workout in the mornings is to look and feel better. Remind yourself why you do it and what would happen if you don't.* ”

- **Partner Up:** One of the reasons that you don't feel motivated enough to work out in the morning is that you aren't really answerable to anyone. Involve someone in your workout sessions. This way when you wake up, there will be someone waiting for you to join them. If not for yourself, you will wake up for the other person or risk letting them down.
- **Make It Harder For Yourself To Skip:** The best way to cut off your escape route is making yourself accountable to more people. Advertise that you are planning to go for a morning workout. Tell your family, tell your friends, put it on your social media accounts. Now that the whole world knows, you have to do it, don't you?
- **Socialize While You Workout:** You're bound to run into people who exercise at your gym

at the same time as you on a regular basis. Strike a conversation with them. Make new friends. This will not only make your morning workouts more enjoyable, but it will also give you something to look forward to every morning.

- **Set Goals And Award Yourself:** The thing about setting goals is that, since they come from you, staying motivated to follow them isn't really easy. But if you set goals for yourself, and then award yourself when you reach those goals, that right there is a winning strategy. Hit the gym for your morning workout every day and do 5 miles on the treadmill, and you can treat yourself to that nice pair of shoes you've had your eye on.
- **Remind Yourself Why You Do It:** At the end of the day, the reason that you workout in the mornings is to look and feel better. Remind yourself why you do it and what would happen if you don't. A slip up here and there is excusable, but compare the energy you had during those days to the days when you did go for your morning workout. There is only going to be one winner!

RESETTING YOUR SET POINT



Many people try to lose weight and fail. This is because everyone has a certain general weight that their body feels most comfortable at. This is called your set point. It is your ideal weight where the heart, lungs and other organs function at an ideal level so as to not expend too much or too little energy.

When a person is on a diet they change their metabolism because of the foods that are being cut out or cut down on. The body's metabolism eventually pushes back to compensate the weight loss and thereby increases hunger and cravings. This is called the "yo-yo effect" and is one of the main reasons why diets don't work in the long run.

This article will discuss what determines a body's set point, the ways to reset your set point in order to avoid the ups and downs of diets, and how to successfully keep the weight off, long term.

What Determines A Body's Set Point

A body's set point is determined by four physical criteria:

- **Physical Activity** - Burning the calories that are taken in is an important way to change your body's set point. The calories that have been ingested should be relatively similar to the calories burned. Over time, the body gets used to this amount and basically sets itself to handle that amount of exercise and calories.

- Genetics - Many people like to “blame” their genes for how they look based on the fact that they think they can’t process calories as well as others. While this is true for some people, the majority just have to change their eating and exercise habits for an extended time period.
- Diet - As with physical activity, diet is another integral part of the body’s set point. Your set point doesn’t necessarily mean eating less means lower body weight, and eating more doesn’t mean a higher one. However, eating the right foods for you and exercising properly will help make a big difference in your set point.
- Hormones - Hormones can play a part in resetting your set point, much in the same way genetics do. High levels of testosterone, sensitivity to leptin, and lower levels of cortisol are some specific hormones that can affect body weight. While healthy hormones aren’t the most important factor in determining a body’s set point, maintaining a healthy lifestyle is the best option for healthy hormones and a healthy life.

How Can You Reset Your Body’s Set Point

Most people try to lose weight by trying one or more diets and exercise plans. They cut out carbs, sugars, or fats, they go to the gym, and then after 6 weeks, put the weight right back on. This is often done many times in a person’s life and is called “yo-yo dieting”, because just as a yo-yo goes down, it must then go up.

Although there is not much you can do about genetics and hormones, physical activity and diet can certainly be altered. The key to resetting your body’s set point is to make minor changes that you can do for the rest of your life. Going on huge diets and intense exercise binges is not a good idea for most people because of the eventual crash.

One scientific method is called the 10% method. It means that you should be able to lose no more than 10% of your body weight at a time and keep it off. Losing more than 10% means your body begins to fight back by increasing metabolism, hunger, and cravings. This 10% loss should be over a 6 month period. Afterwards, the person can try for another 10%.

“ *The key to resetting your body’s set point is to make minor changes that you can do for the rest of your life. Going on huge diets and intense exercise binges is not a good idea for most people because of the eventual crash.* ”

The best and easiest way to start changing your body’s set point is by changing your diet. Eating more healthy foods on some days and less food overall on others keeps the metabolism at a level that will eventually lower the body’s set point. Diets lower your everyday caloric intake, while resetting your set point means having a healthy everyday eating style and not just cutting calories.

The key to resetting your set point is really consistency. Making subtle changes in your diet and exercise routines will take time, but also has to last forever. Small dietary changes and beginning with simple exercises that you can do forever instead of short, intense exercises will help change your overall health by resetting your body’s set point.

BEST TIME OF DAY TO WORK OUT



There are many different theories regarding what is the best time of day to work out. While there are a few theories that come from scientific studies about the body's chemistry, most experts say that the best time of the day when people's bodies are the most effective is up to the individual.

There are many different factors that contribute to when people are the most motivated or the most physically ready to exercise. This article will examine some of these factors in order to help you figure out which is the best time of day for you to work out, maximizing results and minimizing chances of injury.

Scheduling Factors

Some people just do not have the luxury to work out during the day. A busy job, family, friends, extracurricular activities, and many other factors can often leave a person with only two choices for exercise: morning or night.

A third option could allow for a lunch time workout, which can be an attractive option, but the downside is that it can also be time restrictive. Most people get an hour for lunch, and once you factor in the time it takes to change clothes, shower, and other grooming necessities, the time frame decreases even further. For

many people this might not be long enough to achieve the desired workout.

Another time problem is that people actually have to eat lunch too! If you are going to have a lunch time workout make sure you eat immediately after the workout. Eating makes the body put energy into the digestive system instead of the lungs and muscles. This means you could feel tired and could even experience cramps. If do you have to eat before exercising, try to allow 90 minutes for the body to process your meal.

Working Out in the Morning

Some people enjoy working out in the morning. This is because it has not yet become a burden on the rest of the day's schedule. When people don't work out in the morning and try to find time in the rest of the day, there will inevitably be something else that will come up, and the time set aside to workout will vanish.

Before working out in the morning, make sure to take extra time to warm up. The body will be coming out of a resting or 'cold' state after a long period of rest. Make sure the blood is flowing to the muscles. This is essential to avoid injury.

If you are a morning person then this is perhaps the best time to exercise. Generally speaking, the best time to exercise is when you are feeling at your best. Getting psyched and energized to find the motivation to start an exercise is one of the hardest parts, and can become infinitely more difficult if it is not the right time of day for you.

There are a few other advantages to working out in the morning:

- The Most Important Meal of the Day - When going for a workout in the morning you are going to burn many calories and are therefore going to need to replace them to have energy for the rest of the day. A healthy breakfast after a good workout starts you

out on the right track to eat healthy for the rest of the day.

- Convenience - Instead of having to change clothes, makeup, hair, deodorant, etc. more than once a day, you can roll out of bed, go for a workout, and then change just once for the rest of the day.
- Routine - Most people who work out in the morning can develop a routine more easily and stick with it, compared to people who work out at other times in the day. Since there are less personal and professional distractions in the morning, it is easier to get into a rhythm.
- Afterburn - The afterburn of a morning workout will follow you throughout the day. This means that your body will be ready and willing to burn calories for any other activities you do throughout the day.

“ *For people who do not work out in the morning, the evening is the preferred time to exercise. Some people are just not morning people and the best time of day to work out is when you feel most motivated.* ”

Working Out in the Evening

For people who do not work out in the morning, the evening is the preferred time to exercise. Some people are just not morning people and the best time of day to work out is when you feel most motivated. If you are not a morning person, dragging yourself out of bed is not going to get the best results in your exercises.

Here are some advantages of working out in the late afternoon or evening;

- Relieving Stress - Increases in stress levels have been scientifically linked to gaining

weight and inhibiting the body to burn fat. Working out at the end of a stressful day can be a great way to get rid of the stress hormones that will stop you from losing weight.

- Friends - Most people do not want to go for a jog at 5 am. Having friends or colleagues to exercise with provides motivation and support when trying to keep to an exercise schedule.
- You Are Awake - If you are not a morning person there is very little point to trudging along on a treadmill. At the end of the day, the body is fully awake and ready to go. The key is to exercise while you are still on the day high and before you crash for the night.

Afterburning

People who work out in the mornings have the benefit of "afterburning." This means your body will be burning calories for the rest of the day after a morning workout. While working out at night will technically burn the same amount of calories, it can also disrupt your sleep pattern. After working out at night, the body will be in "sleep" mode. This means the afterburning phase of exercising and will be less effective at burning calories.

“ For most people, working out in the morning makes the most sense. By starting a workout routine in the morning, you will be able to burn calories in the morning and then use that energy for the rest of the day. ”

For most people, working out in the morning makes the most sense. By starting a workout routine in the morning, you will be able to burn calories in the morning and then use that energy

for the rest of the day. Having the afterburn for the rest of the day means you will burn more calories and body fat.

The final scientific conclusion for the best time of day to work out is this: find the best time that works for you. Some people jump out of bed in the morning and are ready to get energized. Some people need 4 hours to wake up and feel like themselves at 8 o'clock at night.

Whichever time is best make sure that you can keep up a consistent regimen because consistency is the key to any effective exercise schedule.

HOW YOUR LEVEL OF ACTIVITY AFFECTS YOUR METABOLIC RATE



A person's metabolic rate is dependent on many things. Most of these factors are out of our control. However, the ones that we can control are diet and, more importantly, exercise.

Many people are quick to say that their metabolism is the reason they cannot lose weight. Specifically, that it is bad genes contributing to bad metabolism. Well, these people are only about half right.

Around 50 - 80 % of a person's metabolism is used just to keep the body functioning at a normal level. The rest is actually up to us.

Diet and exercise are the predominant factors when defining a person's metabolic rate. Even though there are many factors that people can't change to affect their metabolism, this article will focus on what metabolism is and how your level of activity can affect your metabolic rate.

What is Metabolism

Metabolism is described as “all chemical reactions involved in maintaining the living state of the cells and the organism.” To put this in simpler terms and for the purposes of this article, we will be looking at it as burning calories to give the body the energy it needs.

The body can burn calories in the following ways:

- **Thermic Effect of Food (TEF)** - When a person eats, they are using energy in their digestive tract to digest the food. Basically, you are burning more energy while eating than you are with no food in your system.
- **Resting Metabolic Rate (RMR)** - This metabolic rate is the most important because the body's RMR accounts for around 65% of the calories that the body burns during the day. The body's RMR is the amount of calories burned just to keep the organs functioning, blood pumping, and anything else to simply keep the body alive while not in activity mode.
- **Physical Activity Energy Expenditure (PAEE)** - This is the energy burned while doing any physical activity. This does not mean just exercising, but any movement at all. Walking, doing the laundry or anything involving activity is your PAEE.

All of these ways of burning calories can be altered to increase your metabolic rate. Changing your TEF will require you to increase your level of activity, which in turn, will increase your RMR. Therefore, the best way to increase your metabolic rate is to change your level of activity. By using specific exercises, you can burn fat and lose weight more easily.

Which Exercises to Use

While many people like to hop on the stationary bike, treadmill, or stairmaster for an hour or two, these exercises are not actually the best way to increase your metabolic rate.

“ While many people like to hop on the stationary bike, treadmill, or stairmaster for an hour or two, these exercises are not actually the best way to increase your metabolic rate. ”

Instead of endurance exercises, there are much more efficient activities that will affect your metabolic rate and allow you to burn more calories. Some of these exercises include:

- **Burst Exercises** - These exercises encompass working out using short, intense exercises instead of long, steady ones. Do exercises such as sprinting, jumping, or skipping rope for 30-90 seconds, rest for 60 seconds, and then repeat, for a total of 15 minutes per day. Glucose in the muscles will be depleted compared to endurance exercises. Replacing glucose in the muscles requires burning more energy.
- **Swimming** - The same type of burst exercise can be applied to swimming. Instead of swimming for an extended period of time, do short, intense laps that leave you out of breath. Rest and then repeat for a total of 15 minutes.
- **Weight Training** - Muscle requires more energy to function than fat. If a person has more muscles in their body, then the body will need to burn more calories to get back to its resting state. By putting on muscle weight instead of fat, the body will need to burn more energy to get back to its resting state.

Why You Should Balance Your Metabolic Rate

There are factors about your metabolic rate that you can't control, such as age, height, gender, genetics, and hormones. They are what

they are and there is nothing you can do to change them.

Exercise and diet are the factors that you can change. The level of activity in your life will affect your metabolic rate, which will make your body burn more calories and eventually balance your body's set weight. While eating a balanced diet is important, the amount of exercise is equally important. This is called balancing your metabolic rate.

When people consume too much food compared to the amount of calories burned, it is called a positive energy balance. Most people that have found their "set point" will consume around the same amount of calories that they will burn with exercise and their resting metabolic rate. This is called a balanced energy.

A negative energy balance is when a person is burning more calories that they are consuming. However, while this may seem like the best option for losing weight, the body can go into a "conservation mode" and will cease burning fat to conserve energy.

“ When people consume too much food compared to the amount of calories burned, it is called a positive energy balance. Most people that have found their “set point” will consume around the same amount of calories that they will burn with exercise ”

When muscles are being used, they burn glucose. Burst exercises burn more glucose than endurance exercises and therefore require more energy to be replenished. By having more muscle than fat, your metabolic rate will increase to get itself back to normal after exercise.

The best way to balance your metabolic rate is to do burst exercises and gain muscle mass, while consuming enough calories from food to allow the body's metabolism to be effective.

The body will burn more calories to get back to its resting state and it will eventually burn more calories overall, leading to a longer, healthier life!

SPEEDING UP METABOLISM



Speeding up metabolism will burn calories faster and allow you to lose weight more efficiently.

Everybody wants to lose a few pounds now and then, especially for the summer! Most people go straight to the gym, do a crash diet, or both. After a few months, people either give up or may have even lost their goal weight. This concept is called yo-yo dieting, and has been going on for decades.

It doesn't work. Did you know that 95% of the people, who lose weight with a crash diet, put that weight back on within a year?

The key to losing weight and burning fat is to change your metabolism. Sure, everyone says that their genes are to blame when can't lose

weight. "I was born this way" is a natural sentiment when faced with the tough task of dropping a few pounds. But that sentiment can be changed.

This article will discuss some of the techniques anyone can do to speed up their metabolism and burn more calories to lose weight.

Exercise

One sure way to speed up metabolism is to change the way you exercise. Many people often do endurance exercises such as running on a treadmill for an hour. While this will burn calories, it does little to speed up your metabolism.

Burst exercises increase the body's metabolism because it involves short, intense exercises that will make the body use more oxygen and burn more energy. As your body returns to its normal state, it is speeding up your metabolism because the body is still burning energy to get back to its resting state.

Muscle weighs more than fat. By weight training for 30 minutes, two to three times per week, you will speed up your resting metabolism by 100 calories per day. This means that even when you are resting, you have reset your metabolism to keep working to lose weight.

Diet

There are several changes that can be made in your diet to help speed up your metabolism. One of most effective nutrients for accomplishing this are eating omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3's balance your blood sugar and reduce inflammation, giving your body the opportunity to increase your metabolism. Consuming omega-3's in addition to exercising can help you lose weight more effectively. Omega-3 fatty acids are most prevalent in fish such as salmon and tuna, as well as flaxseed and walnuts.

“ *Another common food item that has recently been linked to speeding up metabolism is green tea. Green tea contains a chemical called catechin, which is thought to speed up metabolism, even when resting.* ”

Another common food item that has recently been linked to speeding up metabolism is green tea. Green tea contains a chemical called catechin, which is thought to speed up metabolism,

even when resting. By drinking 5 eight ounce cups of green tea per day, energy expenditure can be increased by up to 90 calories.

Another good diet tip to ensure your metabolism is working as efficiently as possible is to make sure you eat breakfast. There is a reason they say breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Breakfast quite literally wakes up your metabolism. Waking up your metabolism as early as possible will help your body burn calories more efficiently throughout the day. Try to make breakfasts that include healthy options such as:

- Oatmeal
- Berries
- Almonds or Walnuts
- Spinach and Feta Omelets
- Whole Grain Toast
- Bran
- Low-fat Milk
- Bananas
- Ricotta cheese
- Yogurt

Another great tool to burn fat and to speed up your metabolism is to eat fruits and vegetables. There is a catch, however, in that they should be organic whenever possible. Pesticides that are used on most fruits and vegetables can interfere with the functioning of the thyroid. The thyroid controls the body's metabolism, among many other things, and the chemicals that are used in pesticides can inhibit its effectiveness.

Proteins are another great tool, and they are digested more slowly than fats or carbs. This means that you will feel full for longer and won't be craving more food or unhealthy snacks. It also means that the body will expend more energy trying to burn those proteins, and can help you to lose weight more effectively.

It is important to remember not to slash too many calories when trying to speed up your metabolism. If there aren't enough calories to burn, the body will go into "survival mode"

and will stop burning fat altogether in order to conserve energy. A healthy amount of calories, based on your weight, age and gender, per day is the best way to ensure your metabolism is functioning as efficiently as possible.

Always make sure to eat throughout the day. This will mean less overall hunger, and therefore less craving for foods that are unhealthy. If you want to eat 6 meals per day, then try to stay around 300 calories per meal, or just take your usual amount of calories per day and divide them by six for the most effective way to speed up metabolism.

Get Some Sleep

“ We all know how great it feels to get a good night’s sleep. You wake up feeling energized and ready to go. This is because your metabolism works best without the stresses of being tired all day. ”

We all know how great it feels to get a good night’s sleep. You wake up feeling energized and ready to go. This is because your metabolism works best without the stresses of being tired all day. If you are exhausted then the body does not have the energy needed to burn calories and will actually lower your metabolism in the end.

Speeding up your body’s metabolism is a great way to get your body to its ideal weight, and keep it there. A more efficient metabolism means that your body is no longer trying too hard to keep all the internal organs running at peak efficiency, and can focus on burning fat instead. Increasing your metabolism will help your body burn calories more efficiently and lead to a longer, healthier life.

LIFESTYLE



Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul.

John Muir

HOW TO LIVE THE GOOD LIFE



Everyone has good days and bad days. The key to living the good life is to have the good days outnumber the bad days. So how do we accomplish this?

People are unique, so there is no right answer that fits every single person. However, there are some things that everyone can try to do more often to make the good days more prevalent.

Here are some tips and tricks to make your life easier and happier.

Family

Having a family that is there for you no matter what is very important to living the good life. It is a safety net for your life. No matter

what is going on or what has happened in the past, knowing your family will be there for you is an essential part to being happy. Siblings fight. Kids hate their parents. The important thing to remember is that they will be there for you at the end of the day.

Having someone who will take care of you no matter what will allow you to make bigger and bolder choices with your life. If you fail, there will always be someone there to fall back on and get you back on your feet.

Friends

While having family to fall back on in times of need is important, it is also important to have friends around you whether it is the good times or the bad. Having friends are the building blocks to every other relationship you will be in. Learning to treat your friends the way you want to be treated is how people succeed in life.

Having your friends around guarantees that there will be more good days than bad ones!

“ If you are not doing anything then you are not living. By having a job, volunteering, coaching, babysitting, or doing anything that gives your life purpose, you can live the good life. ”

Be Productive

If you are not doing anything then you are not living. By having a job, volunteering, coaching, babysitting, or doing anything that gives your life purpose, you can live the good life. The

best way to feel fulfilled is by helping others to get the job done.

Take it Easy

While the last point made it sound like you should be going full speed for as long as you can, it is important to rest as well. It can be a 20 minute break to go for a walk, or it can be 2 weeks off in the summer to go to the beach. If you go too hard and too fast then your brain is not functioning at 100% and mistakes will be made. Work hard but know when to take a break. You will be much more productive and useful after a little rest.

Do Things On Your Own

“ *There is no satisfaction quite like completing a project by yourself. Being self-sufficient gives you the confidence to go through each day knowing that everything is going to be alright.* ”

There is no satisfaction quite like completing a project by yourself. Being self-sufficient gives you the confidence to go through each day knowing that everything is going to be alright. Even simple things like replacing a light bulb or unclogging the sink will give you the gumption to try other things like changing a tire or even moving to a new country!

Travel

Speaking of doing things on your own, travelling is the best way to live the good life. If you already have a significant other, then bring them along! Travelling to other places and

experiencing new things will open up your soul and allow you to see humanity for what it really is.

By learning and sampling other cultures, foods, customs, and even religions, you will have a better understanding of this world and why and how it all works. Stress will diminish the body's immune system's functionality and will ultimately shorten your life. By travelling and understanding how the world works, you will lower your stress level and be able to live the good life!

Talk To People

If you decide to go travelling, you will meet many new people. Talking to strangers and getting to know them is another great way to know more about the world. Even if you don't speak the language, people like you are making the effort.

This principle applies even if you aren't travelling. Take the time to talk to the person you see at the bus stop every day, or the coworker who seems to be a little shy. Most people have something to say but maybe don't have too many people who will listen. Having an open mind and an open ear can make all the difference in the world. When someone opens up to you, then you are living the good life!

These are just a few of the many things that you can do to live the good life. Life will give you back what you put in so make an effort to put in as much as you can. You might be surprised at what you get back in return!

THE STRESS AND ADDICTION CONNECTION



The basic idea behind the stress and addiction connection is that when people have a lot of stress in their lives they sometimes don't pursue healthy ways to relieve it. They can sometimes turn to drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes for relief which is not good for anyone.

So what stress is, what causes stress, what are stress dangers, what is the stress and addiction connection, and what are the best ways to deal with the stress in your life?

What is Stress?

Stress is what you feel when the demands of your life exceed your ability to meet those demands. It is your psychological, physiological and behavioral responses to things that challenge or threaten you. When you are feeling stress you are feeling your self-protective, survival instinct called "fight or flight."

Basically when you feel stressed it means that your body is telling you that there is a situation that has to be dealt with. The body will

release different chemicals to combat the different types of stress.

Since stress causes the body to react to situations where it thinks it is in danger, people feel on edge and uneasy when under stress. Sometimes they look to deal with this is with addictive substances.

“ *Since stress causes the body to react to situations where it thinks it is in danger, people feel on edge and uneasy when under stress. Sometimes they look to deal with this is with addictive substances.* ”

What Causes Stress?

There are any number of things that can cause stress. However, there are several factors that have presented themselves as the most common. These factors include:

- Conflicts
- Overwork
- Death of a Friend or Loved One
- Major Life Changes
- Illness
- Legal Problems
- Addiction Issues

There are obviously many other things that cause stress but the key aspect is to manage it as well as possible without resorting to an addictive substance.

Stress Dangers

Chronic stress can be dangerous because it can cause the body's immune system to not function as well as it should. This is because stress is a warning sign for the body and not meant to be a long-term issue.

When stress becomes too much for the body to handle, it becomes chronic stress. Chronic stress means that the chemicals in the body and the brain that are used to fight stress end up abusing the body instead.

Chronic stress can lead to serious health problems. If not treated properly it can lead to long-term problems, and could even become fatal. Some of these conditions include:

- Diabetes
- Digestive Problems
- Ulcers
- Depression
- Fatigue
- Heart Disease
- Substance Abuse

The Stress and Addiction Connection

When people have too much stress in their lives, chronic stress, they can look to many different things to get themselves back to feeling relaxed. Some people take up healthy habits to get their brains and body back on track by exercising and eating right. Others use methods that involve addictive substances.

Drugs or alcohol are quite commonly used to deal with the pain. While this will allow you to relax for a short period of time, the downside is that drugs, alcohol and cigarettes are extremely addictive substances and extremely detrimental to your health.

These substances will de-stress you for a short period of time, but substance abuse is not all that great. Since stress usually comes in waves that vary in intensity, most people can cope with it in order to get back to a healthy state. However, with chronic stress there can be the feeling that you can't get away from this problem and you need a way out.

Ironically, using drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes to combat stress actually increase stress over time. The brain ends up being dependant on these substances. When it doesn't get these

addictive substances, the brain and body get even more stressed and starts abusing your immune system, causing all sorts of health problems and illnesses.

The Best Ways To Control Stress

Using addictive substances like drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes to deal with stress is like putting a band-aid on a bullet wound. They will temporarily give you relief but you will eventually need more and more and more. Use becomes abuse.

“ There are ways to deal with stress that do not involve things that will eventually be toxic to your health. If you use natural methods to deal with your stress then you will be healthier in the long run. ”

There are ways to deal with stress that do not involve things that will eventually be toxic to your health. If you use natural methods to deal with your stress then you will be healthier in the long run. Some things to try include:

- Breathing Exercises - This is a very effective way to reduce stress in your life.
- Eating Healthy - Healthy items like green tea and bananas will go a long way to reduce stress.
- Exercise - Using exercise is a great way to alleviate stress from your life. Short, intense exercises that are repeated for a total of 30 minutes will energize the body and mind to produce the chemicals to deal with stress.
- Relax - Listening to music, reading a book, watching a favorite TV show. These are all simple ways to just get your stress level back to normal.

The stress and addiction connection is increasingly prevalent in today's society and is growing every day. There are many ways to deal with stress. Some people deal with stress by using addictive substances but this presents the pitfall of substance abuse.

The best way to deal with stress is to use healthy techniques. By using healthy methods to deal with stress you will be able to live a long and healthy life!

BEST 5 WAYS TO CREATE DAILY WORK-LIFE BALANCE



There are plenty of times in our life when we wish we could strike a better balance between our work and personal life. Most of us are too obsessed with making money, climbing the corporate ladder, and advancing our careers. So much so that it often comes at the cost of our personal lives. Be it our relationships, our personal interests or anything else, we just don't have time for ourselves.

Creating a healthy daily work-life balance is not impossible, and the truth is that most of us realize that it is something that needs to be done. But what we struggle with is putting these changes into action.

Below are the best 5 ways to create daily work-life balance that can slowly improve your lifestyle. Give these a try and see just how better they'll make your life.

• **Create a proper routine and follow it**

Start by planning your routine around a daily morning habit that gives you a sense of calm before you go to work. You could try meditating or doing an early morning workout. A good morning routine will get you off to a good start, give you a sense of having accomplished something first thing in the morning, and provide you with the impetus to carry on the good feeling through the rest of the day.

“ *Sticking to this routine like clockwork will allow your body to rest.* ”

Do this for the evenings too. Plan a routine for every night including when you go to sleep, maybe fix a time for watching your favorite late night show, or just plan out your schedule for next day in advance. Sticking to this routine like clockwork will allow your body to rest when it's time to rest. It will also give you some time to yourself enabling you to go to sleep at peace.

• **Make time for yourself**

Making time for yourself is an important part of striking a work-life balance. Not only does everyone need a break from the hassles of work, but what you also need is some time to relax, some time to yourself. It doesn't matter what you do, but take an hour out each day. Maybe go for a jog or get a massage. Whatever you do, this hour is necessary for managing the stress and fatigue that come with work.

Meditation is especially excellent for this. It will lower anxiety levels to a bare minimum and improve work efficiency like you've never known before.

• **You don't need to overwork yourself**

From these best 5 ways to create daily work-life balance, this one is probably the most

understated. The fact is that most of us don't realize that we don't actually have to overwork. Overworking is bound to tear up your work-life balance. Whatever little time you did have for living went down the drain the moment you started working overtime.

The best thing to do about this is to tell your boss or your co-workers that you have too much on your plate. You don't need to say that it's too much to handle but explain to them how overworking is affecting the quality of your output. Everyone needs to work together to find a solution to this, but that is what teams are for.

• **Always saying yes isn't going to work**

One of the reasons that you can never seem to strike that work-life balance that you crave so much is that you just don't know how to say 'no'. It is completely natural for one to have limitations. Often we tend to keep getting ourselves stuck in situations because we keep compromising on our limitations. That doesn't have to be the case.

The next time a colleague invites you out for a drink after a long day at work, say no. Use that time to catch up on your sleep. This doesn't mean that you can't say 'yes', but don't say 'yes' just because you don't want to say 'no'.

• **Let your creativity out**

Creativity is something that is bound to make you feel alive. Whether it is doing something at work, at home or anywhere else, as long as you're being creative, the chances are that you will feel good about yourself. You may be the best at your job that involves no creativity, but the fact is that it is only creative pursuits that will give your life excitement. They will open your mind to new possibilities and expand your horizons. Creative pursuits will help you achieve work-life balance and add that extra bit of excitement to your life.

HOW TO THINK LIKE A MILLIONAIRE



If you want to become a millionaire, you have to think like one. But just how to think like a millionaire?

If you just take a moment and look at all the self-made millionaires out there, the thing that will stand out to you is that most of them have a very specific mindset as far as their money spending and money managing habits are concerned. Anyone who is a made millionaire knows the amount of hard work that went into their accomplishments. As such, they understand the value of money and aren't really ones to blow it away on unnecessary luxuries.

Real millionaires don't need to look rich to be rich. They don't need to flash their money at every opportunity. They know that money makes money and realize that by spending it on unnecessary luxuries they are in fact just wasting all the potential that comes with it.

The reality is that you need to learn from this habit. You need to appreciate the value of money and understand that if you start managing whatever money you have right now, there is a good chance you could make more from it. How to think like a millionaire? Here are a few tips that can help you on your way:

• Be Fearless

Making money is a risky game, and the fact of the matter is that you can never succeed if you're overly cautious. Stop worrying about every little detail before making a decision.

This doesn't mean that you start making ill-informed decisions. But don't over think things.

Think of it this way, when housing collapsed many people lost out, but a few made millions. You need to start detecting and taking opportunities when they come around. It is a well-known fact that most successful people invest almost 20% of their income every year. Be fearless and start investing today!

• Be Objective Driven

“ Making money for the sake of making money seldom works. Set an objective for yourself and let that drive your money related decisions. Save because you want to invest in something down the line. ”

Making money for the sake of making money seldom works. Set an objective for yourself and let that drive your money related decisions. Save because you want to invest in something down the line. When you set yourself goals, there are lesser chances that you will go about blowing your money away on unnecessary things. Every action that you take must be objective driven and bring you closer to achieving your goals.

There are plenty of examples that tell you how important having an objective is. There are so many successful celebrities who ended up being bankrupt because they didn't manage their money. They didn't know what to do with the money when they had it and wasted it all away. Learn from them.

• Saving is the backbone of becoming a millionaire

This is just about simple math. Every dollar you save today will appreciate and give you much more in the future. Say you save \$200 per month for 45 years and invest it in a fund. This fund provides you with an average yield of 10%. In 45 years, you would have \$2,236,000 in the bank.

That being said, saving is not easy. It requires lots of commitment and discipline. But all it takes is a look at the example above to realize that becoming a millionaire is at your fingertips if you want.

• Take the initiative

To think like a millionaire you need to realize that such people are always looking for opportunities to grow their income. They are always studying, researching and educating themselves about new business opportunities.

You need to be prepared to jump on the next big opportunity that comes around. Millionaires have an eye for investments that are profitable. Keep your eyes and ears open for any information that can give you a leg-up. Think long term. Be prepared to put your money on investments that promise exceptional opportunities. Some may seem low profile now, but may have exceptional futures. Take the leap.

• Be mentally prepared for failure

How to think like a millionaire? There is no sure-shot way of becoming a millionaire. It is the millionaire mindset to understand and accept this. Be ready for failures and disappointments. Be prepared to get right back up. The key to thinking like a millionaire is dropping a defeatist attitude. No one benefits from concentrating on things not in your control. Instead, focus on the next opportunity that allows you to reach your dreams.

HOW PROLONGED STRESS CAN LEAD TO ANXIETY



Almost everyone feels stressed during the day. A hectic work schedule, things to do at home, personal problems, and everything else you have to do contribute to your stress level.

While there are many things you can do to reduce your stress from day to day, sometimes stress can build up and become chronic. Chronic stress can lead to even more serious health risks like chronic anxiety.

This article will discuss what stress is, what anxiety is, and the ways you can deal with them.

What Is Stress?

Stress is defined as any demand that is placed on your mind or body. At any given time, there are many stresses being placed on both the mind and the body. But when the stress becomes habitual, you start to notice its negative effects.

Stress is not a bad thing. In fact, it is one of the body's protection mechanisms. Stress lets us know that something is wrong and our body and brain don't like what is happening.

Feeling stressed when you are studying for a test, or before a job interview means that your body is preparing for a change. The body and mind don't like change! However, once the small amounts of stress and change have been dealt with, your life goes back to normal and the body adapts.

The harmful part of stress comes into play if it becomes pervasive. Having constant stress on your body and mind is very harmful. Prolonged stress is called chronic stress and chronic stress can lead to anxiety.

What Is Anxiety?

“Anxiety is a feeling of fear, or worry, or general uneasiness that encompasses your daily life. It usually means that you have some issues that need to be resolved, problems at work or at home, or an upcoming event that you want to be done with.”

Anxiety is a feeling of fear, or worry, or general uneasiness that encompasses your daily life. It usually means that you have some issues that need to be resolved, problems at work or at home, or an upcoming event that you want to be done with. While these anxieties are normal, there are some types that are more severe.

Severe anxiety can be categorized into several groups:

- Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) - This type refers to people who generally expect the outcome of whatever is happening in their life to go wrong. They have a fear that whatever they do is not going to go the way they expect it to.
- Phobias - This is a common form of anxiety. It means having a fear of a specific object or situation. Even if the fear is irrational, the anxiety that comes with it is real.
- Panic Attacks - These come about after prolonged periods of stress, but can also happen instantly. They are accompanied by shaking, nausea, confusion, and breathing difficulty.
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) - This anxiety disorder means that people feel the need to do something that is repetitive, intrusive, and distressing in order to feel normal. People feel the need to do things repetitively in order to feel less stressed, but unfortunately, the anxiety repeats itself.
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) - People who have been involved in a very serious, life-changing event can often develop the anxiety disorder called PTSD. It is commonly associated with people who have been in war situations, have been raped, or been in serious accidents.

How Are Stress and Anxiety Connected

Anxiety is the aftermath of too much stress. Having a regular amount of stress in your life is good. It keeps you on your toes. It makes you study harder for that test. It makes you prepare better for that job interview. It keeps you going.

However, when you have too much stress, there can be health risks. Some of these risks are in the form of the anxieties previously listed. If left untreated, these anxieties can take over a person's mind and body.

How To Keep Stress Under Control

Having prolonged stress can lead to anxiety, but there are many ways to counteract everyday stress. Getting stressed for a wedding, a test, or an interview is normal because that stress will go away after the event occurs. The problems arise when everyday stress builds up over time and leads to anxiety.

Here are some simple tricks to keeping yourself healthy and stress free:

- Exercise - Even something as simple as walking for 20 minutes can energize the body and mind to relieve stress.
- Eat Healthy - Snacking on foods that are not good for you will only stress you out more because you will feel bad about yourself. Bananas, green tea, and vegetables are the best bet!
- Relax - Make some time in your day to just be with yourself. Resting with a good book or a movie will do wonders for de-stressing yourself.
- Sleep - Once you have found some ways to relax, the best way to relieve the rest of your stress is to get a good night's sleep. By using these methods to keep your stress under control you will be able to sleep well and have less anxiety!

“ *As noted above, prolonged stress can lead to anxiety and other health problems. Stress related anxiety problems are becoming more prevalent in today's world.* ”

As noted above, prolonged stress can lead to anxiety and other health problems. Stress related anxiety problems are becoming more prevalent in today's world. Everyone has to keep longer hours at work, giving them less time at home, there are bills to pay and families to take care of. Taking a little bit of time every day to de-stress yourself will lead to a longer and anxiety free life!

HAPPINESS



I, not events, have the power to make me happy or unhappy today. I can choose which it shall be. Yesterday is dead, tomorrow hasn't arrived yet. I have just one day, today, and I'm going to be happy in it.

Groucho Marx

THIS IS YOUR BRAIN ON HAPPINESS



We have the habit of reducing happiness to a few feelings that we associate with feeling better about ourselves at any given time. But happiness is actually much more than that. It is a way to look at the world, a way that lets you take in everything around you and feel a profound contentment with life.

Sometimes looking for happiness can lead to frustration and anger. But it is up to us to remain happy by being mindful and looking at life in a way that makes it look like it is worth it. You have to remember that it is the mind that takes external stimuli and converts it into

happiness or sadness. Some people seemingly have it all but aren't happy. Then there are some who have nothing but will seem like the happiest in the world.

You can't really avoid emotions, but what you can do is learn to control them. Happiness is something that needs to be worked on. It is a conscious effort on your part. Be mindful of who you are and what you love about your life. Focus on happy thoughts and things. Don't let your mind wander onto things in the past, things that don't make you happy. This is your brain on happiness.

You need to try and dissociate from anger. Learn to look at things and circumstances objectively. Anger, like happiness, is just thoughts in your brain. You can control it. Next time you feel angry, convince yourself that you are not mad. Learn to let it go and you will see that it works. This may sound confusing, but the more you practice it, the easier and more natural it becomes.

Humans are strange in the way that many similar personality traits occur together. For example inner peace, strength, independence and happiness are bound to be found together. In the same way, jealousy, envy, and anger are usually found together. So if you focus on developing one positive part of your personality by being mindful, others are sure to follow. And the more positive qualities you have, the more chances you have of achieving happiness. This is your brain on happiness.

“ The study found that the employees who meditated had better moods compared to their non-meditating counterparts. There was also a decrease in their stress levels, and their immune systems were stronger. ”

A study by Jon Kabat-Zinn, the founder of the Stress Reduction Clinic at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, mapped the brain activity of employees of a Biotech company. Half of the employees were asked to incorporate meditation into their lifestyle for about three hours per week. The study found that the employees who meditated had better moods compared to their non-meditating counterparts. There was also a decrease in their stress levels, and their immune systems were stronger. The study proved that medita-

tion has an incredible effect on brain activity that is in charge of happiness and other positive traits. He further found that meditating monks had brain activity that was nothing like he had ever seen before, further strengthening the belief that meditation was the key to being happy.

The best thing about mindfulness is that once you get used to it, you don't need to make conscious efforts to be in control of your brain all the time. The mind learns and understands what to do in certain situations. It will automatically deal with anything you come up against, requiring minimum effort.

When you develop a positive state of mind, you will start experiencing moments of clarity that give you inner peace. It might be a snowflake falling on your cheek or just the sound of a bird singing. These moments will make you realize just how beautiful life is. You will leave your conflicts behind, and be at peace with yourself. That is what happiness is. This is your brain on happiness. And you can develop it by being mindful.

THIS IS YOUR BRAIN ON ANGER AND FRUSTRATION



How many times has it happened that you are caught in traffic, losing your mind over the traffic light not changing quickly enough? It seems like a millennium waiting for it, and you just want to speed through it. You want to be the first car to go through and when someone cuts you off, you lose your mind. Anger takes over you; you are no longer in control as you do something that you are bound to regret later. This is your brain on anger and frustration.

Evolution has been kind to us, and our brain is adept at handling all sorts of situations. But

sometimes survivalist instincts kick in, and we do something primitive. The brain consists of the limbic system as well as the prefrontal cortex. The limbic system has the most basic response of survival, while the prefrontal cortex, a more developed part of the brain, will take your earlier experiences into account and help you make a logical decision.

When you get angry, your limbic system is in control. It contains a small organ called the amygdala, a place where all of your emotional memories are stored. When you go through an emotional experience like anger, information is

passed through the amygdala, where it is processed, and the brain decides whether to send it to the prefrontal cortex or the limbic system. If the emotional part of the experience is overwhelming, the amygdala will take control and inhibit the prefrontal cortex from performing. The limbic system will take charge causing you to react emotionally.

This is when you lose it. Your amygdala causes you to do something without much thought since the part of the brain related to reasoning was bypassed. Such an emotional reaction during anger is also known as amygdala hijacking. During this time, your brain is swamped with hormones related to the 'fight or flight' response, or survivalist instincts. Hormones like cortisol spike. This hormonal response can last for hours and even days, causing you to say or do things that you are bound to regret later. This is your brain on anger and frustration.

“ The person who cut you off turns out to be someone you know. All of a sudden you stop feeling angry. Instead, your temper starts winding down and you are no longer as selfish about sharing the road as before. ”

Now consider the earlier example. The person who cut you off turns out to be someone you know. All of a sudden you stop feeling angry. Instead, your temper starts winding down and you are no longer as selfish about sharing the road as before.

So what just happened? How did your anger and frustration die down so quickly?

Humans have three critical areas of human survival; residence, resources and relationships. Since you know the driver, who proba-

bly lives in the same area and you have a relationship with him, you didn't mind sharing your resources with him. It is a subconscious reaction that the brain has developed over years and years of evolution.

As mentioned before, it is the prefrontal cortex that basically keeps you calm enough to make a 'good' decision. This is followed by a rush of oxytocin, a chemical that promotes relationships, which in this case helps you realize that the driver of the other vehicle is a friend.

Another aspect to consider is mirror neurons in the brain. These neurons cause us to mirror things that we observe. So if we see someone feeling angry, we might mirror that emotion. If you are smiling, other people will also smile with you. The good thing though is that our evolved brain has learned to respond differently to different emotions. You don't need to feel angry with someone showing you anger. We already know how your brain looks on anger and frustration. Respect, empathy, and a smile can go a long way in offsetting the anger. Instead of promoting a rush of cortisol, you can promote oxytocin. This is bound to make you feel better.

THE CHEMICAL MESSENGERS OF LOVE



Many people believe that the heart is responsible for love, well, that is not the case. The brain produces the chemical messengers of love which are responsible for the whole range of emotions we feel during the act of love.

When they say that a couple has chemistry, they couldn't be more right. When you first fall in love, fireworks go off in your head. The chemical messengers of love do their part to ensure that you feel excited, nervous, turned on, etc.

You could talk all night on the phone without ever feeling tired. There are 4 major chemicals responsible for all these feelings. When you fall in love, chemicals like phenylethylamine,

norepinephrine, dopamine and testosterone give you those butterflies in the stomach.

As your relationships mature, so do your feelings. Oxytocin is responsible for the feelings of happiness associated with long-term relationships and trust.

Let's take a look at the 5 chemical messengers of love that cause you to feel how you feel when you fall in love:

• Norepinephrine

Norepinephrine or noradrenaline is the precursor to adrenaline, which is primarily responsible for the excitement you feel at the start of relationships. It makes your heart beat faster

and causes the butterflies in the stomach. Released by the noradrenergic neurons in the brain, this is one of the fundamental chemical messengers of love.

There are almost 3000 noradrenergic neurons in the brain. When activated, your experiences of joy increase tenfold. It also reduces appetite and sleep. No wonder everything in your life becomes secondary when you fall in love.

• Phenylethylamine

One of the chemical messengers of love is phenylethylamine (PEA). This chemical triggers the release of other chemicals, norepinephrine and dopamine, which are vital for the feelings of love. Studies show that as you fall in love, PEA levels increase in your brain. It is a major source of the excitement and energy you feel at that time.

For a while, it was believed that PEA was directly responsible for the feelings of love. But research shows that it is actually the dopamine that it activates, which leads to the sense of exhilaration. It acts more as a neuromodulator than a neurotransmitter. In other words, it is more of a helper than a direct player.

• Dopamine

Dopamine is a neuromodulator, like PEA, but also as a neurotransmitter. It is a chemical messenger of love that is responsible for the feeling of pleasure. It influences happiness and is one of the leading causes of why we feel so light-headed and cheerful when we are in love. It enhances our ability for social interaction and makes us more fun to be around.

Dopamine is also the precursor for norepinephrine. This means, that if the brain is not producing enough dopamine, then you might not feel any excitement when you fall in love. This is quite common in people suffering from depression.

• Testosterone and Estrogen

“ *A lot of us don't like to associate love with sex, but the truth of the matter is that both are profoundly linked.* ”

A lot of us don't like to associate love with sex, but the truth of the matter is that both are profoundly linked. If you are single and have been for a while, there is a good chance of you falling in love with someone you find attractive on first sight. In fact, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that the first stage of love is actually desire.

Testosterone and estrogen are two chemical messengers of love that are mainly the regulators of the reproductive systems in men and women respectively. They are the ones that lead you to feel physical attraction towards the person you love. It is but natural that you want to get close to the other person. These hormones also have an effect on your energy, your feelings of confidence and contentment.

• Oxytocin

Oxytocin is the cuddle hormone that becomes one of the primary chemical messengers of love during long-term relationships. The brain usually releases it during times of physical closeness, especially after sex. It is known to affect the feelings of trust and attachment, helping a couple become closer to one another. It is believed that the more physical closeness a couple has, the better their relationship becomes.

These 5 chemical messengers of love combine to give you that amazing feeling of falling in love. They are the main reason that you feel so elated and happy when you have someone worthwhile in your life.

HOW EXERCISE HELPS MOOD AND MOTIVATION



Exercise helps mood and motivation! We are not just saying that. There is enormous clinical evidence that supports the assertion. Yet, many psychologists still don't recommend it as a course for improving mental health.

The fact is, and most of us have experienced it, after a stressful day at work, exercise will make you feel better immediately. This is not to suggest that you treat it as a short-term option either. There is enough evidence that backs the idea that exercise helps mood and motivation, as well as helps cure longer term depression.

The relationship between exercise and mood is well-established and today we are going to take a look at what it is.

Exercise and the Brain

So how exactly does exercise help mood and motivation? The truth is that there are myriad of factors at play. Exercise affects the human body on so many levels that it is hard to pinpoint the exact reason for the improved mood. There are physiological as well as psychological reasons behind this.

As far as physiological reasons go, research suggests that exercise helps regulate the levels of serotonin, a mood-affecting chemical in the body. It is also known to increase the development of neurons in the brain, thus improving brain activity.

As for psychology, exercise gives a person struggling with motivation, something to do, something to stay occupied with. It provides them with a sense of accomplishment, a sense of achievement which is vital for improving mood and motivation.

Some other factors that make exercise good for the mood include:

- It triggers the release of feel-good chemicals in the brain called endorphins
- It strengthens the immune system making you less susceptible to weakness
- It regulates body temperature and weight, which are both known to affect mood
- If you have motivation and mood issues, you are more prone to look towards alcohol and drugs for relief. Exercise is a healthy alterna-

tive that will also keep you busy enough to avoid that dangerous stuff.

- It gives you something to do. Serves as a distraction from the daily grind of life, allowing you to get away from it all and find some calm.
- If you exercise at the gym or the local park, it will give the opportunity to socialize and build relationships. Relationships are an important factor in feeling good about oneself.

Evidence That Exercise Helps Mood and Motivation

“ *There has been a load of research that looks into how exercise helps mood and motivation. Many of these studies conclude that broadly speaking active people are more motivated than inactive people.* ”

There has been a load of research that looks into how exercise helps mood and motivation. Many of these studies conclude that broadly speaking active people are more motivated than inactive people.

One study conducted by James Blumenthal, a clinical psychologist from Duke University, involved taking people with various depression-related conditions and studying them. The study found that after four months of observation, people who exercised regularly had better moods compared to the group that was on prescription antidepressants as well as the placebo group.

Blumenthal later followed up this study with another one, which focused on how his test subjects were doing a year after the original test. This one showed that the subjects who had continued to exercise up till a year later

were feeling much better about themselves and were more motivated compared to the ones who had given up on exercise or reduced its frequency.

In 2006, a study led by Dr. Michael W. Otto of the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences at Boston University looked into 11 different research papers on the subject of how exercise helps mood and motivation and evaluated them. He concluded that exercise was a fundamental tool for treating depression.

It is not that investigating how exercise helps mood and motivation does not any present any pitfalls. But the evidence that has emerged in its favor is eye-opening. The problem with prescribing exercise for mood is that researchers still don't know just what type and frequency of exercise works best. To complicate the matter, there is also the problem of how well it overlaps with other therapies including prescription drugs.

Work is being done to clarify this aspect. Research, though, has proven that even for patients who do not feel better after drugs, exercise can do the trick. But just what type and amount of exercise helps mood and motivation is still up in the air.

THE FIVE BEST NATURAL ANTI-DEPRESSANT SUPPLEMENTS



World Health Organization (WHO) states that depression will become the world's second most costly disease by 2020. This is to say that in terms of treatment costs, it will be more draining on the pocket than every disease except heart disease. Right now, treatment for depression is mostly prescription antidepressant drugs, typically selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs). But these SSRIs may not always work and do have unwanted side effects. Natural anti-depressant supplements are a great alternative.

The use of antidepressants is so widespread in the US, that according to the National Center for Health Statistics, over 16% Americans between the ages of 45 and 64 use anti-

depressants. Another 72% people above 65 are popping pills. The use of antidepressants in women is even more prevalent, with over 25% of women between 40 and 59 taking them.

SSRIs, as mentioned before, are the most commonly used antidepressants. Traditional drugs in this category include Zoloft, Prozac, Paxil, Lexapro, Celexa, etc. These drugs focus on increasing the serotonin levels in the body to treat depression. Unfortunately, these antidepressants may not always work. They also come with a whole range of side effects, from sex-related issues to weight gain, diabetes, and blood pressure.

So if prescription antidepressant drugs are not working for you, or you are just tired of their

side effects, you should try one of these natural anti-depressant supplements. It is worth remembering that these supplements should not be taken without consulting your doctor first. Many of these supplements work by increasing serotonin levels in the body. If you are already taking medication for that, it is not advisable to take these natural supplements as well.

“ *So if prescription antidepressant drugs are not working for you, or you are just tired of their side effects, you should try one of these natural anti-depressant supplements.* ”

• **St. John's Wort**

St. John's Wort or *Hypericum perforatum* is a natural anti-depressant supplement that has been clinically proven to treat depression effectively. Research shows that St. John's Wort has multidimensional effects on the body. It has anti-inflammatory and anti-viral properties that boost the immune system. It helps treat depression by regulating levels of serotonin, dopamine, neurotransmitters GABA and norepinephrine.

Chronic depression sufferers may find this natural anti-depressant supplement doing wonders for them. It is highly recommended for those who suffer from long-term depression like dysthymia. Required dosage will depend on your level of depression, but it can range anywhere between 900mg to 1500 mg per day.

Be careful about using St. John's Wort with other medicines including SSRIs. Research shows that it adversely affects contraceptive pills as well as immunosuppressants. A couple of other studies have shown it to enhance the efficacy of Plavix, the anti-clotting drug. In any case, it is best to consult your doctor before taking St. John's Wort.

• **5-HTP**

5-HTP or 5-hydroxytryptophan is a naturally occurring amino acid in the body that is made from tryptophan and broken down into serotonin and melatonin, a sleep hormone. It is one of the most popular natural anti-depressant supplements out there used to treat depression and anxiety.

The focus of 5-HTP is to give the body increased levels of serotonin, thereby elevating mood. It has a high propensity to cross into the brain and therefore is quite effective in treating mental health issues.

Much research has been conducted on the use of 5-HTP as an anti-depressant. While most of the information is inconclusive at best, many researchers, backed by clinical results, believe it works well in the short-term. Research suggests that it is also beneficial for insomnia and weight loss. The recommended dosage for the treatment of depression ranges from 150mg – 300 mg a day.

The intake of 5-HTP may result in nausea. It is also known to clash with SSRIs, sleeping pills and other natural anti-depressant supplements like L-tryptophan, SAM-e, and St. John's Wort. Excessive usage can also cause serotonin syndrome, which in extreme cases can be lethal. While 5-HTP has been known to work for depression, it is not advisable to use it in the long-term, since even though it increases serotonin levels, it also diminishes dopamine levels, another factor behind depression.

• **L-Tryptophan**

Instead of 5-HTP, you can also take L-tryptophan supplements to increase serotonin levels in the body. Tryptophan is an amino acid that is broken down into 5-HTP and then serotonin and melatonin. Tryptophan has been proven to be quite useful as a natural anti-depressant supplement.

Although tryptophan is found abundantly in foods, the supplement is known to work better. So if you're looking to treat depression naturally, tryptophan supplements are the way to go. Tryptophan is completely safe to use, but like 5-HTP it should not be taken with SSRIs or other medications.

According to the International Journal of Tryptophan Research, L-tryptophan synthesis is a major determinant of mood. Clinical trials have proved L-tryptophan's effectiveness for the treatment of depression.

“ According to the
International Journal of
Tryptophan Research,
L-tryptophan synthesis is a
major determinant of mood. ”

• SAM-e

SAM-e, short for S-adenosylmethionine, is also a naturally occurring chemical in the human body. It assists the working of neurotransmitters and therefore improves brain function. It has also been known to provide relief for arthritis and joint-related issues.

SAM-e has been comprehensively researched for its usefulness against depression. Over 20,000 people have been subject to trials, with results showing it to be very effective, especially for treating depression in seniors. It has been found to be completely safe to use for everyone, including children. The best thing about this natural anti-depressant supplement is that it is fast acting, working its magic within a few days compared to prescription SSRIs that can take up to 4-6 weeks.

Another great thing of SAM-e is that it does not clash with other SSRIs or natural anti-depressant supplements. It is always advisable to talk to your doctor before you use SAM-e

with other medication, but it has been clinically proven to enhance the effectiveness of SSRIs. As mentioned before, you don't want to elevate your serotonin levels too much so be careful of what you take.

Dosing depends on your level of depression and ranges from 400mg – 1600mg daily. Dosing starts slowly and then is built up as the body gets used to it.

• Saffron

Most of you probably know saffron as a culinary delight, but not many know that it is one of the better natural anti-depressant supplements out there. This amazing herb is one of nature's most treasured healing agents. It has antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties that improve the overall health of the body. Saffron is especially good for the digestive tract, and since most of the neurotransmitters are made there, research shows that saffron can elevate mood. It is most beneficial for the treatment of mild depression, and its results have often been equated to that of Prozac minus the side effects.

Saffron works similarly to SSRIs, in that it increases serotonin levels in the body which in turn treats depression. But what makes it more compelling is that its other properties can reduce the side effects of SSRIs. It can also be used to address a host of other problems including weight gain and infertility.

The recommended dosage of saffron is 30mg a day in two doses. It has not been found to have any side effects as such. But be careful while buying saffron supplements. The reason we say this is because this natural anti-depressant supplement is quite expensive and fake saffron is quite common. There are many herbs out there that are passed off as saffron by sellers, and you need to make sure you only get it from trustworthy suppliers.

RESOURCES

In the Store at JosephGiove.com you will find unique solutions to a wide range of health, fitness, lifestyle and happiness concerns.

Here are some of the health and fitness categories you will discover in the Store:

[Women's Solution](#)

[Men's Solutions](#)

[Optimized Weight Solutions](#)

[Health Solutions](#)

[Natural Beauty and Aging](#)

[Fitness Solutions](#)

[Muscle-Joint-Tendon Pain Relief](#)

[Insomnia Relief](#)

[Mind and Brain Optimizing](#)

[Gastrointestinal Relief](#)

[Diabetes Care](#)

[Arthritis Care](#)

[Addiction Solutions](#)

[Cardio Care](#)

[Endocrinology Solutions](#)

[Alternative Wellness Solutions](#)

[Lifestyle Solutions](#)

[In the Bedroom](#)

[Happiness Solutions](#)

[Energy and Subtle Energy](#)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Joseph R Giove

Joseph is a MindBody Coach, and clinical hypnotist, certified by the American Counsel of Hypnotist Examiners in 1990, and a biomedical engineer. He has inspired thousands of people to thrive...to live fuller, healthier and happier lives.

Joseph has developed a unique approach to mind-body wellness and performance optimization. For over 30 years he has been helping people in all areas of health and fitness including weight loss, exercise physiology, addiction, stress and anxiety, insomnia, depression, diabetes, nutrition, chronic pain, and more. He offers a unique understanding of the mind and body to help you renew, recover from illness, and live optimally with vitality and vigor.

Joseph is former president and CEO of a biomedical research firm, and has held engineering and management positions for Aerospace and NASA projects. He masterfully blends the hard sciences with extensive research and training in interpersonal neurobiology, psychoneuroimmunology, neurolinguistic programming, biofeedback and clinical hypnosis.

Joseph is the publisher of the **MindBody Health and Fitness blog** at **www.JosephGiove.com**, the ***MindBody Optimizer*** book series and the ***MindBody Optimizer*** weekly e-Newsletter. He maintains a private clinical hypnosis practice, **www.HypnosisSanFrancisco.com** in the San Francisco Bay Area.