

May/June 2020

# The art of growing young<sup>®</sup>

Discover What  
Really Matters

Feature article



In this Issue...

Achieving Your  
Personal Best

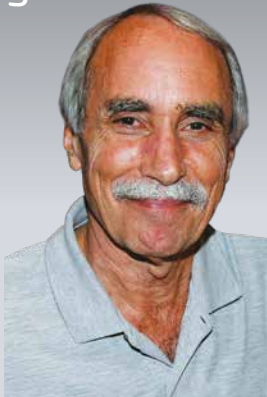
Mood-Boosting  
Foods and Herbs

The Dawning of the  
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# Social Health and Wellbeing

One area of our health that can often get overlooked is our social health—the relationships we form with friends, family, coworkers and other acquaintances. The people we choose to spend our time with, and how much time we spend with them, can have a big impact on our mental and physical health—perhaps now more than ever.

Research has shown that people tend to adopt the lifestyle choices of the people they spend a lot of time with. For example, if your spouse is a healthy eater, you are more likely to be one also. If your best friend enjoys staying physically active, there's a good chance you will be more active as well.

The same goes for less tangible health factors, such as maintaining a positive outlook on life. When we choose to surround ourselves with positive-focused people, we are more likely to do the same and attract other positive things, people, experiences and circumstances in our lives.

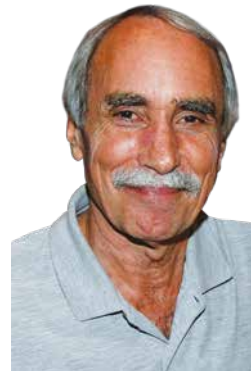
With that in mind, how is your social health? Does spending time in your social circles leave you feeling refreshed and happy? Or does it leave you feeling drained or upset? If you find yourself experiencing predominately negative feelings after spending time with your friends, it may be time to seek out new ones.

Getting together with friends is not always easy. Fortunately, many online tools are available for computers and smartphones so we can video chat when it's not possible to see each other face-to-face in the real world. While this isn't ideal in the long

run, it can be especially beneficial if life circumstances keep you apart from the people you are normally the closest with.

When we talk about health, we tend to focus on things such as eating, exercising, reducing stress and other similar topics. But the people we surround ourselves with have a profound impact on all areas of health. They form the support structure that helps carry us through tough times, and they create a network that celebrates our successes.

The next time you take inventory of your health and the things you do to stay healthy, don't forget to think about your social health. When was the last time you had a deep conversation with a friend, either in person or online? I promise you that deciding who to spend your free time with, and making sure you create time and opportunities to be with those people, is just as important as deciding what to eat or when to work out.



*Dwight L. McKee M.D.*

Dwight L. McKee  
Scientific Director

# Nutritional News



## A new reason to go outside

A study looking at the effects of vitamin D on the body recently discovered the sunshine vitamin has an important role to play in helping healthy gut bacteria thrive. Vitamin D can help modulate the intestinal microbiome, which may be beneficial for people with multiple sclerosis or inflammatory bowel disease. The body produces vitamin D when it is exposed to ultraviolet light from the sun.<sup>3</sup> Twenty minutes of unfiltered sun exposure during peak hours in spring through early autumn in temperate climates is enough to significantly increase your vitamin D levels. There are also many other benefits of exposure to natural sunlight that are just beginning to be discovered.

## Stretch out and reach for better mental health

Weekly yoga sessions may help boost mood and ease symptoms of depression, according to researchers at the Boston University School of Medicine. The researchers found performing yoga increases gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA), a neurotransmitter that has been associated with decreased depressive symptoms.<sup>2</sup>



## Protect your brain with a cup of tea

After researchers followed 900 people for an average of six years, they discovered drinking tea can help ward off cognitive decline in later life. The brain-boosting benefits come from tea's high concentration of flavonols, antioxidants found in plant pigments.<sup>1</sup>



## Protect your heart with nuts

Consuming just one handful of nuts twice a week can help reduce the risk of dying from heart disease by almost a fifth, according to scientists studying the effects of walnuts, almonds, pistachios, hazelnuts and seeds on the body. The study revealed nuts to be a good source of unsaturated fat containing polyphenols, which help support healthy cardiovascular function.<sup>4</sup>

## Blueberries: A healthy treat that helps promote a healthy cardiovascular system

New findings published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* show that eating 150 grams of blueberries daily increases the chance you'll maintain cardiovascular health by up to 15 percent. The researchers believe that eating one cup of blueberries daily can help improve cardiovascular health. The health-protecting nature of blueberries is thought to come from their high concentrations of anthocyanins, which are the flavonoids behind their blue color.<sup>5</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Bodkin, Henry. "Drinking Tea Could Cut Threat of Alzheimer's." The Sydney Morning Herald, January 30, 2020. <https://www.smh.com.au/world/europe/drinking-tea-could-cut-threat-of-alzheimer-s-20200130-p53w4b.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Streeter, Chris C., Patricia L. Gergarg, Richard P. Brown, Tammy M. Scott, Greylin H. Nielsen, Liz Owen, Osamu Sakai, Jennifer T. Sneider, Maren B. Nyer, and Marisa M. Silveri. "Thalamic Gamma Aminobutyric Acid Level Changes in Major Depressive Disorder After a 12-Week Iyengar Yoga and

Coherent Breathing Intervention." *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, January 14, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1089/acm.2019.0234>.

<sup>3</sup> Bosman, Else S., Arianne Y. Albert, Harvey Lui, Jan P. Dutz, and Bruce A. Vallance. "Skin Exposure to Narrow Band Ultraviolet (UVB) Light Modulates the Human Intestinal Microbiome." *Frontiers in Microbiology* 10 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmicb.2019.02410>.

<sup>4</sup> Donnelly, Laura. "Handful of Nuts Twice a Week Can Cut

Chance of Dying from Heart Disease by Almost a Fifth, Study Finds." Yahoo! News. Yahoo!, August 31, 2019. <https://www.yahoo.com/news/handful-nuts-twice-week-cut-070000462.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Curtis, Peter J., Vera Van Der Velpen, Lindsey Berends, Amy Jennings, Martin Feelsch, A Margot Umpleby, Mark Evans, et al. "Blueberries Improve Biomarkers of Cardiometabolic Function in Participants with Metabolic Syndrome—Results from a 6-Month, Double-Blind, Randomized Controlled Trial." *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 109, no. 6 (2019): 1535-45. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ajcn/nqy380>.

# Protecting Joints During Exercise

It's probably safe to assume that many of us exercise in order to keep our muscles strong and our cardiovascular system in good shape. When we look at our bodies in the mirror, most likely we notice the tone of the muscles and the shape of our curves. Many of us may not even think about our joints until something has gone wrong—particularly if they become swollen or painful.

Our joints—such as our elbows, knees, ankles, hips, wrists and neck—are the connecting points between our bones. These connecting points are held together by intricate groupings of ligaments, cartilage and muscles that serve as shock absorbers to our bones.

Think about the last time you felt pain after exercising. Not just the muscle ache we feel after a harder workout or that nagging need to stretch a bit more.

We all know how different it feels when our muscles ache due to getting back into a fitness routine compared to when we have done some damage to a joint. Muscle pain (not a strain) will ache, whereas joint pain can feel relentless.

Think of all the work our joints do to help us reach, twist, bend, turn, stretch, climb, walk and even sit! It is imperative to protect our joints when moving our bodies. Joint pain is a major reason why normally active people stop exercising.

And beyond exercise, joint health is necessary for functional movement. At one point or another, we have all had a very deep sleep during which we may not have tossed or turned as much, leading to waking up in the morning with a stiff shoulder or neck. Or perhaps we stayed in front of the computer too long at work without getting up to take a walk and stretch break. While those aren't necessarily examples of joint damage, they do speak to the importance of keeping our joints moving all day (and all night) long.

In terms of exercise, there are some common causes of joint injury. A big one is doing too much too soon. Perhaps it is the first warm day in a while, and you go for a long bike ride.



While cycling is fairly easy on the joints, a long bike ride after weeks or months of not riding could mean some overuse damage to your joints.

As tempting as it is to jump back into an exercise, or excitedly try a new one, take it easy!

Redundancy may get a bad rap for being boring, but for many of us, doing the same exercise feels comforting and familiar. But that repetition could put some strain on the joints. As with all aspects of healthy living, variety is the key. There is no one exercise or activity you can do to strengthen and protect your joints. A varied fitness and movement routine is helpful to avoid overusing or abusing a given joint.



Strengthening muscles with weights, keeping joints moving with cardiovascular activity, stretching after exercise—these are all part of any health and fitness program, and even more important for your joints.



Utilize the right gear and practice proper technique. Make sure you are wearing the right footwear and using the proper equipment. If you are cycling, go to a reputable bicycle store to get measured for the right size bike. If you are running, a store that focuses on running shoes can be a great resource for analyzing your gait and foot movements to determine what is the best shoe for you. This is when social exercise or consulting a personal trainer is very helpful. Body alignment is essential to protecting joints.

You also need rest and reprieve in order to achieve your fitness goals. Our whole body benefits from stretching and resting. It is a way to slow down and give your body time to absorb the benefits of an activity and heal from any strain.



Other exercises that are joint-protective are leg squats and push-/pull-ups. Squats help strengthen the muscles that protect the ankles, knees and hips.

Take away some gravity and impact by getting into a pool. Swimming is a challenging workout that minimizes joint injury, since there is much less impact on the joints. But beyond swimming, water walking and water aerobics help get our heart rate up while being good to our joints.

Push-ups and pull-ups help strengthen the muscles in the arms, including the wrists and elbows, as well as the shoulders and neck. As mentioned above, make sure you are doing the exercise with proper form so as not to cause excessive joint strain or injury.

# Mental Health and Sleep

**Mental health plays an important role in our sleep. For example, depression can lead to someone sleeping a lot more as a coping mechanism. Or ruminating thoughts that come from depression or anxiety can lead to interrupted sleep or difficulty falling asleep.**

The trouble is that it is hard to identify which one is contributing to the other. Often it is like a dance or a vicious cycle—poor sleep leads to decreased mental health, which in turn leads to worse sleep. Or it could be the other way around. This can make resolving the issue even harder.

**The cycle looks something like this: Lack of sleep leads to tiredness, which in turn can contribute to difficulty coping with daily life.**

Difficulty coping with life's day-to-day issues can lead to a decreased sense of self and feelings of worthlessness. This can then lead to worry and stress. That worry and stress likely will contribute to decreased amounts or quality of sleep. And the cycle goes on and on. Additionally, the cycle can really start with any of those areas. Baseline low self-esteem can lead to the worry and stress that contribute to less sleep and more fatigue.

In addition to anxiety and depression, other psychiatric issues that can easily affect sleep quality and quantity include seasonal affective disorder (oversleeping), mania (under-sleeping), post-traumatic stress disorder (nightmares and night terrors that cause sleep disturbances), and paranoia or psychosis (under-sleeping or sleep disturbances). Additionally, some psychiatric medications can contribute to poor sleep, as can too much caffeine, too late in the day.

Each person is different, but generally speaking most people need between seven and nine hours of sleep a night. The amount of time you need to spend sleeping can also vary depending on season, sun exposure and exercise level. Consider learning more about circadian rhythms as a natural and interesting perspective on sleep. While seasonal affective disorder (SAD) can contribute to people oversleeping, long winter nights and short days lend to natural and healthy longer sleep, even for people who do not experience a change of mood with the seasons. SAD is sometimes related to insufficient vitamin D levels, so if you tend toward low energy or depression in the winter, it's useful to get your blood level of 25-hydroxy vitamin D checked to be sure that it's adequate (at least 30 ng/ml).

For so long, the focus was on quantity—how many hours of sleep are you getting a night? While how much shut-eye you are getting is very important, the quality of your sleep is equally important.

Sleep hygiene—essentially, good sleep practices—is key to improving sleep.

**Stick to a schedule. Sleep experts tout the importance of going to bed and waking up at the same time every day—including weekends!**

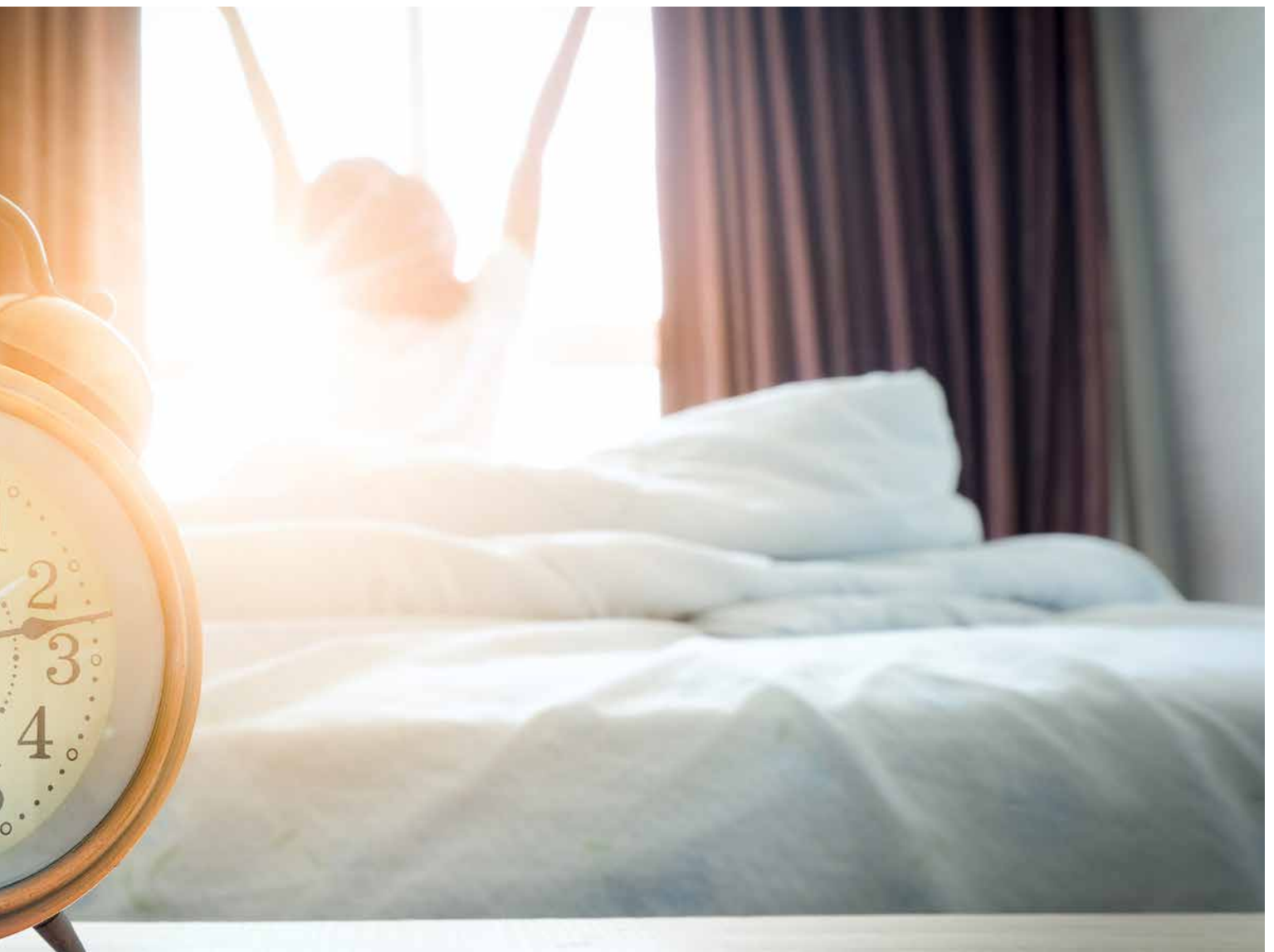
Perhaps, prior to setting this sleep schedule, you should keep a sleep diary (alternatively, many fitness tracking apps or personal devices can do this) to analyze when you are naturally falling asleep and waking up. Review if you feel this is enough sleep for your mood and your mental and physical functioning.



Create a sleep routine that you follow every night. This will become a calming habit that signals to your body to slow down and prepare to rest. Practice this with a self-care perspective in mind. Try being mindful of the experience. No need for elaborate aromatherapy baths or long meditation practices (although both would be great). Treat yourself to simple, calming pleasures such as putting a warm, wet washcloth on your face for two minutes prior to washing your face, or slowly and carefully putting face moisturizer on with relaxing strokes.

Decrease technology, news and stimulating entertainment prior to bed. Try to have technology-free time before bed. At least an hour is the minimum, but longer is better. Get an old-fashioned alarm clock for waking up, and put your phone on the other side of your bedroom (you can leave the ringer on for emergency calls). Turn on the night and do not disturb modes on your phone to stop notifications of emails and texts.





Don't go on Facebook or Instagram prior to sleep, because the content can be stimulating. Similarly, watching or reading the news in the evening can aggravate stress and worrying thoughts. After dark, whenever you are looking at a screen, whether computer, phone or TV, learn about and select settings that minimize blue light from the screen. Blue light tells our body that it's "high noon" and interferes with secretion of melatonin, the sleep hormone, from our pineal gland.

Look at your eating habits. Eliminate caffeine after one or two in the afternoon. Sugary foods or even foods or supplements with higher levels of vitamin B12 can contribute to wakefulness later in the evening.

While a glass of wine with dinner or a nightcap may help you relax, the body processes the sugars in alcohol in a time frame that can actually perk you up later. Furthermore, alcohol interferes with the body's production of melatonin (the hormone that helps us sleep).

Generally speaking, eating prior to bed isn't the best idea due to the hormones released during the body's digestion, possibly interfering with quality sleep. But certain foods are excellent for improved sleep. Explore superfoods for better sleep. Reishi mushroom is one food that can help with both sleep and fatigue, as well as depression.<sup>1</sup> Tart cherry concentrate has been clinically shown to increase melatonin in the body.<sup>2</sup> In laboratory tests on rats, raw walnuts contributed to increased melatonin levels.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Feng, Xia, and Yan Wang. "Anti-Inflammatory, Anti-Nociceptive and Sedative-Hypnotic Activities of Lucidone D Extracted from *Ganoderma Lucidum*." *Cellular and Molecular Biology*, vol. 65,

Once again, the gut-brain connection plays a role in our health—and even our sleep. We think of our melatonin production as coming from the pineal gland in our brain, but even more is produced in the gut.<sup>4</sup> The gut-brain connection has significant correlations to our mental health. Magnesium also promotes sleep. Since many of us are deficient in magnesium and it can be difficult to obtain enough from food sources, consider taking a magnesium supplement to promote sleep. There are also many botanicals, such as lemon balm, that support restful, healthy sleep.

no. 4, Apr. 30, 2019, p. 37, doi:10.14715/cmb/2019.65.4.6.

<sup>2</sup> Howatson G, et al. Effect of tart cherry juice (*Prunus cerasus*) on melatonin levels and enhanced sleep quality. *Eur J Nutr.*, Oct. 30, 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Reiter, Russel J, et al. "Melatonin in Walnuts: Influence on Levels of Melatonin and Total Antioxidant Capacity of Blood." *Nutrition*, vol. 21, no. 9, 2005, pp. 920–924., doi:10.1016/j.nut.2005.02.005.

<sup>4</sup> Chen, Chun-Qiu. "Distribution, Function and Physiological Role of Melatonin in the Lower Gut." *World Journal of Gastroenterology*, vol. 17, no. 34, Sept. 2011, p. 3888, doi:10.3748/wjg.v17.i34.3888.

# Achieving Your Personal Best

The Olympics will take place in 2021 in Japan. This inspiring, global event gives us an opportunity to reflect on how we are all striving for our personal best. The games' vision and theme can be summed up in the three core concepts: striving for your personal best, accepting one another and passing on a legacy for the future.

Just start somewhere. Take the first step. And then the second. And then the next one and the next one and the next one after that. The point is that you have to start somewhere. Sometimes the larger goal can be intimidating if you focus on the goal rather than staying in the moment; that becomes the journey.

When we focus on just the big picture, it can be overwhelming. You may want to get back into running. But instead of running three miles, just jog around the block.



If you want to eat less meat and more vegetables, start with cooking one meal a week that is entirely plant-based. If you would like to begin a meditation practice, start with one minute each day.

Get organized. Successful people all have one thing in common—they are organized. When your baseline is prepared for action, then you can more easily act. Minimal and tidy physical space helps our minds focus. Uncluttered houses and offices clear up our mental space, giving us the sense that we are prepared.

Shift your focus to growth, to being in the moment, and focus less on goals. When you focus on one goal, event or concept of success, what happens if you don't achieve it? When you focus on growth, you use failure (or lesser achievements) as stepping stones in your progress. You tend to get less caught up in "winning" and lean more into the journey.

Absorb the journey instead of just seeing it as a path to the goal. Look at your progress.

While taking something on or quitting something cold turkey is possible and sometimes successful, most often gradual progress is more achievable.

Seek help from experts and develop a relationship with a mentor. Watch, observe, question and learn from those who are achieving their personal best. Relying on yourself to improve and grow is essential, but getting an outside perspective is extremely useful. Being vulnerable enough to ask for feedback from others is difficult. By establishing a relationship with a mentor, you are creating space for that to feel safer. Furthermore, you can get the feedback you need to strive toward your personal best.



Change your mind map. Check how your thinking and feeling are affecting your actions. When you are working toward your goal, do you feel weighed down, motivated, excited, stressed or optimistic? Perhaps you feel a little of all of those things.



When you are striving to achieve your personal best, purposefully and intentionally focus on positive thoughts.



In fact, reward yourself with positive thoughts and praise. This isn't to create a delusional sense of success or progress; rather, it is to use your own emotions to empower you.

Some specific ideas include smiling when you run (or do any exercise), praising yourself out loud when you go to bed early and thinking congratulatory thoughts when you floss!



These are small, positive gestures that promote endorphins and endocannabinoids. These endorphins and endocannabinoids then create feedback to the body that you did a given task (cleaned up the living room, skipped the extra portion of dinner, took a walk during your lunch hour) and then you felt very positively about yourself.

Your personal best is a long and windy road with so many variables. But working at it consistently, reflecting on it honestly and enjoying each moment can help you live a more actualized life.



# Sports and Nutrition

While perhaps you may not be able to claim such physical feats as professional athletes, you still may benefit from better understanding the importance of how nutrition fuels our fitness. While eating a whole-food diet that is strongly plant-based and full of variety is always recommended, which foods should you be eating and avoiding when taking part in vigorous physical activity?

## PROTEIN

One of the most essential nutrients for sports and exercise is protein. Protein provides the building blocks of muscles. Be sure that at least one-third of your food intake contains this important macronutrient. While plant-based options like nuts, seeds, quinoa and soy are excellent options, certain foods pack more of a protein punch. Reach for whole-milk Greek yogurt, sardines and salmon. Distributing your protein intake throughout the day, and especially 30 minutes after resistance training, helps with muscle-building.<sup>1</sup>

## VITAMIN C

There are few things vitamin C cannot do! Vitamin C is one of the most important nutrients for sports and fitness due to its role in antioxidative inflammation reduction and its role in collagen production. Collagen is important for keeping bones, muscles and tendons strong.

Thankfully, vitamin C is abundant in many different foods, such as citrus, berries, red and yellow peppers, and leafy greens.

## VITAMIN D AND CALCIUM

These symbiotic vitamins are important for healthy bones and immunological prowess. Calcium is well known for its essential role in bone health. But it also plays a significant role in muscle contraction. Vitamin D is actually a hormone that is a major immune booster. Another benefit of vitamin D is that it contributes to our mental health.

While most of the nutrients lauded for sports and fitness focus on the physical benefits, our minds are a huge component of our fitness abilities that also need to be supported.

## OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS

Once again, the key property that makes omega-3 fatty acids so good for sporting individuals is that they support a healthy inflammatory response.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, many sources of omega-3 fatty acids contain protein. Vegetarians or those not fond of fish can reach for chia, hemp and flax seeds, as well as algae supplements. Otherwise, sardines, salmon and other fatty fish are great options. Like vitamin D, omega-3s also contribute to improved mental health.

## CREATINE

Naturally found in animal products such as beef, chicken, turkey and fish, this nutrient helps build muscle mass. Some early research has found it to be helpful in preserving muscle mass when you need to decrease activity due to an injury; it may also help to recover lost muscle mass when one is rehabilitating, but other studies are needed for it to be conclusive.<sup>3</sup>

## TART CHERRY JUICE

After challenging workouts, our body can experience inflammation. Cherry juice is full of antioxidants and supports a healthy inflammatory response. Tart cherry juice has even been shown to reduce pain compared to placebos.<sup>4</sup>

A bonus is that it also has been shown to increase melatonin levels in our bodies for improved sleep (also important for sports recovery). Endurance athletes such as marathon runners and triathlon athletes frequently develop viral infections after competitions, and tart cherry concentrate has shown the ability to markedly decrease the incidence of these.

There are also some nutrients to avoid when you are either ramping up your sports game or recovering from an injury.

## AN OBVIOUS CONTENDER IS SUGAR

While we all need glucose to function, many protein drinks, electrolyte drinks, granola bars and protein bars are full of sugar. These items are largely marketed as healthy, when in fact they may have some form of sugar within the first few ingredients. If you need a quick electrolyte refueling drink, try to make your own in a tea or tonic (moringa or red raspberry leaf tea are vitamin-rich options).



Use honey or dates for the necessary glucose, along with sea salt.

If you don't want to make your own, a good store-bought option is coconut water with no sugar added.

<sup>1</sup> Mamerow, Madonna M, et al. "Dietary Protein Distribution Positively Influences 24-h Muscle Protein Synthesis in Healthy Adults." *The Journal of Nutrition*, vol. 144, no. 6, June 29, 2014, pp. 876-880, doi:10.3945/jn.113.185280.  
<sup>2</sup> Sriwardhana, Nalin, et al. "Health Benefits of n-3 Polyunsaturated Fatty Acids: Eicosapentaenoic Acid and

Docosahexaenoic Acid." *Advances in Food and Nutrition Research*, U.S. National Library of Medicine, 2012, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22361189.  
<sup>3</sup> Hespel, Peter, et al. "Oral Creatine Supplementation Facilitates the Rehabilitation of Disuse Atrophy and Alters the Expression of Muscle Myogenic Factors in Humans." *The*

*Journal of Physiology*, vol. 536, no. 2, Oct. 2001, pp. 625-633., doi:10.1111/j.1469-7793.2001.0625c.xd.  
<sup>4</sup> Kuehl, Kerry S, et al. "Efficacy of Tart Cherry Juice in Reducing Muscle Pain during Running: a Randomized Controlled Trial." *Journal of the International Society of Sports Nutrition*, vol. 7, no. 1, May 7, 2010, doi:10.1186/1550-2783-7-17.

# Discover What Really Matters

Living a life of purpose, value and depth is what we all wish for. We long to feel connected to our loved ones. We hope to find meaning in our occupations. We want our material possessions to make our lives freer and less burdened. We desire to feel a deep sense of inner peace.

Life can sometimes (or often) feel chaotic and uncontrollable. It's essential to discover and prioritize what really matters in order to lead a more actualized life. But with the need to attend to everything else (work, to-do lists, extracurricular activities, grocery shopping, taking care of our children or parents), identifying what truly matters and shifting our energies into that can seem like less of a priority.

However, if we do not take the time to discover what really matters and then work to align our lives with that, then we just continue living life on autopilot, instead of intentionally. Here are some ideas, thoughts and actions to get you started.

## Start by identifying what gives you greatest peace

When are the times when you feel the most calm and free? Sure, we can cite a vacation to the beach or the retreat we went on two years ago that took place in a beautiful pine forest. But the truth of the matter is that we need to find deep meaning in everyday life—even meaning in the mundane!

## Aim to identify realistic moments

In a typical week, what are the activities or people who bring you the most joy? Is there a way that you can increase your time spent with those people? Or can you do those activities that bring meaning more often? If not, then really be present during those moments in order to more fully live into what matters.

How do you live into your values on a daily basis? True self-actualization and inner peace can only occur when our values and our actions align. That means you can have a value of peacefulness, but if you are not practicing compassion and kindness in your interactions with your family, coworkers, friends and neighbors, you are unable to experience peacefulness—it simply remains an unrealized concept.

## Analyze your time

How are you spending the majority of your day? This can be a difficult task, since it can be divided into professional and personal categories, and even subdivided from there.

## Slow down

In our productivity-focused society, it is common for people to overbook themselves or fill all of their waking moments with things they need to do. Work more efficiently to create space for slowness. Consider your obligations, such as children's activities. A good general rule is to focus on one (at most two) activities that you truly enjoy, and put more energy into them. Create space for unstructured and unplanned time. Linger over dinner without rushing at least twice a week. Go on long and meandering walks every so often without a destination in mind. Plan a vacation when you have several days to simply do whatever you want (instead of a list of sites to see).

## Explore how others identify what really matters to them

Engage in deeper conversations with friends or family about where they are finding meaning—narrow in on people who you think are leading a purposeful and peaceful life. Ask them how they got to that space or how they are working daily to reorient to what really matters.

The Danish concept of “hygge” (pronounced hoo-gah) has fascinated many in their search for happiness. “Hygge” is a word that has no direct English translation, but most popularly is translated as “cozy.”

Unfortunately, this concept has been used outside of Denmark to sell premium-priced wool blankets and expensive candles. But when you really get to the heart of “hygge,” the popular interpretation of “cozy” leaves off a very important addition—“togetherness.” Hygge is a sort of feeling or ambiance of simple, rustic pleasures shared with others in a slow and meaningful time of connection.

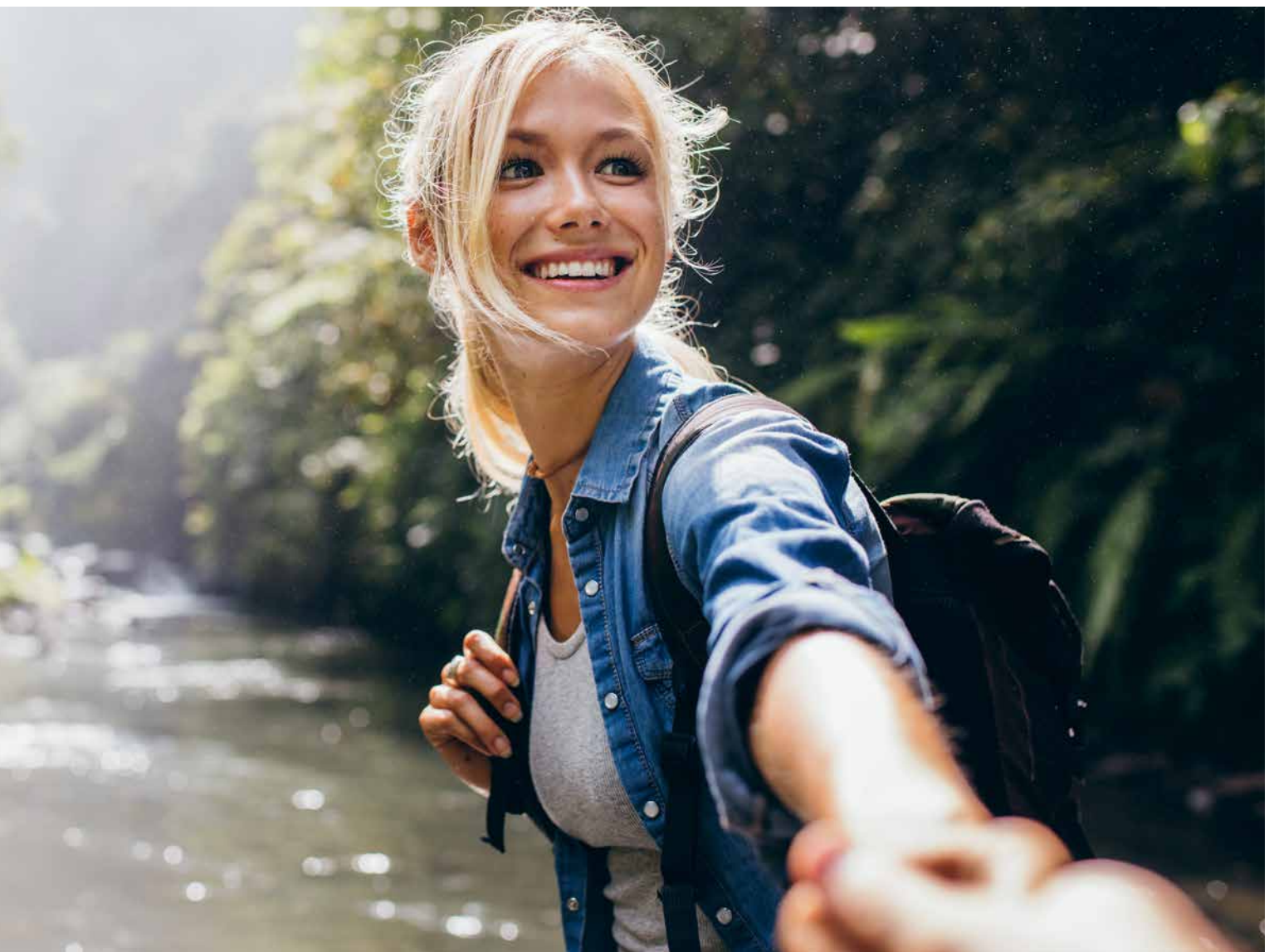


It is prioritizing human connection in a meaningful and unpretentious way. Reading a book by a fireplace is cozy. Sipping tea by that fireplace with friends and real conversation is cozy with togetherness.

## Declutter your life in all aspects

Excessiveness contributes to chaos in our lives. For tens of thousands of years, most humans evolved during a time of scarcity. But in the past century, many of us in the developed world have so much stuff. Taking an inventory of your life and your values requires a paring down of all the things that get in the way of what matters.

The popular author and television personality Marie Kondo has been challenging followers to get rid of items in their life that do not spark joy. Minimalism—from smaller homes and capsule wardrobes to significantly less shopping and simpler daily routines—has been a buzzword for years.



Those who reduce the extraneous things (activities, relationships, obligations, possessions) in their lives report feeling greater freedom to focus on what really matters to them.

Just as you should take an inventory of what brings you peace, joy and meaning, you should also note what drains you. Are there rooms in your home that you feel heavier or emotionally burdened by? What about your workspace? It could be that these places have excess stuff. Paring down and minimizing the stuff you don't need could bring a significant release of energy in your body. Perhaps you've always collected books. Consider going through the books and giving away those that you've read and won't read or reference again.

Do the same with books that you planned to read but haven't done so (remember, public libraries are fantastic resources!). Doing the same thing with a closet clean-out could also help.

While it may seem a little daunting, identifying the people in your life who are more difficult than joyful may be a hard but necessary step to finding and focusing on what matters. Keep in mind that this doesn't mean doing away with those relationships necessarily (you can't abandon family members who are taxing or easily change challenging coworkers). Instead, note how your mind and energy respond to these people. Practice shifting your thoughts and interactions with difficult people so that they affect your spirit less. Consider your social media accounts and who you follow. Hide or unfollow accounts of people who make you feel jealousy, envy, anger or even self-consciousness (it's also good to figure out why these accounts trigger these feelings).

Discovering your purpose in life is a journey—a long, twisty and bumpy road, no less—not the end destination. This is a big question and one that may change and evolve over the years.

While some may know it instinctively, most of us need to intentionally work on identifying and living into what we value most. But it is work worth doing! Living in the eternal moment, which is all that we ever have, is a good way to relax and allow the flow of life to carry us to where we need to go in order to learn what we came into life to learn.





# Mood-Boosting Foods and Herbs

## Can superfoods improve your mood?

Our relationship with food is a complicated one. We do not eat simply to fuel our bodies. We break bread with friends and families, passing on family recipes with fondness. We share meals to grow deeper in relationships, spending hours around a table. Sometimes we reach for sweets or salty snacks during moments of stress, mindlessly eating to calm our nerves. We raise our glasses in celebration to honor and commemorate.

The truth is we are strongly, emotionally connected to food. And that isn't necessarily a bad thing. Comfort food helps us recall warm memories of childhood. Food is cultural and therefore helps us connect to our larger society. Many of us recall that amazing meal we had on a vacation. And certain foods themselves actually contribute to better mental health!

There are so many ways food can contribute to improved mood. Caffeine and sugar will give an immediate boost, but later in the metabolic process cause quite a slump. Instead, stick to mood-boosting foods that are more sustainable for the body.



That said, dark chocolate—rich in antioxidants and flavanols—has been shown in many studies to improve mood and elevate emotions.

Part of that also has to do with the caffeine in it, which makes the case for coffee as a mood booster. But beyond the caffeine, coffee seems to hold some emotional improvement capabilities, since one study noted that even when drinking decaffeinated coffee, participants felt improved mood and cognition.<sup>1</sup>

Pumpkin seeds may not get all the limelight that chia or hemp seeds are getting these days, but these magnesium-packed seeds are a great option for a mood pick-me-up.

Magnesium is essential for brain function (as well as a myriad of other body functions, like sleep and bowel elimination).<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, many of us have a magnesium deficiency, largely due to the depletion of the mineral in farm soil.

Other nuts and seeds also help with mood because of an amino acid many contain called tryptophan. Tryptophan helps produce serotonin in our bodies. Brazil nuts are high in selenium, which is important for brain health. Flax, hemp and chia seeds are all good sources of omega-3 fatty acids, which are well known for mood improvement effects.

There is no better source of omega-3 fatty acids than fatty, oily fish. Wild-caught Alaskan salmon, sardines, arctic char, anchovies and Atlantic mackerel are good sustainable fish options that are high in omega-3s. The Mediterranean diet is an eating lifestyle that emphasizes the consumption of vegetables, fish, whole grains, beans, nuts and seeds, and olive oil. In a long-term study of over 15,000 people, those who adhered largely to a Mediterranean diet showed lower rates of depression.<sup>3</sup>

Curcumin is the principal and dynamic chemical found in the orange root turmeric. Laboratory studies in mice fed curcumin or turmeric have noted increased levels of dopamine, which is associated with healthy mood and good mental functioning. It may help with feelings of mild depression.

Ashwagandha is a medicinal herb from the Ayurvedic tradition that is considered an adaptogen.

Adaptogens are believed to work with the body's endocrine system (the hormonal system, essentially) to optimize function, reduce stress and improve mood. Participants in studies reported lower levels of anxiety when taking this herb.<sup>4</sup> Research suggests ashwagandha reduces cortisol, which becomes elevated with chronic stress.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Haskell-Ramsay, Crystal, et al. "The Acute Effects of Caffeinated Black Coffee on Cognition and Mood in Healthy Young and Older Adults." *Nutrients*, vol. 10, no. 10, Sept. 2018, p. 1386., doi:10.3390/nu10101386.

<sup>2</sup> Inna Slutsky, Nashat Abumaria, Long-Jun Wu, Chao Huang, Ling Zhang, Bo Li, Xiang Zhao, Arvind Govindarajan, Ming-Gao Zhao, Min Zhuo, Susumu Tonegawa and Guosong Liu. "Enhancement of Learning and Memory by Elevating Brain

Magnesium." *Neuron*, Jan. 28, 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Fresán, Ujué, et al. "Does the MIND Diet Decrease Depression Risk? A Comparison with Mediterranean Diet in the SUN Cohort." *European Journal of Nutrition*, vol. 58, no. 3, Apr. 2018, pp. 1271–1282, doi:10.1007/s00394-018-1653-x.

<sup>4</sup> Andrade, C, et al. "A Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled Evaluation of the Anxiolytic Efficacy of an Ethanolic Extract of *Withania somnifera*." *Indian Journal of Psychiatry, Medknow*

Publications, July 2000, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21407960.

<sup>5</sup> Chandrasekhar, K, et al. "A Prospective, Randomized Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled Study of Safety and Efficacy of a High-Concentration Full-Spectrum Extract of Ashwagandha Root in Reducing Stress and Anxiety in Adults." *Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine*, vol. 34, no. 3, July 2012, p. 255., doi:10.4103/0253-7176.106022.

# Asthma

Asthma is a condition that causes inflammation in the airways of the lungs. In order to understand asthma, you must have a basic understanding of the respiratory system. When you breathe in air through your nose or mouth, that air goes down your throat, through the airways and into your lungs.

During an asthma exacerbation, or asthma attack, the airways become so inflamed that the bronchial muscles contract, which narrows the airways, and mucus starts to build up, which can further block the airways.

As you can imagine, if those airways are constricted, you cannot easily get the air from your nose or mouth to your lungs, and it often makes a “wheezing” sound that is classic for asthma—though symptoms can also simply be difficult-to-control, prolonged coughing, with shortness of breath afterward.

When not controlled well or when left untreated, asthma can cause serious health conditions and even death. Essentially, asthma is a disorder related to an unhealthy inflammatory response in the breathing tubes (bronchi) of the lung.

The reasons children develop asthma can include genetics, a poorly developed immune system, severe viral infections and overexposure to allergens. If a parent has asthma, a child is more likely to develop it. Children who grew up in overly sanitized environments and did not get enough exposure to bacteria in their infancy may not have developed a healthy inflammatory and immune response, and can develop chronic inflammation of the airways, resulting in asthma. On the other end of the spectrum, children who had a lot of upper respiratory viral infections as babies and toddlers are also more likely to develop asthma.

Overexposure to pollutants and airborne toxins is another reason children develop asthma. For example, children who live in urban areas with higher levels of air pollution and children who live near manufacturing facilities that contaminate the surrounding environment are more likely to suffer from asthma.

When your child has asthma, develop an “asthma action plan” with her or his healthcare provider. Discuss possible triggers and how best to avoid them. Common asthma triggers include allergens such as dust, mold, animal dander or saliva, and seasonal allergies, including allergies to pollen from plants such as cedar, goldenrod and ragweed. Pollution, cigarette smoke or other chemicals in the air can provoke an asthma attack as well. Respiratory infections also can irritate the airways and lead to an asthma exacerbation. Some people only develop asthma in the weeks following a viral respiratory infection. Sometimes exercise can contribute to an asthma attack, especially when the child is breathing cold, dry air.

Once you recognize the triggers for your child, figure out ways to avoid them. Go green in your home with cleaning products, soaps and shampoos that are natural and not filled with asthma-triggering chemicals.

Be sure your home is not dusty—dust and vacuum your home when your child is at school or out playing, so the dust and particles kicked up by your cleaning don’t irritate your child’s airways. Change your heating and air conditioning filters monthly.



Explore breathing exercises with an occupational or respiratory therapist to see if they help your child prevent asthma exacerbations. Certain methods and techniques, including the Papworth method, Buteyko breathing and some yogic breathing, have had promising results for some asthma sufferers.<sup>1,2</sup>

Consider how certain foods may worsen or improve your child’s asthma. Some people have found success when eliminating dairy, sugar, food coloring or soy—though admittedly this may not always be easy with little children. Boost your child’s immune system with adequate vitamin D and zinc (particularly at the early signs of a respiratory illness). Keep a healthy ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 fatty acids in the diet (somewhere between 1:1 and 4:1 omega-6 to omega-3).



The oily extract from New Zealand green-lipped mussels is often useful in supporting a healthy inflammatory response in the lungs, which can reduce the tendency for bronchial spasm.

Advocate for clean-air policies in your community. If you are planning on moving to a new home, check the air quality (there are online websites that can tell you how to do this) and assess possible manufacturing facilities nearby that may contaminate the air.

Other measures you can take to care for a child with asthma include having the child wear some sort of medical bracelet that lets others know he or she has asthma. In the event of a severe emergency, this can help medical emergency personnel more quickly identify the problem and treat it.

The good news is that many young children grow out of asthma by the time they are 5 years old.

Additionally, medications that your child's healthcare provider prescribes can help prevent asthma attacks if taken according to the instructions. Additionally, emergency medications, often in the form of a "rescue inhaler," can be carried with your child at all times in order to open the airways in the event of an asthma attack.

<sup>1</sup> Holloway, Elizabeth A, and Robert J West. "Integrated Breathing and Relaxation Training (the Papworth Method) for Adults with Asthma in Primary Care: a Randomised Controlled Trial." *Thorax*, BMJ Group, Dec. 2007, [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2094294/](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2094294/).

<sup>2</sup> Manocha, R, et al. "Sahaja Yoga in the Management of Moderate to Severe Asthma: a Randomised Controlled Trial." *Thorax*, BMJ Group, Feb. 2002, [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11828038](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11828038).

# The Dawning of the Age of Retirement

Perhaps you've dreamed of it all your life. That special day in the distant future. The sun would be shining. You'd have a huge smile on your face. You would wake up and take things slowly and leisurely. Retirement. The time when you get to say goodbye to work stressors and get to ultimately relax.

But retirement can be a difficult adjustment for many people. Seniors tend to come into retirement with a host of worries about money, health and family. And some seniors even have difficulty figuring out how to structure their day. They may no longer have any external accountability for getting up and getting going. After all, being late to work may be punishable, but being late to an exercise class or a social gathering isn't as threatening.

How do you adjust to a healthy, productive, meaningful and enjoyable retirement?

When you are no longer working you may even have a personality or identity crisis of sorts!

It may sound silly (or something teenagers go through), but when you leave a profession, you can feel a loss of status and significance.

Maybe you taught history or chemistry your whole life. You were probably revered or at least well known in your school and maybe the community. When your days aren't filled with those student-to-teacher interactions, that is an enormous change. Maybe you spent your work hours crunching numbers or managing meetings.

Or perhaps you did more active labor, like carpentry or construction work.

If you were a nurse or a healthcare worker, your daily interactions with patients may have been comforting.

Aside from part-time work or continuing to work, there are ways to still connect to your profession.

One idea is volunteerism. Think about which aspects of work you loved the most, and figure out how you can volunteer to do those same things.

Maybe as a nurse you enjoyed mentoring new nurses but sometimes felt overwhelmed with the needs of patients. See if there is a university program where you can connect with student nurses. Or maybe you liked your accounting job but didn't like the stress of managing people's wealth. Participate in tax-filing workshops for underserved communities.

If you don't miss your job, but you do miss the external accountability of being somewhere, plan social dates that get you up and out early in the morning. Join exercise classes or take up an art class that meets at least weekly. Set an alarm every morning, and come up with a special morning ritual. You don't have to get out the door, but be sure to get out of your pajamas every morning and into "real" clothes (i.e., clothes you don't mind running a few errands in). Make special weekly (or daily) dates with family members or close friends so you have something to look forward to.

If you were pushed into retirement earlier than you planned or if you worry about your financial outlook, meet with an economic advisor with no financial strings attached, a social worker who works with the elderly, or a trusted acquaintance who is good with money in order to review your concerns, develop a new budget, and access social and community resources that can help you financially.



Exercise regularly. Find ways to exercise that can help you be more mindful (independent activities) and other fitness options that bring you into community (classes, gyms, group walks).

Eat healthfully and communally by gardening in your yard or a community garden, taking novel cooking classes, or participating in a supper club.

Make a personal mission statement and identify your values that you want to especially live into during retirement. Talk to others who have retired in the past couple years for ideas on how to transition from working. Recognize that there will be an adjustment period that could take some time. But you will get through this transition with the right positive mindfulness, reflective evaluation and intentional community.



# Watching Sports

Every few years, most of the world gathers around their television sets or in neighborhood taverns to watch their country participate in the World Cup. During this time people men (and women) who ordinarily root for rival teams will come together to cheer on their country's team (or perhaps a country they strongly like, if their country did not make the finals).

In the United States, some economic reports have suggested that productivity declines significantly during March Madness, the time of year when college basketball has its finals. The United Kingdom, along with several Commonwealth nations (and a small handful of others, like France), has roughly 700,000 viewers. Other well-watched sports events include the Asia Games, with nearly 1 billion viewers, and the Cricket World Cup, with, usually, 400 million viewers.

Presently, across the globe major sporting events and sports seasons are being postponed or even cancelled. Sports fans have expressed disappointment, sadness or frustration that they won't be able to enjoy their favorite past times given the current public health situation. In order to cope with the lack of sports coverage, some people are watching historic sports events while connected to their loved ones via Skype, Zoom or Facetime.

Sporting events have drawn the attention of men for thousands of years.

The ancient Romans and their famed colosseums, filled with gladiators and harrowing animals, drew thousands of primarily male spectators.

The Mayans played various ball games that involved spectacularly architected courts.

<sup>1</sup> Kluger, Jeffrey. "Men and Sports: Science Explains Why Men Love Sports." Time, May 9, 2016, <https://time.com/4322947/men-women-sports-evolution/>.

<sup>2</sup> Meij, Leander Van Der, et al. "Testosterone and Cortisol Release among Spanish Soccer Fans Watching the 2010 World Cup Final." PLoS ONE, vol. 7, no. 4, Apr. 2012, doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0034814.

<sup>3</sup> Bernhardt, Paul C, et al. "Testosterone Changes during

The point is that sports are part of our given culture. The United States is known for its love of American football.

All of Latin America, and most of Europe and Africa are obsessed with football (soccer). India and Pakistan are in love with the game of cricket. Russia, Poland and the Ukraine are huge fans of hockey. The Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico export (and keep for their domestic teams) some of baseball's most successful players. Sports help men feel part of a larger society.

Perhaps, on the other end of that connection to a larger group, there is the allegiance to a smaller group as well. Rooting for their home team helps men feel a sense of civic pride. There is this sense of almost being a part of the team as they celebrate the wins or mourn the losses of their local team.

Sports spectating also helps men with an outlet for competition and playful rivalry. Statistically, men are more interested in competitive sports, whereas women tend to be drawn to sports like running, swimming and yoga.<sup>1</sup> This rivalry makes for a more emotive experience, as well as deepening the connection to the sports community (or team).

That sense of belonging is important for men. It brings a much-needed opportunity for bonding with one another.

<sup>4</sup> Vicarious Experiences of Winning and Losing among Fans at Sporting Events." Physiology & Behavior, vol. 65, no. 1, 1998, pp. 59–62., doi:10.1016/s0031-9384(98)00147-4.

<sup>5</sup> Bellock, S. L., et al. "Sports Experience Changes the Neural Processing of Action Language." Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, vol. 105, no. 36, Sept. 2008, pp. 13269–13273, doi:10.1073/pnas.0803424105.

All people are looking for a sense of community, belonging and unity. Watching sports provides those things for many men. It gives them something to talk about with each other. It provides men with something to laugh about with one another. And it gives them the opportunity to emote and feel—even to cry.





When a team loses, their diehard fans can experience a range of emotions that contribute to increased levels of cortisol.<sup>2</sup> This doesn't sound great for health. But the fact of the matter is that men do experience a lot of health benefits when watching sports.

An emotional outlet is one of them. Sports help men unwind most of the time. When they watch a game, they get to relax, have

fun, laugh and get excited. They get to experience joy! When a team wins, male fans experience a testosterone boost.<sup>3</sup>

One study showed that neurological pathways lit up when hockey fans listened to a hockey game, whereas the listeners who were not fans did not see those brain waves stimulated.<sup>4</sup>

The emotional and social component is why the lack of sports participation may leave men socially vulnerable, with less opportunity to connect. Instead, seek out alternative opportunities to connect with other sports fans. Join an online group that discusses past seasons. Or host an interactive sports trivia night via online platforms. Soon life will be back to normal and perhaps you'll feel an even deeper appreciation for your team.



## Self-Love

When you are taking a flight, it always begins with the ubiquitous safety message.

The flight attendants will go through the importance of wearing your seat belt, where the exits on the aircraft, where the flotation life vests are located, and how to apply the oxygen mask in the event of a sudden drop in cabin pressure. When they get to the part about how to help your child with the oxygen mask and life vest, the announcement always reminds you to put yours on before helping your child (or others).

We've all heard that, but have you ever thought about how hard that would actually be? When you have so many responsibilities to others (and such strong love and dedication for those around you who depend on you), how do you make yourself a priority?

The airline analogy is the beginning. Before we can put on someone else's mask and make sure they are getting enough oxygen, we have to make sure that we are getting enough oxygen. Before we can truly love and care for others, we have to love ourselves. Aside from the improbable airline emergency, how do we practice self-love?

The most fundamental part of self-love is taking care of our mental health. Issues involving mental health are now being talked about and addressed more than ever before.

They were once stigmatized, erroneously diagnosed or silenced, but mental health issues are now being treated with dignity. If you have unexplored past wounds that include serious trauma, it is beneficial to work with a mental health professional.

Practice consistent and constant positive self-talk. Notice the ways in which you criticize yourself (or others) and work at eliminating that negativity.



Journal or write a short list every morning upon waking and every evening before going to bed that includes ways in which you lived into your greater self that day.

Prioritize noting intrinsic things about who you are. While accomplishments are great to list, strive to notice the goodness in your personality and value system. When your positive thinking is strictly linked to productivity or getting through a checklist, then you may be too focused on achievement and not focused enough on basic self-love.

Meditate on self-love and worthiness. It may feel unnatural or even cheesy, but mantras are meant to help us speak truth into being. Something as simple as "I love and accept myself" or "I am a kind person worthy of respect and care" can be said in moments of joy and of tribulation.



Doing these things helps build resilience. When things are difficult, we need a base or foundation to draw from. Think of it almost like building up your immune system with great sleep and healthy eating—you're more prepared to fight a common cold or stomach bug when you have taken care of yourself. Similarly, when you practice self-love regularly, you are building a reserve of resilience for trying times.





## Establish a list of self-love actions that you can take any day.

### Ideas include:

- Take time to relax and rest.
- Do something indulgent without guilt.
- Commit to eight hours of sleep.
- Read an inspiring book.
- Clean and organize your home or workplace.
- Dance to music you love.
- Make a nighttime beauty ritual for your alone time.
- Sit and stand with strong and proper posture.
- Say “no” to people when you feel you’re being overextended.
- Accept compliments with humble gratitude (don’t negate them!).
- Stop comparing yourself to others.
- Do a social media purge.
- Snuggle up with your partner/spouse.
- Cuddle with your cat or dog.
- Take a technology-free day.
- Buy yourself flowers.
- Smile softly all the time.
- Use cosmetics and beauty products that make you feel beautiful.
- Get out in nature at least once a week.

# Ask the Expert

## Is physical exercise good for my brain?

Your brain's gray matter, the portion of your brain that correlates with skills and cognitive abilities, can decline with age. However, a recent study of over 2,000 people found that regular cardiovascular activity can help prevent this decline. The study, which was performed at the German Center for Neurodegenerative Diseases, found that people who regularly engage in cardiovascular exercise such as briskly walking, swimming, biking or running, have higher amounts of gray matter in their brains, compared with people of a similar age who were not physically active. They concluded that aerobic exercise can have a positive impact on cognitive function.<sup>1</sup>

This isn't the first study to show a positive correlation between aerobic exercise and cognitive function.



Other studies have made similar findings. Exercise can also help improve sleep quality,<sup>2</sup> which can be a major factor in regulating mood and fighting stress. Regular physical activity, combined with healthy eating, relaxation techniques and a positive focus, can go far in helping to maintain cognitive function throughout life.

## Do I really need to exercise?

People often debate whether or not it's more important to eat healthy or exercise. While everyone's bodies are unique and respond uniquely to diet and exercise, the two are equally important. It may be possible to stave off weight gain by caloric restriction alone, but that doesn't necessarily mean you are living a healthy life. In fact, a new study revealed that living a sedentary lifestyle can be worse for your health than smoking, diabetes and heart disease.<sup>3</sup> This is because cardiovascular activity does far more than just burn calories. It helps strengthen muscles, improve blood circulation, protect the brain, reduce the risk of myriad diseases, improve mood, increase red blood cells, and so much more. Later in life, being active helps keep us active. Regular physical activity improves balance and muscle tone, which helps prevent falls and increases independence. From walking around the neighborhood to running a marathon, regular physical activity in all forms is a vital part of staying healthy, both mentally and physically.

## Can games really help protect my brain?

The answer is, without a doubt, yes. In one very important way, your brain is like your muscles—the more you use it, the stronger it will be. If you lift weights every day, your arms will be incredibly strong. If you challenge your brain every day, your cognitive prowess will be very sharp. Not long ago, researchers at The University of Edinburgh discovered that people who regularly played nondigital games scored better on memory and thinking tests in their 70s. Nondigital games can be card games, chess, go, board games, and other games that challenge you to think critically in order to win.<sup>4</sup> Learning new games may be even better, as it forces your brain to think even harder as it learns new skills. If you don't enjoy games, any activity that flexes your brain "muscles" can help, such as crossword puzzles, learning new hobbies, taking a new class, learning a new language or learning a musical instrument.



<sup>1</sup> Wittfeld, Katharina, Carmen Jochem, Marcus Dörr, Ulf Schminke, Sven Gläser, Martin Bahls, Marcello R. P. Markus, et al. "Cardiorespiratory Fitness and Gray Matter Volume in the Temporal, Frontal, and Cerebellar Regions in the General Population." *Mayo Clinic Proceedings* 95, no. 1 (2020): 44–56, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mayocp.2019.05.030>.

<sup>2</sup> Whitworth, James W, Sanaz Nosrat, Nicholas J Santabarbara, and Joseph T Ciccolo. "High Intensity Resistance Training

Improves Sleep Quality and Anxiety in Individuals Who Screen Positive for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: A Randomized Controlled Feasibility Trial." *Mental Health and Physical Activity* 16 (2019): 43–49, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mhpa.2019.04.001>.

<sup>3</sup> Mandsager, Kyle, Serge Harb, Paul Cremer, Dermot Phelan, Steven E Nissen, and Wael Jaber. "Association of Cardiorespiratory Fitness With Long-Term Mortality Among Adults Undergoing Exercise Treadmill Testing." *JAMA*

Network Open 1, no. 6 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2018.3605>.

<sup>4</sup> Altschul, Drew M, and Ian J Deary. "Playing Analog Games Is Associated With Reduced Declines in Cognitive Function: A 68-Year Longitudinal Cohort Study." *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B* 75, no. 3 (2019): 474–482, <https://doi.org/10.1093/geronb/gbz149>.