

Words of Wellness

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STRESS

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10 tips to revitalize your body and mind

Small steps can lead to large health benefits. Here are some healthy activities to get you started.

1. Go for a brisk walk during your lunch break
2. Drink six to eight glasses of water a day
3. Boost your fruit and vegetable intake
4. Have a good belly laugh every day
5. Volunteer in your community
6. Reframe your negative thoughts into the positive
7. Take up a new hobby – something you've always wanted to try
8. Make note of something you're grateful for... every day
9. Revisit your values and priorities regularly
10. Sign up for a course for personal or professional growth – learning is lifelong



Brave the Cold, Stay Slim

Staying indoors and cozying up on the couch all winter is a sure way to gain weight. But researchers at University College London found that it's not only a lack of movement that causes you to pack on pounds. When you don't expose yourself to cold temperatures, you're not burning calories to stay warm or create body heat. So go outside and play even in frigid temps, and blast more calories than you would during warmer months.



Stress Builders and Stress Busters

Stress Builder: "I'll never get this project in on time."

Stress Buster: "If I stay focused and take it one step at a time, I'll make steady progress."

Stress Builder: "My supervisor didn't say good morning. He's probably displeased with my work, and I'll get a bad evaluation."

Stress Buster: "I'm jumping to conclusions. My supervisor may have been in a bad mood. So far all my evaluations have been positive, so unless I get some negative feedback, I'll assume my supervisor is pleased with my work."

Stress Builder: "I can't get my mistake on page 53 out of my mind. The paper is ruined. I have disappointed everyone."

Stress Buster: "No one is perfect. I did my best. I'm overreacting to one mistake when the overall report is fine."



Clues to Burnout: Signs & Symptoms of Job Stress

Behavioral:

- Frequent clockwatching
- Postponing client contacts; resisting phone and office visits
- Stereotyping clients
- Treadmilling: Working harder and getting less done
- Increasing reliance on rules and regulations: "Going by the book"
- Avoiding discussion of work with colleagues
- More use/approval of behavioral control measures (e.g., tranquilizers)
- Excessive use of drugs and alcohol
- Marital and family conflict
- High absenteeism
- Irritability with clients and colleagues
- Avoiding work responsibility (e.g., paperwork, meetings)

Psychological

- High resistance to going to work every day
- Sense of failure
- Feelings of anger and resentment
- Feeling discouraged and indifferent
- Negativism
- Loss of positive feelings toward clients
- Self-preoccupation
- Feeling powerless and hopeless
- Rigidity in thinking and resistance to change
- Suspiciousness and paranoia
- Anxiety
- Excessive number of "Bad Days"
- Depression
- Feelings of Guilt and Blame

Physical

- Feeling tired during workday
- Fatigue
- Exhaustion
- Sleep disorders
- Frequent colds and flu
- Frequent headaches
- Frequent gastro-intestinal disturbances
- Frequent vague aches and pains

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10 Thoughts on Whole Living

1. Make this the year you follow through.
2. Invigorate body and mind: exercise until your spirit soars.
3. Other people may have opinions about where your life is headed, but only you have the power to prove them wrong.
4. The path to fearless living goes straight through the roadblocks, NOT AROUND THEM.
5. Seek out foods that sustain, nourish, and warm you.
6. Creativity goes beyond sheer artistry; it takes courage to express your ideas.
7. Disagreements offer invaluable insights. Don't avoid them – study them.
8. To truly detoxify your lifestyle, think about what you can add in, NOT JUST TAKE OUT.
9. The cosiest homes aren't merely filled with stuff; they're designed to bring people closer.
10. An ending doesn't have to be sad. It's the only way to begin something new.

by Terri Trespicio

Stress relief from laughter

A good sense of humor can't cure all ailments, but data are mounting about the positive things laughter can do.

Short-term benefits

A good laugh has great short-term effects. When you start to laugh, it doesn't just lighten your load mentally, it actually induces physical changes in your body. Laughter can:

- **Stimulate many organs.** Laughter enhances your intake of oxygen-rich air, stimulates your heart, lungs and muscles, and increases the endorphins that are released by your brain.
- **Activate and relieve your stress response.** A rollicking laugh fires up and then cools down your stress response and increases your heart rate and blood pressure. The result? A good, relaxed feeling.
- **Soothe tension.** Laughter can also stimulate circulation and aid muscle relaxation, both of which help reduce some of the physical symptoms of stress.

Long-term effects

Laughter isn't just a quick pick-me-up, though. It's also good for you over the long haul. Laughter may:

- **Improve your immune system.** Negative thoughts manifest into chemical reactions that can impact your body by bringing more stress into your system and decreasing your immunity. In contrast, positive thoughts actually release neuropeptides that help fight stress and potentially more-serious illnesses.
- **Relieve pain.** Laughter may ease pain by causing the body to produce its own natural painkillers. Laughter may also break the pain-spasm cycle common to some muscle disorders.
- **Increase personal satisfaction.** Laughter can also make it easier to cope with difficult situations. It also helps you connect with other people.



Fast Coq au Vin

Ingredients:

- 8 small shallots, peeled (Tip: or use a chopped medium onion)
- 8 red mini-potatoes, cut in halves (Bonus: Skins provide extra nutrients)
- 400g skinless, boneless chicken breasts or thighs (Tip: cut breasts in 3 to 4 pieces and thighs in 2 to 3)
- 1 cup (250 mL) dry red wine
- 1 Tbsp (15 mL) olive oil
- 2 cups (500 mL) sliced white mushrooms (Bonus: Low in calories, high in flavour)
- 1 large handful whole green beans
- 1 cup (250 mL) low sodium chicken broth
- 2 cups (500 mL) sliced carrots
- A few stems of fresh thyme, chopped
- 3 Tbsp (45 mL) flour (Tip: Season with freshly ground pepper, if desired)



Method

Dredge chicken in flour and shake off any excess. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add chicken and cook until lightly browned, 1 to 2 minutes per side. Remove from skillet and cover with foil. Add shallots, carrots, mushrooms and potatoes to skillet, and sauté for 3 minutes. Stir in chicken broth, wine and some chopped thyme, bring to a boil, cook for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, in a separate pot, steam beans about 5 minutes. Return chicken to skillet, and cook for about 5 to 7 minutes more, until chicken is cooked through and potatoes are tender. Mix in green beans. Divide among 4 serving plates, garnish with small sprigs of fresh thyme.

Wine Pairing: Burgundy. A light red is traditionally served with this classic French dinner.

Serves four. Per serving: 512 calories, 34 g protein, 6 g fat (1 g saturated fat), 74 g carbohydrates, 9 g fibre, 58 mg cholesterol, 150 mg sodium.