

# THE EPOCH TIMES

# MIND & BODY

## Why Thinking Like an Open-Minded Scientist Is Good for You

Accepting when you're wrong is the first step to being right.

A new book raises the importance of questioning our knowledge and opinions in the face of new evidence

JILL SUTTIE

In a rapidly changing world, it's important to be able to adapt rather than stubbornly adhere to old ideas and opinions. This was one of the lessons of 2020, a year that forced us to question many of our assumptions about what behaviors are safe, how work and school can be conducted, and how we connect with others.

In his new book, "Think Again: The Power of Knowing What You Don't Know," organizational psychologist Adam Grant explains why it's so important for people to be humbler about their knowledge and stay open to learning and changing their minds. The book is filled with fascinating research and guidance on becoming more flexible in our thinking, while helping others to be more open-minded, too.

This skill is crucial not only for facing crises like the pandemic, but also for navigating complex social issues, making good business decisions, and more.

"In a changing world, you have to be willing and able to change your mind. Otherwise, your expertise can fail, your opinions get out of date, and your ideas fall flat," says Grant.

I spoke to Grant recently about his book and what we can take away from it. Here is an edited version of our conversation.

**Jill Suttie:** Your book focuses on the importance of people questioning what they think they know and being open to changing their minds. Why is it so hard to do that?

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If you're more concerned with learning and growing than just being right, then it is much easier to accept new information and deepen your understanding.

LJUPCO SMOKOVSKI/ SHUTTERSTOCK

## How Airplane Mode Helps Reduce Your EMF Radiation Exposure

With one easy swipe, you can significantly reduce the amount of radiation your phone sends out each night

DANIEL T. DEBAUN

We've all been on an airplane daydreaming about our weekend getaway when the customary in-flight announcement comes on requesting for us to turn our electronic



WEERASAK THAM-AMORN/ SHUTTERSTOCK

Airplane mode is a requirement while flying because it shuts off the phone's radio frequency signals that can interfere with various sensors and equipment on commercial airplanes—and your body.

devices off or put them on airplane mode.

But what actually happens when you put your cellphone into airplane mode?

In order to connect to Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, or a cellular network, your cellphone must send out wireless, or radio frequency (RF) signals, which creates a form of electromagnetic field (EMF) radiation. When you set your phone to airplane mode (sometimes called flight mode), these radio signals are disabled so your device can't connect.

The reason for the airplane mode requirement while flying is that the RF signals emitting from mobile devices may interfere with various sensors and equipment on commercial airplanes, especially if there is a high volume of RF traffic.

If you accidentally forget to enable airplane mode, don't worry, the plane won't

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CHINESE WISDOM FOR SEASONAL LIVING

Rainbows Start to Show as Spring’s Potential Grows

Solar Terms: ‘Clear and Bright’ (April 4 to 19)

MOREEN LIAO

A solar term is a period of about two weeks and is based on the sun’s position in the zodiac. Solar terms form the traditional Chinese calendar system. The calendar follows the ancient Chinese belief that living in accordance with nature will enable one to live a harmonious life. This article series explores each of the year’s 24 solar terms, offering guidance on how to best navigate the season.

Solar Term: ‘Clear and Bright’

2021 Dates: April 4 to 19

As this solar term’s moniker “Clear and Bright” suggests, the weather is often clear and bright during this time as we move into spring, but there is also plenty of rainfall to wash away the dust and dullness of winter.

After the rain inevitably comes rainbows. The ancient Chinese believed rainbows were the product of yin and yang energy meeting in balance, and that they couldn’t appear if the energy was purely yang or yin. The solar term Clear and Bright is when rainbows first start showing up in the sky. Not incidentally, it’s also a time of energy balance.

A perfect metaphor for the season, the rainbow with its brilliant arc represents balance, potential, and the promise of renewal when fresh sunshine appears.

A perfect metaphor for the season, the rainbow with its brilliant arc represents balance, potential, and the promise of renewal when fresh sunshine appears.

As the yang energy rises in all living beings during this solar term, the qi energy also becomes clear and bright. This time presents boundless potential for our health if we harness it mindfully.

According to traditional Chinese medicine, the spring season belongs to the wood element. This doesn’t refer to the material of wood, nor to trees. Rather, it is the idea of growing upward and of a vaporizing quality. It is the power of improving, and it provides a foundation for the rest of the seasons to come.

This is why spring is the best time to stimulate and encourage well-being. By doing the right things, we can fol-

low the rhythm of nature and get the best results with minimum effort.

**Living in Harmony With ‘Clear and Bright’**  
As the yang energy begins to rise and accumulate in one’s body, it travels from the inside to the outside of the body. If one eats overly greasy or heat-containing foods, such as hot spices, it may overload the body and cause congestion. The excess heat may also trigger allergic reactions, high blood pressure, or coughs.

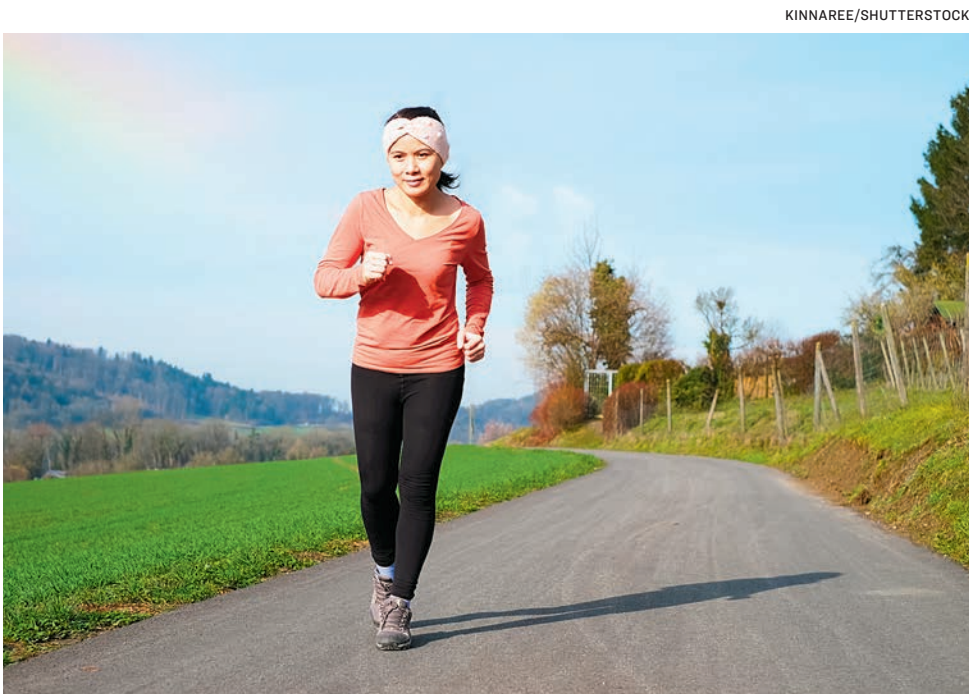
During this time of year, people tend to have good appetites. But try not to overeat, and look to include more outdoor activities in your routine to help you lose any excess weight left over from winter. The sun is very mild and beneficial for health during this time of year, so get outside whenever possible. For elderly people, gentle exercise is best. Be careful not to overdo it.

Dragon Well Tea, or Lonjing Tea is 1 of the top 10 tea types in China; it is a type of green tea. The premium category among the Dragon Well Tea is called Yuqiancha, which means tea before the rain. The tender tea leaves were harvested right before the heavy rains as the rain boosted the speed of the growing and thin the delicate aromas of the tea.

A special tea ritual has been followed for a very long time, people blended newly produced Dragon Well Tea with old ones to drink around this solar term. It might be interesting to blend old and new, but more importantly, it is indeed a good idea to balance the aged and fresh flavors from different vintage as well as to get a nice mix of enzymes.

**Seasonal Foods**  
Beneficial foods include barley, carrot, cucumber, eggs, melon, potato, rice and most grains, spinach, sweet potato, goji berries & their leaves, and yam. They cleanse the blood and tone our livers. Slow-cooked oxtail with plenty of root vegetables is very light, yet replenishing. Avoid mushrooms, wheat, seafood, and plants that grow in water, such as watercress, as the nature of these foods is wet and can cause water retention in the body. Avoid grilled and deep-fried foods. Slow cooking is best for this time. Avoid foods that are overly hot in temperature, or spicy. Recommended herbs include rose, celery, coriander, wormwood, chamomile, marjoram, calendula, lavender, and rosemary.

Epoch Times contributor Moreen Liao is a descendant of four generations of traditional Chinese medicine doctors. She is also a certified aromatherapist, former dean of the New Directions Institute of Natural Therapies in Sydney, and the founder of Ausganica, a certified organic cosmetic brand.



Spring is a great time to take up some gentle exercise to lose any excess weight you gained over the winter.

How Airplane Mode Helps Reduce Your EMF Radiation Exposure

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fall out of the sky. But it’s better to be safe than sorry, right? As a bonus, by disabling these RF signals, airplane mode can help reduce your exposure to EMF radiation.

What Is EMF Radiation?

All cellphones emit EMF radiation, which is comprised of extremely low frequency (ELF) radiation and radio frequency radiation. ELF is emitted by every electronic device with a plug or battery. On top of that, RF is emitted when your cellphone or other mobile device connects to a cell tower, Wi-Fi router, or Bluetooth accessory. What’s the problem with EMF radiation? According to a study conducted by Pew Research Center, practically all Americans use cellphones, and 77 percent use a smartphone. This means almost everyone is exposed to the ELF and RF radiation emitting from their cellphones.

When we constantly use our mobile devices close to our bodies over long periods of time, exposure to EMF radiation can become harmful. Studies have found links between EMF exposure to minor health concerns such as headaches and skin rashes, to very serious concerns, such as fertility problems, DNA fragmentation, cell damage, and cancerous tumors.

For example, a recently released study from the National Toxicology Program showed that high exposure to EMF radiation in male rats was associated with clear evidence of heart tumors, some evidence of brain tumors, and some evidence of tumors in the adrenal glands. In this new “Digital Age,” cellphones and other mobile devices are here to stay, but that doesn’t mean you must always expose yourself to their harmful EMF emissions. Putting your device into airplane mode will eliminate RF radiation, which dramatically reduces the amount of overall EMF radiation emissions.

What Can You Do While in Airplane Mode?

With a phone set in full airplane mode, you can:

- Take pictures and videos
- Listen to music or podcasts that are already downloaded on your phone
- Read e-books downloaded on your phone
- Set and use alarms and reminders
- Make lists
- Play games that don’t require connecting to Wi-Fi or cellular service
- Use AirDrop on Apple devices, which allows for the transfer of photos, videos, and files
- Use GPS tracking on recent models of Android and iOS devices (8.3+ models)

While your electronic device is in airplane mode, you can manually turn on Wi-Fi, which will allow you to use any app or service that requires an internet connection. However, since cellular and Bluetooth signals remain off, your exposure to RF emissions is reduced.

With a phone set in airplane mode with Wi-Fi connected, you can:

- Browse and post on social media apps
- Read and respond to emails
- Message on certain apps (WhatsApp, iMessage, Facebook Messenger, Viber, etc.)
- Video chat on Skype or FaceTime
- Make audio calls using apps
- Stream movies and videos

When Can You Use Airplane Mode?

In addition to using airplane mode in the sky, there are many other times you can harness the sneaky benefits of this feature!

1. During the Day

Enabling airplane mode any time you don’t need to be connected is an easy way to reduce your exposure to EMF radiation.

Using this feature while at the movies, in a meeting, driving (remember, you can still use GPS!), studying, or eating dinner will greatly decrease the amount of wireless radiation you are exposed to.



It can be hard to actively remember to do this, but we recommend setting reminders to enable airplane mode, or do it as soon as you put your phone down to create a healthy habit.

2. At Night

Turning on airplane mode at night means you won’t be disturbed by any messages and notifications that can keep you from falling asleep or wake you in the middle of the night.

Airplane mode also limits your exposure to EMF radiation all night long, which can contribute to better sleep. And, as we all know, good sleep is key to good health.

If your phone must stay connected during the night, such as if you’re on call for your job or are just a worried parent with kids out of the house, keep your device at least four feet away from you while sleeping (not under your pillow or on your nightstand next to your head).

In addition, you can turn off your Wi-Fi router at night to eliminate Wi-Fi connections and ensure your kids aren’t staying up late watching YouTube or playing online video games.

3. Around Children

We get it: Parenting today sometimes leads to electronic devices such as cellphones and tablets being used as a distraction for kids. Enabling airplane mode while your child enjoys screen time will prevent accidental calls, messages, or app purchases, stop notifications from interrupting their movie or game, and create a safer device with some level of parental control on it.

Additionally, children are more susceptible than adults to the harmful effects of EMF radiation. While kids are still developing, radiation can more easily saturate their developing tissues and cause harmful changes at the cellular level.

Airplane mode can easily protect them from RF radiation while they are at their most vulnerable stage in life.

4. At Low Battery Life

If you are ever in the dreaded situation where your phone is almost dead and there is no charger or outlet around, turning on airplane mode helps to save battery life. Even while your phone is locked and the screen is off, it is constantly searching for and maintaining its cellular connection—and constantly emitting harmful EMF radiation.

Airplane mode disables the cellular connection and decreases the amount of power the battery transmits, thus lowering the amount of EMF radiation emitted.

5. While Traveling

Using airplane mode while traveling abroad is a smart, and financially savvy, idea.

Because your cellphone will not be connected to a cellular network, you won’t rack up a huge phone bill with roaming charges. You can connect to Wi-Fi when you choose, and use almost all the functions of your phone, all while avoiding an exorbitant bill for using international data.

Not only will you save money on your phone bill, but you will also limit your exposure to EMF radiation.

How Do You Use Airplane Mode?

Good news: Using airplane mode is easy. When airplane mode is enabled, an airplane icon will appear in the notification bar at the top of your device to indicate that your device is disconnected from the cellular network, Wi-Fi, and Bluetooth connections.

While kids are still developing, radiation can more easily saturate their tissues.

For Apple’s older models of iPhones and iPads, you can swipe up from the bottom of the screen and simply press the airplane icon in the Control Center to enable airplane mode. If you have an iPhone X or later or an iPad with iOS 12 or later, swipe down from the upper-right corner to access the Control Center. When airplane mode is on, the airplane icon will be orange. Another way to enable airplane mode on Apple devices is to open Settings and tap the slider to green.

For Samsung devices, there are three ways to access airplane mode. Via the Settings menu, select Apps > Settings > Airplane mode > turn on (the switch will become green). Airplane mode can also be accessed through the Quick Panel. With two fingers, swipe down from the top of the screen. Tap the airplane mode icon to turn it on (it will become green). You can also press down the power key. After holding down the power key for two seconds, the device options menu will appear. Simply touch airplane mode to turn it on or off.

What Are Other Solutions to Reduce EMF Radiation Exposure?

We at DefenderShield know that cellular and Wi-Fi connectivity is necessary to many peoples’ daily lives, so if keeping airplane mode enabled isn’t a realistic option for you, there are many other easy ways to decrease your exposure to EMF radiation exposure.

If you must always be connected, an EMF radiation protection cellphone case, tablet case, or laptop pad can also help EMF radiation emissions in the direction of the shield.

Using speakerphone for calls and keeping your device at least one foot away from you can also help decrease your EMF exposure.

Daniel T. DeBaun is an internationally recognized expert in EMF radiation, EMF shielding, and EMF-related health issues with special focus on the effect of exposure from mobile devices such as laptops, tablets, and cellphones. DeBaun’s concern regarding the health impact of EMF emissions grew from over 30 years of engineering experience in the telecommunications industry, where he held a variety of executive positions at SAIC, Telcordia, AT&T, and Bell Labs. He is the co-author of “Radiation Nation: The Fallout of Modern Technology.”



LUIS ECHEVERRI/URREA/SHUTTERSTOCK



SAYER JI

You may think that staying slim and eating healthfully means no sweets, but guess what? There are natural and delicious sweeteners that won't wreck your diet, and even have therapeutic "side effects."

No arena of health and wellness is more debatable than what we should be eating. Looking back through time, the foods that constitute a healthy diet have changed so dramatically, you can literally mark the passage of time by the coming and going of dietary fads.

- Weight-loss clubs and popping diet pills in the 1970s
- Cabbage soup and liquid diets in the '80s
- The Zone and blood-type diets (along with lawsuits related to diet pills!) in the '90s
- In the aughts, Atkins and gluten-free
- In the 2010s, it's Paleo, raw, and local

Despite this obsessive focus on what to eat, Americans are fatter—and in many ways—unhealthier than ever before. In 2016, two-thirds of the adult population were considered overweight or obese, according to a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services study. This health epidemic spans ethnic and cultural boundaries and is affecting more adults and children every year.

One factor that is contributing to America's growing weight problem is our obsession with sugar. You probably don't need to see the results of a clinical study to believe that the more sugary calories you consume, the greater your risks of obesity. What you may not know is that what passes for sugar these days is actually a hyper-sweetened extract of one of the cheapest, most heavily sprayed, GMO-pervasive crops on the planet.

Why Sugar Isn't Sugar Anymore

Despite a marked decrease in consumption of refined cane and beet sugars over the last generation, we are taking in more dietary sugar overall, thanks to the prevalence of corn-based sweeteners such as high-fructose corn syrup, in nearly everything on grocery store shelves.

Switching to corn-based sweeteners is a case of jumping from the funnel cake grease into the fire! Corn syrup has become the go-to sweetening agent for processed foods because of its low cost and high concentration (at least 1.5 times that of cane sugar). Thanks to government subsidies, corn is alluringly cheap for food and beverage companies that need a steady supply of sweetness.

Corn is also a top GMO crop, with at least 92 percent of the nation's supply being genetically modified to withstand large doses of herbicides. Setting aside the shocking effects of GMO consumption, this intense concentration of simple sugar is wreaking havoc on the collective metabolism.

Studies abound correlating intake of high-fructose sweeteners to increased risks of obesity, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, fatty liver disease, diabetes, and more.

**What About Zero-Calorie Sweeteners?** Aspartame, Equal, sucralose, Splenda, saccharin: they go by many names but do any of them sound truly sweet? Not when you read the more than 100 scientific abstracts that Greenmedinfo has collected on the perils of artificial sweeteners. Chemical facsimiles of sugar, these unnatural compounds can be far worse than the real thing.

Linked to increased risks of kidney disease, metabolic dysfunction, diabetes, and obesity, these calorie-free sugar substitutes trick consumers into thinking that pre-

viously unhealthy foods can get "a sugar-free pass." But fake sugars are far from harmless. Studies show that consuming synthetic sweeteners generates excessive cravings for the sweet taste, leading to weight gain and other negative effects linked to excessive sugar consumption.

While it might be tempting to think that these sugar imposters can help you bypass the weight and still eat the treats, if you value your health, steer clear of these dietary destroyers!

Nature Offers Solutions

Wondering what options this leaves you when only something sweet will do? Fortunately, nature has you covered. Here are four solutions for satisfying your sweet tooth that won't rot your teeth, create blood sugar imbalance, or cause weight gain.

In fact, these natural wonders pack some amazing health benefits!

Xylitol

Xylitol is a sugar alcohol derived from xylose—a crystalline sugar found in birch bark. Sweet like sugar but with only 40 percent of the calories, xylitol is fast becoming the preferred sweetener of health-conscious consumers.

Low-carb dieters will find xylitol appealing, with less than a quarter of the carbohydrates found in cane sugar. It also stands apart from synthetic sweeteners thanks to its natural origins. Besides birch trees, xylitol is found in the cellular structure of fruits like raspberries, and in vegetables like the corn cob. Even our bodies produce xylitol (between 5 grams and 15 grams per day) during normal metabolic processes.

With a glycemic rating of 13, xylitol is metabolized around eight times slower than regular

sugar, making it a safer choice for diabetics. Unlike sugar, which provokes the release of insulin in response to its consumption, xylitol is metabolized independently of insulin in the gut. It metabolizes slower and steadier than sugar, making it a much safer sweetener for hypoglycemics and the sugar-sensitive.

And there's good news for sufferers of cavities or Candida: Xylitol actually discourages the bacterial growth that feeds these conditions. The bacteria that cause candida, dental caries, and even Streptococcus mutans thrive in acid-based environments, with sugar as their food of choice. Xylitol is non-fermentable, creating an alkaline reaction in the body that bacteria find inhospitable. Xylitol consumption has been shown to dramatically decrease cavities and ear and throat infections, among other infectious organisms.

The dental health community is one of the biggest supporters of Xylitol. Studies have shown that plaque build-up and dental caries can be reduced by 80 percent with the introduction of moderate amounts of xylitol (up to half an ounce per day). Research also indicates that consuming xylitol may increase bone strength and bone density.

**\*Important Note:** Xylitol can have a laxative effect, so start slowly. It is best to obtain Xylitol from a manufacturer who uses birch rather than corn. Finally, Xylitol is extremely toxic to dogs, so please keep it away from Fido! Xylitol is sometimes made from corn, which includes GMO corn. Look for the higher quality, non-GMO certified, and best of all: birch tree-derived form.

Stevia

Stevia is 300 times sweeter than sugar and without caloric content. The stevia plant has been used by native people to sweeten food and drink for centuries and its popularity as a modern sugar substitute grew in the 1990s.

Now, there is new research that confirms what tribal cultures knew: this plant provides a safe, affordable, and tasty alternative to expensive and potentially dangerous sweeteners.

The study, published in August 2017, calls stevia "a suitable calorie-free sweetener," with both "pharmacological and therapeutic properties, including antioxidant, antimicrobial, antihypertensive, antidiabetic, and anticancer." Researchers further heralded stevia's positive effects on those metabolic conditions aggravated by excess sugar consumption, namely obesity, hypertension, and diabetes.

Stevia reduces blood sugar, reduces blood pressure, combats infections, and reduces risks of diabetes. One study even found that consuming stevia was as effective as a popular oral antidiabetic drug, but with fewer side effects.

If you haven't tried Stevia in a while, you will be pleasantly surprised by new formu-

While sugar is implicated in many health conditions, natural sweeteners like the stevia offer a healthy alternative with nutritional benefits.



Companies are always experimenting with new formulations of natural sweeteners.



Many products are sweetened with GMO high-fructose corn syrup.



CASA DA PHOTO/SHUTTERSTOCK

What Is Post-Viral Syndrome?

Some people don't recover fully from a viral infection, including COVID-19

ASHLEY TURNER

COVID-19 has had massive impacts on our world. Every person on planet earth has been affected in some way by this virus and its ramifications.

Thankfully, we know that most people who contract SARS-CoV2, the coronavirus that causes COVID-19, have mild to moderate degrees of illness that subside quickly. However, some individuals experience ongoing symptoms and crippling fatigue. You may be surprised to know that post-viral syndrome can result from other common viruses. Regardless of the virus, when symptoms persist and health isn't quickly restored, it's important to find out why this is happening.

Post-Viral Syndrome

Post-viral syndrome, also known as post-viral fatigue or post-viral fatigue syndrome, isn't a new phenomenon. It's just that now people are likening these ongoing symptoms with post-COVID syndrome. It's important to understand that individuals can experience ongoing symptoms and reactions following Epstein Barr virus, severe acute respiratory syndrome from the SARS-CoV1 virus, West Nile virus, H1N1 influenza, and many others. These viruses can leave patients experiencing long-term fatigue and malaise for months. If left unchecked, people can go on to develop autoimmunity and chronic disease.

The World Health Organization tells us that the majority of people will recover from COVID-19 in anywhere from 2 to 6 weeks. Those who have had a severe case of any viral illness, including COVID-19, can expect a longer recovery time. In fact, The Journal of the American Medical Association published a study that showed that 80 percent of COVID-19 hospitalized patients still had persisting symptoms after eight weeks.

As we have seen with other viruses, COVID has the potential to trigger chronic disease. Oftentimes, we see various forms of viral and other illnesses trigger an autoimmune disease, fibromyalgia, or

chronic fatigue syndrome. Post-COVID syndrome and post-viral syndrome look very similar to chronic fatigue syndrome.

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), it's estimated that 2.5 million Americans struggle with chronic fatigue syndrome or myalgic encephalomyelitis. These conditions are characterized by extreme fatigue that doesn't resolve with rest. Oftentimes, the exhaustion is debilitating.

Symptoms of Chronic Fatigue

It's important to understand that post-viral syndrome symptoms are virtually identical to chronic fatigue syndrome symptoms. COVID sufferers show chronic fatigue symptoms as well as shortness of breath, loss of smell or taste, brain fog, and digestive distress. Interestingly, brain fog and digestive distress often go hand-in-hand due to the connection of the gut and brain through the gut-brain axis.

For a true chronic fatigue diagnosis, other potential causes of fatigue must be ruled out and patients must experience symptoms for at least six months. These symptoms include:

- Fatigue and weakness with exertion (physical, emotional, or cognitive)
- Unrefreshing sleep
- Impaired memory or concentration
- Muscle pain
- Joint pain
- Sore throat
- Tender lymph nodes
- Headaches

Roots of Chronic Fatigue

Oftentimes, chronic fatigue syndrome stumps the medical community as there isn't a clear-cut treatment in their paradigm. Dealing with conditions such as chronic fatigue or post-viral syndrome is where functional and integrative medicine shine because our focus is to get to the root cause of the symptom presentation. By addressing the root cause, we are able to impact the origin of the symptoms. Some potential root causes include but are not limited to:



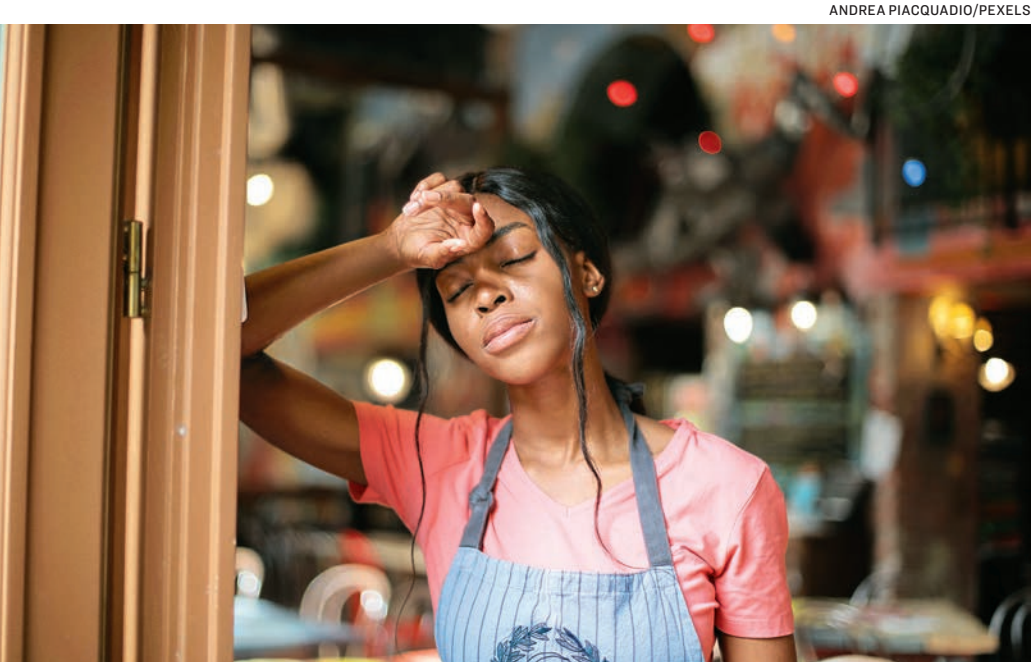
Persistent muscle pain, joint pain, and headaches often accompany chronic fatigue.



Xylitol is a healthier sweetener made from birch bark or corn cob.



Molasses retains the nutrients stripped from processed sugar.



ANDREA PIACQUADIO/PEXELS

2.5 million Americans struggle with chronic fatigue syndrome.

Many people suffer fatigue and other symptoms long after a viral infection like COVID-19 has passed.

- Celiac disease
- Food sensitivities
- Heavy metal toxicity
- Glyphosate toxicity
- Chronic infections
- Mitochondrial dysfunction
- Mast cell activation and elevated histamine response

Each of these factors, or a combination of them, can trigger symptoms of chronic fatigue syndrome. If chronic fatigue syndrome symptoms started after an environmental toxin exposure or viral illness including COVID-19, mononucleosis (mono), or shingles, it could be that the immune system didn't fully rise to the occasion. It may go without saying, but the path forward from each of these root causes will look different from the others. For example, different interventions will be required for someone who had a gluten exposure versus a viral illness. This is why a thorough health history and a personalized approach are so important.

Next Steps

COVID-19 and other viral illnesses not only can contribute to post-viral syndrome, but they can also act as the triggering event for autoimmune disease. We will delve into this topic in our next article. Until then, if you find yourself with lingering symptoms or the feeling that something isn't quite right, do not write them off. Find a skilled clinician who will listen to you and help you figure out the root cause.

*Dr. Ashley Turner is a board-certified doctor of holistic health, traditionally-trained naturopath, author, homesteader, and homeschooling mother of three sweet daughters. You can reach her at Restorative Wellness Center where she practices functional medicine.*



PIXABAY/PEXELS

Honey contains over 181 health-promoting substances and turns the healthy vitality of plants into an energizing food perfect for humans.

to address the escalating rates of overweight and obesity."

Rich in copper, iron, and calcium, molasses can play a vital role in maintaining healthy blood and bones. This makes molasses a great alternative to non-nutritive sweeteners for pregnant or nursing women, or women who are trying to become pregnant. It also makes a great dietary supplement for women at risk of developing osteoporosis.

These four, healthful alternatives to sugar prove that craving a taste of sweetness doesn't have to cause cavities, promote weight gain, or lead to blood sugar imbalances. On the contrary, when we look to nature, we find natural foods which actually sweeten our health, as well as our palates.

*Sayer Ji is the founder of Greenmedinfo.com, a reviewer at the International Journal of Human Nutrition and Functional Medicine, co-founder and CEO of Systome Biomed, and adviser to the National Health Federation. This article was originally published on GreenMedinfo.com*



# Why Thinking Like an Open-Minded Scientist Is Good for You

A new book raises the importance of questioning our knowledge and opinions in the face of new evidence

*Continued from Page 1*

**Adam Grant:** It's hard for a few reasons. One is what psychologists call "cognitive entrenchment," which is when you have so much knowledge in an area that you start to take for granted assumptions that need to be questioned. There's evidence, for example, that when you change the rules of the game for expert bridge players, they really struggle, because they don't realize that the strategies they've used for years don't apply. There's also evidence that highly experienced accountants are slower to adapt to the new tax laws than novices because they've internalized a certain way of doing things.

A second barrier is motivation: "I don't want to rethink; I'm comfortable with the way I've always done things. It makes me feel and look stupid if I admit that I was wrong. It's easier to just stick to my guns (or my gun bans, depending on where I stand ideologically)."

The third reason is social. We don't form beliefs in a vacuum. We generally end up with opinions that are influenced by and pretty much similar to the people in our social circles. So, there's a risk that if I let go of some of my views, I might be excluded from my tribe, and I don't want to take that risk.

**Ms. Suttie:** In your book, you talk about the importance of the "scientific mindset." What do you mean by a scientific mindset and how does it help us in rethinking?  
**Mr. Grant:** I think too many of us spend too much time thinking like preachers, prosecutors, and politicians. [Phillip] Tetlock made a very compelling case that when we're in preacher mode, we're convinced we're right; when we're in prosecutor mode, we're trying to prove someone else wrong; and when we're in politician mode, we're trying to win the approval of our audience. Each of these mental modes can stand in the way of "thinking again," because in preacher and prosecutor mode, I'm right and you're wrong, and I don't need to change my mind. In politician mode, I might tell you what you want to hear, but I'm probably not changing what I really think; I'm posturing as opposed to rethinking.

Thinking like a scientist does not mean you need to own a telescope or a microscope. It just means that you favor humil-

ity over pride and curiosity over conviction. You know what you don't know, and you're eager to discover new things. You don't let your ideas become your identity. You look for reasons why you might be wrong, not just reasons why you must be right. You listen to ideas that make you think hard, not just the ones that make you feel good. And you surround yourself with people who can challenge your process, not just the ones who agree with your conclusion.

**Ms. Suttie:** Why would people ever want to look for reasons to be wrong?

**Mr. Grant:** One of the reasons you want to is because if you don't get good at rethinking, then you end up being wrong more often. I think it's one of the great paradoxes of life: The quicker you are to recognize when you're wrong, the less wrong you become.

There's an experiment where entrepreneurs were being taught to think like scientists that's such a good demonstration of something we can all practice. Italian startup founders went through a three-to-four-month crash course in how to start and run a business. But half of them were randomly assigned to think like scientists, where they're told that your strategy is a theory. You can do customer interviews to develop specific hypotheses, and then when you launch your first product or service, think of that as an experiment and test your hypothesis.

Those entrepreneurs that we taught to think like scientists brought in more than 40 times the revenue of the control group. The reason for that is they were more than twice as likely to pivot when their first product or service launch didn't work instead of getting their egos all wrapped up in proving that they were right. To me, that is some of the strongest evidence that being willing to admit you're wrong can actually accelerate your progress toward being right.

**Ms. Suttie:** But shouldn't we be able to embrace our expertise rather than always giving every idea equal weight?

**Mr. Grant:** I'm not saying that you shouldn't have standards. The whole point of rethinking is to change your mind in the face of better logic or stronger evidence—not to just roll the dice and say, "I'm going to pick a random new opinion today."

There's a great way of capturing what I'm after here, which is something Bob Sutton has written about for years. He defines an attitude of wisdom as acting on the best information you have while doubting what you know. That's what I'm saying here. You need humility.

I think people misunderstand what humility is. When I talk about humility in experts or in leaders, people say, "No, I don't want to have no self-confidence. I don't want to have a low opinion of myself." But, I say, that's not humility. The Latin root of humility translates to "from the earth." It's about being grounded, recognizing that, yes, we have strengths, but we also have weaknesses. You're fallible. Confident humility is being able to say, "I don't know and I might be wrong," or "I haven't figured it out yet," which is essentially believing in yourself but doubting your current knowledge or skills.

**Ms. Suttie:** People often seem to not want to rethink, and they'll use strategies to shut down conversation, like saying, "I'm entitled to my opinion" or "I don't care what you say, I'm not changing my mind."



CHRISTINA MORILLO/PEXELS

If we can welcome being wrong, conversations with people of radically different views become especially rewarding and informative.

“  
**In a changing world, you have to be willing and able to change your mind.**

*Adam Grant, author and organizational psychologist*

How can you encourage somebody to be more open to rethinking if they're unmotivated?

**Mr. Grant:** Your options are not always going to work. But one option is to show your own openness and admit that you might be wrong or your knowledge might be incomplete. The reason people shut down is often because they're afraid of being judged. So, they would rather disengage and avoid that. But if you say, "Hey, you know what? I'm not sure about my opinion here," there's a possibility they'll realize that you're both here to learn from each other.

A second option might be to ask questions that help to consider what would open their mind, which at least encourages them to contemplate situations where they might rethink. If they acknowledged evidence could change their mind, at least it's a step toward progress.

A third possibility is to do something I've been doing since I wrote the book: to acknowledge my own stubbornness at the beginning of these kinds of conversations and admit that I have a bad habit of going into "logic bully mode." I bombard people with facts and data, but that's not who I want to be. I want to come into conversations with people who disagree with me in the hopes that I can learn something from them. I don't want to be a prosecutor.

So, I invite people to catch me doing that and ask them to please let me know. A couple of things happen when I do that. One is sometimes people will call me out and it helps me. Just last week, I was in a debate by email with a colleague and he said, "You're going into lawyer mode again." It was a good prompt for me to think, "Oh oh, I'd better rethink the way that I'm having this fight." The other thing that happens is when I put my cards on the table, often the other person will say, "Oh my gosh, I do that, too. I don't want to be like that either." It sets the terms for the conversation a little bit.

**Ms. Suttie:** At the end of your book, you have 30 practical takeaways for rethinking. Can you mention a few that are particularly important or easier to embrace?

**Mr. Grant:** One of my favorites is being a "super-forecaster," which means, when you form an opinion, you make a list of conditions that would change your mind. That keeps you honest, because once you get attached to an opinion, it's really hard to let go. But if you identify factors that would change your mind up front, you keep yourself flexible.

For encouraging other people to think again, you can avoid argument dilution. Most of us try to convince people with as many reasons as possible, because we think that giving people more reasons makes it easier for them to change their

mind. But we forget that two things happen. (I'm tempted to give you many more, but I'm going to try to avoid diluting my own argument.) The more reasons we give, the more we trigger the other person's awareness that we're trying to persuade them, and they put their guard up. Also, if they're resistant, giving them more reasons allows them to pick the least compelling reason and throw out the whole argument.

The lesson here is, if you have an audience who might be closed to your point of view, sometimes it's more effective to give two reasons instead of five. Lead with your strongest argument.

On the collective side, I love the idea of doing a rethinking checkup. We all go to the doctor for regular checkups, even when nothing is wrong. We should do the same with the important decisions in our lives. I've encouraged my students for years to do annual career checkups where they just ask themselves once or twice a year, "Have I reached a learning plateau? Are the interests and values I had when I came in still important to me now?" We can do the same thing with our relationships or pretty much anything that's important to us.

**Ms. Suttie:** You write that being wrong is tied to a more joyful life. Why is that?

**Mr. Grant:** I had noticed Danny Kahneman [the Nobel prize-winning behavioral economist] just lights up with joy when he finds out that one of his hypotheses is false. So, I asked him, "Why do you look so excited when you find out that you're wrong?" And he corrected me. He made clear to me that no one enjoys being wrong, but that he takes real joy in finding out that he was wrong, because that means now he's less wrong than he was before. All of a sudden, it clicked for me: Being wrong means I've learned something. If I find out that I was right, there's no new knowledge or discovery.

In some ways, the joy of being wrong is the freedom to keep learning. If you can embrace the joy of being wrong, then you get to anchor your identity more in being someone who's eager to discover new things, than someone who already knows everything or is expected to know everything.

**Ms. Suttie:** Do you have any hopes for people engaging in rethinking as a way



FIZKES/SHUTTERSTOCK

If you are trying to convince someone to rethink a position, it is best to limit your arguments to a couple strong points.

“  
**Many of us only focus on the most extreme version of the other side's politics.**

*Adam Grant, author and organizational psychologist*

of bridging our political divide?

**Mr. Grant:** It depends on who's doing the talking. So many of us fall into binary bias, and we only focus on the most extreme version of the other side, which is a caricature, where we say they're either dumb or bad. If you let go of that, there's a whole complex spectrum and many shades of gray between these two political extremes.

Peter Coleman's research shows that, instead of introducing a complex topic like abortion or guns or climate change as representing two sides of the coin, if you can encourage people to think about it through the many lenses of a prism, they become more nuanced and less polarized, and they're more likely to find common ground. Any time you see someone creating an "us versus them" dichotomy, you can ask, "What's the third angle, what's the fourth lens on that?" That gives people the chance to belong to multiple belief systems and to open their minds to multiple ideas, as opposed to sticking to one.

**Ms. Suttie:** What are your hopes for this book?

**Mr. Grant:** I hope that it will encourage more people to be more flexible in their own thinking, to say they care more about learning and improving themselves than about proving themselves. Too many of us get trapped in mental prisons of our own making. But if we could be committed to rethinking, we might have a slightly more open-minded society.

*Jill Suttie, Psy.D., is Greater Good's book review editor and a frequent contributor to the magazine. This article was originally published by the Greater Good online magazine.*

## The Problem With Always Wanting More

**JOSHUA BECKER**

We live in a culture that is never satisfied and always desires more:

More money. More clothing. More toys. More square feet. More followers.

In fact, in many ways, the pursuit of more defines our entire society:

More power. More wealth. More prestige. More reputation. More sex. More. More. More ...

But there is a problem with the lifestyle choice of desiring more. When we constantly desire more, we are never satisfied. Because no matter how much we accumulate or achieve, more always exists.

By definition, it is unquenchable.

No matter how much money is in your bank account ... there can always be more. No matter how big your house ... there can always be more. No matter how many likes on your Instagram post or views on your Tik-Tok video ... there can always be more.

When more is the goal, we never fully arrive. It is insatiable. And that is the problem with always wanting more. Happiness and contentment will always elude us if we are looking for it in the acquisition of more.

I suppose, if it was commonplace to see an end to this pursuit, that would be a different story. If human beings eventually arrived at a level of more, and suddenly became content, we could all strive to reach that magical level.

But that is not the example surrounding us. Quite the opposite in fact. Most everybody who acquires more, only continues to pursue it.

When more is the goal, we never fully arrive. It is insatiable. And that is the problem with always wanting more. Happiness and contentment will always elude us if we are looking for it in the acquisition of more.

We see it in the lives of individuals who amass great fortunes but are not satisfied.

We see it in the world's largest corporations who continue to pursue greater and greater market share and profits.

We see it in those who acquire power and then work relentlessly to keep it and expand upon it.

In the early 1900s, John D. Rockefeller was the richest man in the world. He was once famously asked by a reporter, "How much money is enough money?" Rockefeller replied, "Just a little bit more."

The richest man in the world, not satisfied, still in pursuit of more. More can never satisfy.

Other larger, less anecdotal studies, come to the same conclusion that even the wealthiest among us are never fully satisfied.

Of course, we don't need to look at the lives of others to understand this phenomenon. One look in the mirror reveals the same motivation inside us.

The average American home has tripled in size in the last 50 years and continues to grow larger and larger. The average American woman owns 4 times the amount of clothes as her grandmother, but continues to purchase. The average American home has 300,000 items inside it ... and yet Amazon arrives on our doorstep several times each week.

When more is the goal, we will never find contentment. More is always a moving target. Never fully attainable.

We live life with only two options:

1. We can continue to pursue more. We can believe there is a better life waiting if we were just to acquire more money, more property, more fame.

2. We can reject the false notion that more is needed to discover happiness. And we can find contentment in our circumstances and gratitude for the blessings we already possess.

The choice is yours.

As for me, I'll choose contentment with less.

*Joshua Becker is an author, public speaker, and the founder and editor of Becoming Minimalist where he inspires others to live more by owning less. Visit BecomingMinimalist.com*



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**When we're in politician mode, we're trying to win the approval of our audience.**

*Adam Grant, author and organizational psychologist*

When we rush to judgment on an issue and consider the case settled, we become trapped by our past misunderstandings.

NEW AFRICA/SHUTTERSTOCK







Being physically tough can be helpful, but being mentally tough can transform your life—every single day.

# The Powerful Effects of Mental Toughness

Cultivating mental toughness can help you cope with difficult situations—like a global pandemic

DARA MOJTAAHEDI

With the recent passing of the one-year mark since the COVID-19 pandemic began, the long-term effects have become more apparent. Not only has the virus taken over 2 million lives worldwide, it also has had a profoundly detrimental impact on the mental health of billions of people around the globe.

Research on Chinese citizens at the start of the pandemic found that symptoms of anxiety, depression, and stress were common reactions to the pandemic. These effects were mirrored in other countries and increased over time.

For example, a more recent study in the United States found that one in four adults reported symptoms of anxiety or depression—an increase from one in 10 in 2019. For some, the increased levels of stress and anxiety have also been accompanied by poorer sleep and increased alcohol and substance use—exacerbating mental health problems further.

The rise in mental health problems during the pandemic cannot be attributed to a single factor. Instead, psychologists suggest these negative emotions are due to several different issues. Namely, health worries, fears of dying or a loved one getting ill, isolation, disrupted travel and social plans, along with media-



**A recent study in the United States found that one in four adults reported symptoms of anxiety or depression.**

information overload.

Research found that the psychological impact of the pandemic was greater among certain groups, such as women, students, and people with preexisting health problems. But our new research has also found that for some people, having certain personality traits seems to have offered some level of protection during these difficult times.

Indeed, it seems that having “mental toughness” has helped many people to keep the adverse mental health effects of the pandemic at bay.

### What Is Mental Toughness?

Mental toughness is about more than just having resilience and control in difficult situations. It relates to a psychological frame of mind that endorses confidence and commitment to success. In his book “Developing Mental Toughness,” psychologist Peter Clough describes mental toughness as a combination of the following:

- The amount of control a person believes they have over their life and emotions;
- How much commitment is placed upon achieving goals despite hardship;
- Being able to see potential threats as opportunities for self-development;
- Continuing to strive in changing environments;
- The level of confidence a person has in succeeding, despite setbacks.

Mental toughness levels are influenced by many different factors. While genet-

ics are partly responsible, a person's environment also is relevant. For example, positive experiences while you're young and mental toughness training programs both have been found to make people mentally tougher.

### Holding It Together

Research shows that people who have these traits are less likely to react negatively in stressful situations and display greater coping skills. So our study wanted to build on these findings to discover how mental toughness has potentially helped people during the pandemic.

Overall, we found that reports of depression, anxiety, and stress symptoms were markedly higher than in pre-COVID times. Those who had lost a job or a business during the pandemic reported significantly more symptoms of those afflictions.

Even those facing temporary furlough were more likely to report high levels of distress. That's because the psychological effects of unemployment go far beyond financial instability. A job provides a sense of purpose—and brings a sense of control to people's lives. Taking this away at a time when people are isolated with a limited sense of freedom can further diminish one's well-being.

Yet people who scored higher on our mental toughness questionnaire reported lower levels of depression, anxiety, and stress. This is most likely because these people felt they had a greater sense of control over the situation—and were more capable of staying focused under stress and better equipped to mentally cope. Mentally tough people were also less likely to report depressive symptoms.

### What You Can Do

Research examining the effectiveness of mental toughness training is in its infancy. But research with Australian football players has shown the promising potential for using such training in boosting mental toughness.

For anyone wanting to improve their mental toughness, a good place to start is by simply identifying and affirming yourself with the associated skills and attitudes. Those include relaxation, positive thinking, goal setting, and self-motivation. This could include daily affirmations, setting specific and achievable goals for a project or something you're working toward, and making sure you take time out of your day for meditation or deep breathing exercises.

*Dara Mojtahedi is a lecturer in psychology at the University of Huddersfield in the UK. This article was first published on The Conversation.*



When we teach children mental toughness, we help them navigate an often difficult world.



Research suggests most people have end-of-life experiences that are vivid, meaningful, and transformative.

# As Death Approaches, Visions of Lost Loved Ones Offer Comfort

One doctor's research reveals the peace the dying gain from dreams and visions of the previously deceased

CARINE MARDOROSSIAN

One of the most devastating elements of the pandemic has been the inability to personally care for loved ones who have fallen ill.

Again and again, grieving relatives have testified to how much more devastating their loved one's death was because they were unable to hold their family member's hand—to provide a familiar and comforting presence in their final days and hours. Some had to say their final good-

byes through smartphone screens held by a medical provider. Others resorted to using walkie-talkies or waving through windows.

How does one come to terms with the overwhelming grief and guilt over the thought of a loved one dying alone?

I don't have an answer to this question. But the work of hospice Dr. Christopher Kerr—with whom I co-authored the book “Death Is But a Dream: Finding Hope and Meaning at Life's End”—might offer some consolation.

### Unexpected Visitors

At the start of his career, Kerr was tasked—

like any and all physicians—with attending to the physical care of his patients. But he soon noticed a phenomenon that seasoned nurses were already accustomed to. As patients approached death, many had dreams and visions of deceased loved ones who came back to comfort them in their final days.

Doctors are typically trained to interpret these occurrences as drug-induced or delusional hallucinations that might warrant more medication or downright sedation.

*Continued on Page 12*

### FOOD AS MEDICINE

# The Fever Effect on Autism Triggers New Views on Treatment

A change that comes over autistic children when they have a fever has profound implications about the disorder—and how to treat it

MICHAEL GREGER

Autism currently affects about one in 68 kids in the United States. There are no drugs to treat the core symptoms, never mind the underlying disorder itself—and the disorder appears to be on the rise. But what can we do about it?

Decades ago, a clue was published. A

study called Fever in Autistics was published in Nature and it offered a ray of hope: “When autistics have a moderate fever, they invariably display dramatically more normal behavioral patterns, including a greater desire or ability to communicate,” wrote researcher Rodney Cotterill in 1985.

*Continued on Page 13*



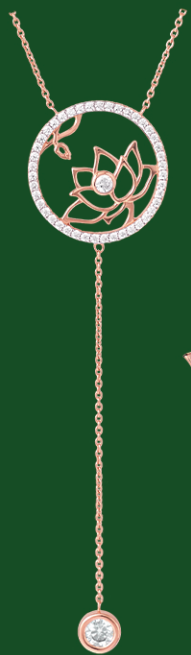
There are very limited treatments for autism, and that may be because we misunderstand the condition.

JEKA/SHUTTERSTOCK

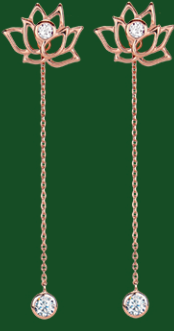


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TRUTH AND TRADITION

# How to Deal With a Year of Burnout From Working at Home

### Tips to resolve the accumulated stresses of working remotely, practicing social distancing

**NILUFAR AHMED**

Over the past year, our lives have seen extensive changes that have led to many of us feeling a sense of exhaustion and burnout.

The luckier among us have been able to remove ourselves from harm's way and work from home during the pandemic. But even the fortunate ones are left to spend our days looking at a screen, with a great deal of our communication taking place via video calls. This has led to what has been termed "Zoom fatigue," where our brains are exhausted from overstimulation.

Aside from the eye strain of looking at a screen all day (if we are not looking at a computer, we're often looking at our TV or our phone), our sense of space is disrupted by video meetings. Suddenly, everyone is much closer than they would be in a pre-pandemic meeting.

In the 1960s, anthropologist Edward Hall described how our relationships operate within socially accepted distances. Close family and intimate relationships occur within a proximity of less than two feet; for close friends,

this distance extends to about four feet.

The pandemic is sending our brain conflicting messages. With video calls, faces are within two feet of us, and this tells our brain that these are close or intimate friends, when instead they are colleagues or strangers. Similarly, social distancing rules have forced our loved ones out into a much more distant field that is usually reserved for people we may meet or know socially, but not very well—acquaintances rather than friends.

**Multitasking is mentally draining. We are much more efficient when we work on one task at a time.**

While our rational brain understands social distancing, the physical inability to touch and hold our close friends and

family can confuse us into thinking the distance is somehow a rejection. The cognitive effort of managing these conflicting messages is tiring.

Video calls also force us to look at ourselves more than we are used to doing, and this can feel uncomfortable and make us worry excessively about how others perceive us.

But turning the video off while on a call can increase burnout in other ways—people may use the opportunity to check emails or catch up on other work while listening in. This multitasking is mentally draining.

We are much more efficient when we work on one task at a time. Our brains respond to the end of one activity and the onset of a new activity from pre-learned cues. Often these cues involve physical movement.

These have largely disappeared—the daily commute is the most obvious absence for those working from home, but walking to and from meetings also allows the brain and body time to prepare for the next task. Outside of work, doing the school run, going to the gym, and regular appointments all add structure and separation of space to our lives.

The blurring of home and work is not only due to bringing our work into our homes, but also the longer hours people report working. Being unable or unmotivated to take part in our usual activities means the weeks and weekends have begun to morph into unbounded time, and the shorter days of winter lessened the distinction between day and night.

**How to Get Through**

So how can we address this feeling of burnout and exhaustion?

Build time into your working day for casual chat that is not work-related. Daily conversations range from small talk about the weather, to more substantive conversation about our lives.

Make time for these conversations, maybe arrange an online lunch. The different use of the technology will help to break the monotony and association of screens with burnout.



PAULAPHOTO/SHUTTERSTOCK

Try recreating some of the benefits of the office. For example, you could enjoy some casual chitchat over a video lunch.

to fear from COVID-19. Yet the YouGov poll also shows they are the most afraid.

This is odd. As influencers noted on Twitter, the level of comfort people feel in returning to normal life is inversely correlated to their level of actual risk.

This invites an important question: Why are young people more afraid? One obvious answer is young adults might simply be unaware their risk of serious illness is low.

**There is a disconnect between perception and reality when it comes to COVID-19.**

As I recently noted, Americans in general are wildly misinformed about the risk of hospitalization from COVID-19, with roughly a third of Americans believing the chances of being hospitalized with the virus are 50 percent. In actuality, it's closer to 1 percent.

The reasons for this aren't hard to find. Studies have shown that U.S. media essentially created a climate of fear by publishing a flood of negative news in 2020. Indeed, an Ivy League-led study concluded that 91 percent of U.S. articles in major media were negative in tone, nearly double when compared to non-U.S. media. The negative news, the researchers noted, continued even when the pandemic was ebbing and when positive medical breakthroughs were being achieved.

"Stories of increasing COVID-19 cases outnumber stories of decreasing cases by a factor of 5.5 even during periods when new cases are declining," researchers noted.

Media may only be one part of the equation, however. Digital technol-



Additionally, sharing the space with colleagues you are friendlier with in real life and who fall into our personal space allowance, makes the online encounter less stressful.

The charity Fight for Sight suggests a 20-20-20 rule, where for every 20 minutes looking at a screen, you look away at a distance of 20 meters (about 65 feet) for 20 seconds to limit eye strain. Where possible, during video meetings keep the camera off or switch to phone calls, and consider whether meetings need to be a full hour.

Before and after a meeting, get up from your desk, move around a bit to mimic the walking to and from meetings, and try to build one no-meeting day into your working week.

Having distinct spaces helps our brains to psychologically switch off from work. If the dining table is used as a desk in the day, move work items out of sight at the end of the day. This could be just a box by the side of the table to place work items in, and that you open every

morning to mark the start of work.

To limit multitasking and increase focus, close down additional tabs and browsers, turn your phone to silent, and check and respond to emails at set times.

Sticking to a routine of starting and stopping work at the same time every day by adding a fake commute—where you get ready and leave the house before circling back and starting work—can help create a mental division of space.

As we enter into spring with already noticeable longer, brighter days, it's the perfect moment to increase the time we spend outdoors, and to get exercise, which is a natural mood elevator.

Being outdoors helps us to feel more connected with others, even with maintaining social distance we can exchange pleasantries, or even just smiles, which can increase well-being.

*Nilufar Ahmed is a lecturer in social sciences at the University of Bristol in the UK. This article was originally published on The Conversation.*

WAVEBREAKMEDIA/SHUTTERSTOCK



Americans, in particular, face a barrage of fearful news that focuses on risks and tragedies to the exclusion of other uplifting events.

a disconnect between perception and reality when it comes to COVID-19. Unfortunately, this disconnect has real-world consequences.

"Those who overestimate risks to young people or hold an exaggerated sense of risk upon infection are more likely to favor closing schools, restaurants, and other businesses," the authors of a recent Franklin Templeton/Gallup study concluded.

This is important because these restrictions are quite serious. Closing parts of the economy is no small matter. These actions are associated with numerous unintended consequences—job losses, mental health deterioration, increased global poverty, surging loneliness, health procedures deferred, and more. Meanwhile, the documented benefits of these restrictions remain elusive.

In 2020, we witnessed unprecedented infringements on fundamental civil liberties. And it all stemmed from fear. Worse, despite the presence of

numerous successful vaccines and crashing case numbers, the alarm bells keep sounding.

CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky is warning of "impending doom," while others warn we must begin planning for a "permanent pandemic." The New York Times is using Florida, which lifted all pandemic restrictions last summer, as a cautionary tale by using rather tortured analysis.

Considering all this, it's no surprise that many young people are terrified of the virus. But we'd do well to remember that fear is the pathway to subservience.

"If you want to control someone, all you have to do is to make them feel afraid," the author Paulo Coelho wrote in "The Devil and Miss Prym."

It's time to stop being afraid. And the first step comes through understanding.

*Jonathan Miltimore is the managing editor of FEE.org, which originally published this article.*



# As Death Approaches, Visions of Lost Loved Ones Offer Comfort

One doctor's research reveals the peace the dying gain from dreams and visions of the previously deceased



Over the course of 10 years, Dr. Kerr and his research team recorded the end-of-life experiences of 1,400 patients and families.

Amid COVID-19, the dying may only see loved ones through a tiny screen.

*(Continued from Page 9)*

But after seeing the peace and comfort these end-of-life experiences seemed to bring his patients, Kerr decided to pause and listen. One day, in 2005, a dying patient named Mary had one such vision: She began moving her arms as if rocking a baby, cooing at her child who had died in infancy decades prior.

To Kerr, this didn't seem like cognitive decline. What if, he wondered, patients' own perceptions at life's end mattered to their well-being in ways that shouldn't concern just nurses, chaplains, and social workers?

What would medical care look like if all physicians stopped and listened, too?

### The Project Begins

At the sight of dying patients reaching and calling out to their loved ones—many of whom they hadn't seen, touched, or heard for decades—he began collecting and recording testimonies given directly by those who were dying. Over the course of 10 years, he and his research team recorded the end-of-life experiences of 1,400 patients and families.

What he discovered astounded him. More than 80 percent of his patients—no matter what walk of life, background, or age group they came from—had end-of-life experiences that seemed to entail more than just strange dreams. These

were vivid, meaningful, and transformative. And they always increased in frequency near death.

They included visions of long-lost mothers, fathers, and relatives, as well as dead pets come back to comfort their former owners. They were about relationships resurrected, love revived, and forgiveness achieved. They often brought reassurance, support, peace, and acceptance.

### Becoming a Dream Weaver

I first heard of Kerr's research in a barn.

I was busy mucking my horse's stall. The stables were on Kerr's property, so we often discussed his work on the dreams and visions of his dying patients. He told me about his TEDx Talk on the topic, as well as the book project he was working on.

I couldn't help but be moved by the work of this doctor and scientist. When he disclosed that he wasn't getting far with the writing, I offered to help. He hesitated at first. I was an English professor who was an expert in taking apart the stories others wrote, not in writing them myself. His agent was concerned that I wouldn't be able to write in ways that were accessible to the public—something academics aren't exactly known for. I persisted, and the rest is history.

It was this collaboration that turned me into a writer.

I was tasked with instilling more humanity into the remarkable medical intervention this scientific research represented, to put a human face on the statistical data that had already been published in medical journals.

The moving stories of Kerr's encounters with his patients and their families confirmed how, in the words of the French Renaissance writer Michel de Montaigne, "he who should teach men to die would at the same time teach them to live."

One such story of visions of comfort is that of Robert, who was losing Barbara, his wife of 60 years. He was assailed by conflicting feelings of guilt, despair, and faith. One day, he inexplicably saw her reaching for the baby son they had lost decades ago, in a brief span of lucid dreaming. Robert was struck by his wife's calm demeanor and blissful smile. It was a moment of pure wholeness, one that transformed their experience of the dying process. Barbara was living her passing as a time of love regained, and seeing her comforted brought Robert

some peace in the midst of his irredeemable loss.

For the elderly couples Kerr cared for, being separated by death after decades of togetherness was simply unfathomable. The story of Joan and her recurring dreams and visions provide an example. These experiences helped mend the deep wound left by her husband's passing months earlier. She would call out to him at night and point to his presence during the day, including in moments of full and articulate lucidity. For her daughter Lisa, these occurrences grounded her in the knowledge that her parents' bond was unbreakable. Her mother's pre-death dreams and visions assisted Lisa in her own journey toward acceptance—a key element of processing loss.

When children are dying, it's often their beloved, deceased pets that make appearances. Thirteen-year-old Jessica, dying of a malignant form of bone-based cancer, started having visions of her former dog, Shadow. His presence reassured her. "I will be fine," she told Kerr on one of his last visits.

For Jessica's mom, Kristen, these visions—and Jessica's resulting tranquility—helped initiate the process she had been resisting: that of letting go.

### Isolated But Not Alone

The health care system is difficult to change. Nevertheless, Kerr still hopes to help patients and their loved ones reclaim the dying process from a clinical approach to one that is appreciated as a rich and unique human experience.

Pre-death dreams and visions help fill the void that may otherwise be created by the doubt and fear that death evokes. They help the dying reunite with those they have loved and lost, those who secured them, affirmed them, and brought them peace. These dreams and visions heal old wounds, restore dignity, and reclaim love. Knowing about this paradoxical reality helps the bereaved cope with grief as well.

As hospitals and nursing homes continue to remain closed to visitors because of the coronavirus pandemic, it may help to know that the dying rarely speak of being alone. They speak of being loved and put back together.

There is no substitute for being able to hold our loved ones in their last moments, but there may be solace in knowing that they were being held.

Carine Mardorossian is a professor of English at the University at Buffalo. This article was first published on *The Conversation*.

### BECOMING MINIMALIST

# How Minimalism Saved Me From Scarcity

'From the outside, it would seem that I was a minimalist, when the truth was that I was one step away from being a miser'

### KARA STEVENS

I was raised by a strong, no-nonsense woman who immigrated from Antigua to make a way for her two children in the busy yet lonely streets of New York City.

My mom never expected to be a single mother in a strange land, but that was her lot when my dad up and left us, making her the chief caregiver and breadwinner in one fell swoop.

It made her depressed, though she never admitted it. It also made her fearful and distrusting of the world, especially a world where an abundance of anything flowed, notably, love or money.

As her only daughter and youngest child, she taught me that life wasn't about taking chances, pressing your luck, or living by faith. None of that foolishness.

If you couldn't make it or hold it, or if it wasn't guaranteed, then you weren't to waste your time with dreams or the pursuit of joy or happiness. There was no room for error. Life was about the ability to endure (not overcome). There was no space for second chances.

This scarcity worldview made me a compulsive overachiever (I currently hold three degrees from some of the most prestigious universities in this country). And just like my mom, I soon became unwilling to open myself to opportunities that required too much of an investment of the heart or wallet.

To ensure that I could control my surroundings, I saved all of the money that I could when I started work-

ing. And if I couldn't find more to save, I would find another job just so I could hold on to more.

My measure of self-worth soon became synonymous with how much sacrifice and deprivation I could endure. It also became aligned with how much money I had in my account and didn't touch.

To ensure that no one could get close to me (or I to them), I kept things casual and at a distance with friends and potential lovers, though a part of me craved connection and intimacy.

The irony about my decision to embrace minimalism was that I was at the height of living on the margins of my life. I had grown accustomed to an ethos of withholding, denying, and delaying fun, connection, and material from my life for the sake of financial security, which I had objectively obtained years before.

Learning to live without didn't necessarily mean that I knew how to live with less. What I mean by this is that minimalism asks you to be present with the real you. It asks you to curate a life that is marked by meaning and value, which can only come from a deep understanding of your personal desires and honoring them.

From the outside, it would seem that I was a minimalist when the truth was that I was one step away from being a miser.

Minimalism helped me bust my world and life wide open by giving me a front seat to a world of truth, authenticity, and abundance—the exact opposite of the world in which I was born into and inhabited.

When I started to embrace minimalism, I got rid of



Minimalism can mean maximizing the things that matter, like our passions and relationships.

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### FOOD AS MEDICINE

# The Fever Effect on Autism Triggers New Views on Treatment

A change that comes over autistic children when they have a fever has profound implications about the disorder—and how to treat it

*(Continued from Page 9)*

They can become less withdrawn, more alert, more talkative, and more communicative. Ruth Sullivan, one of the early leading researchers, had noticed the same effect.

What makes this idea so groundbreaking—so earth-shattering—is that it challenges the whole presumption that autism is some kind of static, irreversible brain disorder, where the brain is inexorably damaged in some way with no hope of recovery. The fever glimpses suggest it may be more of a dynamic brain disorder, where the normal healthy circuits are in there somewhere but are actively being suppressed, and the fever somehow lifts that suppression and relieves the active disorder process. In this way, it suggests that if we could figure out what's going on, we could theoretically relieve it for not just days, but for forever.

But the discovery did not have the effect one might have expected, though nearly everyone who is knowledgeable about the disorder—parents and professionals alike who deal with autism day-to-day—evidently knows about it.

Part of the problem with researching the phenomena is the risk it poses to children with autism. Inducing fever can be dangerous, which means there are limited opportunities to study it, though other researchers did just that in an earlier era.

In fact, the first (and only) Nobel Prize for Medicine ever given to a psychiatrist for brain ailments went to the "father of fever therapy," Julius Wagner-Jauregg in 1927, for his work treating people with paralytic dementia, a severe neuropsychiatric disorder,

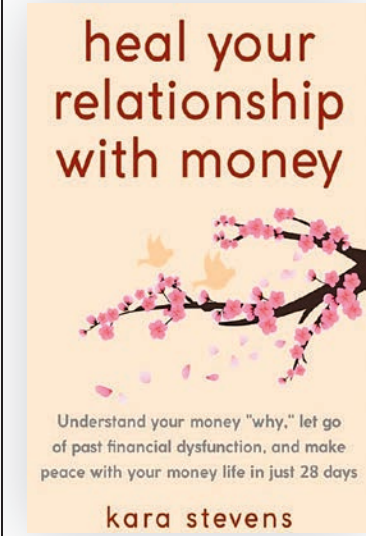
by injecting them with malaria. Some got better—if they didn't die first from the malaria, that is. What is it about fever that can improve brain function? And, can we figure that out without killing people?

A 2007 study published in *Pediatrics* tried to do something along those lines by asking parents to fill out an aberrant behavior checklist during and after an incident of fever.

"The rapid behavioral changes reported during fever" in autism suggest that those neural networks in autism may still be intact, just dysfunctional, "and understanding the reasons for improvement during fever might provide insight" into what's going on, reported the researchers. The "fever effect" in autism had been based on case reports and anecdotes until researchers undertook this formal study of the reported phenomenon, "given the ... potential implications for treatment opportunities."

But how it works remains a mystery and difficult to safely induce. While some of the completely unrelated healing effects of fever have been researched and induced by sitting in a hot tub or sauna, the same isn't true with those related to the brain. That's because the brain has special cooling mechanisms so it stays about the same temperature inside no matter what temperature it is outside, which is a good thing. This is the reason we can bite into a snow cone without literally getting brain freeze. When you get a fever, though, your internal thermostat gets turned up to fight infection, and there is actually an increase in brain tissue temperature.

Your brain has to be careful not to cook itself to death, so it releases heat shock pro-



Kara Stevens believes we all need sound yet relatable financial advice.

items that I had purchased solely because they were on sale or acquired them because they were free and invested in the few things that I really wanted.

I transformed my living (and by extension my emotional) spaces with beauty, expression, and possibility.

**Minimalism introduced me to a level of spirituality that I wasn't expecting. It guided me to a bigger purpose in life; beyond working and hoarding money.**

Minimalism helped me focus on the quality of my relationships and how I wanted to develop deeper, lasting relationships with those that I cared for. It helped me learn to make time to share energy, journeys, stories, and love. I started calling my friends more, opening up about my dreams and challenges, planning get-togethers, and sharing my talents and gifts.

Minimalism introduced me to a level of spirituality that I wasn't expecting. It guided me to a bigger purpose in life; beyond working and hoarding money to building a life that revolved around creating bonds. It led me to a life based on principles and people that improve the world, offer hope, and create positive change.

Minimalism has made life robust, hearty, and satisfying.

It's made life worth living.

Kara Stevens is a speaker, author, and founder of *The Frugal Feminista*, a financial wellness platform committed to helping women heal their relationship with money so they experience endless joy and possibility. You can also find more from her book, *"Heal Your Relationship With Money,"* available on Amazon. This article was originally published on *BecomingMinimalist.com*



For parents of autistic children, the presence of a fever can often offer a rare chance to better connect with their child.

As your brain turns up the heat to give you a fever, these proteins prevent and repair protein damage. At higher temperatures, proteins can start unraveling, which is known as protein denaturing. That's what happens when you cook egg whites—the proteins denature—but that's not what you want happening in your head.

What does this have to do with autism?

One of the causes of autism may be the dysregulation of synaptic function, meaning a dysregulation of the nerve-to-nerve signaling pathways in the brain. This dysregulation may play a key role in the cause of autism spectrum disorders. Well, guess what those heat shock proteins do: They protect and sustain synaptic function. Given that, the next question is whether there is any way to activate the heat shock response without having to get a high fever infection. This prompted an article published in the *Journal of Neuroscience Research* in 2016 that looked at foods that trigger similar biochemical reactions.

Sulforaphane, the active ingredient in

cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, kale, and collard greens, activates the heat shock response. No malaria necessary! So, in theory, according to the review, giving sulforaphane in the form of broccoli or broccoli sprouts to those with autism might reap the same kind of fever-related benefits in function.

That is a fascinating and important line of research and one we will talk about in the next part of this three-part series.

Michael Greger, M.D., FACLM, is a physician, *New York Times* bestselling author, and internationally recognized professional speaker on a number of important public health issues. He has lectured at the Conference on World Affairs, the National Institutes of Health, and the International Bird Flu Summit, testified before Congress, appeared on "The Dr. Oz Show" and "The Colbert Report," and was invited as an expert witness in defense of Oprah Winfrey at the infamous "meat defamation" trial. This article was originally published on *NutritionFacts.org*



One of the grave tragedies of the pandemic response is the distance it has put between people and their dying loved ones.





Research findings suggest the pectin and polyphenols in lemons have qualities that can help with weight loss and appetite control.



FOOD AS MEDICINE

# Lemon Water Can Deliver Real Results

Try this experiment to see what you notice after drinking more lemon

You've probably seen pictures on Pinterest or elsewhere of large pitchers of water with vibrant lemons and the top 10 reasons why you should be drinking it. And maybe you can even remember some of those reasons, despite not actually taking up the habit.

Lemon water can bestow vitality and incredible cleansing effects on the body. If you're just getting started on a path of feeling better through diet, replacing a morning coffee with lemon water is a great first step.

Here is a challenge so you can experience the benefits yourself:

1. Look through the top benefits we've listed below and find the one benefit that will motivate you to start incorporating lemon water into your daily life.
2. Commit to 14 days of lemon water.
3. Write down how you feel on day 1, then on day 14.

Lemons are a citrus fruit in the Rutaceae family (scientifically known as Citrus Limon). While being one of the smallest members of this family, it has some of the most comprehensive health benefits.

For example, lemons are high in vitamin C which is essential for normal growth and development according to the U.S. National Library of Medicine. A single lemon contains around 30 to 40 mg of vitamin C, which is less than an orange's 80 to 90 mg of vitamin C, but still a substantial amount. Vitamin C has been studied extensively and shown to have a myriad of health benefits from protecting against pre-natal problems, cardiovascular disease, eye diseases, skin wrinkles, and immune system deficiencies.

Vitamin C acts as an antioxidant and helps protect cells from damage caused by free radicals.

But beyond vitamin C, lemons have other properties that make them a perfect way to upgrade a glass of water.

## Unique Health Benefits of Lemons

**1. Lemon Water as Detox and Cleanse**  
Cleansing is usually the first benefit that comes to mind when it comes to lemon water. Lemon water provides this detox effect because of citric acid citrate.

Citrate is a naturally occurring chelating agent, which means it bonds with metals. This allows it to help move these toxins out of the body. An animal study published in Environmental Science and Pollution Research International in 2019 found that supplementing with citric acid can protect against heavy metal stress and "has broad application prospects in decreasing oxidative damage caused by heavy metals."

Toxins come into our systems through various sources from the air we breathe to some of the foods we eat. Two of the more well-known studies that shed some light on the use of lemon as a cleanse agent include one published by Dutch researchers in a 2002 edition of The European Journal of Nutrition.

It found lemon peels and the waste stream of the lemon peels left over after extraction

**Drinking lemon water and applying it topically can both help with the skin because of the anti-aging properties of antioxidants in lemons.**



A single lemon contains around 30 to 40 mg of vitamin C.

of the lemon pectin are effective in lowering blood and liver cholesterol levels. Although performed on animal subjects, these results suggest eating lemon peel could help those with fatty liver disease.

The second study was published by Indian researchers in a 2005 edition of BMC Pharmacology. Hesperidin, a citrus bio-flavonoid found in lemons, demonstrated the ability to protect the liver from damage. After administration of CCl4 (a well-known liver toxin), the authors concluded that hesperidin demonstrated a protective effect on the liver.

**2. Improve Digestion with Lemon Water**  
Citrus flavonoids act as a great digestive tonic, according to researchers at the Michael Okpara University, whose 2006 study can be found in the International Journal of Molecular Medicine and Advance Sciences. It has also been shown to calm an upset stomach or mild indigestion. According to a 2014 study published in Volume 24, Issue 3 of the Brazilian Journal of Pharmacognosy(9), this has to do with the way citrus flavonoids in lemon water support the hydrochloric acid in the stomach in breaking down food.

You can make this digestion aid even better by including the zest of the lemon which will improve the good bacteria in your gut.

**3. Weight loss/Appetite Suppressant**  
We're approaching this claim with caution since any new health fad that becomes popular can get turned into a "fat burning miracle."

One of the studies finding lemons supported weight loss, a November 2008 study published in Journal Of Clinical Biochemistry And Nutrition, was not a human trial but did show significantly reduced weight gain when a diet high in fat was being consumed. Most people whether they want to admit it or not fall in the high fat diet category.

Pectin and polyphenols are the main substances found in lemons that have more research available showing weight loss and appetite suppressing qualities.

Pectin gives a feeling of fullness much like other soluble dietary fibers. That may help some people reduce caloric intake the production of inflammation, according to a study published in the journal of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology on May 2011.

The main study was carried out by Drs. Sheau C. Chai, Shirin Hooshmand, Raz L. Saadat, and Bahram Arjmandi, of Florida State University.

**5. Reduced Wrinkles and Improved Skin**  
Drinking lemon water and applying topically can both help with skin because of the anti-aging properties of antioxidants in lemons according to a September 2011 study published in Journal Of The Science Of Food And Agriculture.

The primary cause of skin aging comes from free radicals that cause tissue damage.

Research showed that plant-derived antioxidants were able to reverse the breakdown of collagen fibers in the skin according to a September 2007 study published in

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Collagen gives skin its strength, structure, and plumpness while protecting the skin from absorbing toxins according to an article in News Medical written by Dr. Ananya Mandal, a clinical pharmacology specialist.

If you want to apply lemon juice topically, the simplest way is to dilute it in water and pat on the face with a damp cloth, avoiding the eyes.

Other methods range from creating sugar scrubs to combining with Greek yogurt. In all cases, the antioxidants in the lemon will be the active ingredient.

## Lemon Water Safety Measures

There are a few precautions to keep in mind when it comes to drinking more lemon:

First off you really shouldn't be eating the seeds of the lemon. A few here and there aren't going to be terrible for you, but if you plan to drink lemon water regularly, then make sure you're avoiding the seeds.

They contain small amounts of salicylic acid which is the main ingredient in aspirin. The easiest way I've found to get rid of them is to use a small strainer or a lemon press.

If you're used to sweetening your tea or coffee then your taste buds are going to want a spike of sugar in your lemon water. If you do sweeten your lemon water, use nutritious sweeteners like honey or stevia and avoid refined sugar, corn syrup, and artificial sweeteners.

If you can start to cut more and more sugar out of your diet, you will find your taste buds resetting and your cravings for sugar drop dramatically.

Another common concern is what effects lemon juice has the enamel of your teeth. As long as you're not using it like mouthwash your teeth will be safe. If you're concerned about it, just use a straw.

Drinking lemon water is one of these little things that we can do on a regular basis that can have long-term benefits.

The people who will have the most dramatic effects, in the beginning, will be those who can replace a morning coffee or soda with lemon water.

Give it a minimum of 2 weeks to see what positive benefits you're getting.

Every "body" will respond differently to lemon water, which is why we recommend adding this to your diet without any other major changes to isolate the effects.

This will allow you to better attribute any changes you experience to the lemon water and not some new multivitamin you started taking.

Keep a journal of your mood, energy, and cravings for the 2 weeks to see what positive benefits you experience.

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## MADE TO MOVE

# Too Much Sitting Is Bad for You—but Some Types Are Better Than Others

Our quality of life is affected by how much we sit, and perhaps even more importantly, why we sit

WUYOU SUI & HARRY PRAPAVESSIS

The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced a number of new behaviors into daily routines such as physical distancing, mask-wearing, and hand sanitizing. Meanwhile, many old behaviors—attending events, eating out, and seeing friends—have been put on hold.

However, one old behavior that has persisted, and has arguably been amplified due to COVID-19, is sitting—and it isn't surprising to see why. Whether sitting during transportation, work, screen time, or even meals, everyday environments and activities are tailored nearly exclusively to prolonged sitting. As such, sedentary behaviors, such as sitting, make up the vast majority of our waking day.

Pre-COVID-19 estimates place the average Canadian adult's sedentary behavior at around 9 1/2 hours per day. Pre-COVID estimates in the United States reveal a similar figure, with the average office working sitting as long as 15 hours a day. Current daily sedentary time is likely even higher as a result of stay-at-home orders, limitations on businesses and recreational facilities, and elevated health anxieties.

## Screen time was consistently and negatively associated with subjective well-being.

### Health versus Well-Being

This is a problem, given that chronic excessive levels of sedentary time have been linked to a greater risk of diabetes, heart disease, mortality, and even some cancers. However, for many people, their own judgments and feelings about their quality of life (also known as subjective well-being) may be more important and relevant for informing their health decisions and behaviors than potentially developing chronic diseases.

Subjective well-being encompasses an individual's own evaluation of their quality of life. It includes concepts such as affect (positive and negative feelings) and life satisfaction. Interestingly, these evaluations can conflict with physical health outcomes. For example, a person could have diabetes but still report good subjective well-being, while someone with no physical health conditions may report poor subjective well-being.

This is important, as it means how an individual feels about their own health may not always align with what their body may demonstrate. That's why evaluating subjective well-being is vital for painting a holistic picture of health.

### Different Contexts of Sitting

Relatively little research has examined the relationships between sedentary behavior and subjective well-being. Exploring these relationships is important, as different contexts of sitting—such as socializing versus screen time—may yield different feelings



EUGENIO MARONGIU/SHUTTERSTOCK

or judgments of subjective well-being, unlike relationships between physical health and sedentary behavior, which tend to be more consistent.

As health psychologists focused on physical activity and sedentary behavior, we reviewed the scientific literature describing relationships between measures of sedentary behaviors such as physical inactivity and screen time, and subjective well-being as reflected by affect, life satisfaction, and overall subjective well-being.

Our review highlights three main findings. First, sedentary behavior, physical inactivity, and screen time demonstrated weak but statistically significant correlations with subjective well-being. In other words, those who reported sitting more often and spending longer periods with no physical activity reported lower positive affect, higher negative affect, and lower life satisfaction than those who sat less and moved more.

We also found that this relationship was most apparent in studies that compared people who were very sedentary to those who had more active lifestyles.

### Not All Sitting Is Bad Sitting

Our second main finding relates to the context of sedentary behavior. While many studies examined overall sedentary behavior and physical inactivity, some studies looked at specific contexts or domains of sitting and its relationship with subjective well-being. These studies revealed that different domains of sedentary behavior have unique relationships with subjective well-being.

For example, screen time was consistently and negatively associated with subjective well-being. However, domains such as socializing, playing an instrument, and reading actually demonstrated positive associations with subjective well-being. These results differ from the traditional health-related sedentary behavior research, in which all sedentary behavior is viewed as harmful to health.

Those who reported sitting more often and spending longer periods with no physical activity reported lower positive affect, higher negative affect, and lower life satisfaction than those who sat less and moved more.

Our review suggests that some types of sedentary behavior may be beneficial to the quality of life. Rather, not all sitting is the same in terms of subjective well-being. So when people work toward reducing their sitting time, they should consider not just how much to reduce, but what kind to reduce.

### Less Sitting Is Good for Everyone

Our third main finding concerns overall sitting and self-perceived levels of sedentary behavior. Most studies found a weak statistically significant association between higher overall sedentary time and lower subjective well-being. However, in studies in which participants were asked to compare their sedentary behavior to how much they normally sit, those who perceived themselves as more sedentary than usual reported significantly poorer subjective well-being.

These findings suggest that how much an individual sits overall may not be as important as how much an individual sits compared to their usual level of sitting. This infers that anyone, regardless of how much they normally sit or are physically active, may potentially benefit from sitting less.

COVID-19 continues to influence daily life and routines. Even as businesses and gyms eventually reopen, and we feel more comfortable gathering with others and eventually stop wearing masks, we will almost certainly continue to sit, and sitting will continue to change how we feel. While we may not be able to eliminate all of our sitting, we can all be mindful of both how much we can reduce it and where we can reduce it to be healthier and feel better.

**Domains such as socializing, playing an instrument, and reading actually demonstrated positive associations with subjective well-being.**

*Wuyou Sui is a postdoctoral fellow of behavioral medicine lab, school of exercise science and physical & health education at the University of Victoria in Canada, and Harry Prapavessis is a professor of kinesiology at Western University. This article was first published on The Conversation.*

# What Astronauts Can Tell You About Bone Health

MAT LECOMPTÉ

When astronauts are in space, they are weightless. Gravity disappears, and they float around their spacecraft. It sounds fun, but it isn't great for their bones.

Unloading your bones (taking stress off them) comes with consequences. Their bones become thinner, and their immune system gets weaker.

This can happen to sedentary individuals on earth, too. The more time a person spends sitting, the less stress they are putting on their bones.

When bones are under pressure from walking, standing, jumping, climbing, or weight training, they get stronger. They are forced to adapt to the pressure and respond.

Bone strength naturally decreases with age, and activity typically does, too. Reduced

activity isn't the primary cause of lost bone density in older folks, but it can certainly speed up the process. Low bone density and weak bones can lead to osteoporosis and a greater risk for fractures.

New research published in Nature suggests that regular physical activity can stimulate bone cell regeneration and ultimately lead to thicker and stronger bones.

So, one thing is clear: Putting stress on your bones can help keep them stronger and prevent degeneration. But are there specific exercises you should be doing?

The answer is yes. The exercise needs to be load-bearing. It doesn't mean you need to be lifting heavy weights, but it does mean that exercises such as swimming, aquafit, cycling, or yoga won't be of much benefit. Walking, running, and resistance training are beneficial.



DOTTED YET/SHUTTERSTOCK

Aside from load-bearing exercise, other things you can do to promote bone health include:

- Eating a variety of vegetables
- Consuming protein
- Eating high-calcium foods throughout the day
- Getting adequate vitamin D
- Avoid super low-calorie or restrictive diets

When you take stress off your bones, they get weaker. This can exacerbate age-related bone loss and boost the risk for osteoporosis. Fight back by spending more time up and moving if you can.

*Mat Lecompte is a freelance health and wellness journalist. This article was first published on Bel Marra Health.*



# The 4th Phase of Water

Our cellular health comes in part from the quality of our ‘gel’

BRANDON LAGRECA

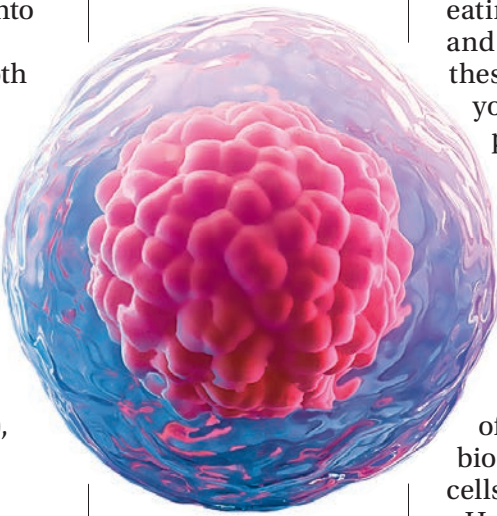
Solid, liquid, and gas—these are the three states of matter presented in the homeschooling science curriculum I was preparing to review with our 7-year-old daughter. The best example to learn these states is water in its different forms: moisture vapor in a cloud, liquid rain, and solid ice. I couldn’t stop there though, not when the intersection of biology and physics tells of a truly amazing fourth state of water that may be the key to life in the animal kingdom.

The fourth state, or phase, of water is gel. With a love of all things cooking and baking, our daughter immediately thought of an example of a gel. Gelatin, a nutrient-dense snack when prepared with pure fruit juice and quality gelatin, is a favorite in our home. The cooking process is amazing to watch. Gelatin is slowly stirred into hot fruit juice until it dissolves. Upon cooling, the proteins in gelatin set and form an organized structure that transforms the liquid into a semisolid. It’s an ideal example of a state of matter that has qualities of both a solid and a liquid.

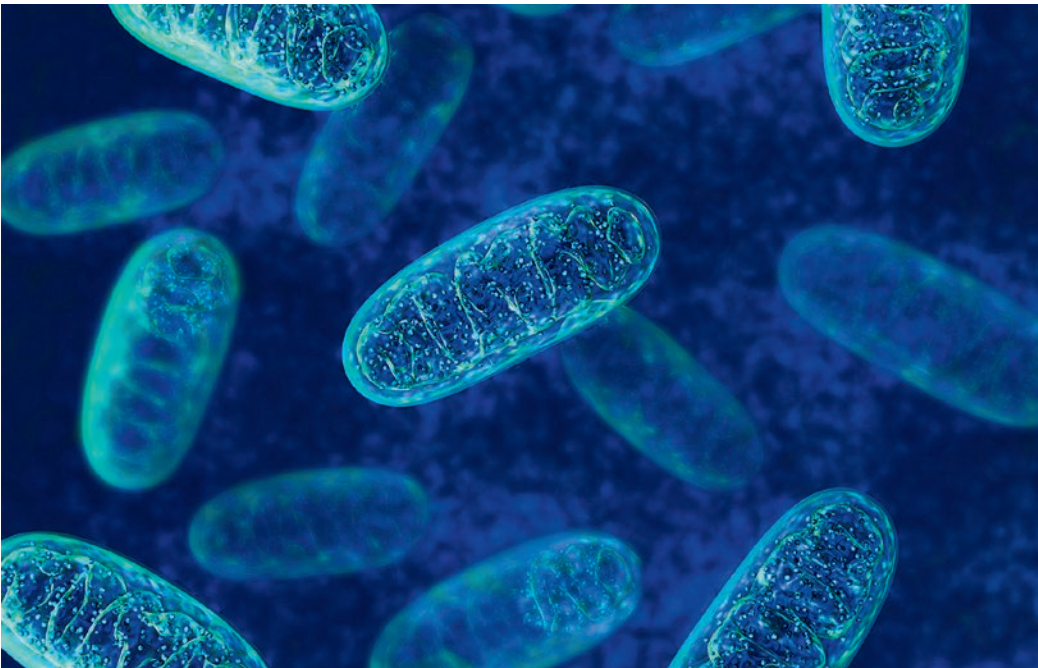
At room temperature, gelatin will remain semisolid. Heating causes the proteins to change shape and the liquid to become liberated. This is analogous to how the liquid water within the human body is structured. All animals are a complex interaction of all states of matter (solid bones, liquid blood, gaseous oxygen, and carbon dioxide), but it’s the gel-like matrix of cellular cytoplasm that allows for optimal efficiency of biochemical work.

Although humans are predominately water, having gel in our cells explains why water doesn’t leak out whenever we have a cut. Trauma leads to bleeding, but tissues don’t deflate like a punctured water balloon. Cell integrity and the ability to import potassium and export sodium are dependent upon having healthy gels.

The gel-like matrix of cellular cytoplasm allows for optimal biochemical efficiency.



The biochemical work of each cell is affected by the fluid-like cytoplasm illustrated here that surrounds the nucleus.



Mitochondria are the tiny power plants within each cell that provide the energy that drives our cellular activity.

The structuring of water in cells is enhanced by getting adequate sunlight, eating a diet with sufficient protein, and staying hydrated. All three of these combine to make the gel within you. Drinking pure water begins the process; consuming gelatin or collagen provides the proteinaceous building blocks; and, as the work of Gerald Pollack elucidates, sunlight is one way to structure water into its fourth phase. The metabolic activity of mitochondria generates adenosine triphosphate (ATP), the power source for most of our cellular activity. ATP is like biochemical sunlight that “cooks” our cells into a gel state.

Unhealthy fourth-phase water may underlie cancer formation and numerous other chronic diseases. Cells become congested as toxins and toxicants burden intracellular integrity. In response, the body turns up the heat to convert the semisolid state of cellular cytoplasm to a slightly more fluid state, allowing impurities to be flushed out of the cells and

carried away by the lymphatic system. That increase of heat may be localized inflammation or systemic fever. It can be externally initiated by the warmth of the sun or the infrared radiation of a sauna. Dehydration, avoiding natural light, and exposure to chemical carcinogens can outpace the body’s ability to depurate.

It’s time to be kind to our gels. Breathe clean outdoor air, bask in sunshine, and eat unprocessed whole foods. Humans are a symbolic fusion of the elements of nature and literally a blend of all states of matter. Ocean waves pulse through our blood vessels, minerals compose our bones, and the sky descends into our being with every breath of life. The purity of the environment is reflected in the integrity of the human body. Inside and out, the health of our matter matters!

*Brandon LaGreca is the founder and director of East Troy Acupuncture, an integrative medical clinic serving south-east Wisconsin, where he specializes in whole-food nutrition, ancestral health, and environmental medicine.*

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**P**uritang plant based Omega-3,6,7,9 is made from purslane and perilla seeds. It contains over **61%** concentration of omega-3 – the highest possible without chemical additives, not possible to derive naturally from fish or other plants, and this combined with omega-6,7,9, accounts for more than **90%** of product content!

Purslane is nature’s gold mine of omega-3, containing the highest level of any green plant, making pure high concentration possible. The purslane and perilla seeds are grown on South Korea’s beautiful Hwangmaesan Mountain, an area where use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides are prohibited.

0% trans fat and 0% hormones, this product is 100% organic and 100% natural. It has no fishy aftertaste or risk of ocean-borne contaminants. It is also non-GMO. Made in Korea.

**Order Online!**

**Puritang Green Vegetable Omega 3, 6, 7, 9** Inspired by Nature. Made from the Heart. [www.Puritang.com](http://www.Puritang.com)