

THE EPOCH TIMES

MIND &

BODY

TATIANA DENNING FOR THE EPOCH TIMES



When Larry Cluff, a busy businessman who would work through vacations, got a brain tumor, life changed—and so did his character. He slowed down, became kinder, and learned to let go.

Lessons From a Brain Tumor

Cancer taught Larry Cluff to slow down, take things lightly, and be kinder to others

TATIANA DENNING

“The real man smiles in trouble, gathers strength from distress, and grows brave by reflection.” —Thomas Paine
Ever since I’ve known him, Larry Cluff has been a go-getter.

In fact, it was his tenacity and determination that made him among the top cross-country runners at Virginia Commonwealth University, where he ran with my roommate, Lacey. It was Lacey who introduced me to Larry.

Larry was also good friends with Mike, the man who would become my husband. Mike and I almost met many times in those years, but seemed to always just miss each other. It wouldn’t be until 10 years later that Mike and I would finally meet, thanks to Larry and Lacey.

After college, Larry built a successful busi-

“**I appreciate small things a lot more now, like good weather, a nice meal, and even Uber.**”

Larry Cluff

ness restoring and converting commercial and residential properties. He had a close group of friends he enjoyed spending time with, and an ambitious goal of someday sailing his boat around the world. Larry finally married and had a family—and life became even busier. He was a living example of the saying “a rolling stone gathers no moss.”

Larry loved his work, and poured himself into it. In fact, I’m not sure he knew how to take a break.

Even when we all vacationed together, he was on his phone managing his business and solving problems—for hours a day, every day. Things that would cause most of us to have heart palpitations, seemed to pass over him like a breeze. Nothing seemed to get in his way or get him down.

And then, just like that, life as he knew it changed.

The Diagnosis

It was the summer of 2016 when Larry first began experiencing symptoms. It started with fatigue and a sudden need to nap every afternoon. Then he began hearing voices. He decided it was time to see his doctor.

At first, his doctor didn’t make much of his symptoms. Larry was an otherwise healthy, active 52-year-old man who was probably just overworking himself.

But when Larry’s symptoms persisted, and then worsened, he was evaluated by a neurologist.

What he learned next came as a shock.

A CT scan revealed a brain tumor. It wasn’t until it was biopsied during surgery that a specific diagnosis was determined.

Although Larry had never heard of it, I knew it well—glioblastoma multiforme (GBM).

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Cleveland Clinic Identifies Melatonin as COVID-19 Treatment

JOSEPH MERCOLA

Melatonin is a hormone synthesized in your pineal gland and many other organs. While it is most well-known as a natural sleep regulator, it also has many other important functions.

Melatonin is a potent antioxidant with the rare ability to enter your mitochondria, where it helps “prevent mitochondrial impairment, energy failure, and apoptosis of mitochondria damaged by oxidation,” notes a 2007 review published in *Frontiers in Bioscience*. It also helps recharge glutathione, and glutathione deficiency has been linked to COVID-19 severity

- Research has also found that melatonin is important in several other ways:
- It plays an important role in cancer prevention
- Is important for brain, cardiovascular, and gastrointestinal health
- Boosts immune function in a variety of ways
- May improve the treatment of certain bacterial diseases, including tuberculosis
- Helps quell inflammation
- May prevent or improve autoimmune diseases, including Type 1 diabetes
- Is an important energy hormone



Melatonin helps keep our mitochondria healthy.

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that can influence your energy level

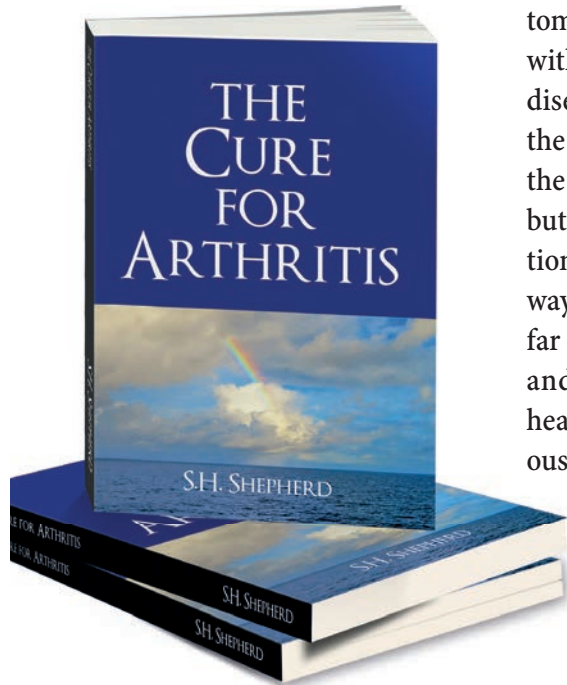
- Helps regulate gene expression via a series of enzymes
- Has anticonvulsant and antiexcitotoxic properties

Melatonin’s Role in COVID-19 Treatment

Melatonin has also been shown to play a role in viral infections and according to a June 2020 research paper in *Life Sciences* journal, it may be an important adjunct to COVID-19 treatment. According to the authors, melatonin curbs several

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The only way to cure arthritis is by attacking its underlying causes



Copyright 2020, 240 pages
Available on Amazon.com

This book enables those who suffer from practically any type of arthritis to do more than rid themselves of its symptoms. It explains how to effectively deal with the underlying causes to prevent the disease from spreading to other parts of the body and reverse the damage done by the disease, information that is needed, but sorely lacking, in this age of information. It equips us to become, in many ways, our own doctors. This reality has far reaching consequences for our health and well-being, providing numerous health benefits, and preventing numerous health disorders.

When the knowledge of how to effectively deal with arthritis is put into practice, practically any health issue that assails us can be effectively dealt with without the doctor's advice.

Analysis of national and world problems must include a spiritual perspective in order to arrive at a balanced understanding of root causes and their respective solutions.

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CHINESE WISDOM FOR SEASONAL LIVING

Feeling Depressed? Avoid Extreme Emotions at This Time of Year

Solar Term: 'Light Snow' (Nov. 22–Dec. 6)

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: 'Light Snow'

2020 Date: Nov. 22–Dec. 6

"Light Snow" (Nov. 22 through Dec. 6) is the second solar term of winter, and it is unlike any other, according to traditional Chinese wisdom. During this time, the yang energy from the sun moves toward the heavens, and the yin energy retreats deep into the earth.

At this time, a unique phenomenon unfolds in nature as yin and yang's extreme separation creates a gap, and energy circulation stops. Symbolically, winter represents death.

As the fine snow starts to fall, winter deepens, like powdered sugar sprinkling onto cookies and cakes. This snow is often wet or mixed with rain. It's light and melts easily. Some may find this type of snow very poetic; a scene that presents an atmosphere of serenity and purity.

In ancient China, during the time of Light Snow, if there was no snow, the farm owners would lay off their permanent staff, or send them away for a long break. This comes from their previous experience.

Because if the weather is still warm around this time, it is expected that next year the insects will be pretty vicious, and the harvest will be average.

Impact on People

Those who already suffer from depression may find it gets worse during this period of time.

Traditional Chinese Medicine believes in moderation, and suggests that we avoid the seven extreme emotions, as they affect one's mood and harm health. These emotions are joy, anger, worry, thinking, grief, fear, and shock.

Dr. Shang Wu, from the Qing Dynasty, recommends we appreciate beautiful flowers if we are stuck in emotions. Music can also help dissolve one's worries. This is indeed very helpful advice.

5 Tips to Live in Harmony With 'Light Snow'

1. Sit on a chair. Lift your feet off the ground and knock your feet together 12 times.
2. Soak your feet in warm water before going to bed.
3. Go to bed early, and get up late to preserve yang energy.
4. Wear a turtleneck or a scarf to protect the neck area.
5. Cover up your waist and lower back

with clothing made with natural fibers, such as cashmere, wool, silk, or a cotton blend.

Seasonal Foods

This is the perfect time to make preserved meat and vegetables.

A traditional recipe is to make a spice rub from ground peppercorns, anise, fennel, clove, cinnamon, and sea salt. Cover the meat with the spices and store it inside a clay pot for 15 days in the fridge to avoid bacteria growth. Next, hang the preserved meat in a cold and airy area for 3 to 7 days. Finally, use peanut shells or cypress branches to smoke the meat until it is nicely dry and well preserved.

Warm milk tea is excellent to repel the winter chill. Enjoy it with nuts or a ginger biscuit. Warm fruit wines are also great. It is wonderful if you add in goji berries or preserved fruits before heating. Just a little bit is enough, and be careful not to drink too much. Some may find it pleasant to add cinnamon bark powder and honey to sweeten the heart.

Bean soups, such as kidney beans, red beans, white beans, soybeans, or peanuts with ginger root, are delicious and help one to feel joyful during cold days.

In nature, at this time of year, energy circulation stops. Symbolically, winter represents death.

Slow cookers or clay pots are the best tools for slow winter cooking. Ginger is also excellent. The warming powers of ginger and cinnamon are especially helpful to push excess humidity out from inside our bodies. Those who don't enjoy ginger can use coconut milk and cinnamon instead.

Helpful foods for this time include banana, carrot, citrus, pumpkin, shiitake mushrooms, truffles, black beans, cashew nuts, black sesame seeds, tomatoes, celery, and walnuts.

Seasonal Essential Oils

Adding seasonal oils to bathwater, warm foot baths, or in oil burners, can help to create balance during this season. Essential oils of bergamot, orange, mandarin, lemon, ginger, cinnamon, rose, lemon balm, verbena, and galanga are all good.

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. Visit Ausganica.com.au



Get outside and get the sunshine that is available.



Traditional holiday spices offer more than warm flavors.

FOOD AS MEDICINE

Spicing for Health During the Holidays

Holiday spices offer nutrients with therapeutic effects—and delicious fat-free flavors

NANCY BERKOFF

The holidays, especially this year, are a time to treat ourselves, our family, and our friends. Traditional holiday flavors, such as peppermint, cinnamon, nutmeg, cardamom, ginger, and cloves can add flavor and flare to holiday treats without adding extra fat, salt, or sugar. Holiday aromas can be incorporated into our environment, adding a calming and happy element.

Cinnamon

Cinnamon was highly regarded in ancient Egypt as a flavoring, a cure for disease, and as an ingredient in perfumes. In medieval times, cinnamon was used to treat coughs, sore throats, arthritis, and to help preserve food. Cinnamon contains a very small amount of fiber, which helps to provide a feeling of fullness, or satiety. This means we can savor and appreciate smaller servings of foods and beverages flavored with cinnamon. Consider a sprinkle of cinnamon in your hot cocoa, coffee, tea, or hot milk.

Cinnamon is harvested from the bark of several different types of trees, including evergreens and laurels. Cinnamon is available whole or in powder form for use in food, or as an essential oil for household use.

There are two main types of cinnamon: Ceylon cinnamon and cassia cinnamon. When shopping for cinnamon, if you have an option, select Ceylon, rather than cassia cinnamon.

Ceylon is scientifically known as Cinnamomum verum, or "true cinnamon." Ceylon cinnamon has a sweeter, more delicate flavor than cassia.

Traditional holiday flavors, such as peppermint, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, and cloves can add flavor and flare to holiday treats without adding extra fat.

Some studies have suggested that the compounds in cinnamon have antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antidiabetic, and antimicrobial properties.

In 2011, researchers concluded that diets rich in "antioxidant spices," including cin-

namon, may help reduce the body's negative response to eating high-fat foods.

This could be helpful during the holidays. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, a teaspoon of ground cinnamon contains about 6 calories and a very small amount of calcium, iron, potassium, vitamin A, several antioxidants and trace amounts of some B vitamins and vitamin K.

Cinnamon adds flavor to foods and beverages without adding fat or sodium. You may find that you add less sugar to foods when cinnamon is used. Consider adding a very small amount of cinnamon to your morning hot or cold cereal, to cooking grains, to hot beverages, or to sauces. To create a holiday atmosphere, boil several cinnamon sticks with some orange slices in a small amount of water. The aroma will create a soothing, mellow holiday atmosphere.

Ginger

Ginger is a versatile flavoring. It can add familiar warmth or pungency to sweet and savory foods. Ginger is known for its ability to provide a sense of calm. To prevent holiday stress, sit back and sip a cup of hot ginger tea or a warm glass of milk flavored with ginger.

Ginger is a flowering plant that was first identified in Southeast Asia. It belongs to the Zingiberaceae family, and is closely related to turmeric, cardamom, and galangal. The underground portion of the stem is the part used as a seasoning.

Ginger has a long history in traditional and alternative medicine. It's been used to aid digestion, reduce nausea, and help alleviate cold and flu symptoms. A 2019 literature review of functional foods concluded that ginger had a very positive effect on obesity and weight loss.

Ginger is available for use in food as fresh, dried, powdered, or oil versions. Use pickled ginger to add excitement, without additional calories, fat, or sodium, to holiday meals. Add a small amount of powdered ginger to hot beverages, hot cereal, mashed sweet potatoes, and fruit salads. Complete a meal with a pinch of candied ginger. Candied ginger is extremely flavorful; a small amount provides almost instant satiety. Use a small amount of ginger oil combined with distilled water in a sprayer to freshen a room.

Nutmeg

Warm, sweet, and aromatic, nutmeg is the quintessential holiday spice. Nutmeg adds a traditional note to holiday eggnog, pumpkin pie, and savory sauces. This exotic spice is known for its calming effect for the mind and body.

Nutmeg was originally identified in east-

ern Indonesia, harvested from the Myristica fragrans tree. The nutmeg seed has a lacy, red veil that is processed into mace, a spice with a milder, gentler aroma and golden color.

The remaining dried seed is ground into nutmeg. If you would like really fresh nutmeg, with a side benefit of an aromatic room, purchase whole nutmeg and microplane as needed.

For centuries, nutmeg was considered very, very valuable. Great Britain brokered the deal for New York City from the Dutch in exchange for a nutmeg-producing Indonesian island.

Germany's FDA has approved clove for use as a topical antiseptic and anesthetic.

Nutmeg is at home in both sweet and savory dishes, in soups and stews and cakes and cookies. Sprinkle nutmeg in rice pudding or custards, over ice cream or pies, in potato dishes and creamy sauces and soups. If you would like to create an instant holiday environment, microplane nutmeg into an attractive saucer and sprinkle with a very small amount of warm water. The aromatic essential oils found in nutmeg will stay activated for hours.

In the Middle Ages, nutmeg was considered so potent it was thought to ward off the plague. Over the years, antibacterial, digestion-boosting, and nervous system-calming properties have been attributed to nutmeg.

Nutmeg has compounds that have antibacterial action against a broad range of disease-causing bacteria. This has been demonstrated by the use of nutmeg as a food preservative. In the course of normal metabolism, our cells produce free radicals, which can cause cell damage. Nutmeg has several active compounds that mop up these free radicals, meaning they act as antioxidants to relieve cellular stress.

Cloves

Cloves are sourced from an evergreen tree that grows in Asia and South America. Cloves provide fragrance to foods and to the home. Cloves are rich in antioxidants, fiber, and omega-3 fatty acids. Cloves con-

tain natural eugenol oil, which can act as a natural anesthetic.

It's important to use cloves sparingly, as they can overpower a dish, and can leave your mouth numb. Add a very small amount of cloves to cooking grains, such as barley or quinoa, to hot cereals, to hot beverages and to creamy soups or sauces. Cloves create so much flavor, you may be able to

reduce the amount of fat or sugar used in some dishes. To create a holiday fragrance, simmer a handful of cloves with some cinnamon sticks on the stove, or bake cloves and cinnamon on a baking sheet, in a 200 degree F oven, with the door slightly ajar.

According to nutrition data, one teaspoon of ground cloves contains 30 percent of the RDI of the mineral manganese, 4 percent of the RDI of vitamin K, 3 percent of the RDI of vitamin C, and trace amounts of calcium, magnesium, and vitamin E and fiber.

In Germany, Commission E, a government agency equivalent to the U.S. FDA, has approved clove for use as a topical antiseptic and anesthetic. Clove oil is known as a remedy for toothache and dental pain. In a 2006 study researchers found that clove-based gel was comparable to benzocaine (a local anesthetic) in its ability to ease pain resulting from injections in the mouth.

Peppermint

Peppermint is a cross between two types of mints: water mint and spearmint. Thousands of years ago, the ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans used peppermint as medicine. Peppermint was traditionally used as a treatment for digestive problems, nausea, cold, and cramps. Before there was Vicks, peppermint was used as a chest rub to ease coughs.

Edible peppermint is available as fresh or dried leaves and peppermint syrup or extract. Fresh or dried peppermint leaves can be stirred into hot tea, coffee, hot cocoa, or warm milk for a refreshing holiday break. Add shredded fresh peppermint to green or fruit salads and to poultry and seafood dishes. Peppermint can create flavoring which allows you to use less sugar or salt. For a lower calorie treat, melt a tablespoon of dark chocolate chips in the microwave, sprinkle with shredded, fresh peppermint leaves, and enjoy! Peppermint for household use is available as an essential oil. Create a holiday room freshening spray by combining a few drops of peppermint oil with distilled water.

The aromas of holiday spices help create lasting memories of the season. Even better, creative flavoring can help to reduce the amount of fat, salt, or sugar you need to keep holiday dishes delicious. Experiment with a variety of healthy flavorings to enliven your meals and your home during this holiday season!

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Lessons From a Brain Tumor

Cancer taught Larry Cluff to slow down, take things lightly, and be kinder to others

Continued from Page 1

Coming with an average life expectancy of 12 to 15 months, if you had to have a brain tumor, glioblastoma was the one you did not want to have.

To add to Larry's challenge, while doctors were removing the mass, two vessels were cut, resulting in a stroke, and paralysis of his left side. Unfortunately, this was also his dominant side. After a month in the hospital, and a lot of therapy, he was able to walk out of the hospital. And while he'd made improvements, he had new limits to contend with.

I asked Larry what his initial thoughts were when he was diagnosed with cancer.

He said, "I thought, OK, I have to stay positive. I decided I wasn't going to let my family see me weak. I was going to be positive the whole time. It was a quick decision, really."

With a diagnosis of brain cancer and new physical challenges, Larry did what befitted his character—he resolved to beat the odds.



TATIANA DENNING FOR THE EPOCH TIMES



The stairway to the loft area in a historic house Larry rebuilt.

Slowing Down

Despite therapy, the stroke left Larry unable to write with or use his left hand well, and walking in a straight line and balancing were a challenge. His short-term memory was impacted, and he sometimes had trouble finding words. The calculations he'd once done so easily for work were now impossible.

For someone who was used to being in charge and going all the time, it was a big change. He wanted to keep his same pace, but his body and mind wouldn't cooperate.

After surgery, Larry started chemotherapy and radiation. When this failed and the tumor quickly regrew, requiring another surgery, he became determined to find a treatment that would work. After discussions with family, and advice from experts, he decided on an experimental therapy at VCU's Massey Cancer Center, which he's continued to this day.

Even so, Larry had to learn to slow down. "I used to have a list of goals, and objectives for how to meet those goals, with a game plan, and a back-up game plan. You focus on those and you just keep rolling. But now, I have to chill a lot more."

Larry had to give control of his business over to others. He had to learn how to be more patient, mostly with himself, and

“**I decided I wasn't going to let my family see me weak. I was going to be positive the whole time. It was a quick decision, really.**

Larry Cluff

how to rely on others for help.

Of course, Larry's version of slowing down wasn't what the average person's might be. Though he couldn't run his business, he and a crew continued rebuilding a historic home at his river house, and then rebuilt a second one.

While his diagnosis may have slowed him down, it didn't stop him. He said: "I remember laying there on the ground, trying to hold a nail so I could hammer it in. And I couldn't do it. So I figured out a trick. I took a bobby pin and put the nail in it, and held that. Once you got your first good hit, you were good to go."

Remembering What Really Matters
Perhaps the answer to what really matters lies in our first thoughts when facing a crisis. For Larry, his thoughts were of his family.

He thought of his daughter Lily—of how he wanted to be around for her 16th birthday, for her wedding day, to be there as she grew older. He thought of his wife, Kathy, his dad, Larry Sr., and his beloved dogs. Since his diagnosis, Larry's learned to appreciate his family more, and also the everyday things he used to take for granted. "I appreciate small things a lot more now, like good weather, a nice meal, and even Uber." He appreciates waking up to another day.

Larry has also realized the importance of his faith, and says it's deepened since his diagnosis. Church is a regular part of that, but he said with a laugh: "This weekend, I

decided I was going to go fishing instead of going to church. But God taught me a lesson because I didn't catch any fish."

For Larry, his faith brings him a sense of peace. "I put all my faith in God. He's going to do whatever he's going to do about it [the cancer]. So it's a little less for me to worry about, because it's in his hands."

He also prays every night. "I start with thanks for all the good things that happened that day, and that's usually a pretty good list. Then I ask God to help me with the things I need help with the next day. And I always include some prayers in there for other people, too."

In matters of life and death, we're forced to re-examine what really matters. And what we typically find is that the things we had believed so important, or so difficult, are no longer so.

It's not the new car or job promotion that matters, but family, friends, being good and kind, and making the most of each day, that truly matter.

We're given a chance to remember why we're really here.

Tempered by Difficulty

Life's challenges can certainly change us. Whether those changes are good or bad is ultimately up to us.

"Before my cancer diagnosis, I was more competent, more confident, maybe even overly so, and I had an excellent memory. But I was sometimes impatient and short-



Larry with Jake and Jacks.

“**I think being an athlete and my six years in the military helped shape who I am. It taught me to stay positive and never give up.**

Larry Cluff

tempered when my workers made mistakes, and I wasn't very good at relaxing."

Since his cancer diagnosis, Larry jokingly said, "Anyone could take advantage of me now, and I wouldn't care." Things roll off his back more easily, and he flows with what life brings. "I think things always work out better when you can do that."

Of course, that flow requires giving up control. "I let Kathy handle things, which keeps things simpler. Of course, that means she's the one that has to hold everything together, and I know it's a strain on her."

Because of his limitations, Larry no longer drives. He's had to close his business, and limit his beloved boating trips to times when someone can go with him. The result has been fewer social interactions, financial changes, and decreased independence.

Even so, Larry hasn't let it make him angry or bitter. "I have more empathy for people now, especially for people at the cancer center. I'm lucky enough to have had a few years. But a lot of them don't get that."

I think there are some changes he's not even aware of. For example, my husband noticed: "When a telemarketer called the old Larry, he'd get annoyed or hang up. But now he's really nice when they call. He listens to what they have to say, politely says he's not interested, thanks them, and tells them good luck." My husband chuckles at the change in him.

Looking Ahead

Larry's journey hasn't been easy. He's had to give up a lot and find a new normal. He's had to be courageous in the face of his own mortality.

But he said: "I don't really have fear. I don't want to die, but I'm not afraid of it. The theory I've come up with in my head is that it's harder to live than it is to die. Dying is easy. So I'm not in a bad situation, and I know my family will be taken care of."

Larry believes a positive outlook has helped. "I think being an athlete and my six years in the military helped shape who I am. It taught me to stay positive and never give up." He's also learned to be positive from his dad, who's been a big influence in his life.

Strength has also come from a local cancer support group, and a new-found meditation practice. One of the most effective meditation techniques he's learned is to "visualize taking all of your problems and putting them on a boat. And then you just watch them float away. If you want, you can always bring the boat back to deal with one of the problems. But otherwise, you mentally just push them all out there, and let them go."

While Larry has admittedly had some down times, he hasn't let them stop him. He's made the decision to push through, no matter how tough things get. When he encounters an obstacle, he said, "I just keep going at it until I get it figured out."

Humor has helped, and so have his hobbies. He's recently started an art class, and

enjoys training his dogs and working on his boats—even though he sometimes has to get help now. He says the limited use of his left hand is probably his biggest frustration. And yet, he said, "I just try to smile, be nice to other people, and encourage them whenever I can."

Larry has always had a kind and generous heart. In fact, he says one of the things he misses most is being able to help his friends more. Perhaps it's his concern for others that's helped carry him through.

Looking back, Larry has been a great friend to so many. Indeed, I'd venture to say there's a predestined connection at work, intertwining all our lives.

Sometimes it takes hearing other people's hardships to put our own into perspective. May Larry inspire each of us to persevere in the face of hardship, stay positive, be kind and grateful, think of others first, and hold onto faith and hope, no matter what life may bring.

Like Holocaust survivor Viktor Frankl in "Man's Search for Meaning," while we may find ourselves powerless to change our circumstances, how we react to our circumstances is always within our control.

Tatiana Denning, D.O., is a family medicine physician who focuses on wellness and prevention. She believes in empowering her patients with the knowledge and skills necessary to maintain and improve their own health.

MINDSET MATTERS

What We Really Lose in the Fight to Be Right

How to stop being right and start being more open and aware

NANCY COLIER

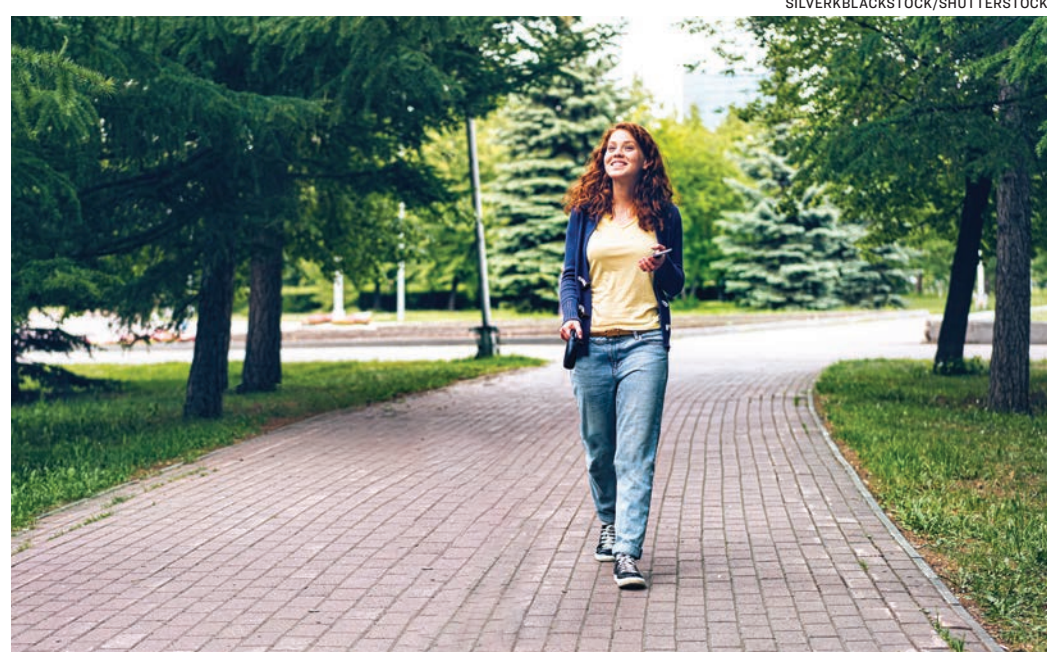
The other day, as I was walking through the park, I decided to practice mindfulness, to deliberately pay attention to my thoughts and see what they were telling me in that moment.

What I discovered was that my mind was generating a whole campaign that explained why my husband was wrong in a recent argument, and of course, why I was right. My thoughts were very clear and concise, quite convincing in their case for my rightness and my version of the truth.

Have you ever noticed that when you're in a conflict with someone, you spend a lot of time defending your side of the story in your mind, making your case for why you're right? We go over and over why the other person is to blame, and what the truth is. We present our case to an imaginary jury, in an imaginary court.

So, what's the point of all that effort? What are we hoping will happen if our imaginary jury deems our version of the truth to be correct? We actually do all of that "proving" to and for ourselves. We use the narration of our rightness, the internal defense of our truth, as a way to

What are we hoping will happen if our imaginary jury deems our version of the truth to be correct? We actually do all of that 'proving' to and for ourselves.



SILVERBLACKSTOCK/SHUTTERSTOCK

Giving up the fight lets us look up and see the world around us.

stay away from what we actually feel.

As I walked through the park that day, I looked beyond the thoughts and past my case for the truth, to see what they were distracting me from feeling. I looked to see what I was avoiding—what was underneath the anxious fervor to prove my case of what really happened. I was then in touch with my profound powerlessness, anger, and hurt. When I stopped constructing an explanation of guilt and innocence, I uncovered my true feelings.

Our thoughts, particularly our thoughts about why we're right, cause us not to feel our true feelings.

But when we stop engaging in our self-defense, something interesting and wonderful happens: We can enter the present moment. When I stopped paying rapt attention to my inner narrative, I was again suddenly noticing the wind, the trees, the dogs, and the sky. I was back in the park; I was back in my life.

When I came home that night, having chosen not to spend the day strengthen-

ing my mind's case for my rightness and my husband's wrongness, I could then meet my husband in that new moment. I could hit the reset button. Because I had chosen not to cling to an old story, something new and unexpected happened: I could feel differently, and he could feel differently—we could be different. Without a prewritten truth, life could change and evolve.

I recommend trying this approach for a day: Refrain from feeding your mind's case for your rightness and others' wrongness; turn away from the thoughts that try to defend your version of the truth. As you do, notice if something in you or your identity itself feels threatened when you drop your case.

Then, instead of diving into your mind's defensive narrative, use your awareness to inquire into your experience—how you really feel and how you're coping with those feelings. Simultaneously, see if, without your narrative, the situation and people in it have more space to shift and evolve. And observe if you are also, in the moment, more present, more open, and more aware. Most importantly, when you stop telling yourself what's true, notice if a new truth can actually emerge.

Nancy Colier is a psychotherapist, interfaith minister, author, public speaker, workshop leader, and author of several books on mindfulness and personal growth. Colier is available for individual psychotherapy, mindfulness training, spiritual counseling, public speaking, and workshops, and also works with clients via Skype around the world. For more information, visit NancyColier.com



We often keep arguing our case in our own minds for why we were right and they were wrong.

NEW AFRICA/SHUTTERSTOCK

WISE HABITS

Let Each Task Fill Up Your World

LEO BABAUTA

Every now and then, I have to remind myself to do one thing at a time.

The tendency to try to do a whole bunch of things seems to be a natural result of my wanting to get everything done as soon as I can. Many browser tabs open, switching between one thing and the next, endlessly, endlessly.

No wonder I can never focus. Then I remember to do one thing at a time, and it's like coming home.

I close all my browser tabs (bookmarking them first, so I can come back to them). I close my email and chat apps. I close everything.

Then I pick one thing, and I just do that. Just read one article, with my full attention.

Open a full-screen writing app, and just write (as I'm doing now).

Just listen to something, with nothing else open. Just watch one video.

Just respond to one message, as if it's the only conversation in the universe that matters.

Just wash one dish. Just eat one bite. Just brush my teeth, or wash my hands, or walk without stimulation. Just exercise.

One thing at a time.

Each one fills up my entire world, as if nothing else exists.

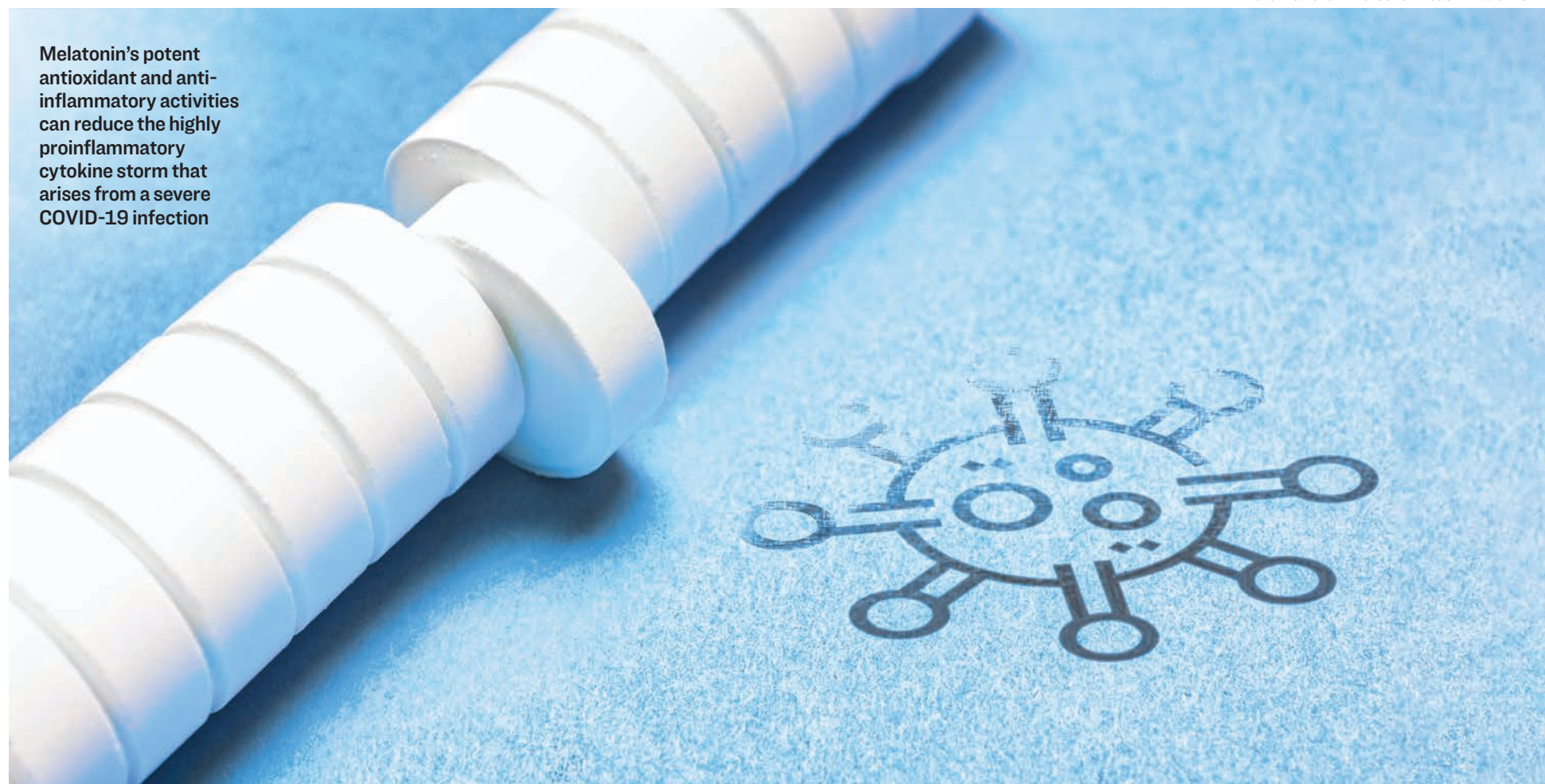


PROSTOCK-STUDIO/SHUTTERSTOCK

Focusing on one thing at a time will help you appreciate the moment right in front of you.

Each thing becomes everything. It becomes practice in mindfulness. In being fully there. In letting go. In being fully appreciative of what's right in front of me. Falling in love with that thing, this gift I've been given.

Leo Babauta is the author of six books, the writer of Zen Habits, a blog with over 2 million subscribers, and the creator of several online programs to help you master your habits. Visit ZenHabits.net



Melatonin's potent antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activities can reduce the highly proinflammatory cytokine storm that arises from a severe COVID-19 infection

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Cleveland Clinic Identifies Melatonin as COVID-19 Treatment

Continued from Page 1

pathological features of COVID-19, including:

- Excessive oxidative stress and inflammation
- Exaggerated immune response resulting in a cytokine storm
- Acute lung injury
- Acute respiratory distress syndrome

They point out that melatonin is also “effective in critical care patients by reducing vessel permeability, anxiety, sedation use, and improving sleeping quality, which might also be beneficial for better clinical outcomes.”

“The scientific review paper, “Melatonin Potentials Against Viral Infections Including COVID-19: Current Evidence and New Findings,” published October 2020 in *Virus Research* journal, also summarizes the many potential mechanisms by which melatonin can protect against and reduce the severity of viral infections.

The authors reviewed research that looked at melatonin's beneficial effects against a variety of viruses, including respiratory syncytial virus, Venezuelan equine encephalitis virus, viral hepatitis, viral myocarditis, Ebola, West Nile virus, and dengue virus. Based on these collective findings, they believe melatonin may offer similar protection against SARS-CoV-2.

Melatonin Reduces Risk of Positive COVID-19 Test

Data from Cleveland Clinic also supports the use of melatonin. Here, the researchers analyzed patient data from the Cleveland Clinic's COVID-19 registry using an artificial intelligence platform designed to identify drugs that may be repurposed.

By identifying clinical manifestations and pathologies shared by COVID-19 and 64 other diseases, they were able to conclude that certain proteins associated with chronic diseases are highly connected with SARS-CoV-2 proteins. Put another way, a number of proteins appear to play a key role in the pathologies seen both in COVID-19 and other chronic diseases.

For example, a peer-reviewed research paper published in *PLOS Biology* noted:

“Analyses of single-cell RNA sequencing data show that co-expression of ACE2 and TMPRSS2 is elevated in absorptive enterocytes from the inflamed ileal tissues of Crohn disease patients compared to uninflamed

All of the patients given melatonin improved within four to five days and all survived. On average, those given melatonin were discharged from the hospital after 7.3 days, compared to 13 days for those who did not get melatonin.

Students at The University of St. Andrews participate in the testing of an antigen test facility before its opening in St. Andrews, Scotland, on Nov. 27, 2020.

tissues, revealing shared pathobiology between COVID-19 and inflammatory bowel disease.”

“Integrative analyses of metabolomics and transcriptomics (bulk and single-cell) data from asthma patients indicate that COVID-19 shares an intermediate inflammatory molecular profile with asthma (including IRAK3 and ADRB2).”

Confounding variables adjusted for in the calculations included age, sex, race, smoking history, and several known comorbidities. The authors point out that while the findings look promising, large observational studies and randomized controlled trials are still needed to validate the clinical benefits of melatonin.

Two key data points missing from the analysis are the dosage used and the length of supplementation. These data were not included in the patient registry, so we don't know how much melatonin is required to lower your risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection to the degree found in this study.

High-Dose Melatonin Successfully Treats COVID-19

It's possible that higher doses than those used for sleep may be needed, at least when treating an active infection. A recent case series²⁶ published in the journal *Melatonin Research* details how high-dose intravenous melatonin can benefit patients with COVID-19 pneumonia.

Here, patients were given 36 mg to 72 mg per day in four divided doses as an adjunct therapy to standard of care. Most supplements contain between 0.5 mg and 5 mg, and when used for sleep, you'd typically start with the lowest dose and work your way up as needed.

All of the patients given melatonin improved within four to five days and all survived. On average, those given melatonin were discharged from the hospital after 7.3 days, compared to 13 days for those who did not get melatonin. This is far better than the expensive treatment Remdesivir, which costs over \$3,000 and doesn't produce anywhere near this improvement.

Other Doctors Are Also Using Melatonin Against COVID-19

Dr. Richard Neel and colleagues at Little Alton and Uvalde Urgent Care clinics in Texas also report using high-dose melatonin in combination with vitamin C and vitamin D, and had as of the last week of July 2020 successfully treated more than 400 patients.

As reviewed in a section below, melatonin enhances vitamin D signaling and the two work synergistically to enhance your mitochondrial function. Melatonin and vitamin C are both also involved with ACE2, the receptor that SARS-CoV-2 uses to gain entry into the cell.

Together, melatonin and vitamin C help reduce SARS-CoV-2 virulence by inhibiting NLRP3 inflammasomes, which in turn inhibits cytokine storms. The Front Line COVID-19 Critical Care Working Group (FLCCC)²⁸ also lists melatonin as an optional addition to their MATH+ protocol for COVID-19.

How Melatonin Combats COVID-19

Research suggests melatonin may have the ability to combat COVID-19 via several different mechanisms. For example, it's been shown to regulate immune responses and

prevent cytokine storms.²⁹ As explained by the authors of one such study published in *Medicine in Drug Discovery* when your immune cells are in a hyper-inflammatory state, their metabolism changes in a way similar to that of cancer cells:

“Similar to cancer cells ... immune cells such as macrophages/monocytes under inflammatory conditions abandon mitochondrial oxidative phosphorylation for ATP production in favor of cytosolic aerobic glycolysis (also known as the Warburg effect) ...”

“The change to aerobic glycolysis allows immune cells to become highly phagocytic, accelerate ATP production, intensify their oxidative burst and to provide the abundant metabolic precursors required for enhanced cellular proliferation and increased synthesis and release of cytokines ...”

“Because of melatonin's potent antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activities, it would normally reduce the highly proinflammatory cytokine storm and neutralize the generated free radicals thereby preserving cellular integrity and preventing lung damage.”

“Cytokine storm is one of the reasons why sepsis (blood poisoning) is so lethal, and studies have confirmed melatonin has a favorable influence on sepsis. (Sepsis is also a feature of severe COVID-19.) As reported in a 2010 study in the *Journal of Critical Care*:

“Melatonin is an effective anti-inflammatory agent ... Its anti-inflammatory action has been attributed to inhibition of nitric oxide synthase with consequent reduction of peroxynitrite formation, to the stimulation of various antioxidant enzymes thus contributing to enhance the antioxidant defense, and to protective effects on mitochondrial function and in preventing apoptosis.”

“In a number of animal models of septic shock, as well as in patients with septic disease, melatonin reportedly exerts beneficial effects to arrest cellular damage and multi-organ failure ...”

“Apart from action on the local sites of inflammation, melatonin also exerts its beneficial actions through a multifactorial pathway including its effects as an immunomodulatory, antioxidant and antiapoptotic agent.”

More recently, a 2019 animal study in the journal *Frontiers in Immunology* discusses how melatonin can protect against polymicrobial sepsis—i.e., sepsis caused by more than one microbial organism—which has a twofold higher lethality than unimicrobial sepsis (sepsis caused by a single microbe). In this case, melatonin appears to offer protection by having an antibacterial effect on white blood cells called neutrophils. A high neutrophil count is an indicator for infection. Melatonin may also combat SARS-CoV-2 infection by:

- Suppressing oxidative stress
- Regulating blood pressure (a risk factor for severe COVID-19)
- Improving metabolic defects associated with diabetes and insulin resistance (risk factors for severe COVID-19) via inhibition of the renin-angiotensin system (RAS)
- Protecting mesenchymal stem cells (MSCs, which have been shown to ameliorate severe SARS-CoV-2 infection) against injuries and improving their biological activities
- Promoting both cell-mediated and humoral immunity
- Promoting synthesis of progenitor cells for macrophages and granulocytes, natural

Data on the dosage used and the length of supplementation were not included in the patient registry, so we don't know how much melatonin is required to lower your risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection to the degree found in this study.

killer (NK) cells and T-helper cells, specifically CD4+ cells

- Inhibiting NLRP3 inflammasomes

General Guidance for Supplementation

As mentioned, it's very difficult to make dosage recommendations based on the limited evidence currently at hand, but since Cleveland Clinic looked at the supplements patients reported using, it seems reasonable to assume they were using it as you typically would. Most melatonin supplements contain between 0.5 mg and 5 mg.

In the case report mentioned earlier, patients were given 36 mg to 72 mg of melatonin intravenously per day, which would likely be excessive for prophylactic use. That said, research³⁷ has found no adverse effects for dosages ranging from 20 mg up to 100 mg.

Whatever dose you take, and I recommend starting low, at 1 mg or less, be sure to take melatonin at night, before bed. Rising melatonin levels is the reason you feel sleepy in the evening, so it's ill-advised to take it in the morning or during the day, when your natural level is (and should be) low. If you happen to wake up in the middle of the night, especially if you're exposed to a light source, you could also take some then, to help you go back to sleep.

Melatonin is also best taken sublingually (under the tongue), either in the form of a spray or sublingual tablet. Sublingually, it can enter your bloodstream directly and doesn't have to go through the digestive tract. As a result, its effect will be felt more rapidly.

Melatonin and Vitamin D Are a Winning Combo

Another supplement of crucial importance in the age of COVID-19 is vitamin D. Interestingly, melatonin enhances vitamin D signaling, and optimizing your vitamin D may be one of the most beneficial steps you can take to lower all of the risks associated with COVID-19, from reducing your risk of testing positive to lowering your risk of severe infection and death.

A deficiency in either vitamin D or melatonin has been associated with the pathogenesis of several chronic diseases, including high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, metabolic syndrome, and diabetes, just to name a few.

These conditions have also emerged as comorbidities that significantly raise your risk of death from COVID-19. Synthesis of both vitamin D and melatonin is also dramatically reduced with advancing age, and old age is a primary risk factor for COVID-19 death. So, while vitamin D3 and melatonin supplementation may be beneficial for most people, it's particularly important for the elderly.

Make More Melatonin and Vitamin D

Keep in mind, however, that it makes little sense to take a supplement unless you're also seeking to optimize your body's natural production of these compounds. In the case of melatonin, this includes making sure you get good sleep on a regular basis.

You also need a good dose of natural sunlight around midday to synchronize your circadian clock so that your body produces melatonin at the appropriate time (i.e., in late evening). As the evening wears on and the sun sets, you'll want to avoid bright and all blue lighting, as blue light inhibits melatonin synthesis. Blue lighting is predominant in LED and fluorescent bulbs that are “cool white.”

Sun exposure, of course, is also the ideal way to optimize your vitamin D. I recommend getting sensible sun exposure on large portions of your body on a regular basis, ideally daily. For further guidance, see “The Risks and Benefits of Sun Exposure” on *Mercola.com*. If for whatever reason you cannot get sufficient amounts of sun exposure, consider taking a vitamin D3 supplement (along with a little extra vitamin K2 to maintain a healthy ratio between these two nutrients).

Dr. Joseph Mercola is the founder of Mercola.com. An osteopathic physician, best-selling author, and recipient of multiple awards in the field of natural health, his primary vision is to change the modern health paradigm by providing people with a valuable resource to help them take control of their health. This article was originally published on Mercola.com, please visit for study links.

Regular Tea Drinking Improves Brain Function

FOKYS FOREST MANUFACTURE/SHUTTERSTOCK

Tea has a potentially protective effect against age-related decline.

A pioneering study led by researchers from the National University of Singapore (NUS) has shown that drinking tea may lead to better interregional brain organization as compared to non-tea drinkers.

In a collaboration with scientists from the universities of Essex and Cambridge in the United Kingdom, researchers used neuroimaging data to reveal the role of tea drinking on brain organization. The results offer the first evidence of positive contribution of tea drinking on brain structure, imbuing a potentially protective effect against age-related decline.

The study's novel approach differed from previous tea studies that relied primarily on neuropsychological measures rather than neuroimaging techniques for investigating interregional connections in the brain. Their findings were published in the scientific journal *Aging* in June 2019.

More Evidence of Tea's Neuroprotective Properties

The research team, led by Feng Lei, an assistant professor from NUS's Department of Psychological Medicine, investigated the functional and structural brain networks in a group of 36 adult participants. Study recruits were healthy, with a mean age of 71 years; the majority were female.

Recruits were grouped into either “tea drinking” or “non-tea drinking” groups, based on their history of tea drinking for around 25 years prior, with criteria set to consumption of 4 to 6 cups per week or more, on average, of green, black or oolong tea.

Researchers sought to understand tea's effects on regional brain connectivity, as well as global or comprehensive effects on the brain. Structural and functional imaging was performed to unveil differences in regional connectivity and brain organization between the tea-drinking and non-tea-drinking groups.

Researchers also explored interregional connectivity within the default mode network (DMN) since previous studies have suggested that it is predominantly involved in cognitive disease and normal brain aging. Finally, researchers included an assessment of hemispheric asymmetry due to prior studies by the group demonstrating leftward asymmetry in structural connectivity to be associated with brain aging.

A Cup of Tea Each Day Keeps Cognitive Decline at Bay

Based on prior research by Feng showing tea's neuroprotective effects for Alzheimer's disease, researchers hypothesized that habitual tea drinking has positive effects on brain organization and structures, reduces leftward asymmetry in structural connectivity and improves the strength of connections in the DMN.

The results of their study validated their hypotheses and added more peer-reviewed, scientific evidence to the literature showing the benefits of plant-based foods. In the comparisons of neuropsychological and cognitive measures, one out of 12 measures, the Block Design test, was significantly different between the tea-drinking and non-tea drinking groups.

No significant differences were found between the tea-drinking group and the non-tea drinking group in either the global or regional functional network measures, however, six regions were significantly different in the structural network, which primarily reside in the frontal cortex.

Hemispheric asymmetries were significantly different between the groups in the structural network, exhibiting greater asymmetry between hemispheres in the non-tea drinking group.

Analysis of strengths of connections within the default mode network revealed consistently increased strength of functional connectivity and the coexistence of increased and decreased strengths for the structural connectivity in the tea-drinking group compared to the non-tea drinking group. Specifically, 11 functional connections exhibited a significant enhancement in strength in the tea drinking group.

Overall, results showed that tea drinking gave rise to more efficient structural organization of the brain and suppression of hemispheric asymmetry in the structural connectivity network. In ad-



Drinking tea can support more efficient structural organization in the brain, researchers find.

dition, functional connectivity strength within the DMN was greater for the tea-drinking group.

“Take the analogy of road traffic as an example—consider brain regions as destinations, while the connections between brain regions are roads. When a road system is better organized, the movement of vehicles and passengers is more efficient and uses less resources. Similarly, when the connections between brain regions are more structured, information processing can be performed more efficiently,” explained Feng.

The research team intends to build on these and prior results by continuing to examine the neuroprotective properties of tea, as well as the bioactive compounds in tea, on cognitive decline.

Food-Based Medicine: All the Benefits, Fewer Side Effects

Whole-plant medicine, such as that you receive when you enjoy a cup of tea, contains synergistic healing capabilities that are difficult to isolate in laboratory conditions. While individual con-

stituents of tea such as catechin, L-theanine, and caffeine have been isolated as active ingredients, Feng's research supports the assertion that whole-leaf tea is better than tea extracts when it comes to brain benefits. So skip the green tea extract pills and enjoy whole leaf, organic tea in its natural form.

Tea has been scientifically validated as a therapeutic substance, with benefits ranging from lowered serum cholesterol to reduced risk of cancer and heart disease, among other substantiated benefits. With regard to brain health, tea has demonstrated exciting antiaging potential, supporting its role as an important component of an overall healthy diet for seniors.

For links to the studies mentioned in this article, please find it at [TheEpochTimes.com/author-GreenMedInfo](https://www.TheEpochTimes.com/author-GreenMedInfo)

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JEFF MITCHELL/GETTY IMAGES





The holidays are not about decorations and food, they are about the people we want to share our lives with. Take the time to clean out old conflicts during upcoming family gatherings.

Use This Holiday Season to Clean Up Messes

There is no better time to tend to our social lives and clean up any tensions or conflicts that linger

JOSHUA BECKER

I have a vivid memory from my teenage years.

One particular winter weekend, my parents left town while my brother, sister, and I (all in our upper teens) stayed home.

Of course, as teenagers tend to do, we weren't particularly prompt in cleaning the house over the weekend. Dishes got left on the counter, wrappers got left in the living room, dirty clothes got left in random places, and the bathroom counters filled with stuff. Messes popped up everywhere.

(It's actually pretty surprising how messy a house can get over the course of four days with just three teenagers ... plus a few friends, I suppose).

"But hey, not to worry," we all thought, "our parents won't get home until late Sunday night. We'll have plenty of time to clean before they arrive."

Of course, if you know where this story is heading, our parents pulled back into the driveway hours before their planned return. I can only assume the moment walking through the front door and seeing our mess everywhere was just as memorable for them as it was for us.

If they found any enjoyment in their weekend away, it vanished within seconds of opening the door. A mess is never enjoyable.

I have since come to view messes differently these days and have learned the importance of cleaning along the way.

It was Gretchen Rubin's one-minute rule that changed my view on cleaning

Make the bold decision to be the first in your family to offer peace and reconciliation.

messes. As she explains it:

"It's very simple: I must do any task that can be finished in one minute. Hang up my coat, read a letter and toss it, fill in a form, answer an email, note down a citation, pick up my phone messages, file a paper, put a dish in the dishwasher, replenish the diaper supply by the changing table, put the magazines away ... and so on."

That habit has changed my life in countless ways. By cleaning messes immediately when they arise, we bring positive effect on our lives.

Conversely, messes that collect and remain over time have a negative impact on our lives:

- They weigh on us mentally because we always know, in the back of our mind, they need to be handled.
- Messes that aren't cleaned become harder to clean over time. I always think of tomato sauce on a plate: easy to clean immediately, hard to clean later.
- Messes that aren't cleaned gather blame. Over time, we even begin to debate who caused the mess in the first place.
- Messes that aren't cleaned collect more mess. Clutter collects on top of clutter and the mess gets bigger and bigger.

It is far better, by every possible measure, to simply clean our messes right away.

This holiday season, clean up any messes that occur in your home. And do so immediately, rather than allowing them to exist and grow.

And maybe, the importance of clean-

ing up messes this holiday season should extend beyond the pile of dishes in your kitchen sink.

Maybe there are greater "messes" that call for your attention and this is the season to finally take a step toward resolving them.

The holiday season is to be a celebration of peace, goodwill, reconciliation, and love. But for many families, thoughts of peace rarely accompany the holiday season. Instead, years of bitterness, resentment, and depression have piled up on top of misconceptions, misunderstandings, and misbehavior.

Messes have emerged and continue to remain.

Family peace was lost years ago—and is yet to be reclaimed.

It seems to me this year, more than any other, we are being reminded of the importance of close relationships. We're being reminded that at the end of the day, what really matters is that your loved ones are safe and you've done your best to live your life to the fullest.

Maybe this holiday season is the holiday season to clean up any remaining messes—within your family or other close relationships that need resolution.

Cleaning Up Relationship Messes

1. Admit that a mess exists Relationships aren't always easy. If there is something between you and a loved one or an old friend, take notice and admit it's time to work toward resolution.

2. Get over trying to assign blame. Messes never get cleaned if we continually blame others for it. The mess may not be your fault, but if everybody keeps waiting for the other person to take the first step, it will never happen.

3. Decide to be the one to take the first step. Determine to be the peacemaker. You may think you have time to do it later, but this year has taught us that isn't always the case.

4. Take one step. Make the bold decision to be the first in your family to offer peace and reconciliation and take one step. Maybe just a simple phone call: "Hey, I'm just calling to wish you happy holidays. I know we've had disagreements in the past, but I just want you to know that I love you very much and I hope we can put them behind us..."

5. Mentally prepare for any response. One small step may be all that is needed to begin bringing closure. Or, it may not. You may not receive the response you desire and may experience rejection again. So be mentally prepared for any response. Either way, you have done the right thing. Accept their response with grace.

6. In all circumstances, seek to leave every relationship better than you found it. One of my first bosses taught me that when I saw him bend down and pick up a dirty paper towel off the bathroom floor. "Joshua, leave every room cleaner than you found it," he said. The principle should also apply to our relationships.

This holiday season, leave every room a little cleaner than you found it.

And leave every person a little better than you found them as well.

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

Breathwork

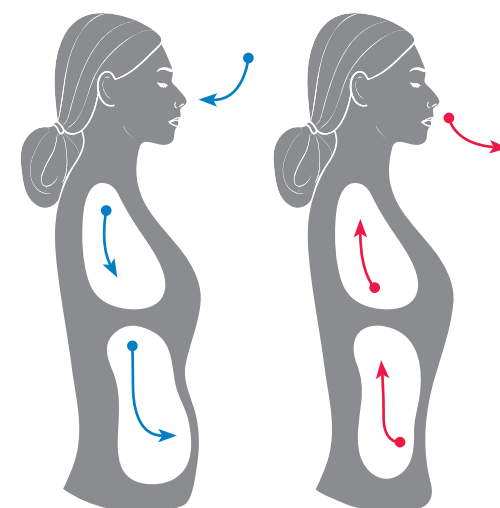
Helps Tame Stress, Benefits Your Mind and Body

Changing how you breathe can have a profound effect on your physiology—and how you feel

Before diving into the different breathing techniques you might try, it's important to recognize that the most basic is to be sure you're always breathing through your nose.



How we breathe is intimately tied to our state of mind, a fact that can help or hinder us.



Diaphragmatic breathing stimulates the vagus nerve and counteracts chronic stress.

JOSEPH MERCOLA

Breathing is universal, habitual, and nearly always automatic. However, you do have choices about the way you breathe—fast or slow, shallow or deep. This can send messages to your body that affect your blood pressure, immune function, mood, and stress level.

For instance, when you get stressed, your breathing pattern and rate change, often resulting in more chest breathing in response to a fight-or-flight situation. This is triggered by the autonomic nervous system. What's interesting about the function of breathing is that it's both a voluntary and involuntary process.

This means that your body breathes automatically, but you also can consciously control your breathing, which is one strategy that has proven effective in reducing physiological stress mark-

ers and increasing feelings of calm.

So, simply by changing the way you breathe, you influence your health. This is a strategy taught most frequently in the practice of yoga. Breathing consciously, maintaining awareness and intent on the function, is called breathwork. Yogis have used this technique for centuries as a tool for healing and to relieve physical, mental and emotional stress.

Common Breathing Habits May Promote Anxiety

If you have ever watched a baby breathe, you may have noticed they are obligate nose breathers, which means they breathe through their noses except when they're crying. You may also have noticed that their belly rises and falls with each breath, and not their chest.

Continued on Page 10

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A LICENSE, NUMBER PENDING, for On Premise Liquor has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 1-3 Little West 12th St., Brooklyn, NY 11214. Kings County, for on premises consumption. Mollusca LLC d/b/a TBD

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A LICENSE, SERIAL # 1332323, for Liquor, Wine & Beer has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Liquor, Wine & Beer at retail under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 218 Ave. A, New York, NY 10008. New York County, for on premises consumption. Pub 213 Corp.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A LICENSE, NUMBER PENDING, for On Premise Liquor has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 2334 Eastchester Rd., Bronx, NY 10469. Bronx County, for on premises consumption. Misto Food Services, LLC d/b/a Misto Bar & Grill

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A LICENSE, SERIAL # 1331323, for On Premise Liquor has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 45-17 28th Ave., Astoria, NY 11103. Queens County, for on premises consumption. Layall Latina Inc

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A LICENSE, NUMBER 1331730, for On Premise Liquor has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 3120 Coney Island Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11225. Kings County, for on premises consumption. Mozart Cafe Inc.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A LICENSE, 2221408 for a "On-Premises liquor license" has been applied for by the undersigned to serve Liquor, Wine and beer at retail in the restaurant under the Alcohol Beverage Control Law at Ichiban of Nyack Inc. DBA: Golden Mushroom, located at 425 RTE 9W, Upper Nyack, NY 10960 for on premises consumption.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A LICENSE, NUMBER PENDING, for On Premise Liquor has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider at retail in a Bar/Tavern under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 233 E. 14th St., New York, NY 10003. New York County, for on premises consumption. CUSMF Powerhouse LLC d/b/a Coyote Ugly Saloon.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A LICENSE, NUMBER PENDING, for On Premise Liquor has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 51 8th Ave., New York, NY 10011. New York

County, for on premises consumption. Sibelles LLC d/b/a TBD

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A LICENSE, NUMBER 1332382, for On Premise Liquor has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 40-04 Restaurant & Bar Corp. d/b/a Spanghills Restaurant.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A LICENSE, SERIAL # 1330930, for On Premise Liquor has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 81-02 Rockaway Blvd., Ozone Park, NY 11416. Queens County, for on premises consumption. Siemira, LLC d/b/a Enzo's Pizza.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A LICENSE, SERIAL # 1330384, for Wine & Beer has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Wine & Beer at retail under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 2054 Dykman St., New York, NY 10040. New York County, for on premises consumption. Pinchos Grill Inc.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A LICENSE, SERIAL # 1330814, for Liquor, Wine & Beer has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Liquor, Wine & Beer at retail under the Alcoholic Beverage

Control Law at 119 MacDougal St., New York, NY 10012. New York County on premises consumption. Fabrizio Prim Cavallacci

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A LICENSE, NUMBER TO BE DETERMINED, for On Premise Liquor has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 1141 Broadway, New York, NY 10018. New York County, for on premises consumption. Apotheks Nomad, LLC.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A LICENSE, NUMBER 1337785, for On Premise Liquor has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 30-02 Steinway St., Astoria, NY 11103. Queens County, for on premises consumption. Pack Five Corp. d/b/a Mini Star Restaurant

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A LICENSE, SERIAL # 1332521, for Liquor, Wine & Beer has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Liquor, Wine & Beer at retail under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 428 3rd Ave., New York, NY 10016. New York County, for on premises consumption. Dozen Bagels Co. Inc

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A LICENSE, NUMBER PENDING, for On Premise Liquor has been applied for by the undersigned to serve Liquor, Wine, Beer &

Cider at retail in a Bottle Club, with 2 additional bars, under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 590 Madison Ave. s/a/k/a 12 E. 57th St., New York, NY 10022. New York County, for on premises consumption. Tourneau LLC.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A LICENSE, NUMBER 1326394, for On Premise Liquor has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 2755 Webster Ave., Bronx, NY 10458. Bronx County, for on premises consumption. JMW Restaurant Bar Lounge LLC d/b/a Hanger Restaurant Bar & Lounge.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A LICENSE, NUMBER 1330747, for On Premise Liquor has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 84-07 Northern Blvd., Jackson Hgts., NY 11372. Queens County, for on premises consumption. Rubriosa 8407 Corp.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A LICENSE, NUMBER 1330828, for On Premise Liquor has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 39-07 104th St., Corona, NY 11368. Queens County, for on premises consumption. Estrella Latina Bar & Grill Corp.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A LICENSE, SERIAL # PENDING, for Wine & Beer, has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Wine & Beer at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 1055-G Liberty Ave., Ozone Park, NY 11417. Queens County, for on premises consumption. New Happy Golden-Hestor Corp. d/b/a Pending

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Breathwork

Helps Tame Stress, Benefits Your Mind and Body

Changing how you breathe can have a profound effect on your physiology—and how you feel

Continued from Page 9

One reason this feels unnatural for adults is the impact body image has on your breathing patterns. Women and men find a flat abdomen attractive and many work hard to attain strong core muscles to achieve it. While a strong core is necessary for good posture and to protect your back, it isn't healthy to hold those strong muscles in while breathing.

This gradually makes chest breathing seem more natural, which creates vertical breathing, so named since as you breathe your chest and shoulders rise. This type of breathing limits the amount of air that gets into the lowest part of the lungs and creates a shallow breathing experience.

Mouth breathing tends to promote hyperventilation, which decreases the amount of oxygen delivered to your tissue and brain.

Breathing Is Connected to Your Nervous System

The link between shallow breathing and your emotions is found in your neurological system. It is critical that your body engages the fight-or-flight response during emergency situations, but chronic activation is unhealthy. For instance, when faced with running away from a bear or an assailant, your breathing quickens and becomes shallower.

The response begins in the amygdala of your brain, an area of the brain that plays a role in how you handle emotions. It sends a signal to the hypothalamus, which communicates through the autonomic nervous system. This controls your heart rate, blood pressure, and breathing.

The autonomic system has two parts: one that raises the alarm (sympathetic nervous system) and one that helps you to calm down (parasympathetic ner-

vous system). The sympathetic system triggers the fight-or-flight response and the parasympathetic system helps apply the brakes to the release of hormones so your body can rest.

These changes happen quickly and without any input from you. However, you have some control over the autonomic nervous system through your breathing. By using controlled breathing, you can calm yourself and create real physiological changes, including:

- Lowering levels of stress hormones
- Balancing carbon dioxide and oxygen blood levels
- Lowering your heart rate and blood pressure
- Increasing feelings of calm
- Improving immune functioning and energy levels

One way to trigger the parasympathetic nervous system is through deep breathing. Anatomically, diaphragmatic breathing can trigger the vagus nerve that plays a major part in the parasympathetic nervous system. This stimulation can help reduce stress, anxiety, and the release of stress hormones.

Diaphragmatic breathing helps correct shallow chest breathing and stimulates the vagus nerve, thereby helping to reduce the effects of chronic stress many experience every day. Americans are no strangers to stress. In April 2019, a headline in The New York Times announced "Americans Are Among the Most Stressed People in the World."

It was an announcement that likely shocked no one, and yet came slightly less than one year before the COVID-19 pandemic raised stress levels even further. The benefits of controlled abdominal breathing include a full exchange of oxygen and lowering or stabilizing blood pressure.

Healthy Breathing Starts With Your Nose

Before diving into the different breathing techniques you might try, it's important to recognize that the most basic is to be sure you're always breathing through your nose. Mouth breathing tends to promote hyperventilation, which decreases the amount of oxygen delivered to your tissue and brain. This can sometimes result in fatigue or

lightheadedness.

It also decreases the ability of your body to filter toxic air pollutants and diminishes the levels of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in your body. This is important since your body needs a balance of oxygen and CO₂ to function optimally. While most of the time, CO₂ is recognized as a waste product, it also has biological roles, one of which is helping your body utilize oxygen.

When your CO₂ levels get too low, it changes your blood pH, which in turn impairs your hemoglobin's ability to release oxygen, called the Bohr effect. Nose breathing is a strategy you should also attempt to use while exercising. Although it's tempting to huff and puff through your mouth, consider reducing your effort until you can breathe through your nose most of the time.

This will only be temporary until your body adjusts to the slight increase in CO₂ levels. To achieve this, you'll have to get used to air hunger, which is an admittedly uncomfortable feeling of mild suffocation. It's important to realize it's normal, safe, and helps your body develop a tolerance for increased CO₂ that ultimately improves your body's ability to use the oxygen being delivered to your cells.

Chronic mouth breathing has been associated with several health problems, such as sleep problems and poor dental health, which I encourage you to try box breathing to resolve.

What's Your CO₂ Tolerance?

There's a simple self-assessment you can do at home to estimate your body's tolerance for CO₂. Dr. Konstantin Pavlovich Buteyko, a Russian physician, discovered that the level of CO₂ in your lungs is related to your ability to hold your breath after exhaling normally. To do this test you can use a stopwatch or simply count the number of seconds to yourself.

- Sit straight without crossing your legs and breathe comfortably and steadily.
- Take a small, silent breath in and out through your nose. After exhaling, pinch your nose to keep air from entering.
- Start your stopwatch and hold your breath until you feel the first definite desire to breathe.
- When you feel the first urge to breathe, resume breathing and note the time. The urge to breathe may come in the form of involuntary movements of your breathing muscles, or your tummy may jerk or your throat may contract.
- Your inhalation should be calm and controlled, through your nose. If you feel like you must take a big breath, then you held your breath too long.

The time you just measured is called the "control pause" or CP, which reflects the tolerance of your body to carbon dioxide. Here are the criteria for evaluating your CP:

- CP 40 to 60 seconds—Indicates a normal, healthy breathing pattern and excellent physical endurance.
- CP 20 to 40 seconds—Indicates mild breathing impairment, moderate tolerance to physical exercise and potential for health problems in the future (most people fall into this category).

To raise your CP, physical exercise is necessary. You might begin by simply walking with one nostril occluded. As your CP increases, consider incorporating more intense exercise to build up an air shortage.

- CP 10 to 20 seconds—Indicates significant breathing impairment and poor tolerance to physical exercise; nasal breath training and lifestyle modifications are recommended. When your CP is less than 20 seconds, don't keep your mouth open during exercise, which is particularly important if you have asthma.
- CP under 10 seconds—Serious breathing impairment, poor exercise tolerance and chronic health problems.

Short CP times correlate with low CO₂ tolerance and chronically depleted CO₂ levels. As a result, the shorter your CP, the more easily you'll get breathless. The good news is that you'll feel better and improve your exercise endurance with each five-second increase in your CP.

Breathing Exercises Are 'Massively Practical'

Belisa Vranich is a psychologist and author of "Breathe," a book about using breathing exercises to affect your health. She spoke with a reporter from The New York Times about controlled



“Breathing is massively practical. It's meditation for people who can't meditate.”

Belisa Vranich, psychologist and author of "Breathe"

breathing, saying, "Breathing is massively practical. It's meditation for people who can't meditate."

Dr. Chris Streeter and colleagues published a small study evaluating the effects of breathing exercises on depression and found improvement in psychological symptoms in participants with major depressive disorder.

The team concluded that the intervention "reduced symptoms of depression and anxiety and increased feelings of positivity." She also spoke to the New York Times reporter. "The findings were exciting. They show that a behavioral intervention can have effects of similar magnitude as an antidepressant."

Below are five different breathing techniques you may consider that use controlled breathing. You'll find several more if you read the article "Top Breathing Techniques for Better Health" on Mercola.com.

Choose a quiet place where you can comfortably and quietly do the exercises once or twice a day. Consider using a journal or diary to record your results, because after a couple weeks and different techniques, it may be difficult to remember which works best for you.

Engage Your Diaphragm

This technique is foundational to all the other breathing exercises, so it's crucial to learn this first since it helps activate your diaphragm and teaches you how to fill your belly with breathing.

Step 1—Begin by relaxing and unbracing your midsection.

Step 2—Take a deep breath in and feel the middle of your body get wider. Let your belly go.

Box Breathing

This is a technique Navy SEALs use to calm their mind under duress. They practice box breathing, so that their use of tactical breathing is effective when it's needed. SEALs use tactical breathing to de-stress in combat situations. There are four steps to practice box breathing and each is done for the same amount of time.

Step 1—Begin by exhaling the air out of your lungs to a slow count of four. Some recommend exhaling through your mouth; others recommend exhaling through your nose.

Step 2—Hold your breath for a slow count of four.

Step 3—Inhale slowly to a slow count of four through your nose, keeping your back straight and breathing through your abdomen so your shoulders don't rise.

Step 4—Hold your breath for a slow count of four and return to Step 1.

Coherent Breathing

The goal in this strategy is to breathe five times every minute. This means you'll inhale for a count of five, pause and then exhale for a count of six. If this is difficult at first, start with inhaling and exhaling to a count of three and work your way up to a count of six. Work your way up to practicing this for about 10 minutes each day.

Rock and Roll

This is a technique you can use while under stress. It has the added benefit of engaging your core muscles. Start by sitting up straight and placing your hand on your stomach. As you breathe in, lean forward and expand your stomach. As you breathe out, curl forward and lean backward at the same time until you've completely emptied your lungs. Repeat this up to 20 times.

Relaxing Breath 4-7-8 Exercise

I first learned this exercise when I attended a presentation by Dr. Andrew Weil at the 2009 Expo West in California. Here's a quick summary of the process.

Step 1—Sitting straight, place the tip of your tongue up against the back of your front teeth. Keep it there through the entire breathing process.

Step 2—Breathe in silently through your nose to the count of four.

Step 3—Hold your breath to the count of seven.

Step 4—Exhale through your mouth to the count of eight, making an audible "whoosh" sound.

Step 5—Repeat the cycle another three times, for a total of four breaths.

Dr. Joseph Mercola is the founder of Mercola.com. An osteopathic physician, best-selling author, and recipient of multiple awards in the field of natural health, his primary vision is to change the modern health paradigm by providing people with a valuable resource to help them take control of their health. This article was originally published on Mercola.com, visit for sources.



One way to trigger the parasympathetic nervous system is through deep breathing.



Foods with high levels of essential vitamins, minerals, and micronutrients provides cells with the building blocks for regeneration and disease prevention and is essential to long-term wellness.

Top 5 Traditional, Fermented Anti-Aging Foods

Foods with microbial action have serious shelf life and healthy flavors

Want a simple way to boost your brainpower, heart health, digestion, disease resistance, and energy level? If that all sounds too good to be true, it's time you got acquainted with the top five traditional, fermented anti-aging foods.

If you are interested in optimizing and maintaining your health and vitality, eating a nutrient-dense diet is a critical piece of the puzzle. Consuming foods with high levels of essential vitamins, minerals, and micronutrients provides cells with the building blocks for regeneration and disease prevention and is essential to long-term wellness.

One of the most potent sources of nutrition, bite-for-bite, are fermented foods. An ancient method of food preservation, fermentation is a natural process in which microbes, such as bacteria or yeast, convert sugars into acids or alcohol under anaerobic conditions. Fermentation produces "good" bacteria called probiotics, which confer a wealth of benefits to intestinal flora when consumed, enhancing the health of your gut microbiome and boosting your immune system.

Is Fermented Food the REAL Fountain of Youth?

With nearly 35 percent of the U.S. population aged 45 and older, medical researchers are on the hunt for a real fountain of youth. Thanks to the enzymatic boost provided by living microbes in fermented foods, the secret to lifelong vitality may lie in adding these nutritional powerhouses to your dinner plate. The scientifically backed health benefits of eating probiotic-rich fermented foods include:

- Improved digestion
- Boosted immunity
- Enhanced weight loss
- Treatment and prevention of gastrointestinal diseases
- Faster healing from colds and flu
- Reduced risk of heart disease
- Improved symptoms of anxiety and depression
- Anti-aging effects

There are many delicious options for adding fermented foods and beverages to your diet. Fermenting foods imbues them with a complex flavor profile and a tart, tanginess that can be enjoyed at breakfast, lunch, and dinner. If you're new to fermented foods, start by adding a couple of teaspoons to your plate as an addition to regular meals.

You can work up to enjoying fermented foods as mainstays of your diet, and even create new recipes for you and your family to enjoy. Your body—and your microbiome—will thank you for it for years to come.

Fermentation is a natural process in which microbes, such as bacteria or yeast, convert sugars into acids or alcohol under anaerobic conditions.



If you purchase yogurt, look for "live and active cultures" on the container or a guaranteed minimum viable bacteria count, and avoid the many heavily sugared brands.

Top 5 Traditional Fermented Foods

1. Yogurt

Yogurt is a popular fermented milk product with a sour taste and creamy texture. Most yogurts contain bacterial cultures, however products can vary in the amount of probiotics they contain, so be conscious when reading labels. If you purchase yogurt, look for "live and active cultures" on the container or a guaranteed minimum viable bacteria count, and avoid the many heavily sugared brands.

Yogurt is also remarkably simple to make at home, requiring only a saucepan or pressure cooker to boil the milk, and starter cultures to begin the fermentation process. Most commercial yogurts contain acidophilus bacterium or bifidobacterium lactis, which you can add using liquid or powdered probiotics or by adding a small amount of an existing batch of yogurt.

If you can't drink milk without digestive upset and think yogurt is off-limits, fermented dairy products may be an exception. Fermentation helps break down lactose, the natural sugar in milk, so even individuals with lactose intolerance may be able to digest yogurt and kefir without difficulty. Kefir is a yogurt-like drink with a thinner consistency and higher protein than yogurt but possessing the same digestive benefits.

The benefits of fermented milk products aren't exclusive to dairy milk. Vegans and dairy-averse individuals can find several varieties of non-dairy yogurt in most health food stores, including soy, almond, and coconut milk yogurts.

2. Fermented Vegetables

Fermenting vegetables is a great way to get the health benefits of probiotics in a way that suits your personal taste. Cultures from around the world have been fermenting native varieties of produce for centuries as a way to preserve food before modern refrigeration. While freshly picked vegetables may only be viable for a matter

of days, fermenting vegetables in brine and storing in air-tight jars can increase shelf-life to several months.

You can find easy inspiration for your fermentation adventures from traditional multicultural recipes like Korean kimchi. A spicy pickled condiment made from cabbage and red chili, kimchi has been associated with anticancer properties. Kimchi is also credited with anti-aging effects due to its ability to decrease free radical production.

Other traditional options for fermenting vegetables include raw sauerkraut and pickled cucumbers, cauliflower, and even leafy greens like mustard and collard. Don't forget to add flavorful spices such as dill and coriander, or for a spicier mix include garlic, ginger, and chilis or hot peppers.



A spicy pickled condiment made from cabbage and red chili, kimchi has been associated with anticancer properties.

3. Kombucha

Kombucha is a tart, fizzy, fermented tea beverage that has become something of a cultural zeitgeist. Popular with health enthusiasts of all ages, you can step up to a kombucha bar in many urban centers and take classes on how to brew your own Instagram-worthy bottles in a multitude of exotic flavors.

Kombucha is brewed using a batch of sweetened tea and a bacteria and yeast pancake called a SCOBY (symbiotic culture of bacteria and yeast). Both green and black tea can be used, however black tea and white sugar are considered the finest mediums for traditional kombucha.

The SCOBY floats in the tea, feeding on the sugary elixir, growing in size and eventually sealing off the liquid at the top like a raft. This keeps potential harmful bacteria at bay and creates the ideal anaerobic conditions for fermentation. A ratio of 50 grams of sucrose per liter of purified water has been used in traditional recipes and is considered the optimal concentration of ethanol and lactic acid.

Leave the brew in a lightly covered jar at room temperature (70 to 80 degrees F) for 1 to 3 weeks; the longer the tea is allowed to ferment, the stronger and tarter it becomes. Once the brew has achieved desired strength, transfer the liquid into individual bottles where it can be flavored with fresh or candied fruits, ginger slices, raisins, vanilla, and the like.

Transfer the now-larger SCOBY (it will add a layer with every batch) to a new container to begin the process again, or store it in a small amount of tea in a sealed jar in the refrigerator to slow the growth process. The bottled tea can be stored at room temperature for 1 to 2 weeks to encourage carbonation, after which time it should be refrigerated.

Experimenting with flavors and potency is part of the fun, and recipes can be modified to suit individual taste preferences. Be sure to use impeccably clean equipment in your process to ensure that no harmful bacteria are introduced.

Besides being delicious, healthful, and fun to make, there are at least 18 healthy reasons to sip kombucha. Kombucha's antioxidant activity has been found to be 100 times higher than vitamin C and 25 times higher than vitamin E. Kombucha's high levels of vitamin C boost immunity, and its antioxidant power protects against cell damage, inflammatory diseases, suppressed immunity, and tumors. Kombucha has also been shown to be effective for prevention against broad-spectrum metabolic and infective disorders.



Kombucha's antioxidant activity has been found to be 100 times higher than vitamin C and 25 times higher than vitamin E.



A 2017 study of obese rats found that a daily dose of ACV attenuated oxidative stress and reduced the risk of heart attack associated with obesity-related cardiovascular disease.

4. Apple Cider Vinegar

Made by fermenting apple juice with yeast, apple cider vinegar, or ACV, is a staple of health food kitchens the world over. Used to make salad dressing, marinades, and baked goods, ACV is also used in many food-based personal care recipes due to its ability to add shine to hair and clarity to your complexion. Good bacteria from the yeast convert alcohol that develops during fermentation into acetic acid, which is responsible for ACV's distinctive sharp, sour smell and taste.

ACV is attributed with anti-diabetic and antioxidant effects that make it a useful ally in the fight against diabetes, a common problem in the developed world. A 2017 study of obese rats found that a daily dose of ACV attenuated oxidative stress and reduced the risk of heart attack associated with obesity-related cardiovascular disease.

Other beneficial metabolic effects attributed to small, daily doses of ACV include balancing cholesterol and offering natural antimicrobial activity, especially useful in our age of growing antibiotic resistance.

Because of its high acidity, consuming too much ACV can be irritating to your teeth, throat, and stomach. As a supplement to daily health maintenance, it's recommended to start with no more than 2 tablespoons of ACV diluted with equal parts water, taken on an empty stomach immediately upon waking as a jump-start to your daily digestive processes.



Frequent, long-term consumption of miso soup has been associated with a reduced risk of breast cancer and reduced risk of heart disease.

5. Miso

A traditional staple of the Japanese diet, miso—fermented soybean paste—is credited with saving the lives of 21 health care workers stationed less than 2 kilometers from ground zero, Nagasaki, Japan, on Aug. 9, 1945.

Dr. Tatsuhiro Akizuki, a physician, credited this miracle to the fact that everyone was consuming daily cups of miso soup garnished with wakame seaweed. A 2003 study from the Research Institute for Radiation Biology and Medicine at Hiroshima University showed that miso does, in fact, have the ability to prevent radiation injury.

Made by combining a mash of soybeans and grains with sea salt and koji (a mold starter), the mixture is fermented for three months to three years, depending on the strength of flavor desired. The resulting enzyme-rich paste contains vitamins, salts, minerals, plant proteins, carbohydrates, fat, and living microorganisms. The potent, salty flavor of miso makes it a great base for soups and sauces and for flavoring meat substitutes like tempeh.

Proof that not everything that's good for you has to be bland, frequent, long-term consumption of miso soup has been associated with a reduced risk of breast cancer and reduced risk of heart disease. Fermented soy products have also demonstrated effectiveness at staving off bone diseases like osteoporosis.

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NUTRITIONFACTS

Açaí Versus Wild Blueberries for Artery Function

Other foods have more potent effects than açai and some of them might surprise you

MICHAEL GREGER

Plant-based diets reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease and some of our other leading causes of death and disability. "Studies have shown that the longest living and least dementia-prone populations subsist on plant-based diets," writes Alexander G. Schauss, senior director of research at AIBMR Life Sciences in "Bioactive Nutraceuticals and Dietary Supplements in Neurological and Brain Disease."

So why focus on açai berries, just one plant, for brain health and performance, as in the cause of Schauss's chapter "The Effect of Açai (Euterpe spp.) Fruit Pulp on Brain Health and Performance," published in the above mentioned book.

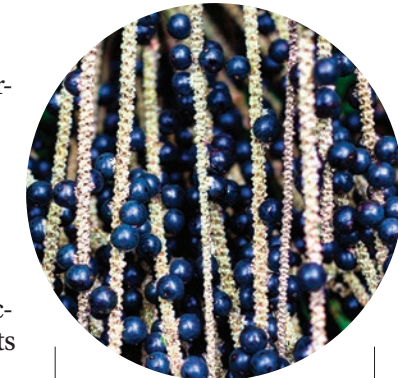
Why aren't we hearing about other foods with this effect?

Foods rich in polyphenols are known to improve brain health, and açai berries contain lots of polyphenols and antioxidants, so perhaps that's why they could be beneficial. If you're only looking at polyphenols, though, there are more than a dozen foods that contain more perserving, such as black elderberry, regular fruits such as plums, flaxseeds, dark chocolate, and even just a cup of coffee.

As I explain in a video on my website titled "The Benefits of Açai vs. Blueberries for Artery Function," in terms of antioxidants, açai berries may have 10 times more antioxidant content than more typical fruits, such as peaches and papayas, and five times more antioxidants than strawberries. But blackberries, for instance, appear to have even more antioxidants than açai berries and are cheaper and more widely available.

Açai berries don't just have potential brain benefits, however. Might they also protect the lungs against harm induced by cigarette smoke? You may remember the study in which the addition of açai berries to cigarettes protected against emphysema—in smoking mice, that is. That's not very helpful. There is a long list of impressive-looking benefits until you dig a little deeper. For example, I was excited to see a "reduction of coronary disease risk due to the vasodilation effect" of açai berries, but then I pulled the study and found they were talking about a vasodilator effect... in the mesenteric vascular bed of rats. There hadn't been any studies on açai berries and artery function in humans until a study published in 2016.

Researchers gave overweight men either a smoothie containing about two-thirds of a cup of frozen açai pulp and half a banana or an artificially colored placebo smoothie containing the banana but no açai. As you can see in my video, within two hours of consumption of their smoothie, the açai group had a significant improvement in artery function that lasted for at least six hours, a 1 or 2 point bump that is clinically significant. In fact, those walking around with just one point higher tend to go on to suffer 13 percent fewer cardiovascular events like fatal heart attacks.



Foods rich in polyphenols are known to improve brain health, and açai berries contain lots of polyphenols and antioxidants.



Blackberries, appear to have even more antioxidants than açai berries and are cheaper and more widely available.



Within two hours of consumption of their smoothie, the açai group had a significant improvement in artery function that lasted for at least six hours, a 1 or 2 point bump that is clinically significant.

You can get the same effect from wild blueberries, though: about a 1 1/2 point bump in artery function two hours after blueberry consumption. This effect peaks then plateaus at about 1 1/2 cups of blueberries, with 2 1/2 cups and 3 1/2 showing no further benefits.

What about cooked blueberries? If you baked the blueberries into a bun, like a blueberry muffin, you get the same dramatic improvement in artery function.

Cocoa can do it, too. After having one tablespoon of cocoa, you gain about one point, and two tablespoons gives you a whopping four points or so, which is double what you get with açai berries.

One and a quarter cups' worth of multicolored grapes also give a nice boost in artery function, but enough to counter an "acute endothelial insult," a sudden attack on the vulnerable inner layer of our arteries? Researchers gave participants a McDonald's sausage egg breakfast sandwich and two hash browns. They weren't messing around. As you can in my video, without the grapes, artery function was cut nearly in half within an hour, and the arteries stayed stiffened and crippled three hours later. But when they ate that McMuffin with all those grapes, the harmful effect was blunted.

Eat a meal with hamburger meat, and artery function drops. But if you eat that same meal with some spices, including a teaspoon and a half of turmeric, artery function actually improves.

What about orange juice? Four cups a day of commercial orange juice from concentrate for four weeks showed no change in artery function. What about freshly squeezed orange juice? Still nothing. That's one of the reasons berries, not citrus, are the healthiest fruits.

For a beverage that can improve your artery function, try green tea. Two cups of green tea gives you that same effect we saw with cocoa, gaining nearly four points within just 30 minutes. That same crazy effect is also seen with black tea, with twice as powerful an effect as the açai berries.

So, why all the focus on just that one plant? Why açai berries? Well, sometimes it is because the author of a given study or article owns a patent on an açai-based dietary supplement (as in Schauss's case). Or sometimes a particularly food, fruit, or remedy just captures your interest.

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

Protecting Your Heart from the Elements

Winter poses additional risks for heart problems so take steps to stay safe and warm

DEVON ANDRE

The winter can be hard on your heart. Cold temperatures literally make things harder for your heart.

If you have heart disease, winter can pile on risk like a fresh snowfall. Some experts suggest that winter creates "the perfect storm" for heart problems.

Simply put, cold weather puts more stress on your body. It's harder to walk around on snow- and slush-filled streets, and the extra effort may tax you more than you'd realize.

The increased heart rate of carrying yourself from place to place, combined with the natural effect of cold temperature on your circulatory system, can boost the risk of a heart attack.

Cold temperatures can decrease the supply of oxygen-rich blood to the heart even though you need more of it as you're working harder. Blood vessels constrict, and the heart needs to rev up



Cold temperatures can decrease the supply of oxygen-rich blood to the heart even though you need more of it as you're working harder.

to meet the body's demand.

People with heart disease will often feel chest pain or discomfort (angina pectoris) in cold temperatures, and it can be alarming. When this happens, it's best to take a break from whatever you're doing and sit down. Especially if you're performing strenuous activity such as shoveling, which also poses a seasonal risk for cardiovascular events.

To give yourself the best chance of getting through a cold winter without a cardiovascular event, there are a few things you can do.

The first is to take your time with the

added physical demands. Sit down for a break when shoveling or take your pace down a notch while walking.

Avoid alcohol immediately before or after outdoor activity. If you warm up with a stout or hot toddy, make sure about 30 minutes has passed following the labor.

Be aware of hypothermia. Even if you're feeling quite warm, don't remove your jacket when outdoors. In fact, put your hat, scarf, and gloves on before going outside. Hypothermia can sneak up on you, so be sure to dress warmly.

Wearing removable layers is the best way to maintain a comfortable temperature and reduce the risk of hypothermia. Wear warm, breathable layers that can easily be reapplied when the cold sets in.

Being aware of the season's effect on your body can help you stay safe this season. And with all the threats working against you, every bit helps.

Devon Andre holds a bachelor's degree in forensic science from the University of Windsor in Canada and a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Pittsburgh. Andre is a journalist for BelMarraHealth, which first published this article.

Working with others toward shared growth creates an environment that can help you succeed.



WISE HABITS

Lessons Learned From Fearless Mastery

LEO BABAUTA

In the past six months, my team and I have been working to support a group of fearless leaders in our Fearless Mastery mastermind program.

And they've been breathtaking. They've created personal transformations and huge accomplishments with what they're doing in their respective missions in the world. It has been awe-inspiring to behold.

I asked them to share their biggest lesson from working together, as we open enrollment for the second round of the course, and here's what they shared:

Joy can be found in the midst of fear:

"I discovered fear was preventing me from finding joy in my life right now. I was afraid to enjoy today's life. Discovering joy in my life today brings me sustainable energy to achieve these bigger goals." — Erik Schneider, creator of Cubicle Monks.

Surround yourself with people committed to the work:

"Who you surround yourself with matters because it defines what's normal for you. When you're around people who are committed to doing the work and embracing uncertainty, it feels a lot safer to do things that scare you." — Aili Kuutan, creator of PureLightPodcast.com

See possibility and be willing to be supported:

"Become clear on the possibility of the next phase of your life, cultivate a willingness to be supported and then make a series of bold asks with conviction and a tender heart." — Suraj Shah, coach, Live With Loss

Broaden your comfort zone beyond what you believe is possible:

"The edges of my comfort zone have broadened. My ideas of possibility, for myself and for the world, have expanded in a way that I don't believe would have been possible on my own. I have come to understand, on a much deeper level, that it is possible to step into new ways of being and create profound shifts in how I experience life." — Amanda Goddard

“Who you surround yourself with matters because it defines what's normal for you.”

Aili Kuutan, creator of PureLightPodcast.com

Transformation takes consistent work:

"Long-lasting transformation comes with the deep and consistent work that we do in Fearless Mastery. The retreat was the pivotal point where the concepts and practices finally sunk in. I now know what it means to answer the question, 'How do you want to show up for your work?' I use my practices daily and continue to receive the great gifts of these positive changes." — Leslie Lynch, the Caregiver Coach

Create by moving out of limiting behaviors:

"I had no idea what to really expect of this program. I only knew that deep inside me, there was a voice telling me to do it and join. The mastermind showed me that there is a way out of limiting behaviors to build what we always dreamed of. This program and the incredible people helped me create the foundation to conquer bigger, more meaningful challenges in my life going forward." — Christoph Weisbrod, founder of Roots Connect outdoor nature adventures

Recognize patterns in our responses, and let go:

"The biggest lesson I learned in Fearless Mastery was to increase my ability to recognize my patterns of response to situations, look for their root cause, and let go of those that no longer serve me, in order to develop deeper relationships with others and experience life to the fullest. Along the way, I was able to accomplish a major life change that I had been unable to complete in the 3 years prior to joining the program, and establish significant relationships with others in a group where I am acknowledged, understood, and challenged. The biggest gift I have received through the Fearless Mastery program is that I found myself." — Ann Byard, optometry business owner

Our walls are imaginary:

"We build our own imaginary walls. Co-inspiration is super powerful. And my new favorite piece of perennial wisdom: 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.'" — Ville Salmensuu, creator

of a project to buy an island in central Helsinki, for a center for mindfulness and well-being

Embody freedom: "I joined Fearless Mastery to plant the seeds that will grow a forest of change. I learned how to create powerful shifts in the world and prioritize the essential work of caring for my whole being. I dove deeper into the stories that hold me back and began to unhook them one by one. I embodied, for a moment, what it feels like to be completely free." — Brittany Kamai, Astrophysicist

“Long lasting transformation comes with the deep and consistent work.”

Leslie Lynch, the Caregiver Coach

Pause and check into your heart:

"My two big lessons during these six months were that I can always start something, even if it's for 5 mins and then I have to stop again, that's fine. I have let go of the fear of losing my flow to be able to do something for a sustained period of hours." — Davor Tomic, film creator

We can surprise ourselves when we let go of our protection mechanisms:

"I've been training people in letting go of the things we do to protect ourselves (procrastination, complaining, hiding, etc.) and I'm constantly shocked by how much is possible once we start to let go of that. The leaders in this mastermind never stopped amazing me." — Leo Babauta
I'm so grateful for the incredible people who dove deep into their purpose in life and created amazing things, supported each other, and shared their hearts.

Leo Babauta is the author of six books; the writer of *Zen Habits*, a blog with more than 2 million subscribers; and the creator of several online programs to help you master your habits. Visit ZenHabits.net



Facing uncertainty feels safer when you're doing it together with others.

How Kindness Spreads in a Community

A new study finds that when we witness kindness, we're inspired to be kind ourselves

JILL SUTTIE

When we see someone being kind or generous, it gives us a warm feeling inside. Researchers call this "moral elevation," and it not only feels good but inspires us to want to do good ourselves. But how much does witnessing good affect us—and why? A new analysis of decades of research aimed to find the answers. The results suggest that our acts of kindness and generosity, online or offline, can have meaningful ripple effects in our communities.

Researchers synthesized results from 88 experimental studies involving over 25,000 participants to measure how much our own altruism increases after witnessing someone acting "prosocially"—for example, comforting someone who is crying, donating to charity, or acting cooperatively in a competitive game. In the studies, people would read about or see someone act in a kind and helpful way, and then have the opportunity to be kind and generous themselves.

The researchers also wanted to understand the reasons why witnessing goodness inspires people and to identify the factors that increase or decrease their response.

Their analysis showed a moderately strong effect, where people witnessing altruism tended to follow suit themselves. That means that when people model kind and helpful behavior, it has a healthy impact on spreading goodness in a community.

"People resonate when they watch someone do something good," says the study's lead researcher, Haesung Jung. "The message that these prosocial behaviors are quite contagious is a really important message that people should know."

To understand why this kind of modeling inspires people to help others, Jung and her colleagues considered several possible reasons. As an example, they examined whether people in the experiments may have simply been feeling pressured to "look good" by being more giving. But they found this didn't seem to matter, as people often gave in ways they assumed would be anonymous.

The researchers also considered whether people were just copying behaviors they'd seen someone else doing. But they found that witnesses of kindness often helped in ways that didn't match what they'd observed. For example, participants might have witnessed a person giving aid to someone who'd fallen on the street and end up donating more to charity when given the opportunity to pay it forward.

"There may be different reasons why people imitate others' prosocial behavior, but we show that it's not really about mimicry," she says. "Instead, they seem to take on the prosocial goal and generalize it to other people and to different forms of generosity."

In other words, people resonate with the underlying reason for doing good and become motivated themselves to



Those who witnessed a kind act were more likely to act more generously themselves afterward, researchers found.

spread the goodness. This suggests that people are prosocial by nature, waiting for inspiration to act.

Interestingly, her analyses showed that it didn't seem to matter how people witnessed a kind act. They could have read about it, watched a TV show where characters acted altruistically, or actually been present when someone helped another person. The effect was the same: They would act more generously themselves afterward.

Other factors also didn't matter—like the age of the witness and whether they saw someone giving material help (such as money) or non-material help (such as comfort). This means that so many things we observe, not just the actions of the people around us but things we see in the media or online, may be subtly influencing our behavior.

But there were some factors that did affect how inspired people were to pay it forward. The more time that had passed since people witnessed an altruistic act, the lower their impetus to give.

In addition, women were more likely to want to "pay it forward" than men. Jung was not too surprised by that, as prior research had shown that women were more responsive to kindness modeling and that they tended to "prioritize relating to others and getting along with them."

Finally, it mattered what kind of response to the kindness people observed. If witnesses saw kind people being praised or even rewarded with money, they were more likely to pay kindness forward themselves. Jung suggests that this can be useful to know if we want altruism to spread.

"It shows we need a social environment where prosocial behavior is positively reinforced in order for people to imitate that behavior more," she says.

Her research has important implications for society—particularly now, when we need people to act in more prosocial ways by wearing masks and keeping physically distant to prevent the spread of COVID-19. If we use the power of modeling, says Jung, we can build a social norm of collaboration, cooperation, and generosity that will help us solve bigger social problems, including the pandemic and maybe even climate change.

“The message that these prosocial behaviors are quite contagious is a really important message that people should know.”

Haesung Jung, the study's lead researcher

"In organizations, educational settings, and just everyday life, it's important to highlight kindness, caring, and good social behavior," says Jung. "Doing good has a much larger impact than people realize."

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.



Prosocial behavior seems to be a goal people take on after experiencing it.

How to Feel Younger During the Pandemic

DEVON ANDRE

The pandemic has undoubtedly had a strange effect on your anti-aging routine. On the one hand, you might be exercising more. On the other, it may have left you wondering about your purpose in life.

Mindset can play a role in feeling younger. Think about the exhilaration you feel when you're working on something you're passionate about. Time flies when you're filling your days with a worthwhile and engaging activity.

That's come to a halt for many people these days and may be even more noticeable as the holidays approach.

Relevance is essential to youthfulness. This year, you might have to look a little harder to find ways to do things that matter. But if you do, it could add years to your life.

Outside of physical activity, you can find other ways to boost self-esteem. Some ideas to increase your sense of worth with the limited options available these days include:

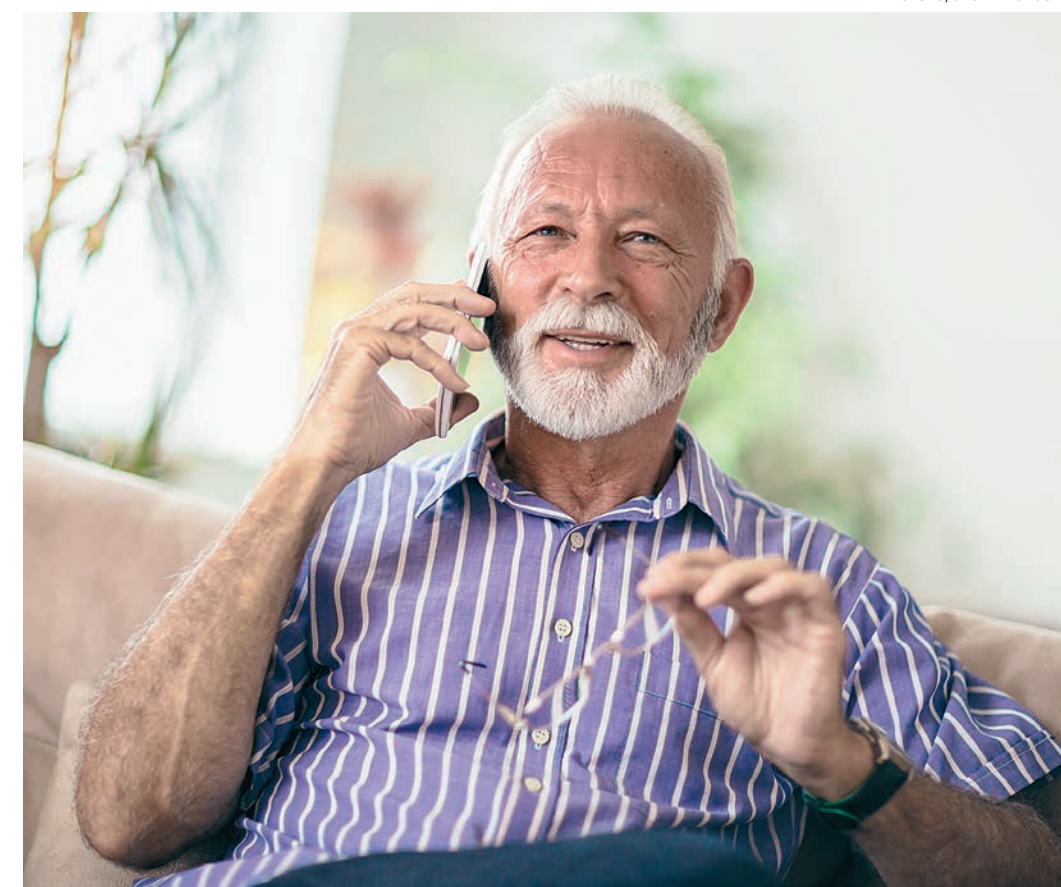
- Picking up the phone and calling friends and family in need. You might

not know it, but these people are likely looking for an ear and a voice. Use yours to spread some love.

- Do something that makes you feel good. If you've been responsible for holiday dinners, perhaps cooking the meals for family or neighborhood pickups could boost your sense of worth this season.
- Get an early start on your New Year's resolution. It takes a long time to form a new habit—up to 264 days—so why not start now? You may have a little more time and space to focus on taking the reins on something you've always wanted to pursue.

Sure, diet and exercise are huge factors in aging. But so is state of mind. Feeling motivated when you wake up in the morning can help you stay and feel young and is central to a successful aging plan.

Devon Andre holds a bachelor's degree in forensic science from the University of Windsor in Canada and a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Pittsburgh. Andre is a journalist for *BelMarraHealth*, which first published this article.



Pick up the phone or start a video chat with a friend or family member in need. Connecting with them will help both of you feel better.

MINDSET MATTERS

Should I Answer Every Text My Child Sends?

Constant communication is depriving our children of the experience of independence

NANCY COLIER

I spend a lot of time with teenagers because I have one. As an observer of this unique species, I am noticing that teenagers are changing in fundamental ways as a result of their relationship with technology.

Teenagers are frequently out and about in the world on their own and with their peers, particularly in the summer. They're taking a crack at independence, living new situations and challenges without their parents' supervision and guidance. Adolescence is a time to start figuring things out for themselves, to problem solve, and to be creative with whatever challenges life is presenting. It's a time to build self-reliance and maturity as they attempt to navigate the world on their own. It's a crucial and transformative period in the development of our children, one in which they lay the groundwork for confidence and capability that will support them for the rest of their lives.

It used to be that when teenagers went away in the summer, they went away. These days, with smartphones in their hands, there's no break in the communication. Many teens stay in constant contact, in a continual conversation with their parents throughout the day. If something upsets or delights them, or a practical problem arises, they're quick to text out for help, validation, and feedback. And they usually receive that understanding, empathy, guidance, solution, or whatever else is needed, immediately.

Technology is removing the need for our kids to figure things out for themselves. It's robbing our children of the opportunity to experience their lives on their own, to live through challenges and joys inside their own company, and to learn how to effectively meet life's ups and downs in their own unique ways.



Adolescence is a time for children to start figuring things out for themselves.

With a smartphone in hand, nothing needs to be figured out or experienced alone. Living happens by consensus, inside a shared and safe zone of continual communication and handholding. Previous generations, by contrast, had to let go of the big people's hands at some point and jump into the waters of independence. There simply was no alternative, and we grew into actual adults as a result.

The result of all this communicating is that we are unintentionally growing a generation of helpless, infantilized, and unable people—children who don't feel equipped and are in fact not equipped to handle life's challenges.

Technology is depriving our youth of the true self-confidence, grit, and resilience that can only come from practicing independence. Just because our kids can now rely on us to be there for them around the clock, doesn't mean that they, or we, should.

What then is the solution to this new digital dilemma, the disempowerment and disabling of our children and our parental collusion in this dependence under the guise of attentive parenting? The solution begins with awareness. That is, becoming conscious of the long-term effects of perpetually interacting with and attending to every text your child sends. While it may feel good to be the person who your child wants to share everything with, providing moment-to-moment validation and support will deprive your child of self-reliance and true self-confidence. When we literally accompany our children through every step of life, they stop (or never start) knowing how to walk for themselves.

Although counterintuitive perhaps, stepping away from your child's texts can be the wiser and more loving choice. Explain to them why you aren't immediately responding to their every communication, that

it's in service to their true independence. When you allow your son or daughter the opportunity to start experiencing life on their own, generate solutions, self-soothe, and cope, you are, in the long run, being a good parent. You're offering a gift to your child that's far more valuable than solving the problem of the moment.

Many teens stay in a continual conversation with their parents throughout the day.

This is of course not to suggest that we should never be available to our children's communications, but rather that we should become mindful of what we are actually doing in a larger sense when we are forever and immediately available to our kids' every experience.

If we truly desire what's best for our children, namely, for them to become capable and to know that they can trust themselves, then we as parents need to stop holding up the other end of the constant conversation. It's up to us to take the higher road and create some silence. We need to be a bit less available and let them discover that they can indeed fly on their own.

Nancy Colier is a psychotherapist, interfaith minister, author, public speaker, and workshop leader. A regular blogger for Psychology Today and The Huffington Post, she has also authored several books on mindfulness and personal growth. Colier is available for individual psychotherapy, mindfulness training, spiritual counseling, public speaking, and workshops, and also works with clients via Skype around the world. For more information, visit NancyColier.com

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