## THE EPOCH TIMES

# MINDS BODY



### **CONAN MILNER**

OVID-19 vaccines have been available since December 2020 under emergency use authorization. Many people have already rolled up their sleeves to take a shot or two, but the pressure is mounting for more to comply.

At a recent White House press conference, President Joe Biden said as many as 98 percent of citizens would need to be vaccinated for the country to get back to normal. He indicated that those who are still holding out are not merely stalling our recovery, but harming public health.

"The vast majority of Americans are doing the right thing. Over 77 percent of adults have gotten at least one shot. About 23 percent haven't gotten any shots, and that—that distinct minority is causing an awful lot of us an awful lot of damage for the rest of the country," Biden said. "This is a pandemic of the unvaccinated. That's why I'm moving forward with vaccination requirements wherever I can."

Considering all the promotion and promised incentives that come with the new shot, it seems odd that anyone would choose to decline. Products from Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson and Johnson are all available for free, and endorsed by numerous experts and health agencies as safe and effective protection from COVID-19.

But not all experts agree. Several doctors and scientists say there is a dark side to the vaccines that isn't getting the attention it deserves.

On Aug. 20, internist, cardiologist, and epidemiologist Dr. Peter McCullough discussed his concerns with a presentation at the Andrews University Village Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan.

"We have a situation where the vaccines don't work well enough in everyone, and it looks like they're not safe enough either," he said.

In a world where health experts are desperately trying to overcome vaccine hesitancy, McCullough's statement is dangerous. It smacks of the kind of crazy conspiracy theories public health agencies and social media companies routinely warn us about. We're advised to avoid such misinformed hearsay and instead follow the science and advice of genuine medical professionals.

The problem is that McCullough is one of the most credible medical experts you're likely to find, particularly in regard to treating COVID-19. He's a journal editor, has published more than 650 peer-reviewed papers indexed in PUBMED, and is president of Cardio-Renal Society of America studying the interface between heart and kidney disease.

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## Standing on One Leg Is a Sign of Good Health

Practicing standing on one leg, especially with eyes closed, can give you confidence and prevent falls



ANHILATOR/SHUTTERSTO

## DAWN SKELTON

Research shows that people's ability to stand on one leg is an indicator of health and that getting better at standing on one leg can add to fitness and potentially lifespan.

Being able to stand on one leg is linked to increased levels of physical activity and decreased risk of falls and is associated with both quality and length of life. Around 37.3 million falls per year worldwide are severe enough to require medical attention.

The inability to balance on one leg for 20 seconds or longer is linked in otherwise healthy people to an increased risk of small blood vessel damage in the brain and reduced ability to understand ideas. You are

Standing on one leg can be made much more challenging if you close your eyes while doing it. less likely to be able to stand on one leg without a wobble if you have a multitude of medical conditions such as Parkinson's disease, stroke, or Alzheimer's disease.

Pregnancy, menopause, the diagnosis of disease, and retirement also can alter our strength, balance, and ability to stay upright, mostly because of the way these affect our ability and motivation to engage in regular physical activity.

Sitting or reclining while awake is associated with lower muscle strength, risk of falls, and physical function, sometimes irrespective of the amount of moderate or vigorous-intensity physical activity you do. People who sit for prolonged periods are

Continued on Page 3

on birch trees is revered for its medicinal properties, including immunity boosting, antiviral, and anti-diabetes effects.

Chaga mushrooms aren't the most attractive fungi on the block, and they're not the tastiest either, but when it comes to medicinal value, chaga mushrooms are king. Typically consumed in tea form due to its bitter flavor, chaga (Inonotus obliquus) is a tree parasite that slowly decomposes tree trunks.

## Many people with cancer use chaga mushrooms as a complementary therapy.

Most often found on birch trees, the black-brown fungus typically infects 30- to 50-year-old trees and may grow on their trunks for another 80 years, producing a conk—a growth that resembles rustcolored charcoal. Chaga mushrooms have been valued since ancient times, when Hippocrates used chaga infusions to wash wounds.

During the 12th century, chaga was valued for its anti-inflammatory, antiparasitic, and gastrointestinal properties and was recommended for heart and liver diseases. Later, chaga became revered for its anti-cancer and anti-tumor effects, which are still being explored today, along with its potent antibacterial, antioxidant, immune stimulant, and antiviral functions.

## **Health Benefits of Chaga**

nentioned in this Even if you're not a fan of article, please see mushrooms, you can reap the article online at the benefits of this medicinal TheEpochTimes. wonder by adding chaga powder to your tea or coffee or by mixing it into a smoothie. Chaga is also available in extract and supplement compiled 71 diseases that chaga may influence along with 63 of the mushroom's pharmacological actions.

## 1. Boost Your Immune System

Polysaccharides (a type of carbohydrate) in chaga mushrooms have broad biological activity, including anti-cancer, anti-inflammatory, antiviral, and antioxidant effects, as well as being immunomodulatory. Chaga mushrooms may modulate immune response by helping to regulate the secretion of Th1 and Th2 cytokines in immune cells, as well as antibody production.

Chaga's water-soluble polysaccharide ISP2a, in particular, has been found to enhance the immune response of mice with tumors, while also enhancing white blood cell proliferation and increasing the production of tumor necrosis factor, a powerful anti-inflammatory agent. It's believed that ISP2a may act as a natural antitumor substance with immunomodulatory activity.

## 2. Ward Off Viral Infections

Chaga has powerful antiviral activity and was found to suppress the infectivity of pandemic influenza virus in mice and was comparable to the antiviral drug



These parasitic mushrooms might kill their host tree, but they're healthy for humans—

Tamiflu. It's also effective against multiple feline viruses and the human viruses herpes simplex virus 1, HIV type 1, and

In one study, at the highest concentration, chaga extract completely stopped or significantly inhibited the reproduction of the hepatitis C virus.

"The presented studies confirm the antiviral effect of I. obliquus and indicate its potential use in the treatment of diseases associated with viral infections," the study reads.

## 3. Anticancer Effects

It's due to chaga's potent immunomodulatory effects that it shows promise as a cancer fighter. Due to its antitumor and immunologic effects, many people with cancer use chaga mushrooms as a complementary therapy, and its extract is known to induce autophagy, which is your body's way of clearing out damaged cells and making room for new ones.

Chaga extracts have been found to inhibit proliferation of or are cytotoxic to human gastrointestinal tumor cell lines, as well as human breast, lung, colon, myeloid leukemia, and cervical cancer cell lines.

While decreasing tumor cell proliferation and motility, chaga produces no or low toxicity to normal cells, and in a study on mice, continuous intake of chaga extract suppressed cancer progression by reducing tumors by 60 percent. In metastatic mice, it reduced nodules by 25 percent compared to the control group.

In another study, which found that extracts of chaga mushroom and bamboo leaf had strong antitumor

For links

to studies

activity, it was suggested that its anticancer effects may be the result of activation of innate immunity.

## 4. Help for Diabetes

Chaga polysaccharides have notable anti-diabetic effects, with animal studies finding that

they can reduce fasting blood glucose form, providing an impressive array of levels, improve glucose tolerance, and health benefits. GreenMedInfo.com has ameliorate insulin resistance. In one study, chaga extract at a dose of 250 mil ligrams (mg) per kilogram (kg) of body weight in mice had "obvious antidiabetes effects," while a dose of 500 mg per kg "was the same as that of [diabetes drug metformin."

## Is Chaga Suitable as a Daily Tonic?

There's some debate over whether chaga mushrooms should be used as a daily tonic or reserved for specific health conditions. Anecdotal reports of improved digestion and mental calm have been reported from using chaga and other mushrooms daily, while some herbalists have suggested that it's best used as an adjunct therapy when required.

There's also concern that this medicinal treasure could be overharvested, as it only reproduces after the death of the host tree. Harvesting chaga conks prior to this time may threaten its ability to reproduce. In Alaska, a lax limit of 10,000 pounds of chaga and other conks per person per year exists, but it's reportedly

At this time, however, The Global Fungal Red List classifies chaga as a fungus of "least concern," meaning it's still abundant in many areas with no evidence of decline.

\*WARNING: Always consult a medical herbalist or your health care practitioner when using both natural and pharmaceutical medicines for any diagnosed condition. This article is for informational purposes only and not intended to be used as medical advice.

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## MEDICALLY CORRECT

## The 6-Foot Myth

The complex and contradictory science of social distancing

**A STUDY** 

**BY MIT** 

When indoors, the risk

for COVID contagion is

nearly the same at

**bU ttt I** 

## **PETER WEISS**

I travel a lot, for business as well as pleasure. It's amazing how each area of the United States handles the pandemic (actually, now an endemic) so differently.

Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) is a zoo even in the best of times, but it is going through a major renovation for the 2028 Summer Olympics. Crowded is an understatement.

My wife and I were in line for an elevator to take us up to one of the Delta lounges. A couple (younger than us) were a few people in front. When the elevator arrived, they went into the empty elevator, and the husband (I am assuming) whips around, holds his hand up, and says "NO more." Another couple in front of us politely notes that there is plenty of room for a few more. The husband then blurts out, "She has cancer, you [expletive]!"

I suppose cancer allows some forgiveness for someone being nasty and angry, from boarding the elevator, and the door closed. When we finally did get to the lounge, we noticed this couple sitting in the very crowded lounge. This got me wondering where this six-foot social distancing comes from?

Dr. Carl Flügge, a German scientist, proposed the idea that people who are well should keep their distance from people who are sick. This was back in the 1840s.

In the 1940s, some scientists were able to film, frame by frame, a person sneezing and yelling and found that we humans spray "spittle" about three to six feet. This is now dogma, and dogma is hard to break. A recent study by MIT published in the

journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America came to a startling result: When indoors, the risk for COVID contagion is nearly the same at six feet or 60 feet because the aerosolized particles mix throughout I think I may have to find a larger elevator!

The Journal of Infectious Diseases published a study done mainly by researchers in Australia who made an interesting finding when researching aerosol spray of CO-VID-19. They found that "of ten studies on horizontal droplet distance, eight showed droplets travel more than 2 meters (≈6 ft), in some cases more than 8 meters ( $\approx$ 26 ft)".

"We found that the evidence base for current guidelines is sparse, and the available data do not support the  $1 - 2 \text{ m} (\approx 3 - 6 \text{ ft})$  rule of spatial separation."

not to enter an elevator in the hospital by someone already in the elevator because of an overwhelming fear of "catching" COVID. Next time, I'll hand out a copy of that

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends 1 meter (roughly 3 feet) of social distancing. This is followed in England, France, and China; Australia, Italy and Germany use 1.5 meters. The WHO based its findings on a study published in the Lancet in June 2020.

"Transmission of viruses was lower with physical distancing of 1 m or more, compared with a distance of less than 1 m,"

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A few months ago, I had a patient complain that our waiting room wasn't socially distanced enough for her. She also complained that we didn't have an elevator monitor to limit it to one person per ride (I admit, it's a small elevator). I politely asked her how she would suggest we knock out the walls to accommodate her concerns, as well as where we should build that new elevator? I thought I was sarcastic, but she thought I was serious and sent me a two-

Protection is good, but there are extremes. Actual physical distancing may make sense for those who are truly vulnerable. I personally wouldn't take an elderly person with chronic health issues such as emphysema, leukemia, and COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) to a crowded arena. I wouldn't have taken them before COVID either.

The problem with social distancing rules is it varies depending on where you live and if there is another agenda that the political powers feel outweighs the need for social distancing. Life is full of risks, and each day, we weigh those risks and live our lives.

There are 36,000 deaths each year from motor vehicle accidents, yet we drive almost every day. We make decisions based on our needs and desires.

We were recently in Nashville, Tennessee, and enjoyed an amazing time. Great city, great food, music, and good friends. People respected one another, and not a mask was in sight on these crowded streets. Nashville, like Los Angeles, has COVID, yet those cities handle the situation very differently.

"One of the bottom lines is that we don't know how long social distancing measures and lockdowns can be maintained without major consequences to the economy, society, and mental health." Dr. John Ioannidis, a Stanford professor and an author of numerous studies on evidence-based medicine and statistics, wrote in STAT on March 17, 2020.

(Ioannidis achieved wide fame for his 2005 paper published in PLOS, "Why Most Published Research Findings Are False.") Last week, I flew on an airline and the flight attendant was adamant, you must wear your mask at all times, and can only take it off while "actively eating" and must replace the mask in between bites. The

while we eat! Sadly, real life has nothing to do with the rules of social distancing.

person next to me leaned over and said

maybe we should all sit six feet apart

Dr. Peter Weiss has been a frequent guest and radio. He was an assistant clinical professor of OB/GYN at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA for 30 years, stepping down so he could provide his clinical services to those in need when the COVID pandemic hit. He was also a national health care adviser for Sen. John McCain's 2008 presidential campaign.

For links to studies mentioned in this article, please see the article online at *TheEpochTimes.com* 

## Standing on One Leg Is a Sign of Good Health

Practicing standing on one leg, especially with eyes closed, can give you confidence and prevent falls

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more likely to develop Type 2 diabetes, larger waist circumference, and obesity.

Why Standing on One Leg Matters Data shows that the time people can stand on one leg changes for men and women at different ages—and an inability to hit those target times for your age group can highlight health problems.

The human body, when standing upright, is inherently unstable. We have a very small base of support relative to our height and width. When in good health, we rely on our central and peripheral nervous system to integrate all the information coming in from our balance senses (eyes, inner ears, and feedback from muscles and joints). We then engage the right muscles (feet, ankle, leg, and core muscles, sometimes even the arm muscles) at the right time to make the necessary adjustments to our posture to

The more physically active we are, the more likely we are to have good balance

and enjoy the well-known physical, psychological, and social benefits of being regularly active.

Other health problems can also affect our physical activity and are characterized by stooped posture and worsened balance, such as depression and osteoporosis, leading to an increased risk of falls and fractures. A stooped posture makes standing on one leg more difficult.

## **Improving your balance** will ensure you are more likely to have improved confidence in performing physical activity.

### Should I Start Standing on One Leg? You can improve your ability to stand on one

leg at any age, and improve your balance. It's more challenging if you have a neurological condition, but studies have shown improvements in balance following exercise in many conditions and it is known to reduce falls in many others. In the United Kingdom, around 1 in 3 adults over 65—and half of people over 80—will have at least one fall a year.

A recent Public Health England report

suggests that lack of activity in older adults because of the social restrictions during the pandemic could lead to 110,000 more older people falling this year.

You can test your own balance using the tests at the fallsassistant.org.uk website within the exercise center section. Video tutorials will help you try some simple balance exercises. Improving your balance will ensure you are more likely to have improved confidence in performing physical activity. Getting more active can help lengthen and improve quality of life.

Standing on one leg can be made much more challenging if you close your eyes while doing it. This is worth practicing as it helps with our long-term balance and reduces the risk of falling over. With our eyes open, the body becomes lazy and relies on our vision to help keep us balanced. If you subtract vision, it gets the other senses working better. Most people can only do this for a short time compared to when they keep their eyes open. Have something close

by to hold on to. You will improve over time. For the over 70s, there's also evidence to show standing on each leg for one minute three times a day can help improve hip bone mineral density. Stronger hip bone mineral density means if you do fall, you are less likely to fracture.

And on that note, do I stand on one leg? Yes, when I am cleaning my teeth morning



Standing on one leg is a great way to gauge physical health because of all the muscles and senses involved. Close your eyes for an extra challenge.

and evening, alternating from one leg to another at least twice. If I am feeling bold, I try one round of the teeth with my eyes closed. That, I might add, I am starting to find more difficult—I must practice more.

Dawn Skelton is a professor in aging and health at Glasgow Caledonian University in the UK. This article was first published on The Conversation.

## list of required reading." **HOW THE SPECTER OF COMMUNISM** IS RULING OUR WORLD The specter of communism did not disappear with the disintegration of the Communist Party in Eastern Europe

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Social distancing is supposedly critical to reduce COVID-19 infections, but the actual science on how the virus is spread suggests otherwise.



A medical staff member administers a COVID-19 vaccine in New York on Oct. 21, 2021.

## Credible Doctor, Incredible Situation

One of America's most esteemed doctors and researchers riled by COVID-19 response

Continued from Page 1

## No Initial Treatment

While the vast majority of medical personnel have followed recommendations from health agencies such as the World Health Organization, the National Institutes of Health, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a growing number of doctors and physicians' organizations are taking issue with the official response.

A major point of contention among this group of skilled, rebel doctors is the strategy to avoid treating sick patients. Until the vaccine, health officials didn't have much to offer people who were sickened by COVID. The disease was so new, and no treatment had been properly tested,

There's been

no medical product that's been so tightly related to death than the COVID-19 vaccines.

Dr. Peter McCullough

so nothing was recommended if anyone contracted the disease. Sick patients were instructed to stay home and quarantine, but were admitted to the hospital if symptoms became severe. The only care that severely ill and hospitalized patients regularly received was a ventilator and oxygen.

This shocked McCullough. At the beginning of the pandemic, he imagined COVID would become a kind of medical Super Bowl, with courageous doctors all trying their best to tackle an incredible challenge. He never expected hospitals would simply sit on the sidelines and wait for a vaccine. He said it was the first time in his career he ever saw doctors not even try to treat their

patients in the prehospital phase. "It became clear within a month or two

that the bio-medical complex was not going to treat COVID," he said. "Something got into the minds of doctors and nurses and everyone to not treat COVID-19, and I couldn't stand it."

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Despite the no-treatment strategy offered by health agencies, McCullough said he couldn't see patients die on his watch without at least attempting to save their lives. So he began working with colleagues in Italy to determine what drugs and treatment strategies might work. The team looked at all the features of the disease: how the virus replicates like crazy and sparks inflammation that eventually leads to micro-blood clots in the lungs impeding oxygen intake. Then, they turned to remedies that were known to address such symptoms, and that had proved clinically successful with doctors attempting to treat

In August 2020, McCullough's landmark paper, "Pathophysiological Basis and Rationale for Early Outpatient Treatment of SARS-CoV-2 Infection," was published online in the American Journal of Medicine.

"It went viral. It's still the most downloaded and heavily relied upon paper for CO-VID-19 for outpatient treatment," he said

His follow-up paper, titled "Multifaceted Highly Targeted Sequential Multidrug Treatment of Early Ambulatory High-Risk SARS-CoV-2 Infection (COVID-19)," was published in Reviews in Cardiovascular Medicine in December 2020. It became the basis for the COVID-19 Home Treatment Guide available from the American Association of Physicians and Surgeons.

These documents spread around the world among health workers seeking answers in treating COVID patients but were censored on social media because they promoted unproven and therefore potentially dangerous protocols. In some countries, doctors were threatened with losing their license or being arrested for using these treatments.

In France, for example, Dr. Didier Raoult was put under severe restrictions for promoting the use of hydroxychloroquine (HCQ)—a drug that was previously available over the counter in France until officials made it prescription only last year.

In South Africa, another doctor was put in prison for prescribing ivermectin.

For McCullough, it was just one more puzzling feature of the COVID-19 response.

"Since when does a doctor get put in prison [for trying] to help a patient with a simple generic drug?" he asked.

## **Concerning Numbers**

To ensure patient safety, health agencies have insisted that potential treatments for COVID-19 undergo large, randomized trials for at least two to five years. The vaccines, however, were given a fast track toward public distribution. In just a few months after being manufactured, the shot was plunged into millions of arms around the world.

The official story is that these new vaccines have been a resounding success. But in many instances, the numbers don't add up.

Consider the CDC's own database of adverse reactions. According to the most recent numbers from the Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (VAERS), more than 16,000 fatalities and almost 24,000 cases of permanent disability have been linked to COVID-19 vaccines.

Yet not one of these cases seems to spark any official concern. The CDC said on its website that the two health agencies sponsoring the COVID-19 vaccine program (CDC and U.S. Food and Drug Administration) had doctors review the deaths reported to VAERS and determined that none of them were relataed to the vaccine.

In the latest statement, the CDC stated on Oct. 6 that "a reviewt of available clinical information, including death certificates, autopsy, and medical records, has not established a causal link to COVID-19 vaccines." But McCullough doubts that regulators

did an honest review.

"It takes a half an hour to do a report, and after you get through all the pages, it says,

'Warning, falsification is punishable by federal fines or imprisonment," he said. "You better believe every single one of these reports is done by somebody who really really thinks it's serious."

An independent review of VAERS numbers backs up his suspicions.

In an early pre-print, a study published in a journal from London found that 86 percent of the deaths reported to VAERS had no other explanation than the vaccine.

"About half the deaths occurred within 48 hours of getting the shot, and 80 percent oc-

cur within a week. There's been no medical product that's been so tightly related to death than the COVID-19 vaccines, and it's biologically plausible," McCullough said. "The spike protein itself is lethal. It damages organs. It causes blood clots. It causes stroke."

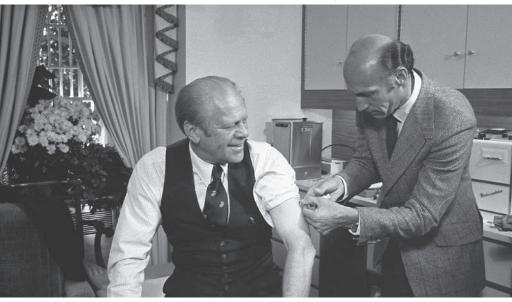
There's no clear consensus on how many have actually been harmed by the vaccine, but how many deaths are acceptable to make a treatment worth its risk?

Consider the swine flu vaccine of 1976 as a comparison. During that pandemic, about 20 percent of the country had received the new vaccine created to guard against the swine flu, but President Gerald Ford terminated the program when 25 deaths were linked to the treatment. Eventually, a total of 53 fatalities were related to the vaccine, and 550 people developed a disorder known

questions the safety of the new vaccines. For example, the Evidence-Based Consulting Group in England, which is the lead consulting group to the WHO, analyzed the reports from the Yellow Card system (the UK's equivalent to VAERS) and concluded the vaccines are not safe.

"It is now apparent that these products in the bloodstream are toxic to humans. An immediate halt to the vaccination programme is required whilst a full and independent safety analysis is undertaken to investigate the full extent of the harms, which the UK Yellow Card data suggest include thromboembolism, multisystem inflammatory disease, immune suppression, autoimmunity and anaphylaxis, as well as Antibody Dependent Enhancement (ADE)," the report states.

DAVID HUME KENNERLY/GERALD R. FORD PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY: B1874-07A



In 1976, during the swine flu pandemic, about 20 percent of the country had received the new vaccine created to guard against the swine flu, but President Gerald Ford terminated the program when 25 deaths were linked to the treatment. Ultimately, a total of 53 fatalities were related to that vaccine, and 550 people developed a disorder known as Guillain-Barré syndrome, which causes muscle weakness and sometimes paralysis.

as Guillain-Barré syndrome, which causes muscle weakness and sometimes paralysis.

"The government offered liability coverage to cover the pharmaceutical manufacturers, and there were hundreds of compensation claims and the program was shut down. This became a standard of acceptability that we would ever accept from a medical product," McCullough said. "If a product is linked to five unexplained deaths, the standard is to give it a black box warning— 'Warning: May cause death.' Fifty deaths? It's vanked off the market. That's our tolerance for a product: 50 deaths within 30 days, irrespective of causality.'

But according to VAERS reports, by Jan. 22, there were already 182 deaths associated with COVID-19 vaccines.

"We already crossed the day of concern on January 22. And if there was a data safety and monitoring board—and I should know since I do this work—they would be havang emergency meetings, saying: 'Wait a We've got to figure out why. We have to do an investigation. Is it old people, young people, diabetics, those who previously recovered?" he said. "But we didn't hear any concern." And McCullough isn't the only doctor who

scientists say there is a dark side to the vaccines that isn't getting the attention it deserves.

## **Contributing to Infection**

Several doctors and

But doesn't the vaccine at least slow the spread of a deadly disease? The unvaccinated are blamed for prolonging the pandemic, but McCullough points to research suggesting that it's really the vaccinated who are responsible for COVID's contin-

"It makes sense, since the vaccinated now probably what's fueling our Delta epidemic minute. People are dying after the vaccine. contributing to infection," he said. "Our CDC tells us that's the case. The CDC on July 26 said through spontaneous reports (COVID-19 Vaccine Breakthrough Case Investigation and Reporting), it shows 6,587 hospitalized or fatal vaccine breakthrough

cases reported to CDC, 19 percent died. "The vaccines don't stop COVID 19, at least not completely. They are not a shield against mortality, and our CDC is telling us."

## **Treatment Tips**

While vaccines get all the attention, Mc-Cullough offers several other tips he recommends for treating COVID-19. First, self-quarantine at home, contact trace, and ventilate your house.

"Open the windows," he said. "The virus hates fresh air. In Singapore, they did studies that [showed] if you're outside, it's impossible to transmit the virus."

Another important tip is to treat early. Avoid going into the hospital.

"Early treatment is what decides a severe case or not. Demand it. Ask your doctor, 'Are you ready to treat me?' If not, go to a telemedicine service," he said. "We estimate that 85 percent of Americans who died of COVID died needlessly because they were denied early treatment. We couldn't save them all, but we could have made a huge impact."

For early treatment, you can start simple with nutraceuticals: particularly vitamins C and D, zinc, and quercetin. McCullough says they don't save severely ill patients, but studies show deficiencies in these nutrients put you at greater risk.

"We can't prove the vitamins are helpful, but the data show they're supportive. And why not? They're cheap," he said.

Other recommendations include hydroxychloroquine (which, supported by 250 studies, is the most widely used drug in the world to treat COVID-19) or ivermectin (a drug supported by more than 60 studies.)

"The only studies that don't show a great benefit from hydroxychloroquine are latestage patients on a mechanical ventilator," he said. "But all the early treatment studies of hydroxychloroquine show it works."

If you do end up in the hospital, Mc-Cullough recommends a monoclonal antibody infusion, such as Regeneron. It's what President Donald Trump took to treat his COVID. It's widely available, but it's not getting to many patients who could use it. McCullough said many doses of the drug

are going unused on the shelf because of this mentality of not treating COVID. "Demand monoclonal antibodies,"

While there's still a significant amount of fear surrounding COVID-19, he says all the data suggest it's a very treatable disease. Unfortunately, the predominant view is one in which every person, even those with natural immunity or a risk for adverse reactions, should be forced to get the vaccine.

"Half the nation is about ready to lose their jobs in the next few months, including me. can carry huge amounts of virus and that's Really? Since when? A vaccine is going to make us lose our jobs?

The fact that the vaccine doesn't work well enough or long enough—and obviously is not safe in everyone—adds to the indignity. "We're in a mass psychosis. ... COVID 19 is a global disaster, and, unfortunately, the

vaccine is making it worse."

PART 1

## What Is Lyme Disease?

What is Lyme disease and why is it so difficult to treat?

## **ASHLEY TURNER**

This is part one of a three-part series exploring Lyme disease—how to test for it, treat it, and prevent it.

Lyme disease can be a crippling condition for many individuals. In fact, many patients who seek functional medicine care at our wellness center often struggle with Lyme and the commonly associated coinfections. Our family has even dealt with both acute and chronic Lyme disease.

## What Is Lyme Disease?

The origins of Lyme disease, or borreliosis, are widely disputed. From what we understand, it was first recorded in the 1970s in Lyme, Connecticut. In 1982, the spirochete bacteria that causes Lyme disease was discovered by Willy Burgdorfer and was named Borrelia burgdorferi. Since then, the rate of Lyme disease has grown, and now Lyme disease is the most prevalent tick-borne illness in the United States.

According to the Centers for Disease they're exposed to. Control and Prevention (CDC), there are nearly 500,000 people diagnosed with Lyme disease every year. Many natural health practitioners believe that Lyme disease and other tick-borne pathogens

are grossly underdiagnosed and frequently missed. One 2018 study published in Healthcare (Basel, Switzerland) suggests that 12 percent of Americans could have been infected with Lyme by 2015, some 55 million people. To say this chronic illness is on the rise is an understatement. A tick bite, usually from the eastern

black-legged tick or the western blacklegged tick, is the most common vector for borrelia burgdorferi, the bacteria that causes Lyme disease. Many speculate that Borrelia burgdorferi is not just transmitted via ticks, but also carried by fleas, mites, and mosquitoes, as well as being sexually transmitted. That position remains controversial in some quarters.

Lyme disease can have devastating consequences on the body because of its propensity to create systemic inflammation, hinder immune function, and potentially trigger autoimmune disease and chronic illness. Oftentimes, these patients are so immune-suppressed that their body can't fight other infections

## Lyme Disease Symptoms

There's a wide range of symptoms for those struggling with tick-borne illness. Symptom manifestation can vary with each



Ticks hang on to grass and bushes, waiting for a suitable host to brush against so they can latch on.

Due to unreliable diagnostic criteria, these infections are easy to miss on the frequently used laboratory tests.

individual. If caught early, Lyme disease and other tick-borne pathogens can be treated relatively quickly. If left undetected, various chronic health concerns can arise, potentially contributing to a systemic inflammatory response, autoimmune disease, and chronic illness.

Sadly, many people who contract Lyme disease don't recall having a tick bite because ticks can be so small. Furthermore, erythema migrans, the classic bull's-eye rash, is only reported about 70 percent of the time. Due to unreliable diagnostic criteria, these infections are also easy to miss on the frequently used laboratory tests.

## The Bullseye Rash

As mentioned, an erythema migrans rash doesn't show up in at least 30 percent of Lyme cases. When it develops, it's usually within 3 to 30 days after the initial bite. The

expands over the course of many days. It can reach diameters of up to 12 inches or more and appear on any area of the body. Sometimes, the skin clears as the rash enlarges, becoming a bull's-eye shape. While there are many classic attributes of erythema migrans rashes, there are many variations and other rashes that can arise from a tick bite.

rash starts relatively small and gradually

## **Acute Lyme Symptoms**

(3 to 32 days after tick bite)

- Headache
- Malaise Weakness
- Fever

Joint pain

- Fatigue Muscle soreness
- Neck pain Flu-like symptoms
- Swollen lymph nodes • Erythema migrans or bull's-eye rash

## **Untreated Lyme After Several Weeks** • Facial palsy (loss of muscle tone on one

- or both sides of the face) • Tinnitus (ringing in the ear)
- Dizziness
- Vision changes
- Shortness of breath
- Sore throat Abnormal heart rhythms
- New erythema migrans rashes Stiff, achy neck
- Meningitis

Nerve pain

• Mild encephalitis, causing memory loss, sleep disturbances, mood changes

## **Chronic Lyme Symptoms**

- Chronic fatigue
- Chronic inflammation • Migratory joint pain
- Severe headaches • Chronic encephalomyelitis, causing
- brain fog, cognitive dysfunction, insom nia, migraines, vertigo
- Dizziness
- Shortness of breath Sore throat
- Tremors Respiratory infections Elevated liver enzymes
- Anxiety
- Panic attacks Rage
- Paranoia
- Depersonalization Gastrointestinal symptoms
- Neurodegenerative diseases New food allergies
- Multiple chemical sensitivities Menstrual irregularities and infertility

Seizures

Why Is Lyme Disease Difficult to Treat? Lyme disease is a dreaded health condition because it's difficult to treat. This is because Borrelia burgdorferi Spirochetes can easily change their form and adapt to treatment methods, especially antibiotics. These forms are known as persisters because they can take on various sizes and shapes, changing from well-known forms to altered morphologies. They are able to form round bodies, L-form bacteria, microcolonies, or biofilms, which remarkably foster the resilience of Borrelia and protect themselves from treatment methods and the immune system.

Many believe that Lyme disease becomes chronic because a round of antibiotics is often an insufficient treatment and Borrelia is able to adapt in the face of antibiotics. This is why a functional, holistic approach can be valuable.

## **Other Tick-Borne Diseases**

In addition to Borrelia Burgdorferi, ticks carry many pathogens including bacteria, parasites, and viruses that can contribute to acute and chronic illness. Some of these include:

**Anaplasmosis:** An infection caused by Anaplasma phagocytophilum that presents with flu-like symptoms and can be fatal if left untreated.

**Babesiosis:** A result of microscopic parasites transmitted through various tick species. Symptoms include fever, chills, drenching sweats, anxiety, shortness of breath, racing heart, brain fog, and nausea. Sometimes hemolytic anemia results from the parasites attacking red blood cells.

Bartonella: Infections from Bartonella can cause fever, headaches, swollen lymph nodes, abdominal pain, fatigue, and poor appetite. It has also been associated with brain-based symptoms including depression, anxiety, panic disorder, and Pediatric acute-onset neuropsychiatric syndrome.

**Ehrlichiosis:** Ehrlichiosis symptoms include flu-like symptoms including fatigue, fever, chills, headaches, and muscle aches

**Mycoplasma:** Mycoplasma are the smallest bacterial species known. Symptoms include fever, cough, bronchitis, sore throat, headache, and tiredness. Sometimes pneumonia is a result of a mycoplasma

**Rickettsiosis:** Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever is included in this group of infections and can be contracted anywhere in the United States. Common symptoms include fever, body aches, stomach pain, nausea, vomiting, and headache. It causes a red rash on the palms of the hands in 50 to 85 percent of people.

**Viruses:** Ticks are able to carry novel viruses including the Powassan virus, South Bay Virus, Laurel Lake virus, Suffolk virus, various black-legged tick phleboviruses, and numerous others.

Listed here are some of the most common tick-borne illnesses and co-infections associated with Lyme. There are many more. With many overlapping symptoms, it's sometimes difficult to ascertain exactly what an individual is presenting with.

Next week, we'll look at testing for Lyme disease and other tick-borne pathogens and how to treat them.

Dr. Ashley Turner is a traditionally trained naturopath and board-certified doctor of holistic health for Restorative Wellness Center. As an expert in functional medicine, she is the author of the gut-healing guide "Restorative Kitchen and Restorative Traditions," a cookbook comprised of noninflammatory holiday recipes.

## Create a Powerful Frame for the World

The ability to change how we view a situation can change our entire experience

## **LEO BABAUTA**

The way we view life is usually invisible to us, and yet it's likely the most powerful thing

For example, one person might hear the words of another person and feel incredibly hurt, stressed, or angry. It ruins their entire week. Another person might hear the same words and feel compassion and love for the other person. Neither person is right or wrong, they simply have different views of the world.

The way we look at the world is called our "framing" of the world: the lens through which we see our lives. It's our view of things.

There are many different lenses, different ways to frame anything. Some of these frames help us more than others. And if we bring awareness to the frame, we can

I'm going to share a few examples of framing, and then share how you might create something powerful for yourself. Some examples:

- An act of helping someone else might be seen as a way to impress others and get acknowledgment and love. Alternatively, it can be a simple act of joyful connection with another human being, a way to offer your gift to others.
- Answering an email can be another oportunity to mess up and look dumb, or • A huge injustice or disrespect it can be a way to connect with someone • Something I can't have ploration and learning.
- Writing can be a dreadful chore full of pressure or boredom, or it can be a • A way to be inauthentic place of curiosity and play, or a place of deep contemplation and silence, or a way to sing your song to the world with exhilaration.
- Cleaning the bathroom can be a gross mundane task that you feel like avoiding, or it can be a mindfulness practice helping you to be more present in your life, or maybe a way to connect your heart to all others who have to clean a bathroom.

As you can see, there are many ways to view a situation (or another person, or yourself). In fact, I've only listed a few in each example, but there are endless possibilities. And which view you choose will determine your



The way we view life is usually invisible to us, and yet it is likely the most powerful thing in our lives.

experience, and often the results you get and what actions you take. Our entire lives are shaped by our frames.

And we usually don't choose them, they're

**Bringing Awareness to Our Framing** So how can we make them less automatic and more of a choice? We have to shine a

We can ask ourselves questions: How am 1 viewing this situation that causes me to feel and react this way? What kind of framing would have me avoid this task or situation? What lens would make me have this experi-

Some common ways to frame things:

- A way I might fail, or be seen as weird or • Overwhelming, too much, too hard
- Unchangeable, something I should just
- resign myself to • A burden, boring
- Another way to prove myself as broken
- A way I need to prove myself worthy or
- A thing I need to get right
- Something I should do
- A chance to show off • A way that others are not doing what they should do
- you care about, or it can be a place of ex
  A way the other person is showing they don't care about me
  - Something I might lose
  - Something to hide because it's shameful

To judge these frames as wrong doesn't help. We all have them somewhere in a place we can't see. They're automatic, and they shape our lives. Which of these might explain some difficulties you're having with habits, relationships, work, health, or finding happiness?

## **Choosing a Powerful Framing**

There are endless possibilities, too many for me to list, but I'll list a few anyway.

and the writer of Zen Habits, a blog with over The idea is to look at a situation, bring awareness to what your current framing 2 million subscribers. might be, and then decide to reframe it for Visit ZenHabits.net

The idea is to look at a situation, bring awareness to what your current framing might be, and then decide to reframe it for

yourself.

Our entire lives are

shaped by our frames.

And we usually don't

choose them, they are

automatic.

Leo Babauta is the

author of six books

Pick a situation that seems particularly challenging: maybe you have not been eating healthily, or feel badly about yourself, or are frustrated with someone, or feel like you're avoiding hard tasks, or have a hard time with a family member who is suffering through health problems.

Take that one situation, and examine your tion you're having? You don't have to get it exactly right, but take a shot.

Would you be open to letting it go and trying on something new?

itless number. A situation or task or person

- ploration, learning
- An opportunity for curiosity
- A way to express your gift, your true self, to sing your song
- A way to connect with someone
- present to your life A chance to surrender, trust, relax with life
- plate, to find solitude and silence
- and openness
- A chance to savor, find the deliciousness,
- A way to experiment, try something new
- An expression of your power

yourself. Try on the new framing, and practice seeing things in this way for a while, and see what results you get. There's no right

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view. What framing might cause the reac-

Are you committed to that framing?

Here are a few possibilities among the lim-

• An opportunity for play, adventure, ex-

- An opportunity for compassion and love
- An opportunity for wonder, gratitude, ap-
- preciation, awe A way to practice mindfulness, being
- A place to practice letting down your de-
- An opportunity to deepen, to contem-
- An exhilarating experience of freedom
- A place of spaciousness
- find the delight
- A place to choose
- A way to meet your needs, to own what you want, to set boundaries with love
- An opportunity to lead, to serve • A way to express your purpose

These are a few of my favorites. I try them

What would you like to choose? Could you try it on for a while and see what emerges?

## The Joy of Serendipity

3 lessons learned about life's moments of unexpected joy

## **MIKE DONGHIA**

like heaven on earth. The particular experiences I'm thinking of can't be manufactured or demanded, and so they always arrive as a happy surprise. I call this the joy of serendipity. Joy: marked by a feeling of great pleasure

There are some moments in life that feel

and happiness Serendipity: an unexpected occurrence that develops in a happy or beneficial way

Maybe it's a playful conversation with a stranger that might be the spark of a new friendship. Or a single joke that sends a group of old friends roaring with laughter. It could be a romantic look or a platonic smile, a serious moment or a silly one.

The commonality is that they leave us with a feeling of being alive, close to those around These moments of heightened emotional experience are the stuff memories are made of.



## How to Relax When You Don't Have the Answers

Surprisingly, not knowing can bring its own wisdom, understanding, and peace

## **NANCY COLIER**

The first time someone suggested I stop try ing to think up a solution to the situation I was trying desperately to solve, it sounded like a lovely idea. But truth be told, I had no idea how to put this advice into action.

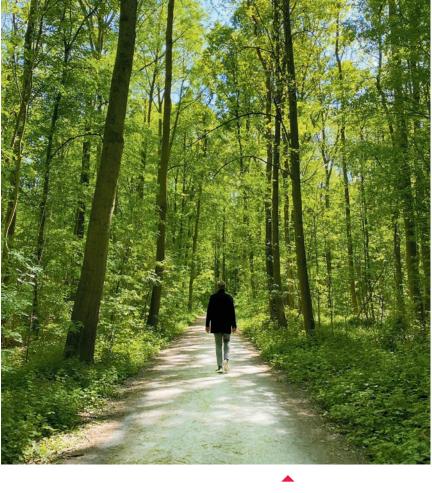
Resolution, for me, had always meant understanding what was happening, what it meant, and most of all, knowing what to do about it. Resolution had always involved excessive and obsessive thinking. If I didn't want to live in anxiety and feel utterly unmoored, I had to solve the questions that were still unsolved. I had to think more, not less, about my difficulties. Living peacefully and not having the answers were incompatible; I needed a plan, a way out of the situation, not a comfy chair inside it.

## We would be wise to learn how to inhabit this non-knowing with a sense of acceptance and relaxation rather than judgment and fear.

But over time, I realized that despite all the thinking humanly possible, there were important questions in my life that I couldn't know and couldn't solve, not yet anyway. This truth was unavoidable and irrefutable. I had to admit and accept that, with all my pseudo-knowing, all my proposed and attempted solutions, I was still not any better off. Any knowing I had thought myself into was illusory. The more I tried to know, the more I felt like I didn't know. On the other side of that admission and acceptance, however, I found something unexpected: utter relief.

We live in an age of reason and science. We worship information, research, and logic so much that we named our era for it: the age of information. To reason is to think, to basket, betting on thinking to save the day. The thinking mind is supposed to offer the road to salvation. At this moment in history, we've lost interest and, to some degree, respect, for all the other ways of knowing: bodily, intuitively, experientially, and so forth—all the ways we can know other than through thinking and logic.

When I present material as a public speaker, despite three decades of professional experience with human beings and their thoughts and emotions, I am almost always asked what MRI studies or research I can offer to support my observations on human behavior. Reason and scientific proof have been anointed as our kings. Thinking, we believe, will solve whatever questions and challenges life presents. And, with technology exploding, our reverence for thinking is only intensifying.



## **Living in the Question**

"The only true wisdom is in knowing we know nothing," Socrates said. A lot has changed in the 2,500 years since Socrates uttered those words. Today, few people could even understand his meaning. Meanwhile, our unceasing need to know the answers, along with our unwillingness to accept the unknown, generate a torrent of excessive thinking—and anxiety.

Mystery, in our society, is not a real thing. It's a flaky or woowoo thing. We're use the rational mind, to understand and taught from the time we're born that we make sense of our world. Over time, we've are good, worthy, if we have the answers. put more and more eggs in the reasoning We feel shame and inadequacy when we don't have the answers. Not knowing is a form of failure, cause to feel weak, defective, vulnerable, and lost.

At the same time, knowing feels safe; it feels like we're in control. With the answers in place, we don't have to face the impermanence that underpins our life, the reality that everything is constantly changing, whether we like it or not. We don't have to feel how out of control we really are as human beings on this mortal and mysterious journey. As a result, we do a lot of faking it, "impostering," when it comes to knowing. Simultaneously, we rush to answers that aren't true or sustainable. We'll do anything, essentially, to not reside in the unknown.

But despite what we're conditioned to believe, life is forever depositing us in situations where we don't have the answers we

want. We don't know the way forward, to say nothing of the larger not knowing what we're all doing here, existing, in the first place. Given how often we won't have all the answers, we would be wise to learn how to inhabit this non-knowing with a sense of acceptance and relaxation rather than judgment and fear. It may feel unfamiliar and unwise to sit with a challenging, unresolved situation. Uncomfortable as it may be, however, it

behooves us to learn how to not know, to feel what it's like in the not knowing. There is wisdom in learning to await more clarity and the arrival of a path through. Living in the question, if we can drop our judgments about it, can become its very own place to reside. With practice, we can learn to actually relax with not having the answer.

When we offer ourselves permission to not know, we allow life to reveal what it wants to reveal, in its own time—without forcing it. The questions then, remarkably, become their own destinations. What's more, we find that not knowing is a place that, if we have the courage to trust it, can deliver deeper and wiser solutions, real solutions, paths forward that are more reliable than anything we can mentally muscle our way into knowing.

Surrendering to living in the questions feels like dropping through a trap door. Suddenly, we are deposited into the present moment; we have permission to be here, to experience what life is like—now. We have permission to get interested in the experience of this reality and allow the answers to reveal themselves on their own timeline.

Relaxing into the questions, unexpectedly, allows us to join a larger unfolding, a process bigger than ourselves, and thankfully, one in which we don't have to control at every turn. At last, it isn't up to only us. Living in the questions, no matter how uncomfortable it might feel, is living in the truth, which, once we get the hang of it, contains its own safety and trustworthiness.

The safety we experience in the truth, however, is not because we have all the answers or because the truth is comfortable (the usual markers of safety), but rather because the truth is inarguable. Surrendering to not knowing means planting our feet in moving ground and accepting that we're in a process without a known outcome—and that the process is the destination, for now.

Nancy Colier is a psychotherapist, interfaith minister, public speaker, workshop leader, and author of "Can't Stop Thinking: How to Let Go of Anxiety and Free Yourself from Obsessive Rumination" and "The Power of Off: The Mindful Way to Stay Sane in a Virtual World." For more information, visit



Thinking, we believe. will solve whatever **questions** challenges life presents

us, present in the moment, and hopeful toward the future. It sometimes feels like you're watching a movie of your own life.

Of course, I hope to increase the number of these moments in my life, but in that pursuit, I've learned a few things along the way.

The ultimate goal of these

serendipitous moments,

like all of life, is to provoke

gratitude.

## You Can't Overly Plan These

endipity," I'm not suggesting that life is random and has no purpose, but rather that our lived experience often feels unexpected and surprising. I'm talking about when life's unexpected moments unfold in a way that brings us joy and makes us feel alive.

By using the word "ser-

**Experiences** 

It's my experience that the joy of serendipity most often strikes when there's less hype and lower expectations. High expectations often mean we're expecting the world to conform exactly to our hopes and pleasures. This is a recipe for disappointment. The perfect posture for joyful serendipity

is to be completely present in the moment, with a dash of playfulness ready for a sprinkling of adventure. You don't want to be "stuck in your own thoughts." Like a good improv student,

the key is to adopt a "yes, and..." mindset: Embrace the opportunities presented to you each moment and expand on them.

## You Can't Make

Them Your Sole Aim As much as we enjoy moments of joyful serendipity, I don't think they were ever meant to be the main dish of life. They are more like a spice, adding flavor and excitement to an

already satisfying meal.

Finding the answer

believe.

isn't always the path

forward, and often isn't

as possible as we might

When we're busy taking care of our responsibilities and living a life of love and purpose, we aren't looking to these serendipitous moments to define us or give us a reason to get up in the morning.

If we give them space, moments of joyful serendipity are free to do what they do best: surprise us, make us feel alive, awaken our senses, engage our emotions, and give us a renewed appreciation for those around us. These moments of heightened emotional experience are the stuff that memories are made of.

## You Should Be Grateful and Not **Demand an Encore** One of the dangers of intensely pleasur-

able and memorable experiences is that we don't know how to receive them for what they are. For example, when we read books or watch movies depicting serendipitous joy, we can easily mistake them for "real life." But, as we all know, real life is made up of many more ordinary moments that don't take your breath away.

The ultimate goal of these serendipitous

moments, like all of life, is to provoke gratitude. They are divine gifts given to refresh us, move us, and fill us with wonder. The way to receive a gift is with a smile, a word of thanks, and enjoyment. Relish those moments and then relive them in your mind. Talk about them with friends and reminisce. Even go so far as to cultivate the right environment to create new moments, but never, ever demand an encore. That's not our right, and it destroys the spirit in which these gifts are to be received.

## The joy of serendipity is a gift, and so it can't

be forced, manufactured, or demanded. I wish you many such moments in your life, and the ability to recognize them for what they are.

Mike (and his wife, Mollie) blog at This Evergreen Home where they share their experience with living simply, intentionally, and rationally in this modern world. You can follow along by subscribing to their twice-weekly newsletter. This article was originally published on This Evergreen Home.



Life is full of mundane moments. Mostly. And then it can sometimes take a twist you didn't see coming and enjoyed immensely when it did.

## Living Simply by Letting Go

Open space in your home and schedule leaves room for new ideas and experiences

## LYNN JAFFEE

bout eight years ago, I convinced my husband to move from our four-bedroom home to a smaller townhome. Our kids were grown and we were tired of mowing the lawn, shoveling snow, and raking the snowdrifts off the roof. We're now tucked into a townhome with a lot less stuff. Even better, we're nestled in the woods with a creek running near our front door. And life is simpler.

While this sounds easy and idyllic, cleaning out our home of 18 years was no easy task. It took a lot of sorting, donating, tossing, and packing. During that process, several of our neighbors expressed that they wanted a simpler life. They too wanted to downsize, but felt they had too much stuff and were paralyzed by the thought of going through it all. Essentially, they were trapped in their homes by their accumulated belongings.

Don't misunderstand me—we had our share of junk amassing in the basement, and my husband is especially fond of holding onto stuff for reasons I cannot fathom. One theory is that people hang onto all kinds of things like scrapbooks, kindergarten artwork, programs, ticket stubs, and grandma's gewgaws as a way to remember the past. Another is that people store things because they are looking to the future, in that you never know when you will need 300 marbles or that scrap of green carpeting.

Most of us crave simplicity. We don't choose to be overwhelmed, to live in clutter, or to be held hostage by our stuff; it just seems to happen. This process and ensuing breakdown is something similar to digesability to discern what is useful and nutritious and what is not and should be let go of. However, when you're unable to separate what you need from what you don't, accuThe same is true of some of your time commulation happens.

The ability to sort and let go also occurs in your mind. As you take in ideas and knowldiscard those that don't serve you well. With let go, it becomes the stuff of worry, anxiety, and harboring grudges.

So how do you find simplicity in a complicated, cluttered life? There are no easy **Put stuff away.** Again, start with the easy answers, and sometimes trying to fix the stuff, like putting your dirty laundry into

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problem can intensify the feelings of being overwhelmed. However, there are a few steps that you may find helpful, offered with the caveat that you choose only one or two at a time, go slowly, and be kind to yourself:

Start with the things you know you can let go of painlessly. This is the low-hanging tion in Chinese medicine, in which one of fruit: the old newspapers in your entryway, its most important activities is your body's the junk mail sitting on the table, and the jacket with the broken zipper in your closet. These are easy, so just set them free.

mitments. Do you have to go to events that you don't enjoy or spend time with people who drain your energy? Some events may edge, you put the helpful ones to use, and be non-negotiable, but some may be easy to drop from your calendar. The end result your mind, however, when you're unable to is that you'll end up spending more time with the people you care about and less time honoring meaningless commitments.

store things because they are looking to the future, in that you

People

never know when you will need three hundred marbles or that scrap of green

carpeting.

the hamper, the dishes into the dishwasher, and the recycling out into the bin.

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Get really good at donating. Find a Goodwill near you or better yet, a charity that will pick your stuff up and use it locally. If you know it is easy to get it out of your house, it is easier to let it go. What to get rid of? A good rule of thumb is, if you haven't touched it in two years, set it free.

Create white space in your home. Clear out an area that has nothing in it except a few things that you love. While clutter feels stressful and overwhelming, an empty space to yourself is incredibly relaxing.

Create white space in your life, too. Prioritize your time commitments and learn to say "no." If you're feeling busy and overwhelmed, unscheduled time alone is like permission to do whatever pleases only you.

Practice gratitude. Maintaining a habit of thankfulness helps to keep worry and as acknowledging three things for which you're grateful each morning before getting out of bed.

And finally, just slow down. Spend some time doing nothing. Think about what your life would look like if you owned less; if you strived for less, and start simplifying in baby steps.

The bottom line is that clutter, whether it's in your living room or in your mind, is a source of stress and feeling overwhelmed. By letting go of some of the things that no longer serve you, it reduces stress and worry and creates space for new ideas and experiences. Give it a try!

Lynn Jaffee is a licensed acupuncturist and the author of "Simple Steps: The Chinese Way to Better Health." This article was originally published on AcupunctureTwinCities.com



What to get rid of? A good rule of thumb is if you haven't touched it in two years, set it free.

## NOW HIRING: LIFESTYLE SECTIONS

## TRAVEL EDITOR

Full-Time

The Epoch Times is seeking an experienced travel editor.

Types of stories include destination guides, local profiles, deep-dive features, travel news, and tips for a general audience. Stories touch on a variety of topics, including history, culture, nature, arts, family, and culinary arts, in ways that showcase and awaken readers to the beauty, wonder, and depth of heritage and tradition.

## ASSISTANT FOOD EDITOR Full-Time

The Epoch Times is seeking an experienced assistant food editor.

Applicants should have exceptional editing, writing, and management skills; expansive culinary knowledge and expertise; and a passion for shining the spotlight on culinary traditions, heritage, and home cooking.

## **FOOD REPORTER** Freelance and Full-Time

The Epoch Times is seeking experienced food writers to contribute feature articles about time-honored culinary traditions and recipes, and the people and places behind them, from across the U.S. and around the world.

Applicants should have a passion for seeking out fascinating food stories; the ability to develop them with original reporting and careful research; and the skill to write in a way that engages, informs, and inspires.

Send résumé, cover letter, samples, and three references to features@epochtimes.com



## **JOSEPH MERCOLA**

he majority of Americans are being misled by official health recommendations to eat "healthy" vegetable oils. Even the term "vegetable oil" is misleading because it gives you the impression that you are receiving vegetable micronutrients when these oils are usually toxic, industrially processed seed oils.

Seed oils are a key ingredient in processed foods and some of the most dangerous "foods" you could eat.

This is even more of an issue today since the high amounts of oxidative stress these oils cause seriously impair your immune function and radically increase your risk of all infections, including COVID-19. In my view, eliminating all seed oils is every bit as important as optimizing your vitamin D level to decrease your risk of COVID-19. At the Ancestral Health Symposium

oxidative. Dr. Chris Knobbe

parallels

between

[arsenic] and

seed oils, not

the least of

which is the

fact that arsenic

is fantastically

oxidative, pro-

held at UCLA in August 2020, ophthalmologist Dr. Chris Knobbe gave an excellent synopsis of why seed oils are Incredibly, the unifying mechanism behind Westthere's many

> disease, obesity, cancer, and diabetes. Knobbe is the founder and president of the Cure AMD Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to the prevention of age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

ernized chronic diseases such as heart

While most have heard about the health risks of eating processed sugars, net carbs, and trans fats, seed oils surpass all of these in the damage they cause to your health. If you were to make one change today to lower your risk of chronic diseases, eliminating seed oils from your diet would be the highest priority.

Heart disease, now the leading cause of death in the United States, was virtually unknown in the 19th century. The

**Most Americans Metabolically Sick** 

same goes for cancer, which caused 0.5

percent of deaths in 1811 and 5.8 percent of deaths in 1900—spiking to more than 31 percent of deaths in 2010. A similar pattern emerged for diabetes, which was rare in the 19th century and had a prevalence of 0.37 percent in 1935. By 2020, there was a 28-fold increase in 85 years, to a prevalence of 10.5 percent.

Obesity? Same story. With a prevalence of just 1.2 percent in the 19th century, obesity increased 33-fold in 115 years, to a prevalence of 39.8 percent in 2015. By 1990, meanwhile, 24 percent of U.S. adults were diagnosed with metabolic syndrome, which is a combination of high blood pressure, dyslipidemia, insulin resistance, hyperglycemia, and visceral obesity.

By 2009–2015, 88 percent of U.S. adults didn't meet the five criteria for metabolic health, measured by blood glucose, triglycerides, HDL cholesterol, blood pressure, and waist circumference.

Continued on Page 12



## How Emotions Have Affected Pandemic Behaviors

Research reveals how a person's emotional response changed their behavior and sense of time during the pandemic

For many people, the pandemic was a chance to refocus on forgotten passions.

## PHILIP GABLE & CHRIS WENDEL

The COVID-19 pandemic has meant different things to different people. For some, it's meant stress over new school and work regimes, or anxiety over the prospect of catching COVID-19 and dealing with the aftereffects of an infection. But for others, it's created space and freedom to pursue new passions or make decisions that had

been put off.

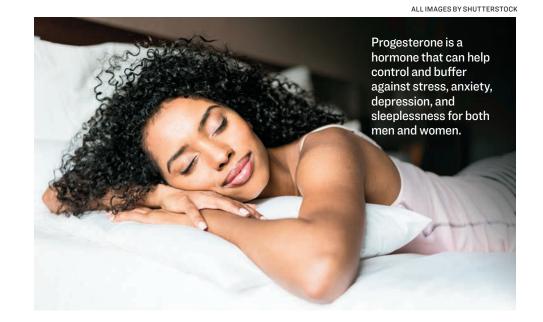
Our upended lives—for better or for worse—also likely influenced our perception of time.

In June 2020, we were part of a team of researchers who presented initial evidence that an individual's sense of time during the pandemic was closely related to their

People who reported feeling high levels

Continued on **Page 15** 





## The Hormonal Stress Buster

Progesterone is one of the 'feel good' hormones and many people don't have enough of it

## ANN LOUISE GITTLEMAN

It goes without saying that stress has become one of the most prevalent health concerns we're facing during these trying times.

Unfortunately, stress has major farreaching tentacles impacting almost every disease and autoimmune issue known to man. It can manifest in things such as weight-loss resistance, migraine headaches, or even acne. And, it can be involved with more life-threatening issues such as cardiomyopathy, Parkinson's, stroke, and dementia. Stress affects every aspect of our health and well-being, so it's imperative to keep our stress levels in check as much as possible.

Making sleep a No. 1 priority, spending time in nature, meditating, and unplugging on a daily basis are wonderful ways to handle stress. But there is another way that many of us overlook: a hormonal stress buster that you probably haven't considered.

Progesterone is one of the "feel good" hormones. And, if you, like millions of others around the world, are dealing with unrelenting stress, you are likely in need of a boost of it.

## It's absolutely essential to have your hormones tested if you want an accurate measurement of individual hormones.

## **How Progesterone Beats Stress**

Produced by the adrenal glands, progesterone functions as both buffer to and treatment for various ailments including stress. Because progesterone plays a significant role in so many functions critical to good quality of life, normal fluctuations in this hormone can have potentially deleterious effects, including the stressful feelings of depression, anxiety, and sleeplessness.

Quite simply stated, stress causes estrogen dominance and a lack of the calming effects of progesterone that counter excess estrogen's negative and often irritable, excitable effects. And no wonder it plays such an important role in our brain health. Progesterone is up to 20 times more concentrated in the brain than in the bloodstream.

Progesterone is widely recognized today thanks to the pioneering research of Dr. Raymond Peat and Dr. John Lee. They found that progesterone deficiency is epidemic among men and women from 18 to 80. Many people simply aren't producing enough progesterone because they lack the nutrient precursors zinc and vitamin B6. And excessive stress depletes this critical hormone.

Progesterone's key role is to help negate the effects of excess estrogen. But when Your Body, and Reverse the Symptoms levels are low and estrogen dominance of Aging." This article was originally happens, largely due to long-term stress,

symptoms such as anxiety, insomnia, fatigue, and irritability begin to appear. These can cascade into so many areas in our lives and destroy our health and

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It isn't common to consider hormones first when you think of ways to approach debilitating stress and anxiety in today's world. There are many other considerations such as thyroid and adrenal health that control the body's intricate emotional balance. But through the many years I've been working with hormone testing, I have found that most people are lacking the proper amount of progesterone needed to combat excess estrogen and help control stress. Therefore, I recommend two very important things to consider as you navigate your way to better mental health and an improved quality of life.

### Here's How to Test Your **Hormone Levels**

It's absolutely essential to have your hormones tested if you want an accurate measurement of individual hormones. I recommend the Salivary Hormone Panel, which evaluates your body's levels of bioavailable progesterone, estradiol, estriol, testosterone, DHEA, and cortisol. Unlike blood tests, which don't measure bioavailable hormone activity, saliva testing is considered to be the most accurate measure of free, bioavailable hormonal activity.

This convenient, at-home Salivary Hormone Testing Kit uses a saliva sample to provide an individualized hormone assessment (from yours truly) to help identify and alleviate the underlying causes of many imbalance-related issues, including stress, anxiety, depression, and sleeplessness.

Keep in mind that as a rule of thumb, I'm not recommending hormone products without testing. But since it's safe to use and since nine out of 10 times, I find deficient levels of progesterone on everyone I've tested, I recommend the topical use of Progesta Key (a transdermal cream that contains USP progesterone derived from wild yam). Products like this can aid in optimizing your progesterone levels and correcting estrogen imbalance.

Progesterone can help control stress, anxiety, depression, and sleeplessness throughout the many stages of life for both men and women. If you find you have a deficiency of this hormone, you can take

Ann Louise Gittleman holds a master's in nutrition education from Columbia University, and is certified as a nutrition specialist by the American College of Nutrition. She also has a doctorate in holistic nutrition and has served as the chief nutritionist of the Pediatric Clinic at Bellevue Hospital and is the former director of nutrition at the Pritikin Longevity Center in Santa Monica, Calif. Her latest book is "RADICAL LONGEVITY—The Powerful Plan to Sharpen Your Brain, Strengthen published on AnnLouise.com



Stress can ruin a healthy balance of estrogen and progesterone. Progesterone counters the often irritable. excitable effects caused by excess estrogen.





Travel nurses take on temporary assignments in hospitals or other health care facilities that have staffing shortages. The contracts typically last a few

## Worn-Out Nurses Hit the Road for Better Pay

Hospital finances and morale suffer as travel nurses become a growing trend

### **BLAKE FARMER**

n parts of the country where COVID-19 continues to fill hospitals, a rotating cast of traveling nurses helps keep intensive care units fully staffed. Hospitals have to pay handsomely to get that temporary help, and those higher wages are tempting some staff nurses to hit the road, too.

Nearly two years into the pandemic, there's some truth in a joke circulating among frustrated ICU nurses: They ask their hospitals for appropriate compensation for the hazards they've endured. And the nurses are rewarded with a pizza party instead.

Theresa Adams said that's what happened at the Ohio hospital where she worked. The facility across town was offering bonuses to keep its nurses from leaving. But not hers. They got a pizza party.

what you signed up for.' No, I did not sign up agement at the moment. for this," she said of the unparalleled stress brought on by the pandemic. Adams is an ICU nurse who helped build

and staff COVID units in one of Ohio's largest my calling and knowing my worth."

a nurse leaves, the remaining nurses can be stretched dangerously thin, caring for more patients at

hospitals. She recently left for a lucrative stint as a travel nurse in California.

Travel nurses take on temporary assignments in hospitals or other health care facilities that have staffing shortages. The contracts typically last a few months and usually pay more than staff positions.

## There is a difference between knowing my calling and knowing my worth.

Theresa Adams, nurse in Ohio

Adams hopes to return to her home hospi-

"I did not sign up for the facility taking advantage of the fact that I have a calling," she said. "There is a difference between knowing



A reckoning may be on its way as hospitals try to stabilize a worn-out workforce.

The use of traveling nurses took off in the 1980s in response to nursing shortages. Although they've always been paid more for their flexibility, some traveling ICU nurses can now pull in as much as \$10,000 a week, which can be several times more than staff

While some hospitals have offered retention bonuses or increased pay for permanent staff members, nurses say it doesn't compare to the financial bonanza of traveling. Hospital managers now find themselves trapped in a pricey hiring cycle—competing for, in particular, the most highly trained critical care nurses who can monitor COVID patients on the advanced life-support devices known as ECMO (extracorporeal membrane oxy- Iknow that I have missed things otherwise I genation) machines.

ible, because they're the most seasoned nurses. And this is what all my colleagues are facing, too," said Jonathan Emling, a nurse and the ECMO director at Ascension St. Thomas Hospital in Nashville.

The shortage of ECMO nurses has prevented the hospital from admitting additional COVID patients who need their blood oxygenated outside their body, he said. No more staff nurses have enough experience to start the training.

"We will train these people and then six months later they will be gone and traveling," Emling said. "So it's hard to invest so much in them training-wise and time-wise to see

And when they leave, hospitals are often forced to fill the spot with a traveler.

"It's like a Band-Aid," said Dr. Iman Abuzeid, co-founder of a San Francisco nurse recruiting company called Incredible Health. "We need it now, but it is temporary." Incredible Health helps to quickly place

full-time staff nurses in some of the country's largest health systems. The number of listings for full-time, permanent nurses on the company's platform has shot up 200 percent in the past year.

To help hospitals, some states are chipping in to hire travel nurses. But for many hospitals, the higher costs are straining their budgets, which is especially difficult for those that have suspended elective surgeries—often a hospital's biggest moneymaker—to accommodate COVID patients.

"Every executive we interact with is under pressure to reduce the number of traveler nurses on their teams, not just from a cost standpoint but also from a quality-of-care standpoint," Abuzeid said.

It's hard on morale as well: Camaraderie suffers when newcomers need help finding syringes or other supplies but may be paid two or three times as much as the staff nurses showing them the ropes.

Some hospitals are trying to stop the turnover by offering big signing bonuses to permanent nurses, as well as loan forgiveness or tuition assistance to pursue additional education. Hospitals have also hiked pay for nurses as they earn certifications, especially in critical care.

Other medical centers are looking outside the United States.

Henry Ford Health System in Michigan announced plans to bring in hundreds of nurses from the Philippines. Smaller community hospitals are looking abroad, too. City-owned Cookeville Regional Medical Center, in a Tennessee town of 35,000, is now recruiting its first foreign nurses.

"The cost for what we pay for a local recruiter to bring us one full-time staff member is more expensive than what we are going to be spending to bring one foreign nurse," said Scott Lethi, chief nursing officer at Cookeville

Lethi hopes the staffers from overseas will decide to stay more than a year or two. He said even new nurses sometimes leave or burn out: Cookeville hired a few recent graduates of U.S. nursing programs who quit after just a few months.

Among ICU nurses of all ages, two-thirds have considered leaving the profession because of the pandemic, according to a survey published in September by the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses.

When a nurse leaves—whether to retire, become a travel nurse or work in another field—the remaining nurses can be stretched dangerously thin, caring for more patients at once. COVID patients are particularly demanding, especially those on ventilators or ECMO machines who may require one-onone care round-the-clock. COVID patients may be hospitalized for weeks or months.

"My ability to care for people has suffered. would not have missed had I had the time to spend," said Kevin Cho Tipton, an advanced practice nurse in the South Florida public health system. "Many of us feel like we're becoming worse at our jobs."

The worry about providing substandard care weighs heavily on nurses. But in the end, Tipton said, it's the patients who suffer.

This story is part of a partnership that includes WPLN, NPR, and KHN.

Blake Farmer covers health care in Nashville, reporting on the region's unique health challenges as well as the city's concentration of health care companies. He's been with Nashville Public Radio since 2007. KHN (Kaiser Health News) is a national newsroom that produces in-depth journalism about health issues. Together with Policy Analysis and Polling, KHN is one of the three major operating programs at KFF (Kaiser Family Foundation). KFF is an endowed nonprofit organization providing information on health issues to the nation.

When buying

reflecting on

your physical

exercise

machine,

including

factors like

injuries and

you choose

pain can help

## How to Choose a Home Exercise Machine

## **MAT LECOMPTE**

Most people don't need another excuse not to exercise: no time, too hot, too cold, or even pain and practicality can hold people back.

Purchasing a home exercise machine can help solve the problem and make exercise much easier. Hopping on an exercise bike for 15 minutes, for example, can help you squeeze in a heart-healthy workout most days of the week.

Working out at home is much easier. It offers the opportunity to split workouts up during the day while enjoying the privacy of your home. But what should you get?

Different factors are worth considering before buying. Depending on your situation, such as your history of injuries or pain, some choices might be better than others.

If you have a history of knee or hip pain, for example, a stationary bike may be better than a treadmill because it allows you to relieve Barbells and racks are better options for

the load of your weight on your lower body. Stationary bikes are also great for people with balance issues or little experience ex-

If you're concerned about osteoporosis, a machine that puts some stress on your bones and muscles is more useful. In this case, a treadmill or elliptical machine is the better choice. Ellipticals are great because they bring

your arms into the mix, but they might not be the best choice for people with shoulder issues. The repetitive motion may add unwanted strain.

Rowing machines are probably the best for intensity as well as incorporating your whole body. Those with back pain or people who struggle to get up and down, however, may want to avoid these machines.

Cable systems or bands can be useful for resistance training at any level.

If you're concerned about osteoporosis, then a machine that puts some stress on your bones and muscles is more useful.



experienced lifters.

There are a ton of choices and your situation should help guide your decisions.

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

The Omega-6 Apocalypse

How the ubiquitous use of

in a new age of disease

Continued from Page 9

as the culprits.

Macular degeneration and osteoarthritis

followed similar striking increases, with

Knobbe asking the question of what was

so ubiquitous during this time that could

have prompted these changes. Dietary

history provides the answer, with the

introduction of four primary processed

foods—sugar, industrially processed seed

oils, refined flour, and trans fats—acting

"I believe this is a global human experi-

ment for which no one gave consent. No-

body saw this coming. They wouldn't have

signed up for it," he said. Knobbe also cites

the work of Weston A. Price, the dentist

who wrote the classic book "Nutrition and

Physical Degeneration." In the 1900s, Price

did extensive research on the link between

He was one of the major nutritional pio-

neers of all time, and his research revealed

native tribes that still ate their traditional

diet had nearly perfect teeth and were al-

But when these tribal populations were

introduced to refined sugar and white flour,

their health and perfect teeth rapidly de-

"Weston Price connected these foods,

these very foods essentially, to physical

degenerative disease in 1939. Nobody lis-

tened," Knobbe said. Knobbe seems to be

most 100 percent free of tooth decay.

oral health and physical diseases.

processed seed oils ushered

**FOOD AS MEDICINE** 

yster mushrooms stand out to "smoke."

mushrooms.'

vitamin C only.

5. Anti-Cancer Effects In addition to beta-glucans, ovster mush-

rooms are a "reservoir of macromolecules," including resveratrol, concanavalin A, cibacron blue affinity protein, p-hydroxybenzoic acid, ergosterol, and others, which play anti-tumor, immunomodulatory, and antioxidant roles that may help fight cancer.

Oyster mushrooms' unique combina-

## 6. Liver Protection

Phosphorylated polysaccharide from oyster mushrooms protected the liver from chemical-induced injury in an animal study, revealing strong hepatoprotective and antioxidant effects. Oyster mushroom extract has shown similarly protective effects in alleviating chemical-induced liver damage in animals.

If you're looking for more reasons to add oyster mushrooms to your regular meal rotation, consider that they've been researched for at least 30 conditions, including cancer, diabetes, respiratory infections, and aging. Here are 15 more of the mechanisms behind

10. Antibacterial

12. Cell cycle arrest

14. Detoxifier

15. Osteogenic

17. Antifungal

18. Caspase-3 activation (anticancer)

20. P21 activation (anticancer)

21. Tumor suppressor protein p53 up-

regulation, yielding potential therapeutic TheEpochTimes.com

These delicious fungi are packed with nutrients and provide many medicinal benefits

among fungi species for their fan-shaped, oyster-like caps. Not only do oyster mushrooms resemble oysters, but their mild flavor is seafood-like and somewhat nutty. In the wild, you can find ovster mushrooms growing on decaying wood such as beech and aspen trees. While they grow vear-round, they're most likely to fruit in mild weather after rain and sometimes release so many spores that they appear

Native to Europe, North America, and Asia, oyster mushrooms have been enjoyed since ancient times and were first recorded in the West by a Dutch naturalist in 1775. Now widely cultivated, oyster mushrooms come in a range of colors, including gray, blue, yellow, pink, and white, which is why they're sometimes called "designer

The term oyster mushroom actually describes a number of different fungi species in the Pleurotaceae family, with Pleurotus ostreatus being among the most common. Also intriguing, oyster mushrooms are considered carnivorous, as its mycelium or network of fungal cells, kills and eats nemotodes, a type of parasitic worm. For this reason, oyster mushrooms are being considered for natural pest control to prevent nematode-related plant diseases.

With their delicate, savory anise flavor, oyster mushrooms can be enjoyed in a range of dishes, from stir-fries and soups to sauces and egg dishes. They're also sometimes featured in vegan "calamari." While taste is the first reason why many choose ovster mushrooms for culinary uses, these mushrooms also have an impressive roster of health benefits that's worthy of your

21 Reasons to Eat Oyster Mushrooms

Medicinal mushrooms, as a whole, are among the healthiest foods you can eat, but each mushroom variety has unique beneficial effects. Rich in dietary fiber, minerals, vitamin B, and protein, there are at least 21 pharmacological actions that have been attributed to ovster mushrooms, which you can explore in-depth at GreenMedInfo.com. This list of researched benefits includes:

## 1. Bone Protection

With their delicate

When oyster mushrooms are fermented by gut microbiota, it leads to favorable al terations that enhance the activity of osteoblasts, or bone-forming cells.

## 2. Antioxidants

Oyster mushrooms are rich in antioxidant polysaccharides, helping to protect against oxidative damage. One type of these polysaccharides, beta-glucans, which are known for their antioxidant and anticancer activities, also increase the activity of enzymes that promote xenobiotic (foreign to the body) detoxification.

Via this beneficial effect, they're able to protect against the harmful effects of acrylamide, a neurotoxic and possibly carcinogenic compound formed during high-temperature cooking.

## Mushrooms are a nourishing tonic for humans and the environment

## 3. Blood Sugar Reduction/AntiDiabetes

Oyster mushrooms, consumed for two seven-day periods during a 24-day study, significantly reduced blood sugar, blood pressure, triglycerides, and cholesterol in people with diabetes, without any negative effects on the liver or kidneys.

## 4. Immune System Support

Among children with frequent respiratory tract infections, those treated with a syrup containing beta-glucans from oyster mushrooms and vitamin C had fewer infections than those treated with

Specifically, 36 percent of the children given beta-glucans were free from respiratory infections during the study period, compared to 21 percent in the placebo group. Not only did the beta-glucan significantly reduce the number of lower respiratory tract infections, but it also significantly decreased the frequency of flu and flu-like disease and modulated humoral and cellular immunity, revealing "complex immunomodulatory activity."

tion of polysaccharides, proteoglycans, and polypeptides may be so immuneenhancing that they could "overcome the limitation of traditional cancer therapies."

### 15 More Reasons to Eat Oyster Mushrooms

their varied health-boosting effects: food for the table."

8. Apoptotic 9. Antiproliferative

11. Cardioprotective

13. Chemopreventive

16. Cholesterol lowering agent

19. Caspase-9 activation (anticancer)

article, please see the article online at

the 21st-century equivalent of Price. Why Seed Oils Are Like Arsenic The problem with seed oils is that they're industrially processed, proinflammatory,

and drive oxidation in your body. Health officials like to state that seed oils are great for you because they lower cholesterol, but as Knobbe says, so does arsenic. The two toxins actually have quite a bit in common: "We may think this is a joke, but actually, incredibly, there's many paral-

lels between [arsenic] and seed oils, not the least of which is the fact that arsenic is fantastically oxidative, pro-oxidative. And this is exactly how seed oils get us. They drive the oxidation. They're pro-oxidative, proinflam-

matory, and toxic, but of all of these, it is oxidation. That is by far the worst." You'll find seed oils in most processed foods, including fast food and even many

expensive restaurants. "Even the finest restaurants are using seed oils because they're about one-sixth

the cost of butter," Knobbe said. The reason they've been able to remain in the food supply, despite their high toxicity, is because they're not acute biological poisons but chronic ones. Chronic poisoning means symptoms don't occur immediately and often only after repeated, long-term exposure. A solid strategy when eating at a restaurant is to avoid all the sauces and dressings, as they are more than likely loaded with these heavily processed seed oils.

"They were brought in slowly, beginning in the 1860s. And they were first used to adulterate lard and butter, and then gradually, they were used to supplant and replace lard, butter, and beef tallow. And that's how they got away with this. And so we gradually became overweight and sick, and they've

have heard about the health risks **of eating** processed sugars, net carbs and trans fats, seed oils far surpass all of these in the damage they cause to

your health.

While most

Americans smoke and drink less now than a century ago, yet their health is deteriorating. The hidden driver of chronic disease may be seed oil.

Seed oils were introduced

gradually to the American

diet and may now make

ries, from sources rang-

ing from packaged foods,

to restaurant foods, to

salad dressings.

up a third of daily calo-

have no heart disease, yet the American Heart Association continues to tell Americans to limit saturated fat to no more than 5 percent to 6 percent of daily calories. Americans, based on a 24 percent to 32 percent of daily caloric intake from seed oils, are getting 8 percent to 12 percent or higher of their daily calories from linoleic acid alone. In another example, Tokelauans, who live in a territory near New Zealand, eat a very different diet with 54 percent to 62 percent of calories from coconut,

> of which is saturated fat. Only about 1 percent of their diet or less is omega-6 fats, and they also have no heart disease and virtually no obesity

which amounts to 53 percent fat, 48 percent

kept them in the food supply that way."

are also:

Cytotoxic

Genotoxic

Mutagenic

Carcinogenic

Atherogenic

Obesogenic

Thrombogenic

**One-Third of US Caloric** 

**Intake Is Seed Oils** 

In addition to being proinflammatory,

Knobbe points out, these seed oil poisons

Knobbe's published data show that seed

oils, which were introduced into the United

States diet in 1866, made up 32 percent of

Americans' diet by 2010, which amounts to

80 grams per person per day. In contrast, in

1865, most people would have only about 2

percent to 3 percent of their caloric intake

from omega-6 linoleic acid, found in seed

oils, which would have come from primar-

omega-6, but this changes when animals

today. CAFO pork may contain 20 percent

omega-6 fats, for comparison. Knobbe

highlights several native populations that

have very low rates of chronic diseases and

comparatively low consumption of linoleic

acid, such as the Maasai Tribe of Kenva

They eat primarily milk, meat, and

blood—a diet that's 66 percent animal fat

(33 percent to 45 percent saturated animal

fat), 17 percent carbohydrate, and only 1.7

percent omega-6 linoleic acid (LA). They

ily from butter, lard, and beef tallow.

or diabetes. "If we look at these populations," Knobbe said, "and you can look at all of them, ancestrally living populations, what they don't have is refined sugar, refined wheat, and of course they don't have vegetable oils."

"So what about the omega-6 LA in these traditional populations? It is 0.6 to about 1.7 percent, I think all are under 2 percent, to the best of my knowl-

edge, where our Westernized populations—7 to 12 percent omega-6 linoleic acid alone. This again is the key takeaway point. So what happens to this omega-6? We accumulated it in our body fat."

## **Japanese Plagued by Seed Oils**

While ancestral populations have had their health protected by not consuming seed oils, other populations, like Japan, have had declines in health that cor-

respond to increasing consumption of these toxic oils. Since 1960, Japan has had marked increases in obesity, high blood pressure, Type 2 diabetes, metabolic syndrome, multiple cancers, and age-related macular degeneration.

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Meanwhile, in 1950, the Japanese were consuming only 3 grams a day of seed oils, which rose to 39 grams a day by 2004. As a percentage of total calories, omega-6 increased to 6.2 percent in 2004 from 1.55 percent in 1950.

"That's the main problem right there," Knobbe said. "So Japan's declining health is most likely due to a 13-fold, 1,200 percent increase in highly pro-oxidative, proinflammatory, toxic, and nutrient-deficient seed oils."

According to the CDC, six in 10 Americans have a chronic disease, and heart disease, asthma, cancer, and diabetes have increased 700 percent since the National Health Survey was undertaken in 1935.

As tech entrepreneur Jeff Nobbs noted in a breakdown of the statistics, during this Ancestrally raised animals had very low time, Americans have been smoking and drinking less, two of the primary drivers of are raised in concentrated animal feedchronic disease. Nobbs, too, believes veging operations (CAFO), the way they are etable oil is the missing link that explains

why Americans keep getting sicker. "If vegetable oil is indeed the hidden culprit behind today's chronic disease epidemic, it's an elegant and simple solution to explain why chronic disease and obesity continue to rise, even as we adhere to public health advice.

"I'm convinced that our wars against red meat, saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium may be misguided. Fighting those battles may be like focusing on the sidekicks when the true villain pulling all the strings is still hiding in the shadows. It's time to shine a light on that slippery villain, our possible public health enemy No. 1: vegetable oil."

## **Prepare Your Food at Home**

It's vital that you reduce your intake of industrially processed seed oils as much as vou can. This means eliminating the folowing oils:

- Soy
- Corn
- Canola Safflower
- Sunflower Peanut
- Grapeseed

To do this, you'll need to avoid all ultraprocessed foods, fast foods, and many restaurant foods. This is why it's so important to prepare as much of your food as you can in your home so you know what you are eating and, in the case of seed oils—what you're not.

Dr. Joseph Mercola is the founder of Mercola.com. An osteopathic physician, bestselling 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

For links to studies mentioned in this article, please see the article online at TheEpochTimes.com

## Essential Oils for Knee Pain Relief

## **IAN KANE**

During my time in the military, I'd frequently hear other soldiers (usually middle-aged or older) complaining about their "trick knee." As I've gotten older, I've learned that knee pain is a frequent issue for adults, especially as we all age.

While knee pain is commonly caused by daily wear and tear from activities such as walking or running, standing for extended periods of time, bending, and lifting, it can also be the result of certain sports such as basketball or soccer. These types of sports entail lots of sudden stopping and starting, as well as pivoting in place, which can put tremendous pressure on people's knees.

Eventually, age catches up with us all, and knee problems can sometimes be part of the aging process. These typically show up in the form of overstressed ligaments, arthritis, and tendonitis.

## **Essential Oils**

Essential oils have been used for many years for pain relief and to treat inflammation. Many of these oils can gradually numb out knee pain. Since essential oils are an allnatural remedy instead of a synthetic one, they usually have fewer side effects. Therefore, they can be ideal in treating knee pain and inflammation.

Here are some essential oils that can be effective tools in your pain management

## Lavender Oil One of the most common essential oils that

people use for knee pain relief is lavender. For centuries, it has been used for not only joint pain but also headaches and migraines. Lavender oil is brimming with agents that are mildly sedative and can also reduce both anxiety and stress levels when inhaled. A 2018 randomized, single-blinded clinical trial studied the effects of massaging patients' knees with a 3 percent dilution of lavender oil and followed up by monitoring their ability to perform their normal daily activities. The group that self-applied lavender to their knees experienced faster relief than the one that hadn't.

## **Eucalyptus Oil**

Eucalyptus essential oil contains potent agents that act as highly effective nerverelated pain relievers, promote better blood circulation, and can help to unblock clogged

sinuses. Just a small amount of eucalyptus oil can not only help with your knee pain but can also soothe headaches and migraines, as well as arthritis. A randomized clinical trial published in

2013 found "inhalation of eucalyptus oil was effective in decreasing patient's pain and blood pressure following total knee replacement."

In addition, eucalyptus oil contains powerful antibacterial and antioxidant properties that can boost overall health.

## Rosemary Oil

Rosemary essential oil has been known to help with recurring joint stiffness, swelling, and pain, such as chronic knee pains that keep coming back. Since inflamed knee muscles frequently spasm and in turn, cause pain, applying this kind of oil can help to relieve those spasms.

Studies also suggest that rosemary essential oil can help to improve blood circulation around knee joints. This oil contains both anti-inflammatory and painkillingcompounds that can also boost the potency of popular pain relief pharmaceuticals.

Additionally, a study that was published in Therapeutic Advances in Psychophar-

Essential oils have been used for many years for pain relief and many of them can gradually numb knee pain without the side effects

of painkillers.



macology showed that smelling rosemary essential oil can boost a person's physical and mental abilities, such as their concentration, speed, accuracy, and overall performance levels. In many countries, rosemary oil is considered a cognitive stimulant, causing people who regularly ingest it to improve their focus. A study on mice in 2017 also found inhaling rosemary oil increased brain dopamine level and may have "therapeutic potential against stress-related psychiatric disorders."

Ian Kane is an U.S. Army veteran, author, filmmaker, and actor. He is dedicated to the development and production of innovative, thought-provoking, characterdriven films and books of the highest quality. You can check out his health blog at IanKaneHealthNut.com



## For the Best Flavor, Grow Your Own Mushrooms are a nourishing tonic for

humans and the environment, and oyster mushrooms in particular are regarded as both a "health promoter and environmental restorer." This is because, as they grow, they break

down toxins from the environment, removing and neutralizing them. These versatile mushrooms have been found to reduce bacteria such as E. coli while also breaking down hydrocarbons and remediating heavy metals.

Growing mushrooms is, therefore, one of the only economical biotechnologies that, as noted by Ethiopian researchers, "combines the production of protein rich food with the reduction in environmental pollution." It's surprisingly simple to grow mushrooms at home, and a number of kits are available to get you started.

Growing your own mushrooms not only provides you with the freshest mushrooms you can find, but they'll taste better tooand you won't have to worry about identifying mushrooms in the wild, a crucial step since some wild mushrooms are poisonous. As noted by the Missouri Department of Conservation, "Considered a choice edible, wild ovster mushrooms have a much better flavor than the cultivated oyster mushrooms found at most grocery stores ... growing oyster mushrooms at home ... [is] educational, fun, and provide[s] healthful

The GMI Research Group is dedicated to in vestigating the most important health and environmental issues of the day. Special emphasis will be placed on environmental health. Our focused and deep research will explore the many ways in which the present condition of the human body directly reflects the true state of the ambient environment. This work is reproduced and distributed with the permission of GreenMedInfo LLC. Sign up for their newsletter at www.GreenmedInfo.health

For links to studies mentioned in this

individuals who reported being relaxed, happy, and confident felt that time was

In contrast, participants who reported

strong feelings of fear, anxiety, or anger—or who felt that their lives were out of con-

trol—perceived time passing slowly. This sensation of time moving sluggishly was also associated with greater worry about

personally getting COVID-19, anxiety

about whether a family member would become infected, and concern about how

the virus would affect personal finances.

We also found an interesting pattern of results related to participants' beliefs about the dangers of COVID-19 and the

ability to address the spread of the virus.

Specifically, participants who felt the

government could effectively control

the pandemic and that there were effective treatments for COVID-19 felt

that time was passing more quickly. Participants who felt there was an

insufficient amount of medical

equipment to treat COVID-19 and

felt the virus was highly lethal re-

ported time passing more slowly.

ception was connected to behavior.

Over the course of the pandemic,

we found that when people were feeling that time was moving by

more quickly, they were more likely

to wear a mask. Meanwhile, when peo-

ple perceived time passing more slowly,

they tended to avoid large gatherings.

ior over the other?

Both limit the spread of the virus. So what might explain the likelihood of one behav-

Individuals who wear masks are engag-

ing in more approach-motivated behav-

ior, as wearing a mask doesn't protect the

wearer as much as it protects those in their

vicinity. The more positive people felt, the

more likely they were to wear a mask to

Those who avoid large gatherings are en-

gaging in more self-protective, or avoid-

ance-motivated behavior. It prevents you

from getting the virus from other people,

with fear and avoidance influencing the

In other words, if you see a light at the

end of the tunnel—through treatments and

faith in the government's responses—you're

more likely to have an upbeat attitude and

be more motivated to engage in behaviors

that help others. If you feel utterly hopeless

or sense foreboding doom, time creeps by.

This seems to motivate the impulse to hun-

As our understanding and awareness of

COVID-19 variants increases, so does our

understanding of ourselves and how we

behave. These findings may highlight the

importance of maintaining good habits and

finding hobbies that foster positive emo-

ker down and protect yourself.

protect others around them.

Then there's the way time per-

passing more quickly.

## Create a Place for Everything That Matters

### **LEO BABAUTA**

It can often feel like our lives are scattered. Like a house filled with clutter, our lives can feel like a huge mess.

I'd like to share an idea for getting things in order: create a place for everything that

In our physical houses, things can get messy when we just put things in random places. So when we declutter, it's not just about getting rid of things we don't want it's also about finding a home for everything we do want. A place for everything.

Once we have a home for each item, it's a matter of training ourselves to put them back where they belong. And once this is in place, things can feel much more sane. It's not about keeping to a perfect system, it's about knowing where things go, and then allowing ourselves to relax into that structure.

What if we could apply the same idea to everything else in our lives? If something is worth being in our lives, doesn't it deserve to have a place? For example:

- Tasks can go in one place, a task manager app or text list that you keep in one place. Instead of keeping them in various messages and inboxes, put them in one list.
- If you have recurring tasks or events to remember, you could put them in one place: a calendar, or a reminders list, or your task list if it features recurring tasks. But choose one, instead of using all of these and forgetting where your recurring tasks might be.
- Doing your finances can become a mess if we don't have structure. You can create a daily habit (like checking your accounts or budget program) and a weekly review to pay bills and take care of other tasks.
- Do you have a thousand browser tabs open? What if the tasks that each tab represented all had a place? Like a list of things to read and watch, a list of ideas to consider for the future, a list of websites you're using to research a project, and of course your task list if the tabs represent tasks you need to do.
- If you have a thousand messages in ten different messaging apps, you might create daily rituals for checking and replying to messages instead of doing it randomly

These are a few ideas, but you might find other places where your life feels messy, and then find a place or a structure to keep that messiness organized. A home for ev-

In the examples above (which you are not limited to), the main places to keep things

- 1. A task list for tasks.
- 2. A calendar for recurring events and re-
- 3. A notes program that has lists of things to read/watch, ideas to consider, research notes, and links.
- 4. A daily and weekly finance routine. 5. A regular ritual to check and reply to

If we had regular times in the day and the

feel much more in order. Leo Babauta is the author of six books and

week to do these things, our lives would

the writer of Zen Habits, a blog with over 2 million subscribers. Visit ZenHabits.net



It's not just physical objects that need to have a place. Notes, reminders, and information can also be put into physical order by giving them their own place.



The constant mess that comes with having small children is a reminder of their active lives, growing and learning as they muck about

Trails of snack

crumbs, bits

of leaves,

and shreds

of crayon

wrappers

are signs that

there is life

lived inside

It may not seem so in the

moment, but when you

the mess came with

look back, you may realize

our walls.

## A Way to Reframe Life's Mundane Chores

The endless tasks of motherhood are part of a precious season of life

## **MOLLIE DONGHIA**

t's yet another day of washing dishes, picking up dirty socks off the floor, scrubbing remnants of glitter glue that have dried onto the kitchen table, and vacuuming crumbs that have been trailed all throughout the

Some days it seems that the chores and picking up after my three young kids never ends. Every room I enter, there's a mess to clean up.

Thoughts like "why do my kids just leave their discarded toy right in the middle of the kitchen floor?" or "why can't they just eat a snack like a normal human being instead of sprinkling crumbs all over?" keep coming up.

I've come to realize lately that no matter how many cleaning routines or chore charts we have, kids are still going to be kids. Life will continue to have spills, messes, crumbs, laundry, and cleaning.

So I ask myself, how do I find joy in this decade-long season of parenthood with all the demands that are placed on me as a mother?

I believe there's a way to see these tasks as more than just mundane and tiring. If I can see the beauty of the ordinary, I can see past the endless chores and see that this is the effort it takes to raise kids and keep a house intact. I can choose to see beyond the hassle that it may cause now, and realize the joy that comes from the ways that I give my time and energy again and again.

But I also want to spend these days of parenthood soaking up the beautiful moments that only small children can bring. I want to appreciate the fact that our home is bursting with life, noise, messes, and crumbs. It may not feel beautiful in the moment, but as I step back and reflect, I can see that something beautiful really is going on.

## **Seeing Beauty in the Ordinary**

It can be easy to feel overwhelmed and burdened with the duties it takes as a parent. But instead of allowing myself to fall into this trap, I can reframe these moments as small, imperfect gifts.

Washing dishes: The byproduct of a chance to sit together as a family several times each day and share a good meal.

**Stained clothes**: Kids that enjoy being outside, digging in the dirt, and jumping in muddy puddles as they soak in all of life's adventures.

**Vacuuming the floor**: Trails of snack crumbs, bits of leaves, and shreds of crayon wrappers are signs that there is life lived inside our walls that encourages creativity and play.

Fingerprints on the windows: Dozens of smudges and fingerprints across the windows remind me that I have three sets of little fingers that are active and bodies that are bouncing around the house.

Week 44, 2021 THE EPOCH TIMES

Cleaning up potty accidents: Learning is occurring and mistakes are a healthy way of gaining a new skill. Show kindness when an accident has happened and take it as an opportunity for the child to see that we all fail sometimes.

**Spills on the counter and floors:** Spills are new milestones of success, where independence is gradually emerging. As my kids grow and become more independent, they're bound to make more of a mess in the process of learning.

Doing many loads of laundry: Kids are busy, active, and curious about life. And the multiple outfit changes they go through each day reflects that they have their own personalities and opinions.

Fixing the couch cushions or throw pillows: The boundless amounts of energy emitted from their bodies is something to be admired. The simple pleasure of jumping off the couch onto a pile of cushions and pillows is one way that they're using their creativity to learn.

Constantly refilling the pantry and fridge: A sign of healthy, well-fed children who are growing and have a neverending appetite because of the energy the use each day.

Picking up toys: Kids have been entertained all day long, have used their imaginations to learn and grow, and have the innocence of childhood that will one day be gone as they mature into adolescents and adults.

While all of these tasks can seem daunting and unending, I'm challenged to see how I can change my perspective and become a parent who graciously accepts the more undesirable roles with a changed heart. I want to live a real life (messes and all) with real people whom I love, and not let the mundane chores rule my attitude or make me resent this season of life.

One day, when Mike and I have an empty nest, I'm sure we would do anything for a trail of cheerios to vacuum up or have to look under the sofa for missing puzzle pieces. I don't want this season of parenthood to pass me by, but want to be truly grateful for the opportunities to raise my children and see each day's tasks as reminders of the ordinary beauty of life.

Mollie (and her husband, Mike) blog at This Evergreen Home where they share their experience with living simply, intentionally, and relationally in this modern world. You can follow along by subscribing to their twice-weekly newsletter. This article was originally published on This Evergreen Home.

## How Emotions Have Affected Pandemic Behaviors

Research reveals how a person's emotional response changed their behavior and sense of time during the pandemic

## Continued from Page 9

of stress and nervousness in March and April 2020 also tended to feel that time was passing more slowly, but people who reported feeling high levels of happiness felt that time was passing more quickly. (Yes, believe it or not, there was a good chunk of people who enjoyed their time spent in lockdown.)

It turns out that even during a pandemic, time flies when you're having fun.

With a year's worth of data, we were able to see how people's views on the progress of the pandemic were related to their sense of time, their emotional states, and whether they behaved in ways intended to slow the spread of COVID-19.

### Where Does the Time Go?

Time is a funny thing. On the one hand, it's incredibly precise and consistent—an objective measure. Each day on Earth lasts exactly 23.934 hours, the length of time it takes the Earth to rotate once along its axis.

On the other hand, how we feel or perceive time passing is neither consistent nor precise. Many people will probably agree that 23.934 hours seem to pass much faster on a Saturday than on a Monday.

Dr. Gable has spent the past decade exploring how two highly related concepts emotion and motivation—play a large role in that experience.

Motivation is a part of emotion and can either be described as "approach motivation" or "avoidance motivation." The former is characterized by the tendency to engage with others or pursue goals when we experience positive emotions, such as excitement and joy. The latter refers to the tendency to pull away from others when we experience negative emotions, such as sadness or fear.

Approach motivation is associated with time passing more rapidly, which ultimately results in spending more time engaged with something that makes us feel good.

Avoidance motivation is associated with time passing more slowly, which motivates us to escape from potentially harmful situations.

Under normal circumstances, these relationships help us effectively pursue our goals and maintain our safety. Consider how long you'll spend absorbed in a good book and how quickly you try to escape

But what happens in extreme circumstances? Thanks to a grant from the National Science Foundation, we were able to investigate for the first year of the pandemic how people's motivations and emotions altered their sense of time.

## **Initial Results**

In April 2020, Dr. Gable and his team asked 1,000 Americans about their sense of time and emotional experiences over the previ-

Almost 50 percent of these individuals reported that time seemed to be dragging by, which was strongly related to higher levels of stress and nervousness. These respondents also reported practicing social distancing more often. Roughly 25 percent of participants said time seemed to be flying by, which was associated with feeling happy and glad. The remaining 25 percent of participants felt no change in their sense of time.

A month later, we contacted the same people and asked the same questions. ously reported time passing slowly said it was moving more quickly. And more of them said they felt relaxed and calm.

## The Rest of the Year

With a full year's worth of data, we were able to analyze the results across 12 months of the pandemic. (The analysis is still under peer review.) We found that

For some people, the pandemic has

given them the motivation to tend to things they used to overlook.

**Motivation** is a part of emotion and can either be described as 'approach motivation' or 'avoidance motivation.'

PROSTOCK-STUDIO/SHUTTERSTOCK

tions. That way you won't be trapped in a cycle of despair, which is only compounded by the sense that time is creeping by. Philip Gable is an associate professor of psychology at the University of Delaware, and Chris Wendel is a doctoral student in psychology at the University of Alabama. This article was first published on The Conversation.

## Nature-Based Activities Help Reduce Anxiety in Adults

Those who suffer from anxiety may benefit from nature-based interventions



A new study finds that people with pre-existing mental health conditions could experience improved mental health through engaging in outdoor nature-based activities

## **SARAH COWNLEY**

For those who suffer from anxiety, everyday tasks can be challenging. But a new study has found that in people with preexisting mental health conditions, including outdoor nature-based activities could help to improve mental health.

Researchers from the University of York were able to show through their study that taking part in outdoor nature-based activities could lead to less anxiety, improved mood, and more positive emotions.

For the study, researchers screened 14,321 nature-based intervention (NBI) records and analyzed 50 studies. They concluded that activities lasting longer than 20 to 90 minutes and sustained over 8 to 12 weeks have the most favorable outcomes for improving mood and reducing anxiety.

Among the activities that were most associated with mental health benefits were gardening and outdoor exercise. Engaging in conversation also had a positive effect and made people feel better.

'Forest bathing' was also highlighted as an outdoor nature-based activity that had an impact on mental wellness. This relatively new idea involves people going into a forest to take in the atmosphere.

Researchers suggest that those who suffer from anxiety may benefit from NBIs that support people and help them engage with nature in a structured way to improve mental health.

While it has long been known that being in nature is good for health and well-being, this study reinforces the growing evidence that participating in outdoor activities is as-

sociated with large gains in mental health. Doing activities individually is effective, but doing them in a group can lead to more significant gains in mental health.

This study found less evidence for improvement in physical health from outdoor activities. They suggest that more appropriate ways to measure the impact on physical health are needed.

## A Need for More Solutions

This study makes a case for a substantial need for sustained investment in the community and place-based solutions such as naturebased interventions. This may play an important role in addressing a post-pandemic surge in demand for mental health support.

"One of the key ideas that might explain why nature-based activities are good for us is that they help to connect us with nature in meaningful ways that go beyond passively viewing nature," lead author Dr. Peter Coventry said.

This critical research is just the beginning of a surge in studies looking into mental health. With the current pandemic unfolding around the world, many are feeling the effects and will be looking for treatments for depression, anxiety, and other mental health conditions.

Sarah Cownley earned a diploma in nutritional therapy from Health Sciences Academy in London, and she enjoys helping others by teaching healthy lifestyle changes through her personal consultations and with her regular contributions to the Doctors Health Press. This article was originally published on Bel Marra Health.

MIND & BODY Week 44, 2021 THE EPOCH TIMES

Routines can anchor our day and make sure we do the things that are most important to us. But sometimes finding that routine takes a process.

# Building a Routine to Reflect, Release, and Reset

How trying to create an evening routine led me to a deeper understanding

### **DANAE SMITH**

he hard part of routines isn't building or creating them, but maintaining them. I'll start an evening routine and it'll last a few days before it's engulfed with other things. Can you relate?

I'm choosing to not give up on it, but the ups and downs with this particular routine are difficult. I believe daily routines are a tool that can help us become more paced, aware, and grounded in the things that matter to us. While I believe that, I also believe routines get to ebb and flow. They get to be what you need them to be in a given moment or season. I also believe the simpler, the better.

That's why I will still show up for this process even if it's been a struggle. There was a time when my morning routine wasn't always consistent, but the more I showed up and leaned into it, the more it became habitual and my favorite part of the day.

So, last night, I sat down to start creating an evening routine. I did my usual spiel, asking myself what I wanted to protect, release, and make room for. As I answered, three main intentions stood out to me: reflect, release, and reset.

That's when it hit me. Maybe the key for sustaining this routine is more than just asking what I want to protect, release, or make room for. Maybe the key is to root my routine in reflecting, releasing, and resetting.

In the past, I would ask myself what I wanted to protect and make room for. This would help me clarify the why of my routine. It still does. I would then list the rituals or practices I'd like to include in my routine; then I would trim that list down to the things that actively

protected and made room.

Now, in answering what I want to protect, release, or make room for, I see the one-word intentions that encompass the heart of the routine. This clarity gave me something deep to root my routine in.

Try to describe the

reason for

in as few

words as

possible.

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a new routine

If you've been struggling with daily routines, I invite you to shift your perspective on the process. I invite you to ask yourself what you want to protect, make room for, or release. As you answer those questions, write down the one-word intentions that encompass the heart of the routine. Choose the rituals or practices that honor those intentions.

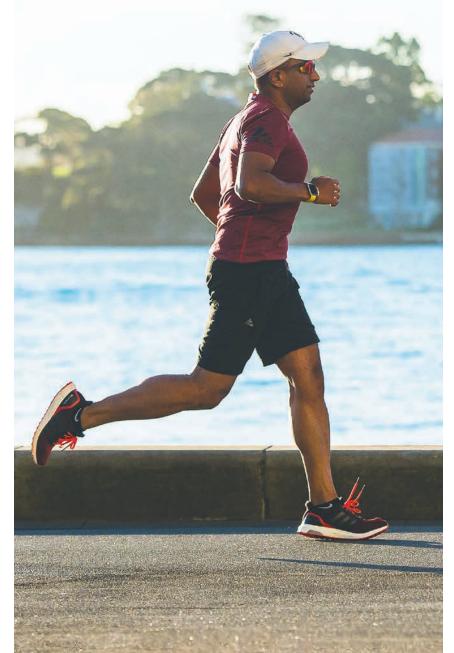
In my effort to live a slower, more simple life, there are easy days and challenging days. Sometimes, the daily rituals and routines come easy. Sometimes, being present and aware is second nature. Sometimes, you don't rush and you move in a measured pace throughout your day. Other times—a lot of times—you feel the tension.

If you've been wrestling with your routines and systems, struggling to find your footing in this slow living space, know that I've been there and have my days, too.

At the end of the day, it's a journey we get to define and discover. It's a marathon, not a sprint. It's important that we take it one day at a time, one routine, one system at a time, knowing that every step—no matter how little or big—counts.

Danae Smith is the founder of This Wondrous Life, a lifestyle blog rooted in pursuing a life lived simply, slowly, and with community. She believes there is more to the mundane than meets the eye. This article was originally published on This Wondrous Life.

- Mike Lindell





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