THE EPOCH TIMES

DEAN MITCHELL/GETTY IMAGES



Find something that gives you joy and make it a part of your healing journey, whether it's spending more time holding your grandchild or walking barefoot at the beach or park.



Do You Have Thin Privilege?

Movements to stop fatshaming shouldn't let junk food makers off the hook

A movement that takes aim at "thin privilege" is ignoring the industry and culture that feeds our obesity epidemic.

MARTHA ROSENBERG

In the past few years, "weight bias" has gained awareness as a form of discrimination. Doctors are attacked for mentioning weight, and there's even a "don't weigh me" card that patients can hand to medical professionals during an office visit. The card says, "If you really need my weight, please tell me why so I can give you my informed consent."

On the other side, the card says "most health conditions can be addressed without knowing my weight," and constant weighing contributes to "weight stigma." So far, 73,384 people have requested the cards.

some exercise and fresh air once in a while.

Continued on Page 6

It's certainly true that people with excess weight are discriminated against on many levels. Moreover, the United States and many other nations have levels of obesity not seen before, which no doubt drives the anti-weight-discrimination movements. Still, the ire of anti-weight bias and "sizism" websites rarely seems to be directed at one clear cause of adult and childhood obesity: junk, processed, and fast-food producers.

Continued on Page 2







Do You Have Thin Privilege?

Movements to stop fat-shaming shouldn't let junk food makers off the hook

Continued from Page 1

Junk, processed, and fast food is not only brimming with unhealthful ingredients such as high fructose corn syrup and salt, it's arguably the most advertised and available food in urbanized Western cultures. Some Epoch Times readers will remember that there was a time when "food courts" didn't exist in malls, and junk food wasn't readily available in banks, bookstores, car washes, hardware stores, train stations, and yes, hospitals. An overweight 30-year-old woman who didn't want her name used, shed more than 40 pounds with no effort when she studied in an African country that didn't have a "snack culture" of junk, processed,

In a Los Angeles Times editorial, Michael Moss, author of "Hooked: Food, Free Will, and How the Food Giants Exploit Our Addictions," observes that the \$1-trillion junk, processed, and fast food industry, often called Big Food, has created products so addictive that people can't resist them, and then convinces

people the excess weight is their fault. How is such food made irresistible and addictive? There are food technology labs dedicated to just that goal, says Moss, with \$40,000 devices that simulate a chewing mouth to, for example, perfect corpus, gallbladder, kidney, and pan-

"People like a chip that snaps with about four pounds of pressure per square inch," he said.

The actual time it takes to chew food has also been modified by food technologists, according to the website Experience Life.

"In the [45 years] that I have been in the food business, we used to have foods that we chewed 15 times and 20 times and 30 times before we swallowed," said Gail Vance Civille of the consumer research firm Sensory Spectrum. Now, most foods only have to be chewed 12 times and "you're in for the next hit to get more pleasure."

Questions About Goals, Tactics, and 'Thin Privilege'

No one could disagree that weight bias—sizism—is wrong and that people shouldn't be judged for their weight, height, shape, beauty, and skin color. But most medical professionals don't agree with the corollary that excess fat is medically inconsequential (or, as the "Don't Weigh Me" card says, "most health conditions can be addressed without knowing my weight.")

The truth is that obesity invites a host of health problems, from diabetes, respiratory conditions, and hypertension to stroke risk, as well as colorectal, uterine how a potato chip behaves in the mouth. creatic cancers. The claim of "fit but fat"

is not supported by science and is largely wishful thinking.

Nonetheless, the concept of "thin privilege" has somehow emerged from the antiweight-bias movement charging that, like "white privilege" and "male privilege," some have unfair advantages in society making them de facto oppressors.

According to an article last year called "What Is Thin Privilege?" in Good Housekeeping: "Like all forms of privilege, the person who has it [thin privilege] may not realize they have any advantage, because it's simply normal for them to, say, not have to think about whether they can fit between tables in a tiny bistro [or] whether their size clothing will be readily available.

"Public spaces and furniture—chairs, benches, tables, bus, and theater seats are designed with smaller people in mind."

Many, including those who carry excess weight, may find the statements jolting. If someone can no longer use traditional seating, it's society's fault for catering to "thin privilege"? Not the person's lifestyle, choices, and especially eating habits? Society is to blame if someone can't fit into a chair?

The Good Housekeeping article adds "intersectionality" to the issue—the conviction that all victim groups (fat, black, brown, female, trans, gay, nonbinary, disabled, Asian, Muslim) are oppressed by the same system and the same oppressors. It quotes a book that suggests that Anglo-Saxons are "taller and slenderer than other races," and opines that "racism, sexism, and fatphobia often go hand in hand." But is

'fit but fat' is not supported by science and largely wishful

The claim of

Excess weight creates a market for drugs to treat cholesterol, blood pressure, diabetes, and acid reflux.

thinking.



root of the problem and the myriad health issues that go with it, such thinking divides society while it obscures the causes.

that really true? Instead of dealing with the

What Is Disordered Eating?

Some "thin privilege" devotees call dieting and calorie consciousness "disordered eating" and an "eating disorder" while they ignore the snacking/overeating culture that Big Food has created. Worse, thin privilege devotees frequently allow no wiggle room (pun intended) between anorexia and health-impacting obesity. For example, when the singer Jessica Simpson sported a noticeable weight gain at a 2009 concert, she defended it as a "decision not to make myself anorexic"—as if there were no healthy area between being overweight and having an eating disorder.

Some thin privilege devotees suggest that eating that doesn't produce obesity is not "natural," as if the "natural" human state is to overeat and carry excess weight. Certainly, food tastes good and gives us pleasure; certainly, some bodies are stocky and

> will never be svelte, but does that mean all nutritional selfdiscipline should be thrown out the window? Cleaning our homes, washing our cars, and mowing our lawns is also not "natural," easy, or fun, but we do it for the payoffs.

There Is Money in Obesity

Moss notes that the industries that hook us on addictive junk food also want us to blame ourselves—not them. Nor are they the only beneficiaries of a hijacked eating system. The diet food industry, valued at \$71 billion, and fitness industry, valued at \$87 billion, also appreciate our

easily gained excessive weight. Then, there's Big Pharma. Excess weight creates a market for drugs to treat cholesterol, blood pressure, diabetes, and acid reflux. It sells drugs for aching backs, hips, and knees. And then there's the business of surgery and prosthetic implants such as hip and knee replacements. Leniently prescribed psychiatric drugs for depression and mood problems—with their notorious

weight-gaining actions—add to obesity. Our obesity epidemic is a complicated problem with far-reaching consequences. We're addicted to easy, cheap, unhealthy food, and the makers and distributors of these foods are addicted to the profits that come from using cheap ingredients that have excellent shelf-life, such as salt, sugar, and government-subsidized high-fructose

While we can't put all the blame on food makers, since our choices drive their profits, we also shouldn't put all the blame on ourselves. And for those that suffer from obesity, blaming thin people makes no sense at all.

Martha Rosenberg is a nationally recognized reporter and author whose work has been cited by the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, Mayo Clinic Proceedings, Public Library of Science Biology, National Geographic, and Wikipedia. Rosenberg's FDA exposé, "Born with a Junk Food Deficiency," was widely praised and established her as a prominent investigative journalist. She has lectured widely at universities throughout the United States and resides in Chicago.

eneficial to the ody's metabolism and immune

fight inflammation and aids the

immune system by activating kill-

er T-cells. These coordinate mul-

tiple aspects of adaptive immunity,

including responses to intracellular

pathogens, allergens, and tumors.

Medicinal mushrooms have been exam-

ined in depth in Eastern clinical studies, and

many of their health benefits have been prov-

en. However, each mushroom is unique and

provides its own distinct health advantages.

Studies are still new to Western medicine, and

solid evidence for humans still needs more

research, since much of the work has been

Some medicinal mushrooms, such as shii-

take, enokitake, lions mane, and maitake,

can be eaten by simply cooking them. Oth-

ers, such as reishi or turkey tail, are too tough

and bitter to eat and need to be made into

tea, soup, powders, or tinctures that can be

added to smoothies, teas, coffee, or sprinkled

The nutraceutical market has been add-

ing medicinal mushrooms to product lines

combinations that claim to deliver a broad

spectrum of compounds to improve one's

health. Look for products made from 100 per-

cent mushrooms, certified organic, and with

a guarantee that it's scientifically verified and

Increasing awareness of the potential

side effects of synthetic therapeutic agents

has led to increased efforts to seek out

natural products with beneficial effects

on health. This has led to a huge increase

in the number of mushroom products ap-

pearing in the marketplace. More research

is needed on the bioactive components in

mushrooms to determine their biological

responses in humans as well as their place

in future pharmaceutical or nutraceutical

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wellness, organic foods, healthy lifestyle

choices, and whole-person medical care. Her

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naturopathy, homeopathy, organic and

biodynamic farming, and yoga practices.

doesn't contain added fillers.

Whole Food or Supplement

Medicinal Mushrooms The New Power Food

These fantastic fungi offer a range of health benefits, some of which have been recognized for millennia

SANDRA CESCA

many different shapes and colors and grow best in warm moist soil Lfull of decaying organic material. They are nature's recyclers, breaking down what has died so it can be used to create new life. Since they contain no chlorophyll like green plants, they can't perform photosynthesis. Consequently, they must get all their nutrients from the soil. The habitat dictates the species of mushrooms that can grow there. Germination takes place by spores rather than seeds, and their roots are called mycelium.

ushrooms come in

Scientists have a hard time agreeing on how many fungi there might be in the world, but only about 120,000 of them have been described so far. Only two percent are poisonous while many others are used for their medicinal properties. Although most mushrooms are edible, few species are actually consumed, as most can be tough, woody, or gelatinous, give off an unpleasant smell, or taste bad. Only about 20 varieties are truly flavorful.

Brief History

Mushrooms have been used for thousands of years in cultures around the world, particularly in Eastern countries, as highly valuable tonics for life, energy, longevity, and for various spiritual ceremonies. Some of these mushrooms have been used extensively in Chinese and Ayurvedic medicine due to their medicinal properties.

The oldest official Chinese list of medicinal substances comes from Shennong Bencao Jing. It contains 365 medicinal substances, and the list includes several mushroom species used for medicinal purposes. Especially revered is the famous Ganoderma lucidum mushroom (Chinese: lingzhi, Japanese: reishi). As of 2015, research has found medicinal properties in more than 850 mushroom species.

Traditional Japanese medical practices called Kampo have been in existence since the fifth century and are based on traditional Chinese Medicine but have been adapted to Japanese culture. Medicinal mushrooms are commonly prescribed in Japan, particularly for cancer patients under the umbrella of "integrative oncology."

While China has been the leader in mush-

have been used for thousands of years in cultures around the world, particularly

and for various

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Mushrooms

in Eastern countries, as highly valuable tonics for life, energy. and longevity,

and meat substitute.

In the last few years, interest in the medicinal properties of mushrooms has exploded, earning them the status of a "power food."

Mushrooms in general are loaded with beneficial nutrients like B vitamins, antioxidants, and fiber, and are composed mostly of water, carbohydrates, and proteins. Medicinal mushrooms have exceptional properties known to be beneficial to the body's metabolism and immune system.

radicals during detoxification of the body. most important of these is beta-glucan, a phytochemical polysaccharide found in the cell

room use for health benefits, practitioners of Ayurveda originating in India have been more cautious. Many believe a lack of studies and funding on the use of mushrooms has left a gap in the research to support their efficacy.

Today the most commonly consumed mushroom variety is the button mushroom, or Agaricus bisporus, which makes up about 40 percent of the mushrooms grown around the world. Among the medicinal mushrooms, Shiitake Lentinus edodes is now the world's leading cultivated edible mushroom, at about 22 percent of the world's supply, with China as the major producer. The jewel of all edible mushrooms is the truffle. Referred to as the "diamond of the kitchen" truffles are the most expensive mushroom in the world. They grow near tree roots and are sniffed out by dogs or on cereal. pigs that have been trained to recognize the

Mushrooms also have a flavor known as for several years, but the variety is growing. umami, which is a savory taste found in These dietary supplements include multiple meat. This umami flavor makes mushrooms a satisfying meat substitute. Portobello mushrooms are a popular "burger" patty

What Are Medicinal Mushrooms

Mushrooms can also help scavenge free Research has paid special attention to mushroom polysaccharides, which are a type of carbohydrate that contributes to the metabolism of sugars such as glucose. The

walls of medicinal mushrooms. Studies have shown that beta-glucan helps **ASK A DOCTOR**

Doctor: What to Do After Covid Vaccines

ANN CORSON

STORY AT A GLANCE

THE EPOCH TIMES Week 13, 2022

- Dr. Ann Corson summarizes reported side effects of COVID vaccines
- How big a role nutrition plays and why • Best foods to consume and what to avoid, and supplements to take and when
- What lifestyle has to do with immunity

Ask a Doctor: "What can people who have health problems linked to the COVID-19 vaccine do to help themselves?"

If you believe your COVID-19 vaccination may be responsible for certain conditions that developed afterward, you could be right, and you may need to take measures to recover.

As information and data surrounding the safety and efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccines have become increasingly available, scientists and doctors continue to express concerns regarding the negative health effects being documented around the world, including in Germany, Israel, Scotland.

In May of 2021, Drs. Stephanie Seneff and Greg Nigh published a comprehensive overview of the potential problems associated with the COVID-19 vaccines.

"In this review, we first describe the technology underlying these vaccines in detail. We then review both components of and the intended biological response to these vaccines, including production of the spike protein itself, and their potential relationship to a wide range of both acute and long-term induced pathologies, such as blood disorders, neurodegenerative diseases and autoimmune diseases."

A study published in CELL on Jan. 24, 2022, demonstrated that people who have received COVID-19 vaccines produce higher levels of the spike protein for longer periods of time than those who were unvaccinated and were infected with the natural virus. The researchers also found that synthetic vaccine mRNA persisted in the lymph nodes of the vaccinated for 60 days, the entire length of the study.

Another study published in Frontiers in Immunology found that the S1 segment of spike protein from natural infection with SARS-CoV-2 can persist in the body for 15 months. The spike protein is known to be toxic to the human body. This raises concerns over the potential for cumulative toxicity of the spike protein with vaccine booster doses.

These findings raise significant questions regarding how long the synthetic mRNA and spike protein actually persist in the bodies of the vaccinated. A recent interview with Drs. Robert Malone, Peter

McCullough, and Steve Kebe provides a more detailed discus sion of the significance of these

On March 1, 2022, a pre-print paper published on medRxiv demonstrated that the synthetic mRNA from the Moderna injection didn't degrade as rapidly as the company claimed it would. After incubating both mouse and human cell lines with the Moderna vaccine, spike protein began to be than those infected. produced in approximately 6 hours and continued for 12 to 14 days.

In testimony before the Tennessee State legislature, Dr. Ryan Cole said, "These vaccines do not prevent acquisition of the disease ... do not prevent transmission of the disease, do not prevent illness from the disease, and do not prevent death from the disease."

In a recent podcast, McCullough claimed that the COVID-19 vaccines are not sufficiently safe or effective, and "the mass vaccination program worldwide has failed. In fact, [it] has made things worse."

AU.S. insurance executive noted that during the second half of 2021, there was an excess mortality rate of 40 percent for employed people aged 18 to 64. Hundreds of professional and amateur athletes have collapsed, with many dying on playing fields, often on live TV. After an analysis of CDC data, former BlackRock executive Edward Dowd recently showed that more millennials aged 25 to 44 (61,000) died in the second half of 2021 than the total number of U.S. soldiers (58,000) who died during the whole of the Vietnam war.

Peer-reviewed medical papers have documented that the COVID-19 injections damage the innate immune system T-cells and Natural Killer cells and suppress our own tumor suppressor genes, which interferes with the body's natural ability to stop cancer growth. Additionally, a paper in Current Issues in Molecular Biology published Feb. 22, 2022, showed that the Pfizer synthetic mRNA was inserted into the DNA of human liver cells in just six hours.

Among the serious side effects of the CO-VID-19 shots being reported are the following: myocarditis or inflammation of the heart muscle; blood clots throughout the body that can lead to stroke, heart attack, pulmonary emboli, or amputation; vasculitis or inflammation of the lining of the blood vessels; autoimmune diseases, recrudescence of previously controlled infections such as herpes, shingles, and tuberculosis; increase in rapid spread of cancers that had been in remission as well as the development of new cancers; multisystem inflammatory syndrome; and immune system dysfunction comparable to that seen in AIDS.

Despite all this overwhelming and frightening information, there is hope for those who received these injections either voluntarily or under duress. There are ways to rebuild your immune system, fight the emergence of latent infections, reduce the risk of cancer, manage the likelihood of blood clots, and help your body clear any circulating spike proteins.

This Is What I Tell My Patients:

Diet is most important. We literally are what we eat. The body's only fuel to heal, replace, grow, and renew is the food you eat. You must drink plenty of fresh, clean water. Your diet should consist of organic whole foods, 100 percent grass-fed meat, free-range poultry, wild-caught fish, plenty of green leafy vegetables, nuts, healthy fats such as coconut oil, organic olive oil, grass-fed lard and butter, limited grains, minimal fruit sugars, and a complete avoidance of GMO, pre-processed, or highly refined foods, especially those high in added sugars.

and transfats. Sugar is damaging to the body in many ways and should People who receive be avoided altogether, especially COVID-19 vaccines may sugary drinks and sodas, except for produce more of the spike protein for longer that found in nutrient-packed fruits such as berries. Caffeine intake should be restricted to roughly 100 mg daily and aspartame-containing dietary

> beverages or foods should be strictly avoided. It's also important to avoid all kinds of environmental toxicities, including cigarette smoking, alcohol consumption, toxic household cleaners, and non-organic personal care products and makeup.

Immune system support starts with a good organic multivitamin with trace minerals. Support T cells and NK cells with adequate vitamin D3 with K2, zinc with an ionophore such as quercetin to take zinc intracellularly where it's needed, and vitamin C. Herbs that help support immune system function include andrographis, ashwagandha, cat's claw, echinacea, Japanese knotweed, garlic, ginseng, morinda or noni, and turmeric. Herbs that help regulate an overactive or dysfunctional immune function include astragalus, berberine (from Coptis chinensis), curcumin, milk thistle, and scutellaria or Chinese skullcap.

Ivermectin, hydroxychloroquine, artemisinin (from Artemisia annua), isatis (Isatis tinctoria), morinda (Morinda citrifolia), neem (Melia azadirachta), oregano oil, olive leaf extract, star anise (Illicium verum) as well as the amino acid L-lysine can protect against new and recrudescent viral infections.

Reduce the risk of blood clotting and help break up circulating spike proteins by taking omega 3 fatty acids, fibrinolytic enzymes (lumbrokinase and nattokinase), proteolytic enzymes (serrapeptase), lipases, bromelain, and vitamin E, as well as herbs that support the cardiovascular system such as Chrysanthemum morifolium flower petals, danshen (Salvia miltiorrhiza), and scutellaria. Low doses of aspirin may also be needed.

Antioxidant support can include alpha-lipoic acid, beta-carotene, coenzyme Q 10, EGCG

We can help clean up our bodies by eating well, reducing incoming toxins, enhancing outgoing toxins, exercising, sleeping well, spending time in nature, and reducing stress.

(epigallocatechin gallate, the most abundant catechin in tea, which is also a zinc ionophore), glutathione, lycopene, lutein, manganese, NAC (n-acetyl cysteine), quercetin, selenium, vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin E, and zeaxanthin. Herbs that have strong anti-oxidant qualities include olive leaf and scutellaria. Spices such as cinnamon, clove, garlic, ginger, oregano, parsley, rosemary, and thyme are also antioxidants.

Cancer-fighting foods include berries, carrots, citrus fruits, cruciferous vegetables (bok choy, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, cabbage, kale, garden cress), the garlic family of vegetables (chive, garlic, leeks, onions, shallots), green tea, and tomatoes. Herbs that help protect against cancer include artemisinin, blackberry leaves, Chrysanthemum morifolium flower petals, danshen, morinda, and scutellaria.

Inflammation in the body will be significantly reduced by following all of the above recommendations. Additionally, extracts of shea nut, turmeric, green tea, black tea, broccoli, stinging nettle leaf, black cumin seed, and grape seed; herbs such as andrographis, holy basil, manjistha (Rubia cordifolia), and scutellaria; and antioxidants such as pterostilbene and resveratrol can all help reduce inflammation.

To be healthy, we must clean up our bodies by eating well, reducing incoming toxins, enhancing outgoing toxins, exercising regularly, sleeping well, spending time in nature, and reducing external stress.

It's likely no coincidence that many of these habits define the daily lifestyles of people in "blue zones." These are areas of the world where people live the longest and have an unusually high number of centenarians.

These people also share another common feature—they belong to a spiritual community. In other words, they practice a faith.

This is important for several reasons. It reduces stress, teaches self-restraint, and provides companionship. But perhaps even more importantly, these traditions impart morality and belief in the divine.

In a scientific sense, disease develops when the body is out of balance, perhaps due to environmental factors, vices, the corrosive effects of stress, or because previous disturbances were passed down in our genetic code. Faith in the divine imparts the humility to live in balance with creation. It fosters the prerequisite mental attitude to navigate this world harmoniously.

When you recognize that this world, and you as well, are part of something grand, beautiful, and inherently good, you are inspired toward the kind of thoughts and behaviors that do more than impart health, they heal entire communities.

When confronted with so much negativity and evil in the world, we must choose to be good. When each of us improves our own character, the well-being of society will improve. By embracing truth, by cultivating compassion and service to others, we will not only endure, but transcend the trials we're currently experiencing and realize physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health.

Dr. Ann Corson obtained her MD degree from the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia in 1982 and is board certified in family medicine and integrative holistic medicine. Her solo practice in Philadelphia is devoted full time to the treatment of patients suffering from all forms of chronic disease. In 2008, Corson joined Doctors Against Forced Organ Harvesting (DAFOH) to help raise awareness of China's live forced organ harvesting of innocent prisoners of conscience, primarily Falun Gong practitioners. Since 2016, she has been the editor-in-chief of DAFOH's newsletter.

There are ways to rebuild your immune system, fight Many respond well to a gluten-free diet, as gluten itself is inflammatory, and many glutinous foods contain high levels of residual agricultural products such as infections. glyphosate. It's also advisable for some to eliminate dairy from the reduce the diet for the same reasons. Avoid processed vegetable oils risk of cancer,

the emergence manage the likelihood of blood clots, and help your body clear any circulating spike protein.

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EMPLOYED

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PEOPLE

mortality rate of

FOR

Popular Medicinal **Mushrooms**

Chaga: Inonotus obliquus fights free radicals, oxidative stress, and inflammation. Studies on mice indicate it may be helpful with diabetes, certain tumors, and heart disorders

Turkey Tail: Trametes versicolor contain a compound called polysaccharide-k that stimulates the immune system. Lions Mane: Hericium erinaceus improves mental clarity, is packed with antioxidants, and strengthens the immune system. It may help slow the onset of dementia and possess anti-depressant and anti-anxiety properties. It can also help with recovery from neurological damage.

Research has paid special

attention to mushroom

polysaccharides which

are a type of carbohydrate

that contributes to the

metabolism of sugars

such as glucose.

Enokitake: Flammulina velutipes is prized for its taste. its availability in winter when few other fungi fruit, and for a range of medicinal benefits reputed to help with everything from tumors to dementia to gastric ulcers.

Reishi: (ling zhi) Gan-

oderma lucidum has been used by traditional Chinese medicine for over 2,000 years to help combat obesity and inflammation. Scientific evidence from a study published in Nature Communications in 2015 showed a reduction in obesity in mice by modulating their gut microbiome.

Shiitake: (xiang gu) Lentinula edodes has been widely cultivated from about A.D. 1000 and is particularly good for the heart. It has been shown to lower LDL cholesterol in mice and contains compounds that inhibit the absorption

and production of cholesterol in the liver.

Maitake: Grifola frondose is popular in Japanese Kampo medicine and often grows to one hundred pounds. There is lower blood pressure, improve cholesterol levels, and lower blood sugar.

improve stamina.

some limited clinical evidence that it can

Cordyceps: (dong chong xia cao) Cordyceps sinensis is a parasitic fungus that grows on the larvae of insects. It is one of the most commonly used mushrooms in traditional Chinese medicine for the treatment of chronic kidney disease and many people take it to

THE EPOCH TIMES Week 13, 2022

Continued from Page 1

Teresa teared up when she said her sister was living in a motor home on her parents' property. The ex-husband had taken custody of her sister's two teenage children; before getting sick, being a mother was her mission. She used to enjoy her job working as a massage therapist, although had forgotten her purpose when her daughters grew older and became more independent. The divorce had taken its toll, and friends stopped check-

she had walked along the shore.

"The cancer is spreading to her colon. They think it's everywhere," Teresa said, and stopped pedaling completely.

"How about Gerson therapy?" Kate, an accountant, said, as a few classmates nodded that they had heard of someone else who recovered using this nutrition-based approach which has been used to treat cancer, arthritis, heart disease, and allergies since the 1930s.

"My daughter's boyfriend's aunt went to that clinic in Mexico after a heart attack," another voice piped up in the conversation. "Will she try CBD? It's legal where she moved to in Illinois, right?" asked Eve, a re-

altor. (In Eve's mind, every disease could be cured by medical marijuana.) Across the room, our fearless instructor and Juice Plus+ dealer, Jill, thought about the dilemma and said dramatically over

her mic, "Will she see a nutritionist or an integrative doctor? I know a great person in Chicago who ..." Teresa shook her head again, no. No, her sister won't see an integrative doctor or nutritionist. That's for A-listers, hippies, health

nuts ... the wealthy people who live in yoga pants and can call their life coaches on their We've all seen that look before. The look of a caring family member who can't get through

to a loved one. Whether it's trying to get your mom to stop smoking, or your dad to stop calling Chick-fil-A "health food," a change won't happen unless they want it to. Many people say that convincing loved

ones to live a healthier lifestyle and fight for their life is difficult, especially when they believe their last doctor was the only person who could help them—the white coat who barely remembers their name—who enters A 2018 paper published in Elsevier looks at the room late, after they've been waiting an

Alcohol is probably the most

accepted "poison" of our time.

hour and a half, and forgets their patient history every single time.

Loved ones hear every excuse in the book: it's too late, it's too hard, it's too expensive. But is it really too late to heal? What would Teresa's sister need in order to survive a bleak

When most people finish a Western medicine treatment that doesn't work, they think "that's it then." They can't afford alternative treatments that their insurance doesn't cover and think it's no use to change their lifestyle. They're told they're in the "final inning" and She had lived two blocks from the beach in give up. They won't even try the simple, inerations before knew to work, things such as rest, healthy food, and a walk in the sunshine.

"All people who heal have at least one thing in common ... the belief that they will heal," said Dr. Henry Ealy, founder and executive director for the Energetic Health Institute. "Belief may be the most essential nutrient for any healing process.

"Effort and intention are wonderful and essential components for people endeavoring into natural healing. Still, effort and intention can seldom be fulfilled without knowledge and expertise.

"The word doctor means 'to teach,' thus a doctor is really a teacher, and that makes the patient a student. While experiences with doctors that fail to honor their oaths and basic aspects of the Patient Bill of Rights can be demoralizing, patients should never stop seeking the knowledge and expertise of a qualified doctor. The key is to look for people who care and treat you as they would a family member. ... These are the doctors who exemplify what it means to be a healer." Some studies would suggest that Teresa's sister can survive the cancer, but she would have to conjure up the desire to live. This means she'd have to change her mindset and her lifestyle, and if she were to find a new doctor or healer, it would be essential that they actually cared if she lived or died. Here are 10 inexpensive and free ways to take control of your own health, starting with step one: finding the desire to live and believing that the body can heal itself.

Find the Will to Live

the neuropathology of "give-up-itis," the au-

All people who heal

have at least one thing in common ... the belief that they will heal. Belief may be the most essential nutrient for any healing

Dr. Henry Ealy, founder and executive director, Energetic Health Institute

process.

thor's term for extreme apathy that can lead to death despite lack of organic cause. It's a state that can follow traumatic stress; mental defeat as a real pathology.

If giving up can be fatal, then the opposite is also true. Once someone decides they can heal on their own, they can research healing methods and therapeutics, including techniques of some of the world's most prominent medical researchers and healers.

If Teresa's sister searched online for ways to support her body in its fight against cancer, she would find dozens of mind/body therapies. Some cost money, but others are completely free. The key would be to keep an open mind. Sometimes, that means recognizing that scientists and doctors aren't always right.

For example, it was a physiological maxim, repeated by scientists for decades, that you can't heal a damaged brain or grow new neurons. Now, we know that just isn't true. And while the power of the placebo effect is well-documented, people still undervalue the importance of their thoughts in disease

Wanting to live and expecting to heal are essential prerequisites to meaningful action that can reverse the course of a disease.

Avoid and Eliminate Toxins

When you begin to research how to heal your chronic illness, you may start to uncover culprits rarely spoken of in the hospital or doctor's office.

Medical herbalist Brett Elliott describes these culprits succinctly on the blog Ultimate Herbal Health. In his words, which echo ideas from traditional medicine and many medical researchers, our chronic health conditions stem from six usual suspects: environmental pollution, pharmaceuticals, food, household chemicals, metabolic toxicity, and emotional stress. Therefore, in order to help their bodies heal, people need to stop putting toxins in their bodies and support their bodies' detoxification func-

Alcohol is probably the most accepted "poison" of our time, according to Olga Khazan in The Atlantic in January 2020. Khazan wrote, "Alcohol's byproducts wreak havoc on the cells, raising the risk of liver disease, cer, and fetal alcohol syndrome. Just this month, researchers reported that the number of alcohol-related deaths in the United States more than doubled in two decades, going up to 73,000 in 2017."

According to the Harvard Study of Adult Development, a longitudinal study that followed 268 Harvard sophomores for more than 80 years, alcohol abuse was among the single greatest contributor to their early death, disease, and divorce.

Drinking alcohol, eating junk food, smothering your skin in chemicals, and binge- In a study on coping with chronic disease watching TV series or doom-scrolling on You need to press the reset button if you want to change.

Trying to talk a grown adult out of filling their grocery cart with cases of soda, frozen pizza, and microwave macaroni and cheese is as easy as getting a football fanatic to attend a book club instead of watching their favorite team.

Yet, dozens of international studies found that diet interventions and lifestyle changes can prevent chronic diseases, including

Dr. Steve Puckette of Puckette Integrative Healthcare writes on his website that when you're sick, your body is vulnerable and your

"I cannot stress enough how crucial a healthy diet is when addressing any health issue, even something as minute as a common cold," Puckette writes.

"There is a saying that 'food is medicine.' If you ask what's the one thing you can do for the rest of your life to ensure better health and vitality, the answer is eating right."

Hydrate Properly

The role of dehydration in chronic diseases is well documented. According to a review in the Journal of the American College of Nutrition, "acute systemic dehydration" may be a pathogenic factor in several diseases, including cystic fibrosis, and keeping

heart failure, dementia, seven types of can-

MEN

CUPS

Change How You Eat

heart disease, stroke, and cancer.

immune system needs support.

such as exercise asthma.

Whether it's bottled water or filtered water, it's a scientific fact that water (pure water—not caloric drinks containing water) Keep Moving is important for every cell in the body to function properly.

According to an article by Liana Reiland, D.N.P., of the Mayo Clinic, water ensures proper digestion and prevents constipation.

"Water also helps flush toxins from the body, promotes good kidney function, keeps your joints and muscles lubricated, supports healthier and younger-looking skin, and helps regulate body temperature," she writes, noting that the Mayo Clinic recommends 11.5 cups (92 ounces) for women and 15.5 cups (124 ounces) for men per day.

Become Self-Sufficient

Some of the most popular apps today are mood trackers to improve mental health, symptom trackers for chronic illness, and fitness tracking to assist with workouts.

Studies have shown that journaling reduces stress, improves immune function, keeps the memory sharp, boosts mood, and strengthens emotional functions. Keeping a "healing journal" is an important way to take ownership of your health—and it also promotes self-efficacy.

According to a literature review published in Nursing Open, promoting self-efficacy in patients with chronic disease beyond traditional education increases treatment adherence and decreases costs and hospitalizations. The review cited a study that found that self-efficacy "enhances engagement in health-promoting activities and adherence to treatment regimens."

There are currently more than 259,000 inexpensive health and lifestyle apps available for self-charting, including apps like Glucose Buddy, which monitors glucose levels and tracks carbohydrate intake for diabetes, and iLog Lyme for recording symptoms and treatments for Lyme disease.

For intractable seizures, and hard-to-treat epilepsy, many people are learning that certain food items, activities, and illnesses trigger seizures. These important revelations came about from keeping detailed daily diaries of seizure activity, diet, and activities. A simple spiral notebook can work just as well as an app.

Asking for Help and Building a Team

published in the Journal of Occupational your phone for hours on end are just some of Rehabilitation in 2017, researchers found the ways you intoxicate your mind and body. that people can overcome difficulties with chronic disease through acceptance and learning self-efficacy, as well as making boundaries and gaining insight into abilities and limitations. Another way to cope was being able to ask for help and support

> If you have never asked for help before, it can feel awkward. People will be surprised, nervous, or helpful depending on who you decide will be on your team. Studies show the power in asking for help. You can read up on articles that offer you a script. An article called "Living with a chronic

> illness—reaching out to others" on MedlinePlus suggests that talking with people who have the same illness can be important, including in peer support groups. It also advises you to tell those around you that you have a chronic illness. And importantly, let your loved ones know that they can help

"Sometimes, all you need is someone to talk to," the article says. Make sure to let your loved ones and friends know how they

Meditation

"Calm mind brings inner strength and self-confidence, so that's very important for good health," the Dalai Lama said.

Sitting still may sound a little boring to some, but scientists have finally proven what monks have known for centuries: Meditation heals.

For example, a recent study in the Journal of Alternative Complementary Medicine found meditation practices that elicit the

hydrated helps with hypertension, heart relaxation response have been demonstratalternative medicine can be affordable, ed to reduce blood pressure just as well as but few take the steps to get an estimate. A disease, stroke, gallstone disease, glaucoma, and even broncho-pulmonary disorders blood pressure medications.

Jane Fonda tried to warn us, Richard Simmons gave it a whirl, and newbies on Instagram are rubbing it in with pictures of their rock-hard abs: Your body needs exercise to stay well. Still, too many people with chronic illness decide to emulate bronze statues and

Lack of exercise is a major cause of chronic disease, according to reams of research. Inactivity contributes significantly to chronic conditions such as metabolic syndrome, obesity, insulin resistance, liver disease, heart disease, cancer, and premature death.

Whether it's stretching in the morning or walking the dog, the intention to move your body will serve you well as you heal. Add some of your favorite music to your exercise routine and raise your vibration even more, it. And that's the reason why we're terrified as studies show positive psychophysiological effects of music during exercise.

We all know that healing involves regular exercise. At least 30 minutes of physical activity per day, at least five days per week, is essential, according to the Mayo Clinic.

Get the Right Amount of Rest

"Sleep may be as important to health in old age as diet and exercise," according to new evidence from the project Demography and Economics of Aging and Alzheimer's Disease. A review of numerous studies has shown that sleeping too much or too little is associated with mortality among

So what is the Goldilocks amount of sleep? A 2018 cross-sectional study on sleep and chronic diseases published in Sleep Science stated the value established for "long sleep" is nine hours. When you're healing, you need a little more sleep than most people, and as your body recuperates, the next day can be filled with enjoyment.

Finding Enjoyment, Connection in the **Human Experience**

All of the above are important to heal, and the studies prove it. But the key to it all, es- she began researching the root cause of pecially in the isolating time of COVID-19, intractable epilepsy, and discovered endless is making emotional connections to help *possibilities in healing for those who are* you heal.

Dr. Wayne Jonas writes in Psychology Today, "When our encounter with another person results in connecting to our emotional self—especially to a part we have avoided dealing with because of fear or grief (emotions all too prevalent right now)—the healing can be profound." Jonas said he's read studies of patients with rheumatoid arthritis who report significant pain reduction after a single episode of sharing their traumatic experiences with their illness. "Patients with asthma have improved lung function—measured objectively with a spirometer—a month after a similar single sharing."

Similarly, people face the challenge of enjoying life while living with long-term illness. What's the point of healing when they can't enjoy what they once enjoyed as leisure time? According to a study by Julia McQuoid,

Ph.D., titled "Finding joy in poor health: The leisure-scapes of chronic illness," leisure should be accounted for and incorporated into illness management plans. In other words, find something that gives you joy and make it a part of your healing

journey, whether it's spending more time holding your grandbaby or finding a local garden with a great bench, or walking barefoot along the beach or grass. Write yourself a prescription for it.

Is All of This Feasible?

A recent survey found that 61 percent of Americans were living paycheck to paycheck as of December 2021. A January 2022 survey found that less than 50 percent of Americans could afford a last-minute emergency. This leaves most people with only one option: They decide they will only participate in treatments covered by their insurance. Many would be surprised to learn that

Whether it's bottled water or filtered water,

every cell in the body to function properly.

it's a scientific fact that water (pure water-not

caloric drinks containing water) is important for

study in BMC Complementary Medicine and Therapies found that "out-of-pocket expenditures of over \$34 billion per year in the U.S. are an apparent testament to a widely held belief that complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) therapies have benefits that outweigh their costs."

Teresa said her sister's Medicare was all

"It's the worst care," but she can't afford anything else, and she truly believed it was the safest path.

Teresa, her sister, and most of America are frightened of taking the path less traveled, and who could blame them? People hear anecdotal good news about vitamin C infusions, yoga, and complete diet overhauls, but no one goes to the doctor for a chronic condition and receives a prescription for any of those things.

Bestselling author Caroline Myss said in a TEDx talk, "Choice is the most powerful thing we've got going for us, and we know to make a choice."

This is, perhaps, why people listen when their doctors say they have nothing left to offer and why they won't get creative and seek out-of-the-box care.

Myss advises those facing failed treatments to take risks. Proof may not always be available in the form you would want, but the stories of other people who have faced similar diseases and recovered offer something even more important—hope.

Age-old wisdom about eating right, sleeping, and exercising outdoors is proven by lived human experience. You know yourself the power of a friendly face and sym-

Healing is having a mission and knowing you matter. Fulfilling that mission takes courage, effort, and the decision to live in life-affirming ways.

If you have a loved one who isn't convinced they can heal on their own, maybe you can offer a reason to believe in selfhealing. One way you can do that is by telling them why they matter. Remind them why they are important to you. Help them discover the meaning of their life.

According to Rabbi Jacobson, founder of the Meaningful Life Center, "Just like a business cannot function without a mission statement, neither can you, neither can I, neither can anyone. What is your mission in life?"

Beth Giuffre is a mosaic artist and health reporter for The Epoch Times. When her youngest of three sons began having seizures, willing and open to alternatives.

OUR CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITIONS STEM FROM 6 USUAL SUSPECTS:

environmental pollution

pharmaceuticals food

household chemicals metabolic toxicity

emotional stress



Once someone decides they can heal on their own, they can research healing methods and therapeutics, including techniques of some of the world's most prominent medical

researchers and healers.



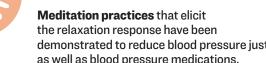
Inactivity contributes significantly to chronic conditions such as metabolic syndrome, obesity, insulin resistance, liver disease, heart disease, cancer, and premature death.



When most people finish a Western medicine treatment that doesn't work, they think "that's it then."







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Made Possible Through Minimalism

JOSHUA BECKER

"Happiness resides not in possessions, and not in gold." —Democritus

Thirteen years ago, I was introduced to minimalism and immediately drawn to it. At the time, the decision was based purely on a felt need: I was tired of all the cleaning and organizing required to care for our stuff. The more we owned, the more

we cleaned. I was also a bit tired of living paycheck to paycheck. But many of the financial ben-

efits were revealed to me later.

Minimalism provided benefit for my family in both areas. Almost immediately, it freed us to spend less time and money chasing and accumulating material possessions.

But the benefits in my life have gone well beyond those felt needs. The outward journey has offered opportunity for inward change as well. It has allowed my heart to change and discover some positive traits I always desired.

Here are 10 positive, personal traits made possible through minimalism:

1) Contentment: being mentally or emotionally satisfied with things as they are. intentional decision to live with less allows that discontent to slowly fade.

2) Generosity: willingness and liberality in giving away one's money, time, and so on.

When the mentality of always needing to own more is removed from our thinking, we are free to use our resources for other purposes. We are allowed (and have more opportunity) to redirect our energy, time, and money elsewhere.

3) Gratitude: a feeling of thankfulness or appreciation.

One of the most significant steps we can take toward experiencing gratitude in life is to focus less on the things we don't have and more on the things we do. Minimalism makes that possible.

4) Self-Control: the ability to exercise restraint or control over one's feelings, emotions, reactions, etc.

One of the most important character traits anyone can develop is self-control. And minimalism provides opportunity for it in greater degrees than ever before.

Minimalism forces us to take back control. It forces us to take back control of the things we own, the things we purchase, and the things we choose to pursue. Rejecting society's notions of consumerism and happiness is an almost daily exercise

holders that we answer to, who keep us on the right track.



Rejecting society's notions of consumerism and happiness is a daily exercise in self-control.

5) Honesty: being honorable in principles, intentions, and actions; being upright and fair.

Not all, but many of the lies and mistruths that are told in our society are based on a desire to get ahead and possess more. Finding contentment with your things (even wanting less of them) reduces the need to be dishonest for financial gain. Not every minimalist becomes more honest, of course. But minimalism does make it more possible for those who de-

6) Appreciation: the act of estimating the qualities of things and giving them their

As we focus less on comparing our possessions to those of other people, we can begin appreciating people's accomplish-Not all, but most of the discontent in our ments, their successes, and the beauty lives revolves around physical possessions they bring to the world. Life becomes less and comparing our things to others. An about competition and more about en-

> We can fully appreciate others without being jealous of them (or worse, hoping for their downfall).

> 7) Self-Awareness: conscious knowledge of one's own character, feelings, motives, and desires.

Many people go through life having no clear sense of their true values. Instead, desires are molded by culture and advertisements that bombard us each day.

Minimalism forces us to become more self-aware as it compels behavioral and psychological questions: Why is this hard for me to get rid of? Why did I buy all this stuff in the first place? Where

did I get these ideas of happiness? Learning about ourselves isn't easy, but it's always worth the

8) Joy: the emotion evoked by well-being, success, or good fortune or by the prospect of possessing what one desires.

Minimalism removes the pursuit of happiness and joy from never-ending consumerism. Possessions promise joy, but never deliver in the long-term—which is why we always accumulate more.

I would never say that people automatically find joy when the pursuit of physical possessions is removed. But it certainly

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One of

the most significant steps we can take toward

experiencing gratitude in life is to focus less on the things we don't have and more on the

things we do.

We must take the time

to contemplate who we

are and what we value.

CANICULA/SHUTTERSTOCK

9) Optimism: hopefulness and confidence about the future or the successful outcome

"You'll never change your life until you change something you do daily," John

How about changing everything about your every day? How about changing how much of every day goes into cleaning and organizing? How about changing how much of your income goes toward buy-

That intentional change in behavior would offer opportunity to craft the life you desire going forward. And it provides

10) Self-Confidence: a feeling of trust in one's abilities, qualities, and judgment.

chart our own path forward.

Each of these actions, by themselves, would spark self-confidence. But taking all of them together almost guarantees it. Owning less requires us to stop living the life sold to us by culture every day. And forces us to gain confidence charting our own.

Now, please don't misread me. I am not contending that all minimalists are automatically more honest, generous,

I know many generous people who would not describe themselves as minimalist. And I'm sure there are some self-defined minimalists who chart obnoxiously high

> on the selfishness meter. Also, I would never profess to have arrived fully in any of the categories listed above.

But I do believe that the intentional rejection of posses-

Joshua Becker is an author, public

frees us to find it in things that matter.

Week 13, 2022 THE EPOCH TIMES

of something.

Maxwell once said.

ing things you don't need?

optimism about what can be.

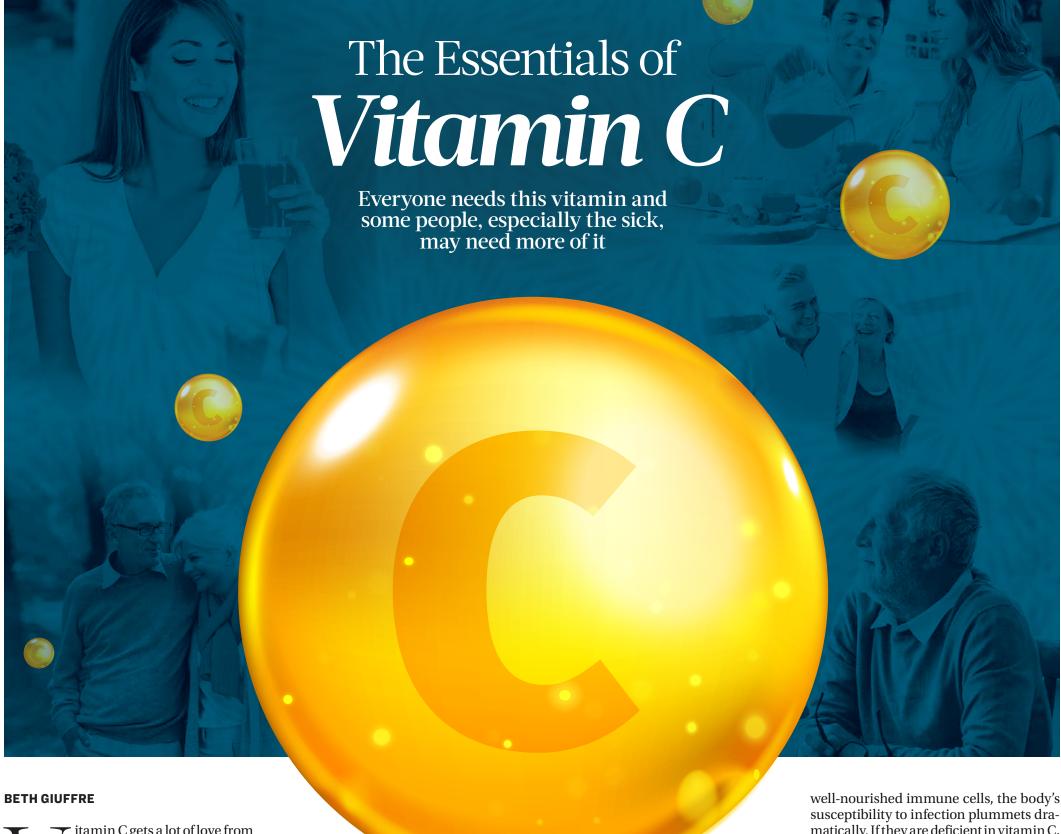
Minimalism allows us to stop comparing ourselves to others. It allows us to celebrate our uniqueness, focus on the positives, and

sions allows greater opportunity for each of these positive traits to emerge. What you do with that opportunity is up

speaker, and the founder and editor of Becoming Minimalist, where he inspires others to live more by owning less. Visit BecomingMinimalist.com

WHY DONATE TO US?

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itamin C gets a lot of love from nutritionists. PubMed lists some 70,000-plus studies into this essential vitamin, looking at everything from its effect on sepsis to how it affects nanoparticle additives in food.

When it comes to its potential as a disease fighter, those who study these things are pretty enthusiastic about it.

"Vitamin C is the world's best natural antibiotic, antiviral, antitoxin and antihistamine," write Andrew W. Saul, Ph.D., ed, doesn't mean it is simply a matter of author of "Doctor Yourself: Natural Healing That Works" and editor-in-chief of Orthomolecular Medicine News Service.

"Vitamin C is the world's best natural antibiotic, antiviral, antitoxin and antihistamine," writes Andrew W. Saul, author of "Doctor Yourself: Natural Healing That Works" and editor-in-chief of Ortholar Medicine News Service. Vitamin C "As English literature has earned concentrates on Shakespeare, superstar status so orthomolecular (megavitaamong many

vitamin C. Let the greats be given their due. The importance of vitamin C cannot be overemphasized." But just because vitamin C is well-regard-

min) therapy concentrates on

taking more. There are different kinds of vitamin C and different ways that people need it or can better use it. Some people absorb all the nutrients they need from eating fruits and vegetables high in vitamin C. Others with health challenges process vitamin C more efficiently with high-dose infusions or daily supplementation.

Ealy, founder and executive community director of the Energetic Health Institute said nutritionists. disease: "When a person comes mention nutrition.

Dr. Henry

studying the pathology of chronic and infectious disease that the most common symptom to look for is fatigue.

A well-nourished and nutrient-dense body produces higher amounts of energy and therefore has more energy to optimize cellular function, said Ealy. In the case of *Continued on Page 12*

The way traditional

matically. If they are deficient in vitamin C, they are more susceptible to an exposure turning into an infection.

"If they are nutrient-dense, then they are less susceptible to an exposure turning into an infection. It's that simple," he said. that for more than 20 years It sounds easy enough, but most doctors he has been teaching his stuaren't sure how to dose supplements such dents one inescapable truth of as vitamin C. Some doctors rarely even

to you for help, you know exactly one "There is a strategy for effective dosing of thing...you know that that person is nutrinutraceuticals that often eludes medical professionals that lack training in clini-He said he tells his students who are cal nutrition. According to the National Academy of Sciences, the average M.D. only receives about 19.6 hours of nutritional training, or what amounts to a weekend workshop ... if they receive any nutritional education at all."

TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE

Chinese Medicine and the Causes of Disease

system has some insightful-and unexpected-views on what can lead to illness

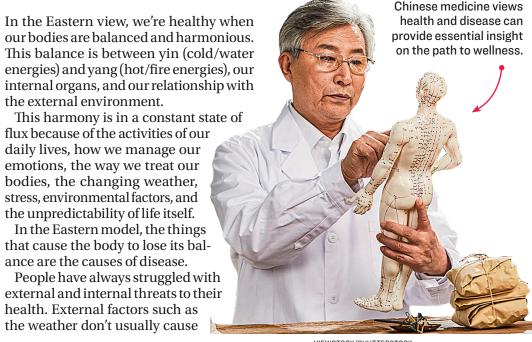
This ancient medical

EMMA SUTTIE

our bodies are balanced and harmonious. This balance is between yin (cold/water energies) and yang (hot/fire energies), our internal organs, and our relationship with the external environment. This harmony is in a constant state of flux because of the activities of our

daily lives, how we manage our emotions, the way we treat our bodies, the changing weather, stress, environmental factors, and the unpredictability of life itself. In the Eastern model, the things that cause the body to lose its balance are the causes of disease. People have always struggled with

external and internal threats to their health. External factors such as the weather don't usually cause



disease, but when the body is weak or the weather changes too quickly for us to adjust, it can make us sick. For example, being out in the rain and then going into an air-conditioned shop can cause cold to get "inside" the body, making us unwell. The following day, we may wake up feeling achy and congested and know that we've come down with something.

The amount of food and how frequently we eat are also significant.

Other illnesses are brought about by internal factors, such as emotional upsets and excessive sexual activity.

Continued on **Page 11**





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Poor glycemic control is associated with impaired bone turnover, making your bones weaker and more prone to fractures.

How Blood Glucose Damages Bone Health

The same foods that elevate your risk for Type 2 diabetes also undermine bone regeneration

JOEL FUHRMAN

In addition to following a diet that is made up of whole plant foods, it's important to keep the glycemic load of your diet in mind. Using more beans, nuts, and seeds as major calorie sources, instead of grains and potatoes, reduces the overall glycemic load of the diet. As more and more research is conducted, we are learning that blood glucose levels are relevant to most chronic illnesses, not just diabetes.

Type 2 Diabetes

Increases Fracture Risk Evidence suggests that patients with Type 2 diabetes are at greater risk of bone fractures. Among patients with Type 2 diabetes, poorer glycemic control is associated with impaired bone turnover, meaning slower replacement of old bone tissue with new bone tissue. This suggests that elevated blood glucose could weaken bone.

We are learning that blood glucose levels are relevant to most chronic illnesses, not just diabetes.

Hyperglycemia Harms Bones

Bone tissue constantly rebuilds itself. Bone-building cells called osteoblasts and bone-resorbing cells called osteoclasts work together to maintain bone mass and bone strength, striking a balance between building new bone and breaking down old bone.

Elevated blood glucose impairs the bone-building effects of osteoblasts. A study in healthy women found that a single bout of hyperglycemia resulted in measurable decreases in markers of osteoblast activity. This impaired building of bone structurally compromises bone, leading to elevated fracture risk. For example, another study found that patients with inadequately controlled Type 2 diabetes had higher fracture risk (compared to healthy people and those with adequately controlled Type 2 diabetes) and altered bone architecture in the femur—thinning in the middle and thickening at the ends—which suggests

susceptibility to fracture. In addition to compromising bone turnover, elevated blood glucose accelerates the production of advanced glycation end products (AGEs), which drive oxidative stress and damage collagen in bone tissue. Production of the bone-derived hormone osteocalcin is also diminished in Type 2 diabetes and in response to hyperglycemia. In addition to its bone-building activities, osteocalcin is involved in metabolism; a form of osteocalcin prompts insulin release and increases insulin

sensitivity in muscle and fat tissue. Hyperglycemia also promotes calcium loss via the kidneys and reduces osteoblasts' responsiveness to vitamin D.

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Nuts, Seeds, and Beans Can Help

In a vegan or near-vegan diet, when high-glycemic foods like potatoes, rice, and white flour products are used as the staple calorie sources, the glycemic load of the diet can get excessively high. Lower-glycemic calorie sources like beans, nuts, and seeds help shift the glycemic load of the diet lower, which, as mentioned earlier, affects many aspects of health, including bone health.

How Almonds May Promote Bone Health

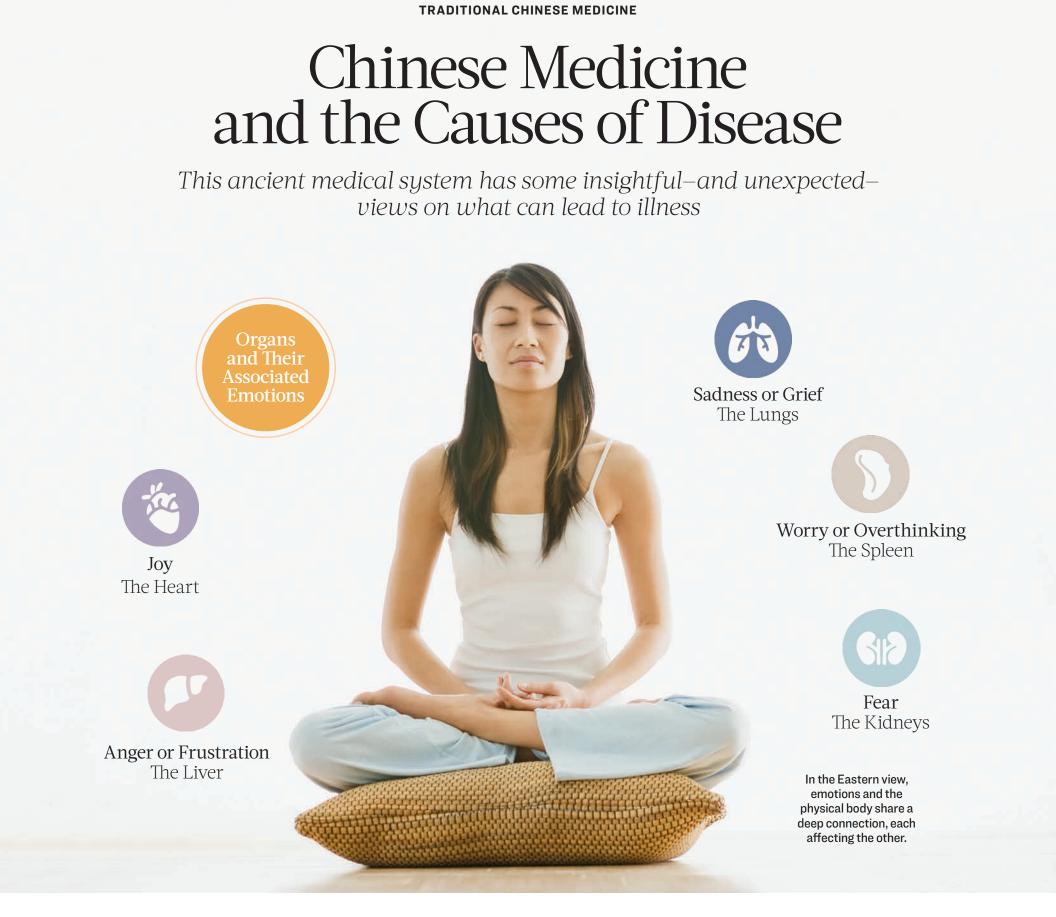
Nuts may contain additional phytochemicals that promote bone turnover, according to an interesting study. Healthy volunteers consumed three different meals, each containing the same number of calories; the meals were made up primarily of almonds, potatoes, or rice. Cultured osteoclast precursor cells were then treated with serum from the volunteers. Serum taken after the almond meals reduced the number of osteoclasts formed and osteoclast-specific gene expression and reduced calcium release from bone cells. No effects of the potato or rice meals were detected. This suggests that phytochemicals derived from almonds help to keep the balance between osteoblast and osteoclast activity. This could be due to anti-inflammatory or antioxidant phytochemicals, as there is evidence that the anti-inflammatory effects of other polyphenols (such as plum polyphenols) help prevent bone loss, and oxidative stress is known to stimulate osteoclast activity, leading to bone loss.

A focus on high-nutrient foods, including lots of green vegetables, beans, nuts, and seeds, keeps glucose and insulin favorable while providing nutrients crucial to bone health.

Joel Fuhrman, M.D. is a boardcertified family physician, seven-time New York Times best-selling author and internationally recognized expert on nutrition and natural healing. He specializes in preventing and reversing disease through nutritional methods.



Nuts may contain additional phytochemicals that promote bone turnover.



Continued from Page 9

But first, let's talk about how Eastern medicine describes the body, health, and disease.

Chinese medicine is a philosophy life and creation. It uses the language of nature to describe the causes for disin Eastern philosophy. ease and diagnosis: an excess of summer heat, external wind, or internal dampness. These terms may sound strange to our ears, but they describe the causes of common ailments in the Eastern view. It's simply the language used to describe what has been observed over thousands

Emotional Factors

It may seem strange to think of our emotions as a potential cause of disease. In the West, emotions aren't considered when evaluating the etiology of disease, but that does seem to be changing as the widespread effects of loneliness, stress, and depression become recognized as major factors in disease. However, in the Eastern view, emotions and the physical body share a deep connection, each affecting the other. In the Eastern model, many organs have a corresponding emotion. Each emotion affects the whole body, but does so for its respective organ in particular.

Organs and Their **Associated Emotions**

Joy is associated with the heart, while anger and frustration are associated with the liver, sadness and grief with the lungs, worry and overthinking with the spleen, and fear with the kidneys.

Consider that someone has suddenly lost a loved one. Their grief can manifest in the lungs as a shortness of breath, asthma, and a cough. It also works in reverse. Someone who has a chronic cough can find themselves feeling more melancholy than usual. The cough has weakened the lungs, predisposing them to grief. It's a constant cycle of interaction.

Another example is someone prone to worrying, which is perhaps heightened because of a public speaking engagement they have coming up. These feelings can manifest as problems with digestion, such as bloating, gas, pain, and diarrhea. And again, the reverse is true. When we have prolonged digestive issues, it can make us more prone to worry and overthinking.

Diet and Eating Habits

Eating a healthy variety of clean, nutrient-rich foods is vital to maintaining a healthy body, mind, and spirit. It also supports the essential functions of our internal organs and all of the body's

The amount of food and how frequently we eat are also significant. Smaller, more frequent meals are better for you and easier to digest than one or two big ones. Of course, everybody is different, but we live in a culture with larger than necessary portions and never enough time to sit down and eat a meal properly, which explains why digestive problems are so prevalent. Just remember, the body

loves consistency, and modera-

tion is key. One thing that's unique to Chinese medicine about eating, in particular, is being mindful. Western culture values productivity and multitasking (which isn't good for us), but the Eastern perspective has always valued doing one thing at a time, which significantly benefits the digestive system. Mindfully preparing and eating a meal will increase its health benefits, as it allows whack can contribute to the body to focus on digestion and assimilation.

Stress

Stress, as we are all acutely aware, is part of life. Many health professionals believe that it's at the root of countless illnesses. One of the reasons stress can be so detrimental to our health isn't that it exists, but how we deal with it. Unpleasant situations are unavoidable, but how we process them is the key to managing stress in a healthy way. When stress overwhelms us, especially on an ongoing basis, it can wreak havoc on the immune system, making us more susceptible to illness. Thankfully, Chinese medicine offers some tools to help us manage stress in life.

MEDITATION. Meditation, simply put, pulls us out of the chaos of life and allows us to quiet the mind and become centered. There are a few ways that we can do this: taking a walk in nature, sitting quietly, or lying down. It's incredible how beneficial taking 20 minutes to sit quietly can be to the body, mind, and spirit. Meditation is a simple yet powerful way to manage

you need a boost.

If we think about health

representing a state of

equilibrium, anything

that throws it out of

actually a vital part of treating disease and a way to calm the mind, body, and spirit with forms of graceful movements, also with an emphasis on the breath. Both tai chi and qi gong are best practiced outside, as nature has a calming, grounding be ample time between the activities that effect on the body, mind, and spirit.

> QI GONG. Qi gong is a gentle, meditative exercise system similar to tai chi. Some forms are considered internal martial arts, while others are more spiritual in nature. Qi gong has been practiced

> > for thousands of years in China, and it's an ideal way to calm the mind and body with its fluid movements and em-

phasis on breathing.

Fatigue

Fatigue is a common problem in the modern world. So many of us are overworked, overstressed, and underslept. Sleep is the way that our bodies heal, detoxify, and repair. Getting restful sleep is vital for a healthy immune system and clear cognition. The intense nature of our lifestyles makes insomnia a common

problem. Sleeping in a dark room without electronics, not eating at least four hours before bed, and making sure that you aren't holding on to emotions are some excellent ways to ensure a good night's sleep.

Excess Sexual Activity

This one always catches people off-guard. Yes, you read that right—excess sexual activity can cause disease. But, before panic sets in, let me explain how that works. All of us are born with "jing," which our parents give us at birth. We only have a Emma Suttie is an acupuncture physifinite amount, so preserving it is essential

for health and vitality throughout life. There are ways that we can supplement and support our jing, and we do that by to live a healthy lifestyle in the modern living well and taking care of ourselves.

There are ways we "spend" our jing, like money in a bank account, and there's a direct correlation between spending our

often ends in ejaculation, which directly represents their jing or essence. Ejaculation is considered to be a loss of jing, stress if you have a tough day or feel like but only when done excessively, without allowing the body to recover. Jing is consumed when women have children drawn from insight into the nature of physiological processes. What we eat is TAICHI. Tai chi is another excellent exercise (which is normal), but having too many babies without time to rest and regain strength in between diminishes jing and accelerates aging.

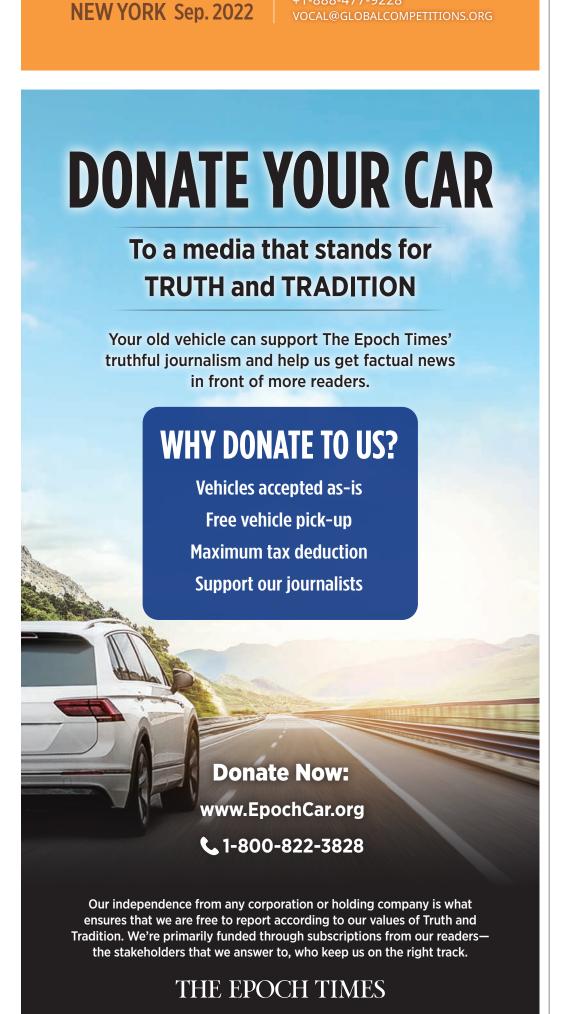
> The focus for this idea of jing is that there cause loss (sexual activity for men and childbearing for women) so the body is able to recover, and jing is maintained. Our bodies have innate healing and regenerating capabilities, but must be given the time and resources to do so.

Parasites

Parasites are as old as time, and most of us have them. An estimated 80 percent of both adults and children have parasites in their gut. Although many people believe that they're a problem in parts of the world with poor sanitation and not enough access to clean water, parasites exist worldwide. Symptoms of parasites are pain in the abdomen, poor appetite, diarrhea, gas, itchy anus (especially at night), bloating, emaciation, and exhaustion. Parasites have a profound effect on the body, draining it of essential nutrition, leading to deficiencies and weight loss.

There are various factors contributing to disease, internal and external. In the Eastern approach, some may be new to us. If we think about health representing a state of equilibrium, anything that throws it out of whack can contribute to disease. Chinese medicine is a medicine that teaches us to listen to our bodies, so that we know when things are out of balance. We can then make small changes to bring us back to a healthy state. Temperance is another. Being moderate in work, play, food, drink, and our emotions are all ways that we can stay healthy now and long into

cian and founder of Chinese Medicine *Living—a website dedicated to writing* about how to use traditional wisdom world. She has lived and practiced in four countries and now works through her consulting practice Thrive Consulting. She is a lover of martial arts, the jing and aging. For men, sexual activity natural world, and a good cup of tea.



Continued from Page 9

"Sadly, most M.D.s simply aren't qualified to use nutrition as a clinical therapy and that's not their fault. It's a major failing of modern allopathic medical education," Ealy said.

How Does Vitamin C Work in the Body?

Vitamin C, also known as ascorbic acid or ascorbate, is naturally present in some whole foods, added to others, and available as a dietary supplement or intravenous

Unlike animals and plants that can create their own vitamin C, humans cannot synthesize the vitamin through internal metabolism as we do with vitamin D. Therefore we need to ingest it and hence, its "essential" status.

Vitamin C is absorbed by a group of different proteins in the small intestine, where an active transport system can move it through the gut and into the bloodstream. Unlike Most university medical schools recomvitamin C is water-soluble and therefore boost your cells and support the rest of the body, while what isn't used is eliminated through urine.

According to Alexander Michels, a research associate for the Linus Pauling Institute at Oregon State University, vitamin C can stay in the body for weeks.

"Levels of vitamin C in the blood are controlled by the kidneys through a process known as 'renal reabsorption,' which prevents vitamin C from being lost in the urine. Taking large doses of it can overwhelm this system, so the extra amount is lost in the urine in a matter of hours," he writes on the institute's blog.

"When someone who doesn't have high blood levels of vitamin C takes it, the vitamin stays in the system longer."

Getting adequate C every day is like having your own personal mechanic checking your car before you drive it. He clocks out at the end of the day, but is available for work tomorrow if you need him.

Vitamin C, Health, and Immunity

Medical researchers, nutritionists, and holistic healers agree on many of the benefits of vitamin C, including its importance in immune function.

Vitamin C is a confirmed antioxidant, which means it can counter free radicals. Free radicals are molecules that are missing an electron, which leaves them hunting for one to balance themselves. This hunt means they are reactive and damaging to cells. This makes them significant contributors to disease. Antioxidants neutralize free radicals.

Ongoing research is examining whether vitamin C may prevent or delay certain cancers, heart disease, and other diseases by limiting the damaging effects of free radicals.

When the body is depleted of vitamin C, the immune system can be compromised, and the body can be vulnerable to illness and disease. An epidemiological study published in the Nutrition Journal, July 2021, and essential nutrient for adrenal found 82 percent of critically ill COVID-19 health are much, much higher."

adult patients had low vitamin C values.

"Given the potential role of vitamin C in sepsis and ARDS [Acute respiratory distress syndrome], there is gathering interest of whether supplementation could be beneficial in COVID-19," wrote the researchers.

Others have found intravenous vitamin C to be effective in early treatment of CO-VID-19, particularly in hospitalized cases, as evidenced in Ealy's peer-reviewed position paper: "COVID-19: Restoring Public Trust During A Global Health Crisis" which references an effective vitamin C protocol used in Shanghai, China from early 2020

Among vitamin C's other roles, it aids in the absorption of nonheme iron (the form of iron present in plant-based foods that carries oxygen throughout the body so cells can produce energy).

How Much Is Enough?

fat-soluble vitamins such as D, E, A, and K, mend using the Recommended Dietary which are absorbed and stored in tissue, Allowance (RDA) as a guide on just how much C we need. For instance, healthy can't be stored in your body for later use. women are supposed to shoot for 75 mg of Whatever your body can handle, it uses to C per day (120 mg per day for women who are pregnant or breastfeeding).

Looking at the RDA, the average person thinks adding black currants (1-cup=203 mg) to their lunch box yogurt, or eating a sliced up a kiwi (1 cup=164 mg) first thing in the morning is really all they need.

Unfortunately, most nutritionists and naturopaths say we need to need to raise our vitamin C intake beyond that.

The RDA for vitamin C provided by the Food and Nutrition Board, is low and outdated, according to Ealy.

"Deficiency of even one essential nutrient and the cascade of negative events [that follow for a cell can be truly devastating long-term," he said, adding that certain nutrients and botanical medicines can help amplify the intended healing effect.

Processed foods containing synthetic vitamin C can have less vitamin C than their fresh counterparts no matter how hard technologies try to preserve the fragile vitamin. Fruit-flavored snacks, juices, and cereals need to be fortified with ascorbic acid to help replenish vitamin C content lost in processing.

If you are sick or looking for a therapeutic effect from vitamin C, you may need to

Using Vitamin C Therapeutically

The RDA for vitamin C is far too low for patients experiencing chronic infection or recovering from chronic disease. While the RDA suggests that 75 to 120 mg of Vitamin C for adults is the goal, Dr. Ealy said, in actuality that amount is the bare minimum to stave off nutrition preventable disease.

"In clinical practice, given the amount of elevated levels of stress most Americans feel daily and the high rate of exposure to chemical pollution in most foods, water, and homes, the daily requirements for vitamin C as an antioxidant, antiviral, detoxifier,

Vitamin C is best depends on what problems you are having.



Fresh food has the most vitamin C but even preserves offer some.



Green kiwi has 93 milligrams of vitamin C per 100 grams.

MG/DAY

at least 120 mg of

Pregnant women need vitamin C per day.



What form of

"Yet, even though the requirements for vitamin C are much, much higher on a daily basis, even the CDC [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention knows that 37-46 percent of Americans aren't getting even the minimal RDA amounts," Ealy said.

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Typically, naturopathic doctors, functional medicine practitioners, and certified holistic nutritionists with the highest success rates employ a strategy known as therapeutic range, which answers the important clinical question, "How much of a particular nutrition do I need to get into the body in order to produce a healing response at the cellular level?"

Ealy said vitamin C requires approximately 3,000 to 5,000 mg per day to fall within the therapeutic range, "and sometimes even this range may be too low."

Best Sources of Vitamin C

There are many ways to get vitamin C, so which is the best? A berry acai smoothie? Sauteed kale or spinach? A 1,000-milligram capsule, a tasty, sugar-coated gummy vitamin, or a trip to the hydration bar for an

People's techniques for "C-loading" vary widely, and unless you are a professionally trained nutritionist, you may be unsure what is best for you.

Let's get into some details on which is the best way for you:

Raw Food:

Best for Conscientious Eaters

If you are a health food superstar and watch what you eat, getting your recommended intake through raw foods high in vitamin C is your yellow brick road.

Raw fruits and vegetables have the highest amounts of vitamin C. If you cook those foods, it will affect how much vitamin C they retain.

"It's best to consume foods high in vitamin Crawwhenever possible, instead of cooked, because cooking methods like boiling, simmering, sautéing, stir-frying and poaching can cause significant losses of vitamin C and other 'delicate' nutrients," said Jillian Levy, CHHC, in Ancient Nutrition.

Levy said, "Cooking nutrient-dense foods tends to destabilize some of their valuable enzymes and destroy certain antioxidants and vitamins."

A Korean study published in Food Science and Biotechnology found boiling vegetables destroyed vitamin C in almost all their samples (0-73.86%), due to the vitamin leaching into the water, with the greatest loss found in boiled chard. Blanching reduced vitamin C in the samples (57.85 to 88.86%), with the greatest loss found in blanched spinach. Steaming significantly reduced the retention of C in all vegetables except broccoli (0-89.24%). The authors found:

"Steaming and microwaving retained higher concentrations of vitamin C than boiling because of the reduced contact with water at relatively low temperatures. Using minimal cooking water and cooking for shorter time periods should result in higher vitamin C retention."

A study from Zhejiang University in China discovered cooking broccoli with the high heat saute method also caused 16 percent losses of vitamin C. No formal studies have been done to measure vitamin C loss in grilling or baking vegetables, however, perhaps keep in mind a rule University of Central Florida nutritionists follow:

"There are three main things that deplete veggies of their nutrients when cooking: temperature, time and water. So the lower the temperature, less time exposed to heat and less water used, the better."

Also important to note, Michels, the research associate for the Linus Pauling Institute, wrote that vitamin C levels in many foods are retained during freezing and canning:

"The freezing process destroys some of the enzymes that would otherwise degrade vitamin C in fresh fruit and vegetables. Also, the cold temperatures tend to preserve ascorbic acid. Canned fruit has also been shown to be a good source of vitamin C—likely because the products are canned shortly after harvest with minimal additional processing, and the use of brief amounts of heat in the canning process can destroy enzymes that would otherwise degrade it."

Supplements: Necessary for the Majority

"Never underestimate the power of a potent multivitamin to really amplify the effectiveness of any individual nutrient or botanical," Ealy said. "There is a simplicity to the art of healing when we select the right synergistic nutrients and botanicals and then dose them in amounts high enough to produce

What form of Vitamin C is best depends on what problems you are having. Dr. Brian Lum of the Functional Healthcare Institute recommends ester C for immune boosting, allergy symptoms, and helping your body reduce histamine levels. This form is generally better absorbed than ascorbic acid but not as well absorbed as liposomal vitamin C.

the intended therapeutic effect."

Lum recommends liposomal vitamin C supplementation for methylation (detoxification) issues, such as those who carry the MTHFR gene, a gene studied for its association with autism spectrum disorders. "This form is the best and is great for those with digestive problems because it can be absorbed without fully going through the digestive system," he writes on a recent blog post.

Lum's page provides "loose guidelines" for people, but recommends putting a plan together with your doctor. For instance, he might recommend a combination of remedies for a sore throat, depending on his patient, such as "rose hip tea with Ester C and zinc picolinate."

Yet depending on which medical consultant you ask, the answer may be different. What supplement is best for you depends on needs, varying from allergies, light or chronic deficiencies, and specific health problems. It's personal.

And then there's the problem of supplement "impostors."

Autumn Smith, a holistic nutritionist and founder of Paleo Valley writes on the website for her supplement company that we need to take care when researching our vitamin C supplements. Like most nutritionists, she recommends eating a plethora of whole foods for vitamin C, but if you need to supplement, she said it's vital to find a natural product that doesn't contain sugar, GMOs, harsh processing ingredients, or synthetic ascorbic acid.

Smith said it's imperative you read the labels before you buy.

When finding the right supplement for you, make sure you find a natural, clean, and potent product, she said. For those who have reactions to the many variations of supplements, they may want to look into intravenous vitamin C (IVC).

Infusion: Best for Immediate Need

Intravenous vitamin C drip supplementation is a little more complicated than swallowing a capsule or juicing a bag of grapefruits, but some find it's the most effective way of getting high doses of vitamin C into your system. Some people use this method to attack cancer cells with highdose vitamin C.

The way the IVC process works is by inserting the vitamin C right through a needle in your arm, bypassing the digestive system by taking the shortcut straight to your bloodstream. Proponents say skipping the gastrointestinal tract this way makes the vitamin C more bioavailable.

"IVC is an excellent way to deliver high doses of vitamin C at or beyond the upper limits of therapeutic range directly into the bloodstream," Ealy said.

IVC patients can take their time in a chair with custom blends of 'vitamin cocktails' at hydration bars and integrative clinics. Others go for straight, pure vitamin C.

People are using IVC as an adjunct therapy in between chemotherapy, for Lyme disease, intractable epilepsy, and many other con-

Cooking nutrient

dense foods tends to destabilize some of their valuable enzymes and destroy certain

Jillian Levy, CHHC, wrote in Ancient Nutrition

antioxidants

and vitamins.



Fruit is canned shortly after harvest with minimal additional processing.



Steaming broccoli is a good way to retain more of its vitamin C.



Vitamin C infusions bypass the digestive system but can be

ditions, especially where the person can't list of symptoms, simply because vitamin C digest food properly or absorb oral supplements due to severe health conditions.

A study published in Frontiers in Physiology 2018, found IVC can decrease toxicity and side effects of chemotherapeutic agents in cancer patients with low levels depleted by chemotherapy. The IV administration provided significantly higher peak plasma concentrations because it bypasses the regulated intestinal uptake of oral vitamin C. The study examined a number of anti-cancer mechanisms proposed, such as indirect generation of hydrogen peroxide and antioxidant and anti-inflammatory functions.

Yet, outside of oncology and other chronic conditions, people are faced with deciding if a short-term boost of IV vitamin C is worth it. Since vitamin C is known to have a relatively short half-life, some IV vitamin C critics have called the infusions "expensive urine." IVs mean time and money. The process takes up to 45 minutes to an hour to complete and depending on where you go, the cost varies from \$35 to \$155 for one infusion, depending on the venue.

The average person participating in IV vitamin C treatments will go 1 to 2 times per month, according to a PLoS One survey of complementary and alternative medicine practitioners. Those with more serious conditions showed a frequency of approximately twice a week and about 19 treatments per patient.

Ealy believes IV vitamin C is worth it for a long list of chronic conditions:

"In the cases of cancer and severe infections," he added, "severe nutrient deficiency must be assumed during the initial assessment and confirmed by laboratory testing whenever possible."

"Vitamin C will most surely be deficient and because vitamin C is a master nutrient that plays essential roles in a multitude of key cellular functions across multiple tissues and organs, delivering it directly into the bloodstream, in high doses, is often incredibly effective at achieving the desired therapeutic effect."

Vitamin C Deficiency

Whether you are sick or not, you will want to avoid vitamin C deficiency. "Cells have many, many diverse nutri-

tional needs," Ealy said. "Cells don't ask for much, but what they need ... they need."

The concept of bioavailability, or the percentage of an administered substance that is absorbed in the intestines (and ultimately available for use in your cells and tissues), comes to play when considering how to best receive your vitamin C.

about half the vitamin C you eat in food is bioavailable (at best), some people cannot youngest of three sons began having sei-(or will not) eat the foods that give them the zures, she began researching the root cause ght amount of daily vitamin C, and therefore benefit from supplementation.

Vitamin C deficiency can result in a long are willing and open to alternatives.

There are

many different

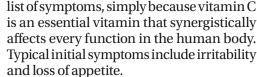
formulation

of vitamin C

supplements

for people with

different needs



Certain groups are at risk for vitamin C inadequacy. This includes smokers, infants fed evaporated or boiled milk, individuals with limited food variety, and people with malabsorption and certain chronic diseases such as cancer, gastrointestinal conditions, cardiovascular disease, age-related macular degeneration, and eye disease.

If you are getting sick every cold and flu season, you may not be getting vitamin C in your diet for one reason or another and need to take vitamin C supplements.

If COVID-19 caught up to you, you are likely on the risk list.

Testing for Vitamin C Deficiency

That said, you have two options: You can get a blood test for vitamin C deficiency, or you can take the recommended supplement dose and hope for the best.

If you choose the second route, the challenge is deciding which version of the CVitamin is best. This process takes research, as one size does not fit all.

The products on the market are endless from liposomal, esterified, time-release, to mineral forms. When you take them and how often play a role, and whatever else you are taking as far as drugs, other supplements, and your lifestyle, complicates that process. If you have health conditions or concerns, you should consult a professional.

Conclusion and Caution

No matter how you get it, you need vitamin C because your body cannot produce it, and that is the reason it is called an essential vitamin. The best way to get your vitamin C is through whole foods (preferably raw, and organic) but if you need to supplement, that's an equally viable route, as long as you have real data (either labs, personal information, or professional nutritional advice) that advises the right amount and protocol, you need.

A word of caution: In some people, high $vitamin\,C\,doses\,can\,cause\,symptoms\,such$ as diarrhea, nausea, heartburn, gastritis, fatigue, flushing, headache, and insomnia. People with chronic liver or kidney conditions, gout, or a history of calciumoxalate kidney stones may have issues with supplements, according to standard medi-

Though some health professionals say Beth Giuffre is a mosaic artist and health reporter for The Epoch Times. When her of intractable epilepsy, and discovered endless possibilities in healing for those who





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JENNIFER MARGULIS

ictor Hugo had just five months to write his novel "Notre-Dame de Paris," or "The Hunchback of Notre Dame," as it is known in English. But the already accomplished French author was completely blocked. An entire year past the deadline he had agreed upon with the publisher, Hugo hadn't written a single sentence of the book. Too many other things were competing for his time.

For one, Hugo was distracted by upheaval in France. In 1830, Paris was besieged, gripped by political upheaval, and in the midst of a second revolution.

For another, Hugo and his wife were precipitously evicted from their living quarters because the landlady couldn't bear all the noise generated by the comings and goings of their friends and colleagues.

Using any excuse to procrastinate with the task at hand, Hugo spent his time going out to the theater instead of staying indoors to write the book.

But when his infuriated bookseller told Hugo that he was in breach of contract and had to deliver the entire manuscript by December 1 or else pay a fine of 1,000 francs a mon in children and adults with ADHD week for every week's delay, Hugo knew he and autism, Lopez said.

According to his wife's published memoirs, Hugo realized he "must be punctual to the

To that end, he bought himself a bottle of ink and a gray woolen shawl which he could drape himself in. Then he locked away his regular clothing so he would have no temptation to leave the house. Finally, he began

From that day forward, his wife explained, Hugo left his desk only to eat and sleep. His only breaks were an hour of conversation with his friends in the afternoons. In fact, during the entire time he was writing what would be subsequently considered one of the greatest novels of European literature, Hugo left his new apartment only once. On December 20 (he did get granted an extension to February), he tried to attend the trial of King Charles X. Eh voilà. His scheme to beat the procrastination beast worked. He wrote the last line of "Notre-Dame de Paris" on January 14, using the last drop in his bottle of ink.

Pundits such as healthy habit guru James Clear, author of "Atomic Habits," have made liberal use of Victor Hugo's story to offer readers techniques to conquer their blocks and overcome procrastination. But what if there's another way to understand what Hugo went through? What if that time he spent not writing was necessary, an essential part of the process that led him to writing such an important and brilliant book?

The Procrastination Problem

Lollygagging, dilly-dallying, dithering whatever you call it, most of us do it. Even the most productive writers and artists, and the most successful CEOs, have times in their lives or careers when, like Hugo, they become blocked.

Procrastination is such a widespread "problem" that countless books and articles have been written about how to beat it. You've heard of some of them. Perhaps you've even read them: Brian Tracy's 2017 bestseller, "Eat That Frog!: 21 Great Ways to Stop Procrastinating and Get More Done in Less Time," Piers Steel's 2012 more scholarly "The Procrastination Equation: How to Stop

Putting Things Off and Start Getting Stuff Done," and Jane Burka and Lenora Yuen's 1983 perennial classic, "Procrastination: Why You Do It, What to Do About It Now."

These are all fantastic and helpful reads. And they all make several arguments against procrastination.

You know these arguments already, because you've likely said them to yourself over and over again: Procrastination is the opposite of productivity; what you resist persists; when you're blocked from doing the things you want and love to do, you're not living your best life; time-wasting activities such as video games and social media take you away from the things that really matter; the list goes on.

Jeannie Lopez is a clinical psychologist with a specialty in neuropsychology (as well as in functional nutrition) based in the East Bay, California, told me that there are many psychological dynamics at play when people procrastinate. Sometimes, it's perfectionism and a fear of failure that keep people from getting what they know they have to do done, other times it's because of brain challenges, including executive functioning disorders. Difficulties with problem-solving, goal-setting, and staying on task are com-

She also told me it's common to have procrastinators and non-procrastinators in the same family. Indeed, one of America's lead procrastination researchers, Dr. Joseph Ferrari, a professor at DePaul University in Chicago, insists that there is little to no genetic component to procrastinating.

"You are not born a procrastinator," Ferrari insists in a recent article in Psychology Today. "You are not the product of 'bad genes' from your parents. You learn procrastination as a way of life ..."

Lopez agrees. "I'm a super-organized planner. My daughter is not. She's 18 and she procrastinates all the time. My daughter's attitude is, 'Why do it now, when you can do it later?" Lopez said. "My style is, 'Let's do it now, so we can do something else later!""

Positive Procrastination

As much as she sometimes becomes frustrated with the clash between her way of doing things and her daughter's, however, Lopez says there are unseen and unsung benefits to procrastinating.

"Let's look at the positive side," Lopez says. "Let's make sure we look at the pros and cons of procrastination as a concept. What does it do that hinders us and what does it do that helps us and propels us forward?"

Lopez says that her daughter, who thrives off the adrenaline rush that comes from putting something off until she's nearly out of time, is able to complete tasks at a high level of excellence just before they're due.

"For the adrenaline junkies like her, it gets them going. This is their fuel. They live for these moments. Bring it on. Here's the challenge. Let's get going."

But if you're not someone who thrives on last-minute adrenaline, even as you are beatingyourself up for "wasting time" and letting your negative self-talk take over, what's actually happening may be quite different. Procrastination is not always "bad" or "wrong" or "time-wasting." In fact, I would argue, your lollygagging may sometimes—perhaps even often—serve a positive purpose.

Enter a concept that I call productive pro-

There are many psychological dynamics at play when people

procrastinate.

Sometimes we need

to do something else-

or nothing at all—so we

can find the right way to

tackle a difficult task.

Sometimes

to sit with

things and

have them

percolate.

psychologist

Jeannie Lopez, clinical

you just need

soak up sunlight, which has myriad health benefits, as well as getting some fresh air and exercise. But in addition to all of that, although I wasn't actively thinking about the article I needed to finish, my subconscious must have been at work. Once I was done turning over and watering the compost and I returned to my desk, how to solve a problem with the article's organization became

When the impetus to put something off

that you feel you need to be doing leads you

to do something else that is actually pro-

ductive and necessary for your health and

well-being, procrastination becomes part of

Let me give you some examples. Recently,

instead of finishing a magazine article due

by the end of the day, I noticed it was sunny

outside. It felt like the perfect moment to turn

over the soil in my compost. So I jumped

up from my desk and went to work in the

garden (a luxury, I realize, that comes from

working from a home office). I started to be-

rate myself for not writing, knowing that my

close-of-business deadline was looming. But

I was doing a task—aerating the compost—

that was productive in itself (and good for

the worms). I also was allowing my skin to

a positive and productive process.

instantly clear. Full disclosure: I strive to be an on-time erson and the article was late by several hours. I was mad at myself for taking such a long break. But the truth is that what felt like a self-sabotaging delay was actually helping me get the job done. My editors didn't mind the delay. The procrastination was productive.

My real mistake was my self-directed Lopez believes there are several upsides

to procrastinating. "Our society puts pressures on us, emphasizing speed and getting things done quickly," Lopez said. "But sometimes you just need to sit with things and have them

Arable Land Lying Fallow

Farmers who practice regenerative techniques let their land lie fallow during one or two growing cycles. This technique has been used for centuries in Asia, Africa, and the Mediterranean. An inexperienced eye sees a weed-filled empty field and a profiteer denigrates fallowing because the unplanted soil isn't turning a profit. But the wise man knows that, as quiet as the field might look, a process of regeneration and rebirth is happening inside the soil. The rest period is giving the land a chance to replenish itself.

I believe that's what Victor Hugo was doing all those years ago. While actively not writing "Notre-Dame de Paris," Hugo completed at least one book of poems, a play, and a novella. "Notre-Dame de Paris" is considered one of the most important novels of 19thcentury European literature. Perhaps, we have Hugo's productive procrastination to thank, in part, for its excellence.

Jennifer Margulis, Ph.D., is an awardwinning journalist and author of "Your Baby, Your Way: Taking Charge of Your Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Parenting Decisions for a Happier, Healthier Family." A Fulbright awardee and mother of four, she has worked on a child survival campaign in West Africa, advocated for an end to child slavery in Pakistan on prime-time TV in France, and taught post-colonial literature to non-traditional students in inner-city Atlanta. Learn more about her at JenniferMargulis.net

The accumulated weight of old ideas, toxic thoughts, and uncontrolled emotions can weigh us down

Declutter Your Soul

MOLLIE DONGHIA

You may have gotten quite successful at decluttering your home of the unneeded "things." You've learned to hang on to what adds value and reduce the rest. If you have, you've likely seen the peace that results from owning less and having fewer items to man-

But decluttering your home is only one way to create meaningful life change. I believe that, even more importantly, we need to declutter our souls as well.

"Clutter is not just physical stuff. It's old ideas, toxic relationships, and bad habits. It's anything that does not support your better self," author Eleanor Brown wrote.

Have you ever stopped to consider what kind of mental clutter has built up inside of you? I'm talking about the clutter that weighs you down physically, emotionally, and spiritually and that gets in the way of doing what matters most.

For me, this clutter takes the form of anxiety and wanting control. For others, it may be feeling stressed, burdened by relationships, or generally overwhelmed with life.

We all desire to become the healthiest version of ourselves, but sometimes we're buried under internal clutter that prevents us from pursuing meaningful habits and life changes.

Of course, I'm not a medical doctor and can only write from my own perspective and insights, but I would invite you to consider what mental clutter you carry with you as you continue to read this article. Think about what you can do today to create more healthy habits going forward.

The Clutter You Carry Inside

When we consider "clutter," most of us can recognize the mental weight of a physical mess. We know what it feels like when we neglect to have a good organizational system.

We can each feel the unease that comes when piles of clothes haven't made it to the closet, or kids' toys are strewn through every room of the house. And although this stuff takes up mental space, I would argue that the clutter that takes up the most space in our lives is in our souls: regrets from the past, unhealthy relationships, comparing ourselves to others, stories we tell ourselves to cope with hardship, judgments from others that make us feel defeated, unregulated emotions that erupt from the stresses of life, having too many tasks.

Over the past several years that I've struggled with my own mental clutter, I've seen valuable ways to combat these emotions. These approaches have allowed me to dig deeper and identify what this clutter is, where it's coming from, and healthy ways to move forward on my journey.

Ways to Declutter Your Soul Make time to be still

A habit I've been diligent to keep for the past few years is my morning quiet time. I've realized how important it is to have this hour of quietness to myself before the day begins. It allows me to start my day off with a clear focus as I sit and pray, read, and prepare myself for the day ahead.

Finding that time of day without distractions in order to meditate, pray, journal, or even take a break and relax is one of the healthiest ways I've found to clear mental clutter. Quiet time lowers your blood pressure, decreases your

heart rate, and increases your awareness of

Limit social media Too much consumption of social media can

create feelings of comparison and self-doubt, leaving us discontent with who we are or what we have. Taking an occasional break from social media is a way to take a healthy step back from passively watching the lives of others.

I've taken regular breaks from Instagram every few months, and this allows me to have more realistic expectations with goals, relationships, motherhood, and other important

If social media causes you to compare yourself to others in an unhealthy way or leaves you feeling defeated after scrolling, I would encourage you to take a break for a time and consider who you follow

Decide once

It's been estimated that the average adult makes more than 35,000 decisions each day. Decision fatigue can cause stress and anxi ety as we waffle back and forth trying to make the perfect choice.

Something I'm still learning, but have made great strides in, is this: When you make a decision, stick with it. An okay decision with firm resolve is much more powerful than a great decision that you're wishy-washy about. Just decide and don't look back, unless the facts on the ground change significantly.

Set boundaries

When we allow unhealthy relationships, busy schedules, or negative thoughts to weigh us down, we're left exhausted. Learn to say "no," even to good opportunities, so that you can be free to say "yes" to things that are truly important.

Leaving margin in our weeks has been one of the most helpful habits that we've found in this full season of life. We've committed to less, but still have plenty of space to serve in ways that matter.

Set up an emotional boundary Have you ever stopped to consider what kind of mental clutter has built up inside of you?

Quiet time

your blood

decreases your

heart rate, and

increases our

awareness of

what matters

most.

pressure,

lowers

friends and family that add encouragement to your life and give you strength to be there for friends in a more needy season.

Ask for help

We can't do everything and expect to do everything well. We each have our limitations and the capacity to only take on so much. Humans thrive when we live in communi-

from the relationships that cause stress or

anxiety. Surround yourself with a base of

ties with one another. When we ask for help from people we trust (a spouse, family member, coworker, or friend), we not only allow that person to carry some of our burden, but it also allows us to be more generous, as we see how beneficial help from others can be.

Start small

Mike and I have learned (sometimes the hard way) that when we want to make a life change, starting small is the best course of action. Starting small skips over the need for a perfect plan, because it enables you to learn as you go.

For example, you want to start exercising on a regular basis, but have never stuck with a plan for more than a few weeks. When you start small, you make the habit too easy not to do. Instead of aiming to run five miles per day or do a workout so strenuous that it leaves you completely exhausted, start much smaller. I'm talking embarrassingly small: Run for one minute on day one, two minutes on day two, three minutes on day three, and so on, until the habit becomes attainable, realistic, and even enjoyable.

Don't set out to make gigantic lifestyle changes. Start with a few healthy choices and master those by making them so easy that you can't not do them. Find what you can stick with in the long term, and I guarantee that you'll have much more success.

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 first published on ThisEvergreenHome.com



Staying off social media is a great way to clear some head space.



Humans thrive when in communities. If you need help, don't hesitate to ask for it.



Taking some contemplative time in the morning can preempt mental mess from forming by giving you a clearer

we're buried under

internal clutter that prevents us from meaningful life changes.

MONKEY BUSINESS IMAGES/SHUTTERSTOCK

The Power of Routines

What you do every day matters and routines help you do it

MEGAN EDGELOW

The word "routine" can bring to mind words such as mundane or ordinary.

During the COVID-19 pandemic's disruptions to daily life, routines may have felt boring and restrictive. However, as an occupational therapist and researcher of the effect of activity and participation on mental health, I know that routines can be powerful tools. They can support cognitive function, boost health, and provide meaningful activities and social opportunities.

Early in the pandemic, researchers pointed to the value of daily routines to cope with change. As the two-year anniversary of the pandemic coincides with the relaxation of public health measures across the country, reflecting on routines and their value is useful when moving toward a "new normal."

Routines Support Cognitive Function

First, having a daily routine and regular habits supports cognitive function and may even free people up to be more creative. Research has found that having regular work processes allows workers to spend less cognitive energy on recurring tasks. This can support focus and creativity for more complex tasks.

Think of typical morning routines that existed before the pandemic: helping family members get on their way, taking a usual route to work, grabbing a warm beverage along the way, saying hello to coworkers, flipping on a computer, or opening a calendar. Having habits such as these can set the stage for a productive workday.

A review of the daily rituals of influential artists found that many artists have well-defined work routines that may support their creativity rather than constrain it. Memory research shows that regular routines and $hab its\, can\, support\, older\, adults\, to\, function$ better in their home environments.

If taking medications at the same time and putting the keys in their spot is part of a daily routine, less energy will be spent looking for lost objects and worrying about maintaining one's health, freeing up time for other things that people want to do in

Routines Promote Health

Regular routines can also help people feel like they have control over their daily lives and that they can take positive steps in managing their health. Making time for exercise within routines can help meet recommended daily activity levels. This is especially relevant now, as research shows that people who reduced their activity levels during the pandemic could experience enduring health effects.

As people increase activity outside of their homes, they might consider taking transit to school and work, returning to organized fitness activities and the gym, and finding opportunities to include movement throughout the day. Other ways that routines can support health include regular meal preparation and getting enough sleep, activities that seem simple, but can pay dividends in healthy aging over a life-

Routines Provide Meaning

Regular routines can also go beyond the streamlining of daily tasks and add some spice to life. Evidence indicates that a health-promoting activity such as walking can offer chances to enjoy nature, explore new places, and socialize.

Research on the concept of flow, a state of full absorption in the present moment, shows that activities such as sports, games, fine arts, and music can be fulfilling and reinforcing. Regular participation in meaningful and engaging activities can also contribute positively to mental health.

Small Steps to Build Routines

If you think your daily routines could use a tune-up, consider some small steps:



A daily routine and regular habits supports cognitive function and may

even free people up to be more creative.

If you make a time to do something and stick with it, like jogging in the morning, you'll find it easier to maintain the habit.

CHANDER R/UNSPLASH

Use a day-timer or smartphone app to organize your activities and put the things that you want to do in your schedule.

Choose a regular time to wake up and to go to bed, and try to stick to it most days of

Make physical activity manageable with neighborhood walks or bike rides a few times per week.

Start a new hobby or reengage in a past one, such as playing sports or games, making arts and crafts, playing an instrument, or singing.

Keep an eye out for meaningful activities that may be popping up in your community, such as a book club at the library or a social walking group.

Routines have the power to help us manage our health and our work, home, and community lives. Two years after the pandemic changed everyone's lives, people now have an opportunity to consider the routines they want to keep and the meaningful things they need in their daily lives to stay productive, happy, and healthy.

Megan Edgelow is an assistant professor in health sciences at Queen's University in Ontario, Canada. This article was first published on The Conversation.

Local groups and clubs may offer meaningful activities that will upgrade your daily routine.



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