

THE EPOCH TIMES

MIND &

BODY

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“

The first thing I noticed with people that are over 70 that are fit and healthy and set them apart from someone that may not be so healthy is the positive attitude.

Blanca Garcia, a registered dietitian nutritionist



AGE WELL

The Secret to Healthy and Fit Elder Years

Healthy habits arise from the quality of our character and define how well we age

CONAN MILNER

You find a lot of machine metaphors when trying to understand how the human body works. Fuel is compared to food, for example, or an engine is compared to our digestive process. Computer circuitry is said to be like our nervous system. And just like mechanical parts, body parts are said to wear out with time and overuse. But a machine doesn't have feelings. Or morality. It doesn't have an internal compass that tells it why it shouldn't party all night and eat soda and chips all day, nor a knowing side that nudges it to go outside, connect with nature, and move its

mechanical parts in a healthy way.

The machine metaphor for the human body overlooks one of the most critical components to good health: good character. And yet the human body as a machine idea is everywhere.

German biologist Dr. August Weismann is credited with introducing this wear-and-tear theory of the aging human body in 1882.

In the past, doctors drew metaphors from nature to describe health and biology. Perhaps Weismann's idea was influenced by the ever-increasing role machines have played in our lives since the industrial revolution.

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Unlock a long and healthy life with a clear mind about what matters.



MARKO GEBER/GETTY IMAGES



MIGUEL SAAVEDRA/SHUTTERSTOCK

FOOD AS MEDICINE

Black Garlic: The Antioxidant Powerhouse

Under the right conditions, garlic can be transformed into something even more powerful

EMMA SUTTIE

Garlic is a pretty magnificent vegetable. There are few, if any, foods more beloved and present in more kitchens than this bulb.

Garlic is one of the most popular foods on the planet and has been used for centuries by cultures the world over. Cloves of garlic have been found in ancient Greek temples and Egyptian pyramids, including the tomb of King Tutankhamen. Back then, garlic was used not only to enhance the flavor and aroma of meals, but it was also used to increase strength, enhance physical performance, preserve food, and support digestion.

Today, a staggering 250 million (a quarter billion) pounds of garlic are consumed every year in the United States alone. Unfortunately, much of our garlic is coming in from distant lands rather than local growers. China produces 80 percent of the world's garlic, followed by India, South Korea, Egypt, and Russia.

In addition to its deliciousness, garlic has a long and impressive list of health benefits. Garlic is an antiviral, antibacterial, antifungal, and anti-inflammatory; it boosts the immune system and fights infections, decreases your risk of cancer, and helps protect against cardiovascular problems such as atherosclerosis (a buildup of plaque in the arteries), clotting, high blood pressure, and strokes.

If you think the above list is impressive, just wait. It turns out that if you heat regular garlic in a humidity-controlled environment for 30 days, something extraordinary happens: It unleashes garlic's little-known secret weapon.

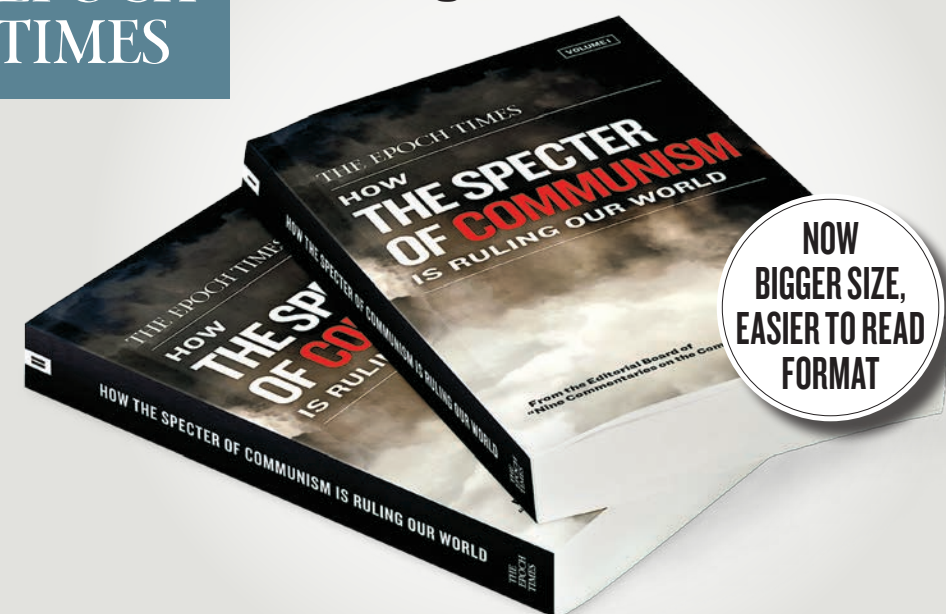
Raw garlic contains minerals such as magnesium, calcium, phosphorus, selenium, and one of the most potent antioxidants in the plant kingdom, allicin. Allicin is only released when the garlic is chewed (not for the faint of heart), cut, or crushed, and you'll know it because it's responsible for garlic's pungent aroma. The problem is that once you crush a clove of garlic and liberate the allicin inside, you have less than an hour before it loses its potency and all the healing benefits that come with it.

But there's a way to preserve and enhance all of garlic's health benefits, and amazingly, it's been used in South Korea, Thailand, and Japan for centuries. It's called black garlic.

What Is Black Garlic?

Black garlic is simply regular garlic that has gone through a process of fermentation.

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Not all heat can be relieved by a cool dip. Sometimes the only way to cool down is to stay calm.

CHINESE WISDOM FOR SEASONAL LIVING

The Heart Is Vulnerable in Summer, so Stay Calm

Solar Term: ‘Summer Begins’ (May 5 to May 20)

MOREEN LIAO

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

Solar Term: ‘Summer Begins’

2021 Dates: May 5 to May 20

This is the time when the sun's heat finally warms the earth and prompts everything to grow and move.

Naturally, insects and wild animals become very active due to the increase in temperature and relative humidity, and crops start to grow rapidly.

If the heat is too strong, the plants will grow quickly, but their stalks will be weaker. Fast growth also affects their flavor.

Clever farmers in ancient China would use up the summer tea leaves in fruit or flavored tea blends, such as with plum flowers, berries, orange, or jasmine. The fruits and flowers masked the taste of the less-flavorful tea leaves.

The heat from this solar term not only affects the earth, but also our bodies. Very hot weather can damage the heart. Thus, during summer, we need to take good care of our circulatory system by staying calm and avoiding getting angry. It's also important to eat a healthy, cooling diet.

In ancient China, Emperor Qianlong (1711–1799) from the Qing Dynasty used to make cooling summer teas from the morning dew of water lily leaves and the green lotus seed sprouts from his palace gardens. Both of these plants are considered extremely cold in the traditional Chinese medicine system of classification. This method classifies foods according to their nature, not by whether they are physically cold or warm to the touch.

According to a book written in the Warring States period, “Yurling,” women used to drink plum juice with wine, hoping to stay young forever. It is very good to eat plum at this time of year to promote beauty.

The elderly, or people with weak health, often have a poor appetite around this time. Therefore, it is important to design a well-balanced diet for them and pay extra attention to their well-being.

This is also the season when the young ones grow the most rapidly. Make sure they're getting enough nutrients and exercising gently.

Tips for Living
in Harmony With the Season

1. Take midday naps, as they help to strengthen the heart.
2. Drink plenty of water.
3. Avoid exposure to wind after sweating.
4. Massage the temples by pressing firmly with the center of both palms. These two pressure points help clear water retention inside our bodies and protect the heart.

Seasonal Foods to Beat the Heat

Avoid alcohol and strongly flavored or greasy foods. This protects the skin from rashes or irritation brought on by the increase in humidity.

Eat foods such as bean sprouts, celery, cucumber, eggplant, eggs, fava beans, fish, millet, milk, oats, seaweed, spinach, tofu, tomatoes, wheat, and zucchini.

The heat from this
solar term not only
affects the earth, but
also our bodies.

Enjoy fruits, such as cherries, grapefruit, strawberries, lemons, melons, and passion fruit. Red-colored foods are beneficial at this time.

Try to avoid overprocessed foods. Sour is the perfect flavor for this time, as sour-tasting foods, especially vinegar, help maintain moisture levels inside the body and stimulate the appetite. Avoid or reduce bitter foods.

The best herbs for the season are coriander, dandelion, peppermint, jasmine, licorice, melissa, rose, and tender ginger.

Epoch Times contributor Moreen Liao is a descendant of four generations of traditional Chinese medicine doctors. She's also a certified aromatherapist, former dean of an Institute in Sydney, and the founder of Heritage Formulations, a complete solution for TCM professionals. Visit RootsTCM.com for details.



In ancient China, Emperor Qianlong (1711–1799) from the Qing Dynasty used to make cooling summer teas from the morning dew of water lily leaves and the green lotus seed sprouts from his palace gardens.

FOOD AS MEDICINE

Black Garlic: The Antioxidant Powerhouse

Under the right conditions, garlic can be transformed into something even more powerful

Continued from Page 1

Chemically referred to as the “Maillard reaction,” the process is biologically quite complex. The garlic bulbs are placed in a humidity-controlled room and heated to approximately 170 degrees Fahrenheit for 30 days. This process causes the sugars in the garlic to caramelize, making it turn its distinctive black color. It also changes the texture and taste. Black garlic has a chewy texture and a sweet balsamic flavor.

However, the most significant transformation is that in its black form, garlic is imbued with not just healing properties but healing superpowers. Interestingly, allicin, the powerful antioxidant in raw garlic, is almost completely destroyed during the heating and aging process of creating black garlic. On the surface, this doesn't make sense, as allicin is one of garlic's most potent health-boosting agents.

But the fermentation process that produces black garlic is also the catalyst for an important transformation, turning allicin (a powerful antioxidant) into S-allyl-cysteine (SAC), an even more potent antioxidant. S-allyl-cysteine is better absorbed by the body, is more stable, and is an even more powerful antioxidant than allicin by a factor of more than two to one.

Black Garlic's Health Benefits

Some of the most compelling discoveries about black garlic involve how the heating, moisture, aging, and resulting fermentation process enhances already existing nutrients and changes existing nutrients into new ones. These changes make black garlic superior to regular garlic in terms of its healing and protective abilities.

In a comprehensive review of black garlic's SAC content, the superior antioxidant effect of black garlic over regular garlic was found to be because of various complex mechanisms that illustrate how robust black garlic's antioxidant capabilities can be. One of the most beneficial actions of antioxidants is their ability to destroy free radicals in the body. Free radicals are formed from various factors, such as inflammation, exposure to UV light, air pollution, ionizing radiation, pesticides, alcohol, and smoking. Free radicals accelerate aging and have been shown to be a contributing factor to many diseases.

Adding black garlic to your diet or taking a high-quality supplement is worth it for its free-radical fighting antioxidant benefits alone. But black garlic has a host of other impressive healing benefits that more than earn it the title of a ‘superfood.’

Decreases Inflammation

Inflammation is the root of many of our most destructive diseases, such as autoimmune diseases, metabolic disorders (diabetes, obesity), and cancer. The S-allyl-cysteine in black garlic is one of the best things you can add to your diet to reduce any inflammation already present and reduce your risk of developing inflammatory diseases in the years to come.

Reduced inflammation also reduces your chances of developing cognitive conditions, such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases, and it can help to improve memory and other cognitive functions.

Looking at several studies, researchers in Taiwan have suggested that black garlic and its bioactive compounds may have a protective effect on the brain and help prevent neurodegenerative disorders and cognitive decline. They published their article in the journal *Molecules* in 2021.

Decreases Cancer Risk

Numerous studies demonstrate that black garlic is showing promise in its ability to destroy certain types of cancer cells. Black garlic was shown to increase apoptosis (a type of programmed cell death) in human leukemic cells and increase cytotoxicity (toxic to cells—cancerous ones) in human lung carcinoma, breast adenocarcinoma, stomach adeno-



This complex biochemical process caramelizes garlic and makes it sweet and chewy.

carcinoma, and cancerous liver cells. In studies, black garlic also decreased the volume and weight of tumors in human gastric cancer cells and inhibited colon cancer cell growth.

In another study, black garlic was shown to have a hepatoprotective effect, meaning that it protects the liver from damage, which, in this study, was from chronic alcohol abuse.

Boosts the Immune System

Our immune systems are our first line of defense against pathogenic invaders. The allicin in regular garlic is known to be a potent antimicrobial, antibiotic, and antifungal. Still, when that allicin is converted to the S-allyl-cysteine in black garlic, it becomes an even more powerful way to protect the body against viruses, bacteria, and fungal infections such as candida by destroying any such invaders trying to take up residence in our body.

Improves the Cardiovascular System

If you have cardiovascular problems—or would like to avoid them—adding black garlic to your diet is probably a good idea. Black garlic has been shown to decrease the risk of cardiovascular problems such as atherosclerosis (plaque in the arteries), clotting, high blood pressure, and stroke. In a study published in *Frontiers in Physiology*, black garlic improved heart function in patients with coronary artery disease by improving circulating antioxidant levels. The same study also found 27 main compounds in black garlic with strong antioxidant properties.

Another study published in the journal *Nutrients* found that consumption of black garlic helped reduce blood pressure in subjects with high cholesterol.

Some studies also suggest that black garlic has a cardioprotective effect, protecting the heart from damage.

How to Make Black Garlic

If this is the first time you're hearing about black garlic, you aren't alone. Even though it has been used for centuries in many Asian countries, it isn't common in

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Researchers in Taiwan suggest black garlic and its bioactive compounds may have a protective effect on the brain and help prevent neurodegenerative disorders and cognitive decline.

the West, and it isn't something that you would typically see at a grocery store.

There was a time about 10 years ago that it became a bit of a trend with high-end chefs, but other than that, it isn't particularly well known. If you can find it, it costs a pretty penny—upward of \$20 a pound.

Of course, if you feel adventurous, you could always try to make it. Although the process of creating black garlic isn't exactly simple (primarily because of the time involved), it's possible. I was able to find instructions online for three different ways to make black garlic using either a dehydrator, a slow cooker, or a rice cooker.

A Truly Powerful Food and Medicine

The foods that we eat every day are an opportunity to nourish our bodies, fortify our health, and fight disease. Regular garlic is incredibly versatile—it's found almost everywhere and is relatively easy to grow; it enhances cooking and encompasses an impressive list of healing benefits from boosting the immune system to cleansing the body of pathogens. It's a very good thing to have around. If you want to supercharge its healing benefits—which are already pretty spectacular—you can try the recipes for making black garlic, which has all of regular garlic's benefits and then some.

With uncertainty about the future and a lot of talk recently about food shortages and supply chain issues, gaining some knowledge of common foods and their healing capabilities is only prudent. Being well informed, self-sufficient, and healthy will empower us to face whatever the future may bring.

As Winston Churchill once said: “Healthy citizens are the greatest asset any country can have.”

Emma Suttie is an acupuncture physician and founder of *Chinese Medicine Living*—a website dedicated to sharing how to use traditional wisdom to live a healthy lifestyle in the modern world. She's a lover of the natural world, martial arts, and a good cup of tea.



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MEDICALLY CORRECT

Compassion: The Essence of Good Medicine

The best medicine comes when skilled physicians have the heart to care

PETER WEISS

We all get way too many emails and texts that make us want to turn off our devices. I don't need to know about the latest discount for a new laser machine, or a text letting me know that I won a free iPhone—if I just respond.

I also get a lot of old-fashioned mail, from insurance companies denying a patient's prescription for one reason or another, to a company telling me they can provide a service to prevent me from getting unsolicited offers! With all of this, I wasn't expecting a handwritten letter from a long time patient, N.L.

I actually stopped, looked at the envelope, gently opened it, and started reading. Something about it spoke to me and said, "slow down and read."

"My Dear Dr. Weiss," she began and started by explaining why she didn't come in for her annual exam this past year. Many patients did not, due to the fear of COVID 19. I just acknowledge them and say, "no worries, you're here now."

N.L. went on to say she really missed our annual "visits." I loved how she called her annual exam "our visits." N.L. is my age, has no children, and every year, we discussed what book we really enjoyed that past year. Both of us are avid readers. She said she really liked my recommendation of "The Lost Shtetl," by Max Gross. She wanted to give me "one final recommendation," the book "Yiddish for Pirates" by Barry Garwin. I had to stop and reread that last line, "one

N.L. wrote she loved being my patient for 'forever number of years' and was so ever grateful for her care.

The more rushed and robotic health care becomes, the more we need to make compassion a priority.

final recommendation." I knew what was coming next. She went on to say she had stage 4 terminal glioblastoma (a very aggressive deadly brain cancer) and wouldn't be seeing me again.

N.L. wrote she loved being my patient for "forever number of years" and was so ever grateful for her care. I had been seeing her for some 35 years, and we really did talk about books each of those years. I had her read "The Martian" by Andy Weir, years before the movie came out. She didn't enjoy it as much as I did, but she read it. The letter hit me hard. I have lost patients over the years and have built up a long and strong bond with so many. N.L. was one of the really good ones.

Compassion is very much the buzzword today when speaking about health care. What is it really? The Journal Clinical Ethics had an editorial titled "Compassion in healthcare" in their 2013 specially themed edition of the same title.

The editorial makes that point that "Compassion and empathy involve attunement—the delicate but precise art of 'reading' another person's emotions and responding sensitively and appropriately." There are few times we need this kind of attunement as distinctly as when facing a potentially life-threatening situation where another human being's help is critical to resolving it.

Compassion is the key to providing the best health care possible. Being a physician is about being the patient's champion. Compassion is where "care" begins.

A research review published in the journal *The Patient* in 2017 looked at nine studies that tried to measure compassion among health care providers. The authors came to the conclusion that there is an "unmet need for a psychometrically validated instrument that comprehensively measures the construct of compassion in healthcare settings."

In other words, there is wide concern about the lack of compassion in health care systems today. What we measure, matters, as the saying goes. Scientists that they are, they want a way to measure it. We need more compassion but I don't think any of us need studies to realize that.

I tried reaching out to N.L., but received

no response. I recently wrote a letter to her, thanking her for being my patient and allowing me to "care."

I told my wife about N.L. and she reminded me of another story I had told her many years ago about the first patient I lost.

It was 1979 and I was in my third year at the University of Michigan Medical School, doing a surgical rotation at the Veterans Administration hospital in Ann Arbor. I was only a medical student, but I considered C.L. my patient.

He and his wife owned a bakery in Toledo, Ohio, only 50 miles down the road. C.L. had severe diabetes as well as significant heart disease. My job was to "debride" his diabetic necrotic toes every day. I had to cut off the dead tissue right at his bedside. In those days, there were just wards with curtains, no private rooms like today.

He had already lost several toes and on that day, with me there, his big toe fell off. He just laughed. C.L. told me about the struggles and joys of his life. Two days after his toe misadventure, his wife brought me in a birthday cake she baked. I never knew how they found out that it was my birthday (I was 22 on that date).

A few days later he coded and we were unable to resuscitate him. I say "we," but I just stood in the back and watched the doctors and nurses do everything they could.

His death shook me, but I knew there would be many more over the years to come. I had to finish my rounds with the team after that, all very somber, hardly an unnecessary word spoken.

Compassion isn't just for physicians, it's for all of us. We must find time to stop and read those letters. Compassion is a two-way street. I am always in awe of the patients who have serious medical issues and yet sincerely ask me how I'm feeling and how my family is.

"A kind gesture can reach a wound that only compassion can heal." — Steve Maraboli

Dr. Peter Weiss is the co-founder of the Rodeo Drive Women's Health Center in Beverly Hills, Calif., and remains in private practice. He also spends part of his time writing and lecturing on health care in America.



The Neurological Toll of Masks and Lockdowns

The physiological consequences children are suffering could have repercussions for a generation

JENNIFER MARGULIS

Dr. Avery Jackson, a board-certified neurosurgeon based in Michigan, performs complicated brain surgeries in the operating room as often as four times a week. During these surgeries, which can last for up to eighteen hours, Jackson, who is Chief Executive Officer and Medical Director of Michigan Neurosurgical Institute in Grand Blanc, wears a surgical mask.

At even the lowest levels of exposure, a study found carbon dioxide reduced brain activity.

While masks make sense in the operating room, Jackson said, people—especially children—should not be wearing masks in their everyday lives.

As Jackson explained to a group of nearly 100 doctors and other health professionals at a two-day medical conference in Conroe, Texas, on April 29, wearing masks outside the operating room creates a host of health problems. Masking, Jackson said during his talk, is especially dangerous for children's developing brains. That's because masks can cause people to rebreathe a small amount of their exhaled carbon dioxide—over and over again.

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Any kind of oxygen restriction may have negative effects on the brain.

Become a Hospital Prepper

Get to know your health care environment and be ready if a loved one is likely to require care

PAMELA PRINCE PYLE

I was working the night shift when I received a call from someone in the emergency room. "I'm going to need you to come down to see a patient. It's a tough one."

"Tough" was putting it mildly. Two young newlyweds had come to our resort town, the words "Just Married!" scrawled in big letters across the back window of their car. For fun, they had decided to check out one of the many live theaters in our area that thrill guests with elaborate, grandiose shows. This particular per-

formance featured armored knights on horseback, jousting and displaying the skills of an era long gone.

Soon after entering the theater, the young husband complained of shortness of breath. When his condition worsened, someone called 9-1-1. Before an emergency crew could arrive, the man collapsed, his lips turning blue.

A crowd gathered, unsure of what to do until the ambulance arrived. The frantic wife knelt by his head and whispered in his ear as her tears fell on his face.

Continued on Page 15



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WISE HABITS

Effortless Effort: Relaxing While Trying Hard

Try taking on the day with a calm intention rather than an intense push to get things done

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LEO BABAUTA

I've noticed that a lot of us will be pretty wiped out at the end of a long day of work or social activity, to the point where we need time to recuperate from exhaustion. There's nothing wrong with that, but let's talk about the possibility of doing hard things without exhausting ourselves.

We might call it effortless effort (similar to "wu wei" in Daoism)—the idea of acting without a huge amount of pursuit, tension, or extraneous physical effort.

When someone talks about "trying hard," that usually means they put a lot of energy into something, and quickly exhausted themselves. "Trying hard" is equated to being very tense, pushing hard with your body and mind, and putting everything you have into it.



Sometimes we add more strain to a task than it actually requires. What if we can move through the day with a lighter step and gentler determination?

Can you rest your attention gently on one spot, not forcing the attention but just resting it?

If you talk to someone about "relaxing," they will usually think of that as the opposite of "trying hard." They think of lying on the couch, muscles relaxed, not doing anything. "Relaxing" is equated with "laziness" for a lot of people.

So "trying hard" and "relaxing" are seen as two opposite things.

What would it be like to try hard while relaxing?

An Experiment

Try this experiment: Relax the muscles of your torso, neck, jaw, head so that you're sitting upright but relaxed. Now read a few sentences of this article, while keeping that upright relaxed posture. Breathe easy, feel peaceful, while reading.

Notice what it's like to give focus to the reading, while not tensing up. While remaining peaceful and relaxed.

Now try it while drinking a glass of water, or walking around the room. Upright and relaxed, doing things without spending more effort than is needed.

Practicing and Adjusting

We can practice in meditation as well—can you have a relaxed upright posture and keep your focus on the present moment, without straining? Can you rest your attention gently on one spot, not forcing the attention but just resting it?

This is the essence of effort without extra effort. Giving something your focus without spending all your energy. Moving without too much tension.

Of course, it takes some tension to move—otherwise you'd collapse on the floor in a puddle. We need to spend some energy to move around a room, or to sit upright. But we don't need

Meditation is one of the best examples of 'effortless effort.'



to spend more than the minimum required. It's like spending what you need for food, without needing to splurge on every bite.

Sometimes a lot of energy is required. And if so, you try hard with that burst of energy. Just what's needed. And then go back to relaxed upright posture, without needing to spend more.

You can practice all day, if you keep "effortless effort" in mind. You can cook, wash dishes, talk to people, answer email, without needing to be tensed all the time, without needing to exhaust yourself. Notice if your torso is tensed up, your jaw clenched, or your temples tight. Then relax.

Notice what it's like to spend just what's needed, and not everything.

Leo Babauta is the author of six books and the writer of Zen Habits, a blog with over 2 million subscribers. Visit ZenHabits.net



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