WEEK 39, 2022

THE EPOCH TIMES

JOSEPH MERCOLA

The zucchini is an underestimated nutritional treasure.

The peak harvesting season for this delicious member of the gourd family in the Northern Hemisphere is from May to August. When harvested correctly, zucchini (Cucurbita pepo) is dark green and has firm fruit. Although most people think of it as a summer vegetable, it is, indeed, a fruit.



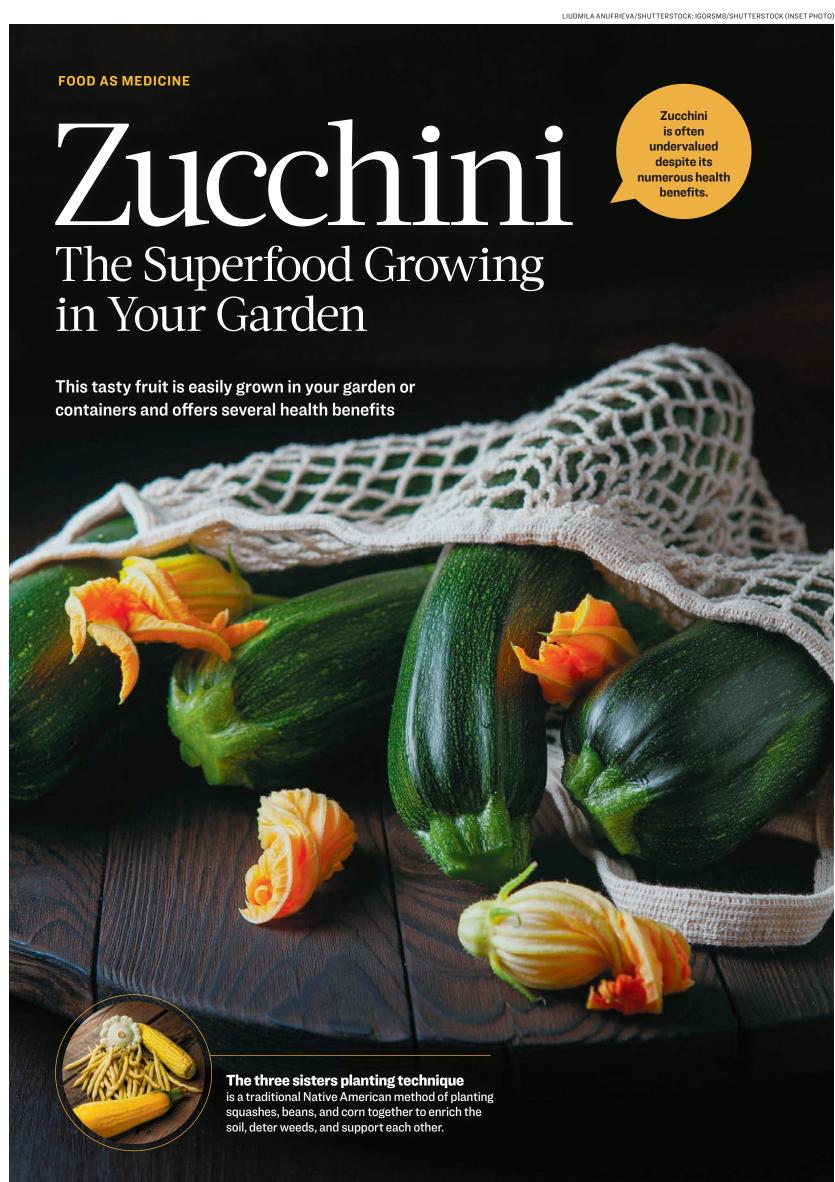
Zucchini comes in different varieties, all of them are excellent source of fiber and nutrition.

The plant is native to Central America and Mexico. According to the Department of Agriculture (USDA), zucchini may have been one of "The Three Sisters," which were crops planted within a shared space. This indigenous agricultural practice used three plants—corn, beans, and squash—to nourish and protect each other as they grew.

Zucchini plants can grow in nearly every climate during the warm summer months. It takes only one or two plants to produce enough for one family. In addition to being a good producer throughout the growing season, zucchini is also high in nutrition and has several health benefits. Zucchini are best harvested when they're 1.5 inches round and no longer than 8 inches.

Zucchini can taste bitter when they become overripe or stressed. That's because, like other vegetables in the family, zucchini contains toxins the plant uses to defend against predators. Zucchini produces cucurbitacins, which have a bitter taste. Usually, cultivated zucchini has a low level of the toxin, but the level rises when they are overripe or stressed by such things as wide temperature swings, uneven watering, low soil fertility, or low soil pH.

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The Pandemic's Bacterial Echo

Our response to COVID-19 has brought a life-threatening increase in antibiotic-resistant infections in hospitals

> A pill for every ill doesn't work well when it makes the bugs stronger.

XIAOXU SEAN LIN & HEALTH 1+1

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of life-threatening infections from a well-known superbug has spiked in hospitals.

MRSA, which stands for methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, is one of the most well-known superbugs, or bacteria that are resistant to most antibiotics.

Since 2010, laboratory-identified



through the United States, hospitals have experienced an increase in the number of MRSA infections. The hospital overload has resulted in higher health care-associated infections.

During the fourth quarter of 2020, the national MRSA bacteremia standardized infection ratio was 34 percent higher than that of 2019. Several states reported even greater increases in 2020, such as Arizona with an 80 percent increase and New Jersey with a 99 percent increase.

cases of MRSA infection were sig-

nificantly decreasing. However,

as the COVID-19 pandemic swept

Some studies have suggested the increase is due, in part, to the rising use of antibiotics to deal with the fear of secondary infections in CO-VID patients. Others have linked the rise to increasing use of antimicrobial agents, including sanitizers. Then, there are the health care conditions created by the pandemic itself.

MRSA is increasingly common in nursing homes. From September to October 2021, 48.7 percent of residents in nursing homes were found to harbor MRSA at any body site.

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THE EPOCH TIMES



Embrace the autumnal changes brought forth by the changing seasons and learn to live in

CHINESE WISDOM FOR SEASONAL LIVING

The Beginning of Autumn: East Versus West

Solar Term: 'Autumn Equinox' (Sept. 23 to Oct. 7)

MOREEN LIAO

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

Solar Term: 'Autumn Equinox'

2022 Dates: Sept. 23 to Oct. 7

"Autumn Equinox" is the 16th solar term of the year and the day when the sun **From the day of the** crosses the celestial equator, heading southward, creating one of only two days in the year (the other being the spring equinox) when day and night are the same length. In 2022, the autumnal equinox falls on Sept. 23.

In the Western astronomical calendar, the equinox marks the end of summer and the beginning of autumn in the Northern Hemisphere, while marking the end of winter and the start of spring in the Southern Hemisphere. In the Chinese calendar, autumn is considered to start earlier and is already half over by the time of the autumn equinox. In

this calendar, autumn began on Aug. 7 this year. There are 46 days between when ancient Chinese people and Western people define the first day of autumn. Each year, there might be one or two days of variation, depending on the sun and Earth's movements, but it's roughly the same every year.

Many believe Confucius The Spring and Autumn compiled the Spring and Annals, also known as Chunqiu, is an ancient

Chinese chronicle that has been one of the core Chinese classics since ancient times. The Annals cover a 241-year period from 722 B.C. to 481 B.C. It's the earliest surviving Chinese historical text to be arranged in an annals format. It was traditionally regarded as having been compiled by Confucius and was included as one of the Five Classics of Chinese literature.

The Annals recount how, for ancient Chinese, the beginning of autumn was the time when the gods of autumn were ready to descend to earth, so the Chinese people worshipped to heaven and went to the west to welcome them. Those gods would finally arrive on Earth on the autumn equinox, and the ancient Chinese would welcome them with a ceremony in the center of the capital city.

This was one of two such major ceremonies that em perors in ancient China held each year in the worship of the divine. The one in spring was to pray for a prosperous year to come and for mild weather; the one in autumn was to thank heaven

coconut milk.

traditional Chinese medicine doctors. She's also a certified *aromatherapist, former*

dean of an Institute in Sydney, and the founder of Heritage ormulations, a com-

com.au for details.

This is the time to enjoy nutritious sweet foods, like baked apples with honey and nuts.

Autumn Annals.

and the gods for a good harvest. If the harvest was poor that year, the fall ceremony was used as an opportunity for the Chinese to offer repentance.

From the day of the autumn equinox, the balance between yin and yang energy starts to shift dramatically, with the warm yang energy fading rapidly. Normally, lightning and thunder should have ceased by this time, as the natural quality of thunder is pure yang. If thunder still exists after the autumn equinox, it was believed this indicated an imbalance of yang and yin energy for the year, and the crops would suffer

Autumn Equinox, the balance between yin and yang energy starts to shift dramatically.

With 'Autumn Equinox'

There are several things you can do to live in harmony with the natural cycle during the solar term of Autumn Equinox.

When eating, avoid deep-fried and grilled food, as well as food that is cold or overly spicy.

Drink lukewarm or roomtemperature water and avoid ice water or cold

Keep your back and belly covered, and avoid cold air, especially when the skin is damp from sweat. That includes cold air from an air conditioner.

This is a good time for gentle exercise, such as a walk in the early morning.

Any foods that taste sour, such as vinegar, kombucha, or yogurt, are particularly beneficial in these two weeks. They balance the heat in the liver and lungs, and tone the skin to reduce skin irritation.

Seasonal Foods to Eat

The following are good foods to eat during this solar term: sugar cane, honey, maple syrup, or foods naturally sweet in taste; pears, apples, grapes, mandarins, grapefruit, oranges, tangerines, lemons, buckthorn berries, raspberries, and cranberries; and sesame, walnuts, almond milk, and

Epoch Times contributor Moreen Liao is a descendant of four generations of

plete solution for TCM professionals. Visit ausganica.

to death.

The Pandemic's Bacterial Echo

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Continued from Page 1

Therefore, when hygiene conditions deteriorated during the peak of COVID, when hospitals were overcrowded and staff overworked, hospitalized patients or visitors to hospitals also had a higher chance of cross-contamination with other infections. This created additional challenges to treat COVID patients, as opportunistic infections would worsen the disease progress for patients.

80 Percent Mortality, Antibiotics, and the Comeback

The story begins with Staphylococcus ("Staph") aureus. A grape-like, golden bac-

teria, it's often colonized on the skin and in the nose of healthy people. Approximately 20 percent to 30 percent of the population carries the bacteria persistently, while another 20 percent to 60 percent of people are intermittent carriers.

S. aureus usually doesn't cause any harm to people with healthy skin. However, when it's allowed to enter the bloodstream or internal tissues, it may cause a variety of potentially serious infections, such as pneumonia and blood infections; and it may even lead to sepsis or death.

In the pre-antibiotic era, the mortality of patients with S. aureus exceeded 80 percent. The introduction of penicillin in the early 1940s dramatically reduced the number of deaths. However, in less than two years, penicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus emerged. Afterward, another antibiotic of the penicillin class, methicillin, was invented. However, another two years passed, and S. aureus fought back once again. The dangerous bacteria MRSA appeared this time.

S. aureus has a cell wall that's essential for maintaining its life. Methicillin inhibits its cell wall synthesis, which leads to its destruction. However, MRSA has developed a gene called mecA, which prevents this from happening. As its cell wall can't be harmed by methicillin with this gene, the bacteria can survive.

What's worse is that the mecA gene can be spread to other bacteria.

MRSA also has developed other genes that ead to resistance to other antibiotics, im mune evasion, tissue disruption, and pathogenic islands that cause more severe diseases. Therefore, the antibiotic-resistant superbug has become stronger and stronger.

Hospital-Associated MRSA Is More Deadly

MRSA is one of the very few bacteria that is "very good at" causing infections in healthy people and sick people in the hospital, according to Dr. John Ross, an infectious disease specialist and professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School, in a comment on Harvard's website.

MRSA was first observed among hospitalized patients in the 1960s, and since 1990, it has spread rapidly in the community, though health care-associated MRSA can be more deadly.

In hospitals, patients are commonly exposed to antibiotics and receive lots of hands-on care, making it an environment more susceptible to lethal bacteria. Community-associated MRSA is resistant to only some types of antibiotics, while hospital

Methicillin resistant **Staphylococcus** aureus (MRSA) is one of the very few bacteria that is 'very good at' causing infections in healthy people and sick people in the

hospital.

Methicillin-resistant

Staphylococcus

aureus (MRSA) can be

controlled or minimized

with proper hand

washing and regular

disinfecting of surgical

equipment.

Patients will sometimes

compel doctors to pre-

scribe unnecessary

and other health care-associated MRSA is resistant to most of the antibiotics. As a result, treatment for health care-assoand linezolid.

vancomycin-resistant S. aureus.

Health care-associated MRSA infections cant mortality.

MRSA Colonization Is Less Severe Than

Studies have also compared the mortality rates between MRSA and MSSA (methicillinsusceptible S. aureus).

A study published in the journal Antimicrobial Agent and Chemotherapy found that, in patients with MRSA bloodstream infection, their 30-day mortality was higher than that of the control group without S. aureus bloodstream infection, with an odds ratio between 4.4 and 4.8; and patients with MRSA had a higher mortality than the controls, with an odds ratio between 2.4 and 3.3.

30-day mortality.

teria carries.

to the stage of infection, can also bring about higher mortality in elderly patients. Sometimes, MRSA colonization can enhance other bacterial infections. A study of 6,000 community-dwelling adults aged 40 to 85 years found that the 11-year mortality rates were 35.9 percent for MRSA-colonized and 17.8 percent for non-colonized participants.

Patients usually get infected during surgical procedures or due to the use of invasive medical devices. As many elderly people do hemodialysis reg-

ciated MRSA has fewer effective antibiotics to choose from, and currently vancomycin is the first choice. Sometimes, a few other antibiotics can also be used, such as daptomycin

Vancomycin has historically been the drug of choice and sometimes the last resort for the treatment of serious MRSA infections. However, its increased use has already led to

Community-associated MRSA commonly causes serious skin and soft tissue infections, particularly in young and healthy individuals. Health care-associated MRSA usually causes more invasive infections, including surgical site infections, bloodstream infections, and pneumonia.

are often difficult to treat and have a signifi-

Infection, but Still Increases Mortality

In statistical terms, an odds ratio greater than 1 indicates a positive correlation, meaning the two events are linked. The higher the number, the greater the indicated association. In the above example, these odds ratios indicate that the infection was linked with the increase in

One thing worth noting is that pathogenicity isn't necessarily associated with drug resistance. It mainly depends on how many demic have added fuel to the fire. If one day and what kind of pathogenic genes a bac-

Mere MRSA colonization, not yet advanced

The Future of the Superbug

MRSA in hospitals is often associated with environmental cleaning and medical device disinfecting. To control MRSA, proper hand hygiene of doctors and nurses and thorough cleaning of equipment are needed.

ularly, it's very important to

make sure the devices are

free of pathogens, including MRSA. However, sometimes bacteria such as MRSA can form biofilms by secreting a slimy material that forms a protective barrier around the colony and can grow on metal and other surfaces. Biofilms are very tenacious and extremely dif-

Antibiotics are an important class

of drugs but become highly prob-

lematic when overused.

ficult to remove. A more serious problem is the bacteria's drug resistance.

Both bacteria and viruses can escape treatment through gene mutation, but bacteria have a unique feature, as some of their genes are transmissible. Once a type of bacteria gains a drug-resistant gene, the gene is able to "swim" from one bacterium to another, and in the end, all of the bacteria get the drug-resistant "weapon." That's why it's so easy for bacteria to become drug-resistant.

Some bacteria even become dependent on certain antibiotics and thrive better when antibiotics exist.

One problem with methicillin and other similar antibiotics is that they only target the cell walls of the bacteria, instead of destroying the entire bacteria cell. This leaves room for the bacteria to linger on their last breath and figure out ways to fight back, especially when the bacteria gene replication and expression mechanism weren't disrupted. Cocktail therapy was used to resolve this issue, by mixing multiple antibiotics and intending to accelerate the bacteria removal. However, this raises another issue, as in some cases the bacteria aren't eradicated, and these bacteria cause increased mortality and gain broader resistance to more drugs.

As viruses mutate faster than vaccine development, bacteria also upgrade faster than antibiotic development. Superbugs have already become one of the biggest crises in the world. Drugs fight and, at the same time, train the microorganism. Battles with diseases seem to be another story on the micro level.

Due to antibiotic abuse, especially the overprescription of antibiotics, the drug resistance and pathogenicity of MRSA will inevitably increase. The two years of the COVID-19 pan-MRSA causes an 80 percent mortality, as its ancestor once did, we may finally realize we need another way to resolve this arms race with the microbial world.

Dr. Xiaoxu Sean Lin is an assistant professor in Biomedical Science Department at Feitian College in Middletown, N.Y. Dr. Lin is also a frequent analyst and commentator for Epoch Media Group, VOA, and RFA. Dr. Lin is a veteran who served as a U.S. Army microbiologist. Dr. Lin is also a member of Committee of Present Danger: China.

Health 1+1 is the most authoritative Chinese medical and health information platform overseas. Every Tuesday to Saturday from 9:00 am to 10:00 am EST on TV and online, the program covers the latest on the coronavirus, prevention, treatment, scientific research and policy, as well as cancer, chronic illness, emotional and spiritual health, immunity, health insurance, and other aspects to provide people with reliable and considerate care and help. Online: EpochTimes. com/Health TV: NTDTV.com/live

Tips and Resources That Can Help You to Avoid Falls

SARAH COWNLEY

For many older adults, preventing a fall can add years to their lives.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, falls are the leading cause of injury for older adults in the United States. About 1 in 4 adults aged 65 or older falls each year. Falls can cause serious injuries such as hip fractures and head trauma, and can even lead

Many people believe that falls are something that will happen to everyone as they age, and there's nothing they can do about it. However, this is purely a myth; in reality, falls are controllable and preventable.

There are many different factors that can contribute to falls. Some of these include:

Muscle weakness

• Poor balance

• Use of assistive devices such as canes or

walkers • Medications that cause dizziness or drowsiness

• Tripping hazards in the home Poor lighting

• Loose carpets or throw rugs

Now that we know some of the main causes of falls, let's talk about what we can do to pre-

An important step in helping to prevent a fall is getting an assessment from your primary care provider. They can provide a list of possible issues contributing to falling risks, including medications that cause drowsiness or dizziness, foot pain, arthritis, and vision problems.

Getting regular exercise also is an excellent

way to help to prevent falls, by improving your

talk to your doctor or physical therapist about which one is right for you. Have your eyes checked by an eye doctor at least once a year. Poor vision can make it more difficult to see obstacles in your path,

increasing your risk of falling. If your vision is poor, creating a safer home environment is essential. Make sure your home is well-lit and free from tripping hazards. Consider installing night lights in hallways and bedrooms so you don't

strength, mobility, and flexibility while also

improving mental health. If tai chi isn't for you,

many other exercise programs are available, so

up during the night. Also, be sure to secure loose cords and rugs with tape or tacks, so they don't pose a tripping

hazard. And consider installing grab bars in tubs and next to toilets.

Falls are a serious problem for older adults in the United States, but there are things that strength and balance. Tai chi has been shown to help to prevent falls by improving balance, seniors can do to reduce their risk of falling.

Seniors can significantly lower their risks of sustaining fall-related injuries by exercising regularly, having annual eye exams, making sure their homes are well-lit and free from tripping hazards, and reviewing their medications with their doctors. If you or someone you know has already had a fall, don't hesitate to ask for help in getting up; it could prevent further injury.

Sarah Cownley has a diploma in nutritional therapy from Health Sciences Academy in London and enjoys helping others by regular contributions to Doctors Health Press. This article was originally published

teaching healthy lifestyle changes through have to turn on overhead lights when getting her personal consultations and with her on BelMarraHealth.com

Zucchini The Superfood Growing in Your Garden

This tasty fruit is easily grown in your garden or containers and offers several health benefits

Zucchini

can help

contribute to

a gut-friendly

microbiome

since high-

fiber foods

gut health.

help improve

Zucchini toppings on pizza.

Zucchini fritters.

Continued from Page 1

If you're saving your own seeds, be sure not to save seeds from plants that produced extremely bitter fruit that wasn't caused by environmental stress, since eating vegetables that are extremely bitter can lead to diarrhea and stomach

Zucchini Nutrition

In an interview with Everyday Health, Kristin Gillespie, a registered dietitian from Virginia Beach, explained that zucchini is rich in antioxidants and micronutrients, saying, "These benefits include reduced blood sugar levels, improved heart health, improved vision, enhanced weight loss, improved bone health, reduced inflammation, and improved digestion."

According to the USDA, 1 cup of chopped zucchini is low in calories, high in fiber, and is an excellent source of these nutrients:

Zucchini May Help With Weight, Blood Sugar

Because zucchini is high in water and fiber, it may fit well into your weight-loss plan. The water and fiber content help you feel full longer. However, it's important to note that to make a difference in your weight-loss efforts, zucchini must replace empty calories from junk food or high-carbohydrate foods, as opposed to just adding zucchini to your current diet.

Multiple Ways to

Include Zucchini

There are multiple ways to enjoy

zucchini in your menu plan. I

like to dry zucchini chips in my

can cut them to a thickness of

your liking to enjoy as low-carb,

Slice up your fresh zucchini in a

parmesan cheese with a meal

or try these delicious crunchy

fritters with avocado dill dip,

courtesy of Healthy Holistic

healthy approach to fritters.

Living. They're an organic and

salad, create zoodles topped with

crispy treats or with a meal.

dehydrator with seasonings. You

in Menu Plan

Zucchini noodles, also known as zoodles, are a unique and interesting way of replacing pasta in your diet if you're seeking to eat gluten-free or low-carb. Zoodles can be made with a julienne peeler for thick, flat slices of zucchini or with a spiralizer for curly zoodles. The zoodles can be sautéed, boiled, baked,

By replacing pasta with zoodles, you can eat the same volume of food, get full, and feel full longer. This is important since eating foods rich in carbohydrates, such as pasta, can spike your blood sugar level and then cause it to drop within a couple of hours, leaving you feeling hungry all over again.

Although fiber is a type of carbohydrate, it's the type that your body can't digest. Instead of being broken down into sugar molecules, it passes through your gut undigested. Another benefit to fiber is helping to regulate how your body uses sugar.

While I recommend that most adults get 50 grams of fiber for every 1,000 calories of food, the USDA's recommendation for adults up to age 50 is only 25 grams (g) for women and 38 g for men. Women older than 50 should have 21 g and men, 38 g. Unfortunately, according to the Harvard T.H. Chan School of 2 diabetes, hypertension, atherosclero-Public Health, most Americans eat only about 15 g per day.

There are two types of fiber found in fruits and vegetables, and both are beneficial. Soluble fiber dissolves in water and can help slow digestion. That also helps you to stay full longer. Soluble fiber can be found in nuts, seeds, avocados, Brussels sprouts, and apples. As soluble fiber dissolves with water, it turns into a gel.

Insoluble fiber adds bulk to the stool and encourages the food to pass more quickly through the digestive tract. While soluble fiber has demonstrated the ability to help to lower your glucose levels, insoluble fiber can help to prevent constipation. Both types of fiber are beneficial and necessary in your diet. Zucchini has nearly equal amounts of soluble and insoluble fiber.

Take Care of Your Heart and Gut Health

Researchers have found a bidirectional association between your gut microbiome and your cardiovascular health. Scientific interest in gut health has revealed evidence that it plays an important role in cardiovascular diseases. Gut dysbiosis is linked to obesity, Type



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This photo shows beans growing up a corn stalk and the tips of zucchini or squash leaves on the bottom—a result of the three sisters planting technique

sis, and heart failure.

In 2018, San Francisco State University released a study in which they recruited 20 men and 17 women to test their cardiovascular fitness and their gut microbiome. An analysis of the bacterial composition revealed participants with the best fitness had a higher ratio of firmicutes to bacteroides.

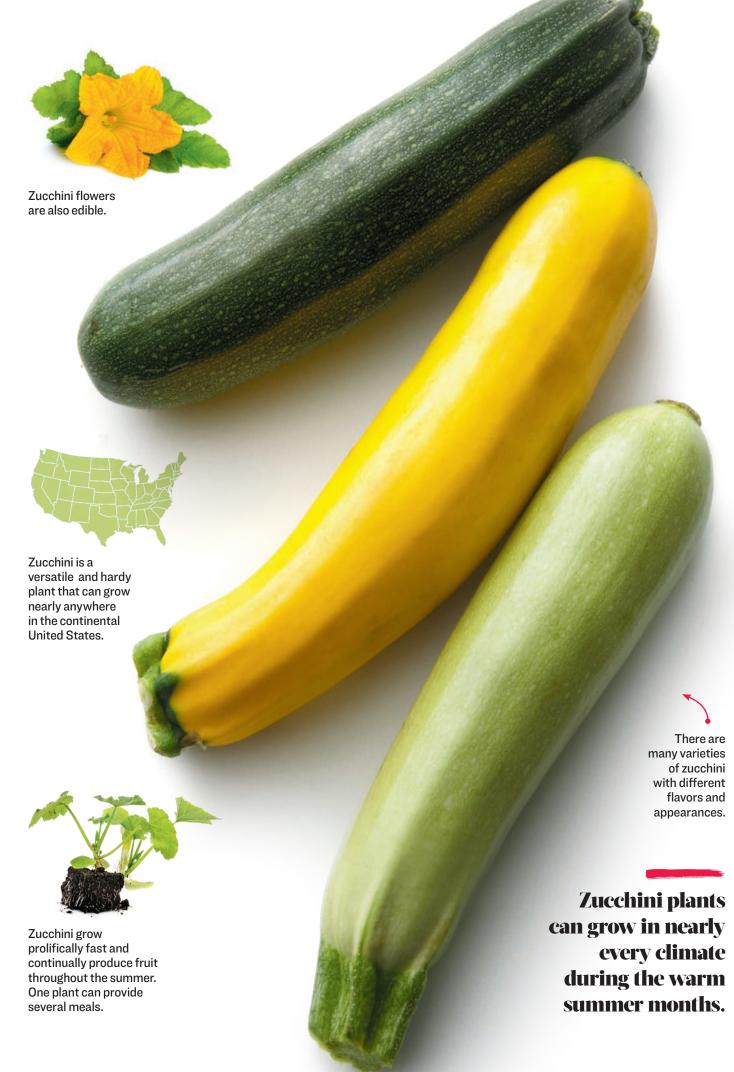
Firmicutes bacteria are associated with a reduction in leaky gut. According to one of the researchers, this shows that exercise has a crucial impact on your gut microbiome and may lead to the creation of individualized "exercise prescriptions" to improve gut health. An animal study at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine demonstrated that when food is eaten, gut bacteria produce chemicals that are absorbed and may activate receptors that lower blood pressure.

In other words, the relationship between your gut health and your cardiovascular health is complex and bidirectional. Zucchini can help contribute to a gut-friendly microbiome, since high-fiber foods help to improve gut health. By supporting regular bowel movements, it can help to reduce the symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome and relieve constipation.

One animal study specifically evaluated the effect that zucchini has on the prevention of cardiovascular disease. lhe rats receiving the intervention were fed a high-fat diet plus 10 percent zucchini, 15 percent zucchini, and 20 percent zucchini. The data showed that those getting 15 percent and 20 percent of their diet from zucchini had morphological changes in the heart, spleen, and kidney that demonstrated a preventive effect against cardiovascular disease.

The data also demonstrated that the animals lost weight after eight weeks of intervention on a high-fat diet plus zucchini. It also was found to increase HDL-C levels and lower triglycerides and LDL-C. They hypothesize that the cholesterol-lowering ability was likely

related to the fiber found in zucchini. While 15 percent to 20 percent may sound like a high percentage of zucchini in the diet, the beneficial effects may



have been related to the fiber and nutrition found not only in zucchini, but in other vegetables.

Zucchini May Reduce Your Risk of Cancer

A research study looking at the effects of fruits and vegetables published in 1991 concluded that "major public health benefits could be achieved by substantially increasing consumption of these foods." Many other studies have demonstrated the powerful effect that fruits and veg-

etables have on cancer prevention. A lab and animal study published in 2020 in Scientific Reports analyzed the effects of cucurbitacin B and I against colon cancer cell growth. The study demonstrated that both inhibited tu-

mor growth in the lab and in an animal study, which suggested that these compounds found in zucchini could inhibit colon cancer.

FLOORTJE/GETTY IMAGES

More research is necessary to determine if zucchini holds a key to preventing other types of cancer or reducing the overall risk of cancer outside the role it plays in the family of fruits and vegetables.

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

Grow Zucchini in Your Garden or Pots

When you care for it correctly, zucchini can grow in your garden or containers. In either case, you will want to use organic fertilizer to ensure a good harvest. You don't have to purchase organic fertilizer at the store or rely on fertilizer from agrichemical businesses. You can use compost to provide a base for your garden and make a fertilizing liquid by soaking mashed comfrey leaves in water when your plants need an extra boost. (Filter out the leaves and just use the liquid.)

a diameter of at

least 24 inches

and a depth of

12 inches. The

pot should have

at least one good

drainage hole



Plant zucchini right after the last frost of the season.

at the bottom. You can even use a large plastic storage container when you drill drainage holes. Avoid using regular garden soil that can contain pests or weed seeds. Fill the container with lightweight, well-draining soil, and plant the zucchini after the last frost in your area.

You can also start the plants indoors four to six weeks before the last frost. Plant two or three seeds about 1 inch into the soil with a couple of inches of space between each seed. As the seedlings become established, add mulch to maintain a stable



You can pollenate zucchini yourself to make sure they produce fruit.

provide you with a If you're using containers, you can move the containers close to each other for pollination. Each flower opens for approximately one day. If it isn't pollinated on that day, you don't get zucchini. When

easily pollinate car

improves your chances of pollination. Female flowers have a tiny fruit behind the base of the flower. You can manually pollinate by removing the male flowers and dusting pollen into the female flowers.

plants are close to each other, you'll have

flowers opening consistently, which



Zucchini do well when they are planted on a raised

the plants below the leaves, which reduces the chance of powdery mildew.

The plants grow quickly, so you may be harvesting 40 days after planting. The fruit also grows quickly, so check your plant every day for new zucchini. Harvest with a sharp knife or pruning shears. If you miss a zucchini, remove any overripe or large squash as soon as possible. This reduces the nutrient demand on the plant. Zucchini can be stored in the refrigerator unwashed, dry, and whole

The Fat Makers: Salt and Dehydration

Too much salt and not enough water spur a metabolic scenario that helps to feed the obesity epidemic

RICHARD JOHNSON

Scientific studies and media coverage are rife with warnings on how sugar, carbohydrates, saturated fat, and lack of exercise contribute to obesity. And tens of millions of Americans are still overweight or obese, in large part because of the classic Western diet and lifestyle.

As an educator, researcher, and professor of medicine, I have spent more than 20 years investigating the causes of obesity, as well as related conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and chronic kidney disease.

two significant pieces of this very complex puzzle: lack of hydration and excessive salt intake. Both are known to contribute

Lessons Learned from a Desert Sand Rat Nature provides a clue to the role these factors play, with the desert sand rat Psammomys obesus, a half-pound rodent with a high-pitched squeak that lives in the salty marshes and deserts of northern Africa. It survives, barely, by eating the stems of Salicornia—the glasswort—a plant that looks a bit like asparagus.

Although low in nutrients, the glasswort's fleshy, succulent sap is filled with water that's rich in salt, at concentrations as high as what's found in seawater.

Recent studies have provided new insights into why the desert sand rat might crave the salty sap of glasswort. Although this hasn't Throughout my many years of studying yet been proven specifically in the sand rat,

obesity and related health conditions, I've it's likely that a high-salt diet helps the sand observed that relatively little is said about rat to convert the relatively low amount of carbohydrates it's ingesting into fructose, a type of sugar that occurs naturally in fruits, honey, and some vegetables.

Zucchini bread.

Fructose production can be stimulated by dehydration, which drives fat production.

That helps the animal to survive when food and fresh water are sparse. It's because fructose activates a "survival switch" that stimulates foraging, food intake, and the storage of fat and carbohydrates that protect the animal from starvation.

However, when the rat is brought into captivity and given the common rodent diet of about 50 percent carbohydrates, it rapidly

develops obesity and diabetes. But if given fresh vegetables low in starchy carbohydrates, the rodent remains lean.

My research, and the research of many other scientists over the decades, shows that many Americans unwittingly behave much like a captive desert sand rat, although few are in settings where food and water are limited. They are constantly activating the survival switch.

Fructose and Our Diets

As mentioned, fructose, a simple sugar, appears to have a key role in activating this survival switch that leads to fat production. Small amounts of fructose, like that found in an individual fruit, are not the problem rather it's excessive amounts of fructose that are problematic for human health. Most of us get our fructose from table sugar and high-fructose corn syrup. Intake of these two sugars totals approximately 15 percent of calories in the average American diet.

These sugars encourage people to eat more, which can lead to weight gain, fat accumulation, and prediabetes.

Our bodies also make fructose on their own—and experimental studies suggest it may be enough to trigger the development

Since fructose is made from glucose, the production of fructose increases when blood glucose levels are high. This process happens when we eat a lot of rice, cereal, potatoes, and white bread; those are carbs that rapidly release glucose into the blood.

And notably, fructose production can also be stimulated by dehydration, which drives fat production.

Fat Provides Water

Fat has two major functions. The first one, which is well known, is to store calories for a later time when food is unavailable. The other major but lesser-known function of fat is to provide water.

To be clear, fat doesn't contain water. But when fat breaks down, it generates water in the body. The amount produced is substantial, and roughly equivalent to the amount of fat burned. It's so significant that some animals rely on fat to provide water during times when it's not available.

Whales are but one example. While they drink some seawater, they get most of their water from the foods they eat. And

when they go for extended periods without food, they get their water primarily by metabolizing fat.

Hold the Fries

HELPS WITH

WEIGHT LOSS

One cup of chopped zucchini has

The role of dehydration as a contributor to obesity shouldn't be underestimated. It commonly occurs after eating salty foods. Dehydration and salt consumption both lead to the production of fructose and fat.

This is why salty french fries are especially fattening. The salt causes a dehydration-like state that encourages the conversion of the starch in the french fries to fructose.

What's more, studies show most people who are overweight or obese don't drink enough water. They are far more likely to be dehydrated than those who are lean. Their salt intake is also very high compared with lean people's.

Research shows that people with obesity frequently have high levels of vasopressin, a hormone that helps the kidneys to hold water to regulate urine volume.

But recent studies suggest vasopressin has another purpose, which is to stimulate fat production.

For someone at risk of dehydration or star-

vation, vasopressin may have a real survival benefit. But for those not at risk, vasopressin could drive most of the metabolic effects of excess fructose, such as weight gain, fat accumulation, fatty liver, and prediabetes.

Drinking More Water

So does this mean that drinking more water can help us to lose weight? The medical community has often scoffed at the assertion. However, our research team found that giving mice more water slowed weight gain and the development of prediabetes,



Drinking water can contribute to weight loss especially since people often mistake thirst for even when the mice had diets rich in sugar

There's also increasing evidence that most people drink too little water in general, and increasing water intake may help people who are obese to lose weight.

That's why I encourage drinking eight tall glasses of water a day. And eight is likely enough; don't assume more is better. There have been cases of people drinking so much that "water intoxication" occurs. This is particularly a problem with people who have heart, kidney, or liver conditions, as well as those who have had recent surgery or are

long-distance runners. For the desert sand rat, and for our ancestors who scavenged for food, a high salt and limited water diet made sense. But human beings no longer live that way. These simple measures—drinking more water and reducing salt intake—offer cheap, easy, and healthy strategies that may prevent or treat obesity.

Richard Johnson is a professor of medicine at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. This article was originally published by The Conversation.

Week 39, 2022 THE EPOCH TIMES

water comprises 65 percent to 75 percent of the adult human body, while for infants, it's even higher at an estimated 85 percent. That's pretty amazing, when you think

As vital as water is to life, it's little surprise that it has provided inspiration and insight from ancient times to today.

Features of Water

Water makes up more than two-thirds (71 percent) of the Earth's surface. It continually moves and shifts, existing in its different forms in oceans, lakes, clouds, the air, vegetation, glaciers, and snow—and this doesn't include what's underground.

Water has some unique characteristics. For example, while substances can take on the various forms of solid, liquid, or gas, water is unusual in that, unlike other cant impact on how we view the world, substances, it doesn't require extreme temperatures to do so—rather, it changes under conditions that life can tolerate.

In addition, when solids of a substance **Lessons From Water: Let Go and Flow** form, the atoms typically come closer togeth- Water flows throughout nature, in oceans, dense. Thus, while most solids sink in water, solid water (ice) is able to stay afloat.

Water's unique features are what allow it to be everywhere and to impact everything—including our own bodies and health. These properties are also what give it a deeper symbolic meaning.

For instance, water is never lost; it just changes form. It "adapts" to its environment in ways that enhance the lives of all. For instance, under heat, it elevates and gives rise to clouds that provide a divine vision that has moved people for millennia. And when water

freezes into buoyant ice, it provides a kind stress. Yet, if things are meant to change, of insulation for the fish and plant life that remain below.

Water's Importance to Health

Water is common, innocuous, and essential. Like love and health, it's easy to take water for granted—until it's missing.

Water is the foundation of each cell, of each organ, and of the body as a whole. Two-thirds of water in the body is intracellular (within cells), while the remaining one-third is extracellular. However, water's concentration within the various parts of the body differs. For example, according to studies, the brain and heart are made up of approximately 73 percent water, the skin is 64 percent water, and the lungs are 83 percent water. Even the hardest parts of the body, the bones, contain 31 percent water.

In a way, water's simplicity is part of its potency. It's the ultimate enhancer and enabler. As such, it serves many functions in the body. It insulates the spinal cord, brain, and other organs, lubricates and acts as a shock absorber for the joints, helps to regulate body temperature through respiration and perspiration, flushes waste and toxins from the body, carries oxygen to the cells, and helps to break food down into nutrients that the body can absorb.

helps to reduce the effects of aging, helps to keep constipation and illnesses at bay, and improves our physical performance.

But as with all things in life, balance is key. Too much water in the body can lead to issues such as congestive heart failure, nausea, diarrhea, or low sodium and other electrolytes. Conversely, too little water—a common problem—can lead to things such as acute kidney failure, joint pain, muscle cramping, and an excess of sodium and other electrolytes, to name just a few examples.

Clearly, water has a tremendous impact on our physical health. But if we slow down long enough to appreciate the wonders of water—wonders that haven't been lost on the poets, philosophers, and spiritually enlightened of the world—the life lessons water has to teach can also have a signifiwhich can have a profound effect on our mental health.

er to make the substance more dense. Water lakes, streams, creeks, and rivers. It doesn't molecules, on the other hand, form rings let things get in its way or impede its when they freeze, making the substance less path. Nor does it resist its natural cycle of change—from its water cycle of evaporation to condensation to precipitation, or from changing its state from liquid to gas to

> solid, as the situation may require. Just as water adapts and takes on different forms, so must we continuously let go of our current state in order to change

Confucius said, "As the water shapes itself to the vessel that contains it, so a wise man adapts himself to circumstances."

Change is one of the few things we can count on in life, but for many of us, just to let go and move on. the thought of change can stir

> no amount of resistance can stop it. If we are rigid and let our minds form fixed ideas about how things should be, then we are more apt to falter in the face of difficulty. But when we are fluid, our minds open up, we are flexible, we adapt, and we grow.

When we understand that we are best served by flowing with what comes, it will be easier to let go of what was and accept what is. And when we do, we might even find that life has offered some amazing op-

Be Strong Yet Gentle

Water can teach us

"Nothing in the world is as soft and yielding as water, yet for dissolving the hard and inflexible, nothing can surpass it."—Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching

Water takes on many forms, and in those forms, it can be solid and strong or gentle and pliant. Even when it's flowing, water can wield incredible strength. At its most still and docile, it can contain tremendous depth. Water has power and endurance amid the toughest of conditions but will return to calm as an inevitable natural state. In people, a tendency toward calm is an attribute of good character. While water can overpower its surroundings, as in a massive tidal wave, this isn't water's nature, but a consequence of its environment. Water is,

Nothing in the world is

as soft and vielding as water, yet for dissolving the hard and inflexible, nothing can surpass it.

Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching

to

PERCENT

of the adult human body is composed of water.



Just as water adapts and takes on different forms, so must we continuously let go of our current state to change and grow.

by nature, humble and serene.

And yet, as the Daoist sage Lao Tzu noted: "All streams flow to the sea because it is lower than they are. Humility gives it its power. If you want to govern the people, you must place yourself below them. If you want to lead the people, you must learn how to

This gentleness isn't without power. Just as a calm person can better reason with others and melt away disagreement, water is able to dissolve more substances than any other liquid.

Reflect

When water is calm, it can reflect a clear picture of anything it greets. It can serve to show the observer that which he might otherwise not see. But if water is turbulent or murky, then what's reflected will be hazy and unclear.

Similarly, when our minds are turbulent—when we're angry, resentful, vengeful, or moved by powerful emotion—we can't reflect on ourselves and what's happening. This makes it impossible to see a situation clearly, and our vision is distorted. When we can keep calm, we're able to reflect on things in a much clearer and more accurate way.

Self-reflection is always important, but perhaps no more so than when we're going through difficulty, or when we've made a mistake, or when someone has wronged us. But when things don't go as we'd like, we shouldn't complain, get angry, or become resentful. Instead, we should calm ourselves, take a moment to reflect, and see

what we can learn from the situation. Philosophers and poets have long said that what's outside of us is merely a reflection of what's within.

As my sister-in-law Stacia likes to say, "What lives in the heart, comes out of the mouth." And in a similar vein, the Bible says, "As water reflects the face, so one's life reflects the heart." (Proverbs 27:19)

If something disturbs our calm, such as when someone bothers us, it may be worth asking what it is that has moved us. Is it because we see something in them that we have in ourselves, lurking in our darker depths? Or perhaps it's to ask ourselves why it bothers us, so that we reflect and purify ourselves. Maybe that's why we take notice of something or feel irritated by it.

In the same way that the movement of water reveals forces beneath the surface, our reactions can reveal aspects of ourselves that may remain hidden.

By observing the way of water, we can appreciate not only the many benefits it brings to our physical health, but the myriad of lessons it has to teach that can help our mental health.

Tatiana Denning, D.O., is a preventive family medicine physician and owner of Simpura Weight Loss and Wellness. She believes in empowering her patients with the knowledge and skills necessary to maintain and improve their own health through weight management, healthy habits, and disease prevention.

Strategies for Child and Family Mental Health

As school resumes, it's time to revisit children's well-being amid the lingering pandemic

NICOLE RACINE, DILLON THOMAS BROWNE & STEPHANIE G. CRAIG

The past two years have been far from normal for children and families. As households prepare for back-to-school, there can be some apprehension about what the year

Our research has shown that children, teens, and parents have struggled in regard to mental health during the pandemic, where higher levels of pandemic-related stress corresponded to more mental health difficulties in families.

Although there are many aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic that aren't in our control, it's important to focus on the things that are. Research shows that negative mental health outcomes in the face of stress aren't inevitable based on external factors alone. There are important strategies families can use to help to promote mental health.

Family routines can provide stability during times of stress, are generally important for children's mental health, and have been shown to be protective for children's mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As child psychologists and researchers, we review the scientific evidence for strategies associated with positive child and family mental health. These are the strategies that we universally recommend and share with the children, teens, and families we work with in our clinical practice to inoculate against stress and family challenges.

1. Social and Emotional Connections

Humans are social beings, and over the past two years, we have experienced limitations and restrictions on our ability to maintain and develop social connections.

Research during the pandemic showed that youth who felt socially connected were protected against poor mental health. Therefore, creating opportunities for children and youth to feel connected within their families and with their peers is critical for promoting

For children and teens, family social and emotional connections are equally, if not more, important than friendships in helping children to protect their mental health. During the pandemic, teens who felt stress at home had more mental health problems.

At home, fostering social connection and understanding can be achieved through spending time together engaging in mutually enjoyable activities. Ensuring that there's time to listen to your child talk about their day, process events and emotions from school, and engage in supportive problemsolving is critical.

When listening to your child or teen talk about their day, it's important to listen and understand first before engaging in any problem-solving. Often, children can feel better after discussing their emotions without needing to problem solve.

Natural opportunities for these connection times include during mealtime, car rides or commutes, and before bed. There are resources that provide suggestions for initiating supportive conversations with your kids.

2. Coaching to Cope With Big and Small Worries

Worrying can be a natural response to un-

certainty, which has become more prevalent during the COVID-19 pandemic. One habit that can help mitigate children's worries from developing further is teaching them to cope with big and small worries as they

Talking about, labeling, and validating worries are important first steps. Next, help them to think through how they might respond if their worry came true, how likely their worry is to occur, and evidence that disproves their worry.

Modeling how you identify, address, and cope with your own worries can serve as an important example for your child. In fact, our research demonstrates that coping ability predicted better mental health for parents throughout the pandemic as well. There are many resources and free apps available for helping your child to cope with worries and anxiety.

3. Schedule Time for Physical Activity Each Day

Physical activity is an important determinant of mental health and well-being for both children and adults. During the CO-VID-19 pandemic, there has been a 20 percent decrease in children's physical activity levels, particularly among individuals living in countries with colder climates.

We recommend starting with a small goal to start, such as going for a walk after dinner. Being successful in a small goal helps to increase motivation going forward. Making changes in how you travel to school or to extracurricular activities (for example, walking or riding a bike) can also be an easy way to increase activity.

As the weather gets colder, consider changing to indoor swimming and recreational activities. Year-round outdoor activities also provide an opportunity for safe physical activity and social engagement despite evolving risks with the COVID-19 pandemic.

4. Protect Good Quality Sleep for **Children and Family Members**

Sleep is fundamental to mental health and

Research during the pandemic showed that **youth who** felt socially connected were protected against poor mental health.

There has

PERCENT

decrease in children's

physical activity levels

during the COVID-19

pandemic.



A stable sleep regimen can offer great benefits for the whole familly and promotes optimum physical and mental well-being.

well-being. Nearly half of parents reported their child's sleep worsened during the CO-VID-19 pandemic, in part, due to reduced physical activity, increased screen time, and heightened anxiety.

Guidelines recommend that children get eight to 11 hours of sleep per night, and adults get at least seven hours. It can be helpful to work back from the time your child needs to wake up and work toward an appropriate bedtime. This can often mean starting a bedtime routine and getting ready for bed before we think we need to.

Having a good sleep hygiene regimen can help anyone who has trouble getting to sleep. This can include avoiding caffeine late in the day, avoiding screens an hour before bed, and having the same routine every night (for example, shower, put on pajamas, brush teeth, read a story or book, go to bed).

For families seeking more information, Children's Mental Health Ontario has put together a School Mental Health Backpack to help children and families with the challenges of returning to school.

Nicole Racine is an assistant professor at the University of Ottawa in Canada, Dillon-Thomas Browne is an assistant professorof psychology at the University of Waterloo in Canada, and Stephanie G. Craig isa research assistant professor at the University of Guelph in Canada. This article was originally published by The Conversation.

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WISE HABITS

The Urgency of Piles

When our to-do items build up, they can take on an urgency they don't require

LEO BABAUTA

Someone I know shared that they came back from a meditation retreat excited about the meaningful possibilities they had envisioned on the retreat—new projects, opportunities, and important stuff they wanted to create.

It's so incredible to be excited about meaningful possibilities!

And then they got home, and there were piles of tasks, emails, and messages waiting for them. The urgency of those piles distracted them from their better The urgency of piles throws off all of our

best-laid plans. We have to deal with piles all the time:

• Tasks piling up on our to-do lists

• Emails and messages piling up in our

 Papers piling up on our desks and documents piling up on our computer desktops • Tabs piling up in the browser

• Chores and errands piling up, phone calls needing to be made, and things needing to be fixed or cleaned

• Clutter piling up all over our homes

These piles of tasks, messages, errands, and chores feel urgent. We can't seem to ignore them in favor of what's most im-

portant. Piles seem to represent neglected obligations. They come with an anxiety that makes us want to fix them over whatever else is calling for our attention.

Sometimes we ignore the urgent piles, but that doesn't make the feeling of urgency or anxiety go away—it only makes it worse. It's like trying to bury our heads in the sand and pretend the problem isn't there. The pile is still calling to us, but we put our fingers in our ears and hum loudly in hopes of drowning out its urgent pleas.

There's nothing wrong with this tendency to want to either tackle the piles or

> your mind be sabotaged by endless thoughts of unfinished tasks. Simply take things one at a time

ODUA IMAGES/ SHUTTERSTOCK

to something that's deeper: a project that's meaningful, a place to bring our hearts and our curiosity. We can bring our deepest intentions of meditation, reflection, and expression. We can deepen our relationships and spend time with those we love without the urgency of the piles calling to us from our phones and

> of the piles? Leo Babauta is the author of six books and

What would you like to do with your

days if you didn't have to feel the urgency

ignore them. There's nothing wrong with

the urgency or anxiety of these piles. But

what if we could create a new relationship

What if the piles are opportunities to

serve, to love, or to play? Would we feel

less anxious and urgent about these op-

portunities to play? The piles don't have

to say anything about our adequacy or

Or they could be seen as a garden. We

want to tend to these little sprouts with

care, but they aren't a forest fire that we

need to urgently deal with. We can bring

our love and care to them, but not urgently.

With this new relationship to our

piles, we can also turn our attention

inadequacy—they're just playgrounds.

with them?

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

laundry baskets.

INTENTIONAL LIVING

6 Decluttering Principles

When evaluating possessions, be decisive as you categorize each object-and move on

Week 39, 2022 THE EPOCH TIMES

A sneak peak at some of the key highlights of the 'Uncluttered' course

JOSHUA BECKER

volved in.

How much time and effort have you put into trying to declutter your home to find clarity and enjoy more rest in your life? Too much?

If so, I have a solution.

I've been running the "Uncluttered" course consistently for six years—more than 75,000 people from all over the world have used the 12-week course to finally break through and declutter their homes. It's one of my favorite things that I'm in-

It's one thing to read about owning less and desiring it to be true, but it can be something very different for people to apply in their lives.

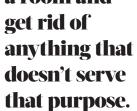
To give you a sneak peek at why the Uncluttered approach has been so effective, here are six decluttering principles that the course is built on.



This is such an eye-opening principle. Think about it. Your bathroom doesn't need a Peloton. Your kitchen doesn't need a video game station. Your bedroom doesn't need piles of boxes in the corner. Find a purpose for every space, or everything will remain confused and out of balance.

Distinguish Between Decluttering and Organizing

Simply put, these things aren't the same. It's like the difference between rearranging the furniture and renovating a **Identify the** purpose of a room and get rid of doesn't serve that purpose.



Start With the Easier Spaces and Move On to Harder Ones Overwhelm is a true mind-killer. Some people say "eat the frog" and tackle the most excruciating task first. While this

thousand times easier.

may work for some, I find it's better to get some quick wins, create momentum, and work your way up to the bigger tasks. This approach also helps with the "I don't

space. Let's focus on decluttering (remov-

ing unneeded things from your home),

and you'll find that organizing becomes a

even know where to start" thinking that keeps too many of us stuck. You won't declutter your entire home in one week, but maybe you can declutter the easiest room. And before you know it, you'll declutter your entire home.



Choose 1 of 3 Options for Every Object: Remove It, Relocate It,

Success and speed go hand-in-hand. When it comes to evaluating possessions, it's time to be decisive and categorize each object and move on. Rinse and repeat, moving as many items "out the door" as possible.

Focus on the Gains, not the Subtractions

Minimizing isn't just about getting rid of clutter. It's about adding freedom and control back into your Decluttering your home life. Celebrate your wins in the form of new can bring you a greater freedom, not in the number of items you sense of peace and help eliminate—although it can be pretty fun you better treasure the things you already own.

Think about your money, your energy, and the days and hours of your life spent addressing clutter. All that time dealing with clutter takes away from what matters most. From this standpoint, who among us can truly "afford" to live a cluttered existence?

Count the 'Clutter Cost'

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

How to Unclutter Your Home

Identify the purpose of a room and get rid of anything that doesn't serve that purpose

Distinguish between decluttering and organizing

Start with the easier spaces and move on to harder ones

Choose one of three options for every object: remove it, relocate it, or leave it

Focus on the gains, not the subtractions

Count the "clutter cost"



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Why We Should Be Careful About Using Statins

These drugs interfere with several essential cellular activities

MINGJIA JACKY GUAN

plants and animals are that animals have a nervous system, mobility, and cholesterol. In recent years, the pharmaceutical industry has painted cholesterol as the root of all evil, saying that if your cholesterol is anywhere higher than a certain level, then you're in great danger and must take X number of precautions and Y number

The three greatest distinctions between

One class of drugs in particular that has risen to prominence over the past few decades is statins. Statins are a type of enzyme inhibitor, which means that they hinder biological processes in the body. Statins block the HMG coenzyme A reloss is an acknowledged side effect of statin therapy.

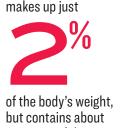
ductase from functioning normally, which is a critical step in a long chain of reactions Memory that leads to the production of many essential fats and molecules inside the body, including cholesterol. Blocking the HMG coenzyme A is how statins reduce cholesterol levels.

> The Necessary Nature of Cholesterol So what does cholesterol do? Cholesterol is a vital lipid found inside all animals and humans. It facilitates a well-functioning

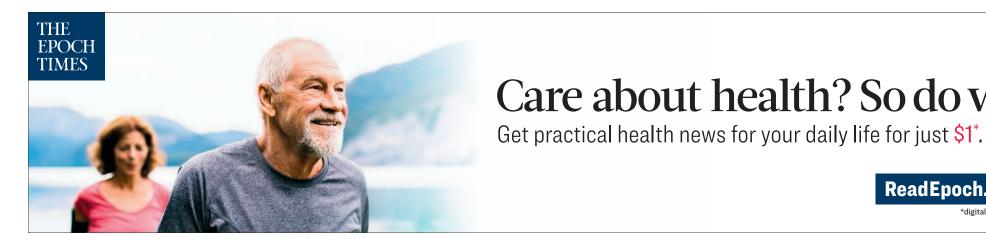
nervous system as well as efficient mobility. Cholesterol is found on the surface of cell walls in concentrated areas called "lipid rafts" and also scattered all over the surface.

Continued on Page 12





a guarter of the cholesterol in the body.



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THE EPOCH TIMES

The Best Fruit for Chronic Constipation

While many turn to prunes, kiwis offer superior effects along with nutritional benefits

The kiwi is a wonder fruit when it comes to tackling the tough, often painful, chronic constipation afflicting so many people worldwide.

Chronic constipation can have many causes. The good news is, nature has many remedies for this uncomfortable, even painful, condition.

Prunes are the first fruit that many think of when it comes to relieving constipation, and they do work for this purpose. Subjects who consumed 2 ounces (50 grams) of prunes every day for three weeks reported better stool consistency and frequency compared with a group consuming a psyllium fiber supplement.

It's worth being careful, though, about consuming too many prunes. It may lead to unwanted effects such as diarrhea, and the sugars can add up if you're consuming prune juice for the bowel benefits.

Fortunately, there may be an even better option when it comes to fruit for constipation relief—kiwi, also known as Chinese gooseberry, which originated as a wild plant in China.

Regular consumption of kiwi has been linked to digestive, immune, and tion, and efficiency in adults who reported metabolic health advantages. The fruit sleep disturbances. Further investigation is exceptionally high in vitamin C and of kiwi's sleep-promoting properties may offers dietary fiber, potassium, vitamin be warranted, the researchers noted. E, and folate, along with different bioactive compounds ranging from antioxidants to enzymes.

For people suffering from poor gum health, consuming kiwi may also help reduce gingival inflammation

Face Off With Prunes and Psyllium

A number of Asian studies have already suggested kiwi's potential against chronic constipation. A partially randomized trial also evaluated the fruit along with psyllium and prunes in U.S. patients with the condition.

The subjects were assigned to consume green kiwi, prunes, or psyllium for four weeks. The researchers looked at their complete spontaneous bowel movements as well as daily stool frequency, stool consistency, and straining.

Based on the results from 79 patients, the number of complete spontaneous bowel movements was similar among the treatments. At treatment weeks three and four, however, stool consistency significantly improved with kiwi and prunes, while straining substantially improved with all three treatments. Subjects assigned to the *To find the studies mentioned in this* kiwi group reported significant improve-

ment in bloating. By the end of the treatment period, kiwi also was associated with the lowest rates of adverse events-most commonly reported with psyllium—and patient dissatisfaction with therapy.

Working Against Constipation, Other **Common Ailments** Other studies support kiwi's benefits against constipation:

through kiwi was effective in reliev-

ing chronic constipation among a Chinese population.

• Daily consumption of three goldfleshed kiwi led to a significant increase of two additional complete spontaneous bowel movements per week as well as reduced gastrointestinal discomfort in mildly constipated adults.

· Green kiwi extract significantly increased normal bowel movements without side effects, and relieved symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome such as bloating, flatulence, and abdominal pain.

Separate research also probed the possible effects of golden kiwi on body composition, lipid metabolism, and inflammation. Results showed that the fruit may reduce body fat mass, improve blood pressure, and regulate inflammatory responses among overweight and obese young adults. Even with common sleep woes, kiwi appeared to be of help.

Consuming the fruit, two pieces of which were given to 24 subjects aged 20 to 55 years an hour before bedtime for four weeks, may improve sleep onset, dura-

For people suffering from poor gum health, consuming kiwi may also help reduce gingival inflammation "despite the lack of any periodontal instrumentation or patient's behavioral changes."

In general, kiwi's high vitamin C content influences its position as a nutritious, immune-boosting fruit. As a natural, whole food, it's ideal for nutrient release and delivery to various places along the digestive tract and elsewhere in the body.

Other natural strategies against constipation can also be explored, from proper hydration to high-fiber foods to probiotics. Fruits themselves offer a plethora of healing properties through the copious quantities of key vitamins and phytocompounds they contain. Learn more about the standout health benefits of kiwi in the GreenMedInfo.com database.

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article, please see the article online at TheEpochTimes.com



 Increased dietary fiber intake Kiwi, also known as Chinese gooseberry, is a good option against chronic constipation.

The Right Way to Shower, According to Experts

For many people, their efforts to stay clean bring a uniquely modern set of problems

JOSEPH MERCOLA

aking a daily shower is a fairly recent development for Americans. Just 100 years ago, many thought getting their whole body wet at once (instead of taking the sponge baths that were common then) would invite diseases like pneumonia, and someone would "catch their death."

Nowadays, a long, hot shower is a daily ritual for many Americans. Most soaps and personal care products have surfactants that, when combined with water, bind to oil and remove the beneficial fats called sebum that naturally protect your skin.

Generally speaking, the more a product bubbles or lathers, the more surfactants it contains. Many people spend money to buy expensive lotions to restore or replenish the natural skin oils they remove when they shower.

The irony is that most of the skin lotions people buy to use after they shower are far inferior to your skin's own "lotion"—sebum. Worse, most are loaded with toxic ingredients that pose risks to your health.

Taking showers that are too long or too hot can also dry your skin, as will not drying yourself with a towel as soon as you emerge from the shower. (There's one exception to the rule: If you live in a very hot or damp environment, let your body "air dry" and the water drops evaporate without a toweling to cool you off.)

Cold water may also dry out your skin, and there's no evidence that it has any therapeutic benefits for your skin barrier, although there may be benefits on a deeper level from exposure to cold temperatures.

Beware of These Chemicals

There are toxins you want to avoid in your soaps, shampoos, and other personal care products—antibiotics. When antibacterial dish, body, and laundry soaps emerged in the 2000s, they were sold as "new and improved" products to get you "better than clean."

However, the products, still widely sold, don't get you cleaner than soap and water but do expose you to the endocrine-disrupting effects of antibiotics such as triclosan, found in popular dish detergents and toothpastes. **Movement?**

Antibiotic resistance and the creation of In reaction to excessive harsh shampooing, a 'superbugs" is driven, in part, by the wide use of these antibacterial products. In 2016, the Food and Drug Adminis-

tration gave industry a year to remove antibiotics from personal care products unless manufacturers could prove their products were "both safe for long-term daily use and more effective than plain soap and water in preventing illness and the spread of certain infections."

All Body Parts Shouldn't Be **Washed Equally**

Soaping your skin can be counterproductive, as we have seen, since it removes the balance of beneficial bacteria and dries your skin. However, you certainly want to wash areas that have a high density of sweat glands and can produce odors—notably your groin area, buttocks, and armpits.

But even when it comes to washing your genitalia, experts warn about excess soap. Here's what writer and Harvard-educated anthropologist Leslie Turnbull of The Week says:

"The external genitalia of both men and women need to be cleaned. ... However, given the sensitivities of these areas, this is best done with the hand, not a cloth ... and, believe it or not, the water of the shower is probably all you need.

"If you feel you really need to use your surfactant-free soap on your groin and (for guys) testicles and (ladies) external labia, then whatever you do ... keep that soap away from the areas where your outside turns into your inside.

"Both urologists and gynecologists agree; soap in these places is as unnecessary and potentially harmful as soap in the eye. Both genders should clean their external genitals front to back, finishing with the perianal area. As with every other part of the body, rinse well both front and back."

Does Shower 'Runoff' Clean Your Feet?

There's another irony. While people generally overly soap their skin, they may actually neglect their feet. Many Americans are guilty of "mistakenly thinking the runoff from cleaning the rest of them will somehow remove the dirt, bacteria, and dead skin from this critical

part of the body," Turnbull says. The top and bottom of your feet and between your toes may need to be washed separately.

Though it may not clean your feet, there's a benefit to the shower runoff for people who are prone to developing ingrown toenails.

After the shower, when your skin and nails are soft, the toenail that tends to "ingrow" can be lifted up by gently going underneath its edge with your fingernail discouraging it from growing into your skin. Certainly, preventing an ingrown toenail is preferable to treating it.

Sometimes, people who are otherwise thorough washers can also neglect their ears, Turnbull says. Use your index finger to lightly clean the external folds of your ears and the oft-forgotten area behind your ears with a gentle shampoo or plain water.

Shampoo in the Shower? Don't Make These Mistakes

Many people wash their hair in the shower daily or every other day. As with showering, there's growing recognition that perhaps we've become too clean with these practices.

Like over-cleansed skin, hair can be dried out by shampoo and can move people to use conditioners to try to replenish the natural oils that are lost, which, like skin's natural oils, are immensely preferable to external lotions that are applied.

Ironically, the less you wash your hair, the less it needs washing: Frequently shampooing actually makes hair more oily—and when you shampoo less, you "train" your hair to become less oily.

In addition to drying out hair, most commercial hair products contain toxic chemicals that operate as endocrine disruptors, including sodium lauryl sulfate, phthalates used for fragrance, and methylisothiazolinone and parabens, used as preservatives.

Neither bath soap nor shampoo should be synthetically scented because a pleasant aroma isn't worth exposure to these chemicals. A slight hint of lavender or citrus derived from essential oils is safe but, if you're unsure, look for hair products whose labels say "fragrance-free."

Have You Heard of the 'No-Poo'

"no-poo" movement has developed that ad vocates abstaining from shampoo altogether in favor of baking soda and vinegar, or even applying conditioner to use as a "shampoo."

If you're thinking of switching over to baking soda and vinegar, be aware, though, that many people say their hair initially felt grimy and unclean before it ultimately got better.

Though we've all heard the instructions "lather, rinse, repeat" for decades, almost no experts actually recommend a second shampooing. Sometimes, "lather, rinse, repeat" is necessary in a salon after chemical treatments, experts say, but it's seldom necessary in the everyday world.

Applying conditioner after you shampoo is more important on your hair's ends than your scalp because the ends are much farther away from your scalp's oil and will be drier. Dr. Karyn Grossman, a dermatologist

in Beverly Hills, California, recommends slapping "conditioner on the ends of your hair—generally, more for thick hair and less for thinner strands—to let it sink in."

She told Greatist, "The warm, wet environment works magic: Follicles open up, letting the conditioner sink in extra deep and making it more effective than if you had rinsed off immediately. Wait until the end of your shower, then use a comb to detangle hair."

Like shampooing, both men and women often like to shave in the shower because it's convenient and the skin is softened. For those who do, Turnbull suggests a few practices.

"If you shave in the shower," she writes, "always keep a clean razor on hand. Dry it out between uses. Consider investing in a good shaving mirror if you shave your face and/or a shower bench if you shave your legs. These can make the process of shaving in the shower infinitely easier and even safer."

Water Is Precious Resource to Be Conserved

With droughts occurring in many

parts of the United States and around the world, we can't act like water is an unlimited resource. A 10-minute shower can use up to 50 gallons of water—about five gallons are used per minute. For this reason, experts suggest turning the water off while you're shaving—especially since most people



want to take their time and be careful with a blade, which could expend a lot of unneces-A lot of water is also misused in waiting for the shower to reach its desired temperature

That is why some conscientious people place five-gallon buckets under their showerhead **MINUTE** while the water is warming to use later for shower can use up to watering plants, rinsing clothing, or even flushing the toilet. Speaking of the toilet, some people urinate in the shower, which isn't as unsanitary as it

GALLONS

of water which equates

to about five gallons per

minute.

sounds since urine is sterile unless there's an infection present.11 While some may find the idea of relieving themselves in the shower unpleasant, it's a habit that does conserve water, because 27 percent of the water used in U.S. homes comes from toilet flushing. Even the humidity and warmth in the

bathroom after taking a shower can be conserved by keeping the door and windows closed. This will soften your skin and let moisture sink in while you're dressing and grooming, experts say.

But there's one caution when it comes to humidity: It can degrade the potency and composition of any medicines you have stored there (and, if left overly humid, the moisture could contribute to mold growth). Increasingly, pharmacists tell people to keep their medicines anywhere but in the bathroom!

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



for naturally products essential oils synthetic ones to avoid exposing

your body to

Week 39, 2022 THE EPOCH TIMES

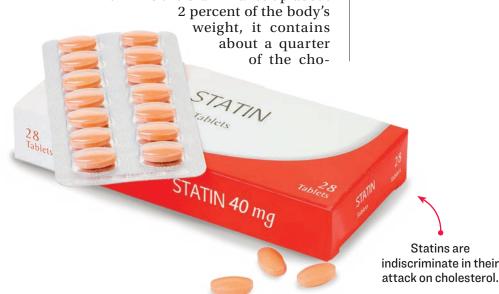


Continued from Page 9

The "rafts" help greatly with nutrient and ion transportation, and scattered cholesterol is a great aid to muscle contraction and functionality.

Cholesterol is also a precursor to many vital hormones found in the human body, including vitamin D3, sex hormones, and adrenal gland steroids. It prevents ionspositively or negatively charged particles such as sodium and potassium—from leaking across cellular membranes. Cholesterol also keeps bile acid levels in check.

And while the brain makes up about



During statin

therapy, the level of cholesterol

dramatically.

sinks

"Cholesterol is found in all animal cell cell membranes, and may act as an antioxidant. Recently, cholesterol has also been implicated in cell signaling processes,

and is suggested to enable lipid raft formation in the plasma membrane." Now, you can see that for

ing to Big Pharma, we don't.

Cholesterol and LDL

You have probably heard of and other sugars in the those with sugars attached) LDL before. LDL stands for low-density lipoprotein, which

is made from cholesterol and a protein called "apoB," among a number of other molecules. LDL, however, isn't a form of cholesterol, much like how a steering wheel isn't a car. LDL transports many vital molecules such as cholesterol itself, vitamin D, and antioxidants across the body. Lower LDL usually means a reduction in the bioavailability of these vital nutrients.

lesterol in the body.

An article published by Norbert Kucerka et al. in the Journal of the American Chemical Society condenses the role of cholesterol into a few sentences.

membranes and is required for proper membrane permeability and fluidity. It is also needed for building and maintaining

our cells to work properly, we need cholesterol. But accord-

especially the case in diabetics. The liver has the job

LDL particles (which are bloodstream into fats. take longer to perform their

job, they also have trouble being recycled by the liver. In the end, macrophages, a part of the immune system, have to seek out these rogue, glycated LDL particles to digest and recycle them.

LDL is made in the liver and returned

to the liver once the LDL particles have

dropped off their contents. Once their

contents are delivered, LDL becomes

"small dense LDL particles," which are

Now, remember the "apoB" protein

mentioned above? The apoB protein is

especially vulnerable to attacks from

sugars in the bloodstream such as

glucose and notably fructose.

Once a sugar attaches itself

onto apoB proteins in the

bloodstream, the entire

LDL particle becomes less

efficient at delivering its

contents and sticks around

longer, causing an increase

Not only do the glycated

in LDL serum levels. This is

then recycled by the liver.

The liver has the job of converting fructose and other sugars in the bloodstream into fats (such as cholesterol, vitamin D, and hormones), packaging them into LDL particles that are transported throughout the body. However, excess sugars in is good for the heart," she continues. "I the bloodstream will interfere with this process and lead to LDL of poor quality being produced by the liver. The "poor" LDL is then more likely to be interfered with by blood sugars, as there's no cholesterol protecting it. The liver can't keep up with the demand for cholesterol needed for LDL production and fructose conversion, and a vicious cycle ensues.

Ramifications of Statin Therapy

Statins directly inhibit the production of cholesterol, which means that the liver now has no chance of keeping up with converting the blood sugars into fats. Fructose, especially, stays in the bloodstream and continues to damage

The biological chain reaction that statins stop doesn't only produce cholesterol, but also the coenzyme Q10; statins, therefore, have a significant impact on energy production.

The muscles now face a number of issues due to insufficient coenzyme Q10 and cholesterol. Ions leak from muscle cells because cholesterol isn't there to stop it. The liver can't keep up with fructose conversion because of a lack of cholesterol. There's more sugar in the blood that causes oxidative damage to muscle cells.

The mitochondria in cells across the body also struggle with energy production because they're missing the coenzyme O10, not to mention that cells receive fewer fats as fuel in general because less LDL is being sent out from

Everything that we do depends on energy. The energy the cells use doesn't come from the wall socket, but from a molecule called adenosine triphosphate, or ATP. The synthesis of ATP from sugars results from two steps: anaerobic (without oxygen) and aerobic (with oxygen). The anaerobic step produces two molecules of ATP, while the aerobic step usually cranks out somewhere between 32 to 36 molecules of ATP.

Now, guess which step uses coenzyme Q10? That's right, the more critical aero-

Even though the muscle cells of people taking statins are missing coenzyme Q10 and therefore don't have sufficient ability to utilize the aerobic part of ATP synthesis, they can still produce energy—it's just much less efficient.

It's like driving a car with square wheels instead of round ones. With the predominance of the anaerobic step of ATP synthesis, the liver, struggling with the fructose issue, hands off fructose production completely to the muscles. Now, the muscles are working overtime to inefficiently it to lactate, a healthy molecule the heart and are sent to the liver for recycling in can use as an alternate fuel source.

Stephanie Seneff, a senior research scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, says in her paper "How Statins Really Work Explains Why They Don't Really Work" that she believes that "the real reason why statins protect the heart from a heart attack is that muscle cells are willing to make an incredible sacrifice for the sake of the larger good."

believe, in fact, that the reason exercise is good is exactly the same as the reason statins are good: it supplies the heart with lactate, a very healthy fuel that does not glycate cell proteins."

But low cholesterol supply is still an awful thing, as there are a number of fatal deficiencies that occur when cells, especially muscle cells, are lacking cholesterol. As previously mentioned, cholesterol is a critical component of the cellular membrane. Here, cholesterol is a gatekeeper that prevents potassium and sodium from leaking across the phospholipid bilayer that wraps every cell.

When cholesterol isn't present, potassium and sodium naturally leak across the cell membrane because of their relative concentration gradients. A high sodium concentration on one side of the cell will cause it to leak through to the side where there aren't as many sodium particles; the same goes for potassium.

This balancing effect, found in most to all natural and biological systems, is called homeostasis or equilibrium. Cholesterol prevents this process and so facilitates a concentration gradient across the cellular membrane; muscles contract and move precisely because of this ion gradient. Here, cholesterol is comparable to a hydroelectric dam.

During statin therapy, the level of cholesterol sinks dramatically. In vitro studies of phospholipid membranes have shown that removing cholesterol from the membrane will lead to a 19 times increase in the potassium leakage rate, and a three times higher rate for sodium.

In order for muscles to move, we need this ion gradient, and in order to create this gradient, our cells need energy. But, energy is at an extreme low because the mitochondria are underperforming because of statins.

The cells are now forced to inefficiently produce a large number of ATP molecules in order to maintain the ion gradient sufficient to maintain muscle movement. You might think, it's only our muscles that are working a little harder, so what? Well, they get completely destroyed in the process.

Remember, the bloodstream under statin therapy contains a shockingly high level of sugar molecules, especially fructose. Fructose is about 10 times more potent than glucose, the "normal" fuel used for ATP synthesis, at glycating proteins, which means that muscles now are being torn apart due to the lack of cholesterol protecting them, the missing coenzyme Q10 which doubles as a potent antioxidant, and the abundance of fructose harming them. Debris from dyroduce ATP from fructose and convert ing muscle cells land in the bloodstream abnormally high quantities, placing it under extrinsic stress.

After more muscle cells deteriorate, they can't keep up with the metabolizing fructose and struggle to produce enough energy for the heart and other muscles. The lack of muscle cells also exposes the embedded nerve endings and make them susceptible to damage. This may eventually lead to amyotrophic lateral "It is well acknowledged that exercise sclerosis (ALS), or Lou Gehrig's disease.

Statins take away cholesterol and the coenzyme 010 from the body, which leave muscle cells energy deprived, leaky, and deteriorating.

studies have found.

ALS belongs to the category of neurodegenerative diseases, which means the development of dementia and neuropathies may now be related to statin therapy, although the science remains controver-

sial. Memory loss is an acknowledged side effect of statin therapy. A 2004 study on the popular statin atorvastatin said that "statin therapy worsened diastolic parameters," meaning a greater chance of diastolic heart failure. One reason for this, as speculated by Seneff, is that this comes from the lack of membrane cholesterol as a result of statin therapy. The cell, unable to keep up with the leaking sodium and potassium ions, replaces them with a calcium- and magnesium-based system, as they are

they won't "fit through the door." Seneff says that calcium and magnesium somehow get the job done, yet they consequently result in calcification of the heart arteries, which is how they cause heart failure in the long run.

ions, nevertheless, and are too large to

simply "slip" or diffuse across the cellular

membrane. These two substitutes don't

require cholesterol as a gatekeeper, as

Why We Should **Be Careful About Using Statins**

Exercise can protect your Cholesterol is vital for humans. Statins heart better than statins,

inhibit cholesterol production. From these two sentences, you might question why statins are prescribed so widely to

Although the use of statins has risen over the past few decades and become quite profitable for the pharmaceutical industry, questions regarding the fundamental reasoning behind their use remain unanswered.

Seneff, when addressing the claims of a 2006 study that "statins cut heart attack incidences by a third" said in her paper that since "heart attacks were rare among [the] group [of people in this study] ... what this translates to in absolute terms is that 60 patients would need to be treated for an average of 4.3 years to protect one of them from a single heart attack. However, essentially all of them will experience increased frailty and mental decline [due to statin therapy]."

Statins take away cholesterol and the coenzyme Q10 from the body, which leave muscle cells energy deprived, leaky, and deteriorating.

Statins also overwhelm the liver with an abundance of blood sugar and force muscle cells to sacrifice themselves to inefficiently deal with the blood sugar and energy issue by processing fructose and producing energy in a self-destructive

This process is the very antithesis of longevity and leads to an increased risk of diastolic heart failure, not to mention exposing nerve endings in muscle cells that has potentially numerous ramifications for the central nervous system.

Statins, therefore, are drugs that you should consider carefully before taking.

Jacky Mingjia Guan is based in Switzerland. He writes about a diverse range of contemporary topics, guided by the limitations of human rationality and

COVID Vaccines: High Risk, Little Benefit for Young Adults

COVID-19 vaccine boosters 'unethical' and up to 98 times worse than the disease, conclude top scientists in new study

Continued from Page 9

Risking Disenrollment

As the study points out, students at universities in the United States, Canada, and Mexico are being told they must have a third dose of the vaccines against COVID-19 or they will be unenrolled. Unvaccinated high school graduates who are just starting college also mandatory for attendance.

These mandates are widespread. Currently, 15 states honor philosophical (personal belief) exemptions to vaccines, and 44 states and the city of Washington allow religious exemptions. But even in these states, private universities are telling parents they won't ac-

cept state-recognized vaccine exemptions. Based on personal interviews with some half a dozen families, The Epoch Times has learned that administrators at some colleges and universities are informing students that they have their own university-employed medical teams to scrutinize the medical ex-

emptions submitted by students and signed by private doctors. These doctors, the families are being told, will decide whether the health reasons given are medically valid.

5 Ethical Arguments

Against Mandated Boosters Though rarely reported on in the main-

have been generating a lot of controversy. While some countries are quietly compensating people for devastating vaccine injuries, and other countries are limiting COVID-19 vaccine recommendations, the United States is now recommending that children 12 and older get Pfizer-BioNTech's Omicron-specific booster and are being told the COVID-19 vaccines are young adults older than age 18 get Mod-

stream media, COVID-19 vaccine boosters

erna's updated shot. At the same time, public health authorities in Canada are suggesting that Canadians will need COVID-19 vaccines every 90 days.

Against a backdrop of confusing and often changing public health recommendations and booster fatigue, the authors of this new paper argue that university booster mandates are unethical. They give five specific reasons for this bold claim:

1) Lack of policymaking transparency. The scientists pointed out that no formal and scientifically rigorous risk-benefit analysis of whether boosters are helpful in preventing severe infections and hospitalizations exists for young adults.

2) Expected harm. A look at the currently available data shows that mandates will result in what the authors call a "net expected harm" to young people. This expected harm will exceed the potential benefit from the

3) Lack of efficacy. The vaccines haven't effectively prevented the transmission of COVID-19. Given how poorly they work—the authors call this "modest and transient effectiveness"—the expected harms caused by the boosters likely outweigh any benefits to public health.

4) No recourse for vaccine-injured young adults. Forcing vaccination as a prerequisite to attend college is especially problematic, because young people injured by these vaccines likely won't be able to receive compensation for these injuries.

5) Harm to society. Mandates, the authors insisted, ostracize unvaccinated young adults, excluding them from education and university employment opportunities. Coerced vaccination entails "major infringements to free choice of occupation 22,000 and 30,000 previously uninfected

and freedom of association," the scientists wrote, especially when "mandates are not supported by a compelling public health justification."

The consequences of noncompliance include being unenrolled, losing internet privileges, losing access to the gym and other athletic facilities, and being kicked out of campus housing, among other things. These punitive approaches, according to the authors, have resulted in unnecessary psychosocial stress, reputation damage, loss of income, and fear of being deported, to name just a few.

Public health authorities in Canada are suggesting that Canadians will need COVID-19 vaccines every 90 days.

A Risk With Little Benefit

The lack of effectiveness of the vaccines is a major concern to these researchers. Based on their analysis of the public data provided to the CDC, they estimated that between young adults would need to be boosted with an mRNA vaccine to prevent just a single hospitalization.

However, this estimate doesn't take into account the protection conferred by a previous infection. So, the authors insisted, "this should be considered a conservative and optimistic assessment of benefit."

In other words, the mRNA vaccines against COVID-19 are essentially useless for young adults.

Mandated Booster Shots Cause More Harm Than Good

But the documented lack of efficacy is only part of the problem. The researchers further found that per every one COVID-19 hospitalization prevented in young adults who hadn't previously been infected with COVID-19, the data show that 18 to 98 "serious adverse events" will be caused by the vaccinations themselves.

These events include up to three times as many booster-associated incidents of myocarditis in young men than hospitalizations prevented, and as many as 3,234 cases of other side effects so serious that they interfere with normal daily activities.

At a regional hospital in South Carolina, the desk clerk sported a button that read, "I'm Vaccinated Against COVID-19" with a big black check mark on it. "What about the boosters?" a hospital visi-

too many shots." "It does seem like a lot," the clerk agreed.

tor asked. "It's starting to seem like we need

"It's hard to know what to do."

But she did have some advice for the visitor. "Just keep reading and educating yourself, so you can make an informed decision."

This new paper is essential reading for anyone trying to decide if they need more vaccines. The authors concluded their study with a call to action. Policymakers must stop mandates for young adults immediately, be sure that those who have already been injured by these vaccines are compensated for the suffering caused by mandates, and openly conduct and share the results of riskbenefit analyses of the vaccines for various age groups.

These measures are necessary, the authors argued, to "begin what will be a long process

adverse events may have been caused by the boosters for young people for each COVID-19 infection related hospitalization theoretically prevented.

Young people are forced to choose between going to university or avoiding the injections.



of rebuilding trust in public health."

of the paper.

May the Force Be With Brave Scientists The study's two first co-authors, Kevin Bardosh and Allison Krug, both thanked their families for supporting them to "publicly debate Covid-19 vaccine mandates" in the acknowledgments section

As we wrote in May, an increasing number of scientists and medical doctors are speaking out about the dubious efficacy and disturbing safety issues surrounding these fast-tracked COVID-19 vaccines. They do so fully aware of the personal and professional risks involved. They deserve our encouragement and support.

Iennifer Margulis, Ph.D., is an award-winning 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

Joe Wang, Ph.D., was a molecular biologist with more than 10 years of experience in the vaccine industry. He is now the president of New Tang Dynasty TV (Canada), and a columnist for The Epoch Times.

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK

Food provides the essential compounds for a healthy brain that functions at its best

DEBORAH MITCHELL

ho can benefit from better brain health? If you said "everyone," you're right. However, we will focus on two groups of individuals with special reasons for focusing on brain health: students and seniors.

First, however, let's define brain health. The World Health Organization defines brain health as "the state of brain functioning across cognitive, sensory, social-emotional, behavioral, and motor domains, allowing a person to realize their full potential over the life absence of disorders."

Why Students and Seniors?

Students are our present and future, and they need all the assistance they can get to go to school, stay in school, and thrive academically. They need to be motivated, supported, and nourished.

Seniors have lived for decades, accumulating experience and wisdom. At the same time, the passing years can take their toll on the brain. The brain health of older adults can be affected by age-related changes in the brain, but also injuries (e.g., stroke, trauma), diseases (e.g., hypertension, Alzheimer's course, irrespective of the presence or disease), and mood disorders. All these much easier.

factors affect the quality of seniors' lives.

Food and Brain Health

One thing that can have a significant effect on brain health in both groups of individuals is food choices. Researchers have documented evidence that some foods are especially beneficial for brain health because of the quantity and quality of nutrients and other substances that can support brain function.

The following 11 foods support and promote brain health and should be included in the daily diet of students and seniors whenever possible. At the end of the list, we provide a few helpful hints on how to include these foods



Almonds

Need a memory boost? Are you

dysfunction? Then eat more almonds.

almonds experienced increased levels of

acetylcholine (brain chemical with a role

in memory and message transmission)

and enhanced memory, while rats with

amnesia also showed better memory after

Experts found that healthy rats fed

experiencing age-related brain

consuming the tree nuts.

Avocado

This versatile fruit is a great source of healthy monounsaturated fats, which have been shown to lower blood pressure. Since hypertension has been linked to a risk of poor brain health, it's high time to include more avocados in your diet.



Beets

We know that beets are often low on kids' menu choices, but they have been shown to promote better blood flow to the brain, plus for students and seniors alike. These ruby red vegetables are also associated with boosting function in the area of the brain involved with working memory and decision-making.



Blueberries

These small berries are packed with anthocyanins, plant compounds that deliver antioxidant and anti-inflammatory benefits, both of which are highly helpful in warding off neurodegenerative disease and aging of the brain. Blueberries' antioxidants may improve brain cell communication, boosting brain power. One study of children and seniors who consumed blueberries also demonstrated better memory and brain processes.



Coffee

If you want a cup of joe to help increase alertness, boost your mood, and improve concentration, that's fine, if you're old enough. Experts recommend for people to be older than 12 to consume this beverage. Children are extra-sensitive to caffeine, so it's best for them to turn to other brainhealthy drinks. For seniors, however, the aforementioned benefits can be on the table, unless coffee and caffeine don't agree with their digestive system or would disturb their sleep. Research suggests that drinking three or four cups of coffee daily can reduce the risk of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases



Dark Chocolate

Dark chocolate is defined as containing at least 70 percent cocoa powder. This powder is rich in antioxidants and flavonoids. Researchers have found that the flavonoids in dark chocolate benefit memory and learning. In one large study, individuals who consumed dark chocolate more often did better on memory and other mental tests than those who ate less of it.



Eggs

We often think of eggs as a great source of protein, but they're also good for brain health. That's because they provide choline, a micronutrient necessary to make a neurotransmitter involving memory and mood. One egg yolk contains more than 25 percent of a woman's daily need for choline. Eggs also provide several B vitamins that play a significant role in brain health, including vitamins B6 and B12, and folate.



Green Tea

When you enjoy a cup of green tea (including matcha tea), you're gifted with antioxidants, the amino acid L-theanine, and polyphenols. Antioxidants and polyphenols may help to prevent mental decline, while L-theanine can help you to relax—and who can't use that advantage when studying for a test or needing to combat stress? Overall, experts report that green tea is a tasty beverage that can improve brain performance, memory, and the ability to focus and stay alert.

Brain Health Food Tips

monds and turmeric).

Why boost your brain health with one

food, when two or more together will

(greens with almonds, walnuts, hard-

boiled egg, and avocado), smoothies

berries, walnuts, green tea, almonds,

and dark chocolate), or main dishes

(salmon with turmeric and lemon, egg

omelet with avocado, beets with al-

(endless possibilities that include blue-



Salmon

Would you like more gray matter? That's the stuff in your brain that's packed with nerve cells involved with memory and decisionmaking. Salmon and other oily fish (herring, tuna, mackerel) contain omega-3 fatty acids, healthy fats that the brain needs to make nerve and brain cells for good memory and the ability to learn. Not getting sufficient amounts of omega-3 may result in depression and learning problems, a situation that's not good for students or seniors.

Start the school day with avocado toast

and slivered almonds, or a blueberry,

almond milk, and walnut smoothie.

Whether you're a young student or a

senior student of life, you need to pro-

mote and support your brain health.

You can do so by choosing healthy

do? All the brain health foods in this list Great snacks for students and seniors

can be combined easily, either in a salad alike include hard-boiled eggs, blueber-

almonds. Enjoy!

that feels easy.

Bottom Line



Turmeric

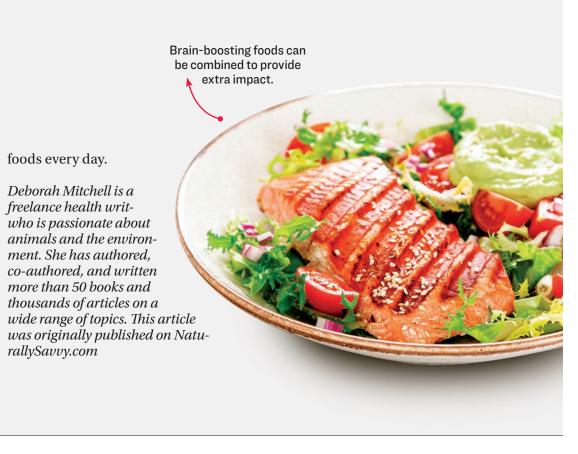
rallySavvy.com

This popular spice contains curcumin, which has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant powers and can enter the brain and impact brain cell function. Curcumin has the ability to promote the growth of new brain cells and improve mood, including anxiety and depression. Looking for a better memory? Curcumin may help.



Walnuts

Several different nuts are good for brain health, but walnuts have an edge because they contain omega-3 fatty acids, which are healthy fats for the brain. These nuts are also a source of vitamin E, an antioxidant that can protect against the deterioration of cognitive abilities.



INTENTIONAL LIVING

Feeling Stuck?

How to get past the 3 beliefs that may be holding you back

MIKE DONGHIA

Have you been feeling stuck, unable to move forward in important areas of your life? That's rough. I've been there.

In the decade after college, there were long

seasons when I felt the gap between who I was and who I wanted to be wasn't shrinking nearly as fast as I wanted. The worst part was that I knew my own



Embracing challenges and difficulties, rather than shying away from them, can help you develop confidence and a greater sense of purpose.

shortcomings were largely to blame, but I didn't know how to change. I wish I'd had a mentor during those

years—someone who really knew me and my struggles and could've coached and encouraged me. I think I wouldn't have felt stuck for so long. But gratefully, over time, I've been able to

figure out many of the obstacles that were holding me back. It turns out that many of them were unhelpful mindsets that I had picked up along the way—mostly through overly idealistic books and websites I had read and internalized.

It's true that you'll need to learn these lessons for yourself. Don't expect that simply reading this article will do the work for you. In my own life, the value of reading about other people's journeys has been two-fold.

It helps me to imagine new possibilities. Sometimes you get stuck because you have no vision for how things could be different. Perhaps the greatest value of art, of any kind, is to broaden the horizons of someone's imagination.

It helps me to put words to my experiences.

I have a friend who regularly visits a therapist, and he claims that the real value for him is in hearing someone else describe his experiences back to him. Somehow, this allows him to see these experiences in a new light and makes them feel more manageable. Reading often does that for me.

I hope my words can be that for you. What follows are a few tips for avoiding the kind of unhelpful beliefs that might cause you to

1. Don't Overvalue an Easy, Pleasurable Life

Ithinkit's obvious to most of us that attempting a life of pure hedonism would be foolish. However, on the margin, everyone feels that their particular life would be better off with a little more pleasure and convenience. I know I did. I now see this belief as one that held me back and one that's likely wrong for most people.

It's a mindset that makes your world smaller. Instead of pursuing hard and challenging goals that expand future possibilities and add a sense of purpose to each day, you're left optimizing your existing life to avoid inconveniences and various activities you don't enjoy. This, ironically, has the effect of making you increasingly fragile toward all sorts of discomfort.

If there were only one piece of advice I could give you today, it would be this: Find the hard work you nonetheless enjoy—and go do it.

2. Don't Wait for the Perfect Plan When it comes to action, everyone loves the idea of it. We think that in the moment of action, we will feel confident, certain, and powerful. Instead, I find that when I take action, it's almost always accompanied by self-doubt. Even as I write this article, one of hundreds I've written, a significant part of me wants to stop and go do something more comfortable. You could try to combat this feeling by

doing as much planning as possible. But in almost all cases, this would be the wrong choice. I've consistently underestimated how much faster I learn by throwing myself straight into a problem. And anyway, most of the time, I already know what needs to be done; I'm simply avoiding the discomfort of starting. Of course, it doesn't feel like avoidance when I'm doing it; planning feels like the real thing, but it's usually not.

The way to combat this tendency isn't a mystery—you need to start before you feel ready. If there really is more planning that needs doing, it will reveal itself soon enough. But chances are, what you really need is to push past the inertia of the status quo and

3. Don't Wait for Motivation

One mistake that had a huge opportunity cost for me was believing that I needed to solve the puzzle of motivation before I could really commit to a course of action.

Why did I feel this way? The people I admired most had incredible levels of energy and focus, and I figured that cracking this nut would be the highest value problem I could solve for myself.

It turns out that motivation is a fickle thing. Much like deciding that you will become happy or humble, motivation doesn't lend itself to direct pursuit—certainly not from a standstill. Unfortunately, I spent far too much time (read: I procrastinated for far too long) on trying to learn about motivation and new methods of becoming a highly productive individual

My thoughts on the subject, after so many years of searching for answers, are now rather simple. High-level, abstract motivation for a goal doesn't easily translate into actually feeling motivated in the moment to get started. One of the best things I did was to carve out a specific time each day to work on my most important work and treat that time as a sacred commitment. It didn't matter how I felt that day; I was going to sit down and do the work.

Overtime, your will power muscle will grow stronger, but perhaps more importantly, the progress you make in this focused effort will provide a propelling sense of motivation to keep going. **Just Go** What getting un-

down to is not waiting around for ideal conditions before getting started. Don't wait for motivation. Don't wait until you have a perfect plan. And don't wait for something

Find a project at the intersection of your curiosity and fear, and jump right into it. You're far more likely to regret not taking action than having chosen a path that you later diverge from.

In this sense, getting unstuck doesn't require a flash of insight so much as a willingness to bravely push forward in the face of

Mike (and his wife, Mollie) 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.

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There are any number of things I can

Is It Beneficial?

This simple question can add depth and wisdom to every decision you make

JOSHUA BECKER

There's an incredibly helpful question we can use to make decisions in almost every area of life: Is it beneficial? I was first introduced to this question

shortly after college, and I've referred to it countless times—not just in big decisions but also in smaller ones.

It's very easy in life to choose the things I want to do, to choose the things everyone else is doing, or to choose things simply because they're available to me.

But there's a wiser way to make decisions than simply thinking, "This is something I want to do."

Adding another question, "Is this beneficial?" forces greater intentionality and better decision-making into our lives. It invites us to think through our decisions in terms of how they'll impact ourselves and if they'll impact others in a positive way.

choose to do on a given day, but the real-

ity is that not everything is beneficial. "Is it beneficial?" is a question that can be applied to almost every decision in life:

How we spend our time

 How we spend our money • Where we focus our energy

• The words that we use The work that we take on

• The possessions we keep in our homes

• The habits we seek to develop

 Even the choices we make when resting

I can do anything I want today, but what's beneficial? I can choose to spend my money in

I can say anything I want, but what's

any way that I desire, but what's ben-

beneficial? I can eat anything I want, but what's

beneficial? I can fill my calendar with anything and everything, but what's beneficial?

I can post (almost) anything on social media today, but what's beneficial? I'll be quick to admit that there are no perfect human beings on planet Earth.

Learning to ask this question consistently and choosing appropriately is a lifelong quest. But our world would be a better place—

and our lives would be more fulfilled—if we thought to ask it more often.

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

MIND & BODY

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK **WISE HABITS** Creating a More Spacious Life Find more ease and freedom by recognizing what you can control

Go for a walk in nature. take a deep breath, and enjoy the feeling of spaciousness around you.

LEO BABAUTA

I've worked with a number of people who want more spaciousness in their lives more time for rest, play, reading, reflecting, self-care, and hanging out with friends and other loved ones.

The challenge isn't that it's hard to create more time (although, for some people, it's actually very hard). The challenge is that no matter how much time we have, we aren't likely to experience it as spacious, restful, joyful, or playful.

We can create all the time in the world, but the truth is that we'll probably have a very similar experience in that spacious time that we have already. If you take a sabbatical, you'll probably experience some openness for a little bit, but then restlessness and fears will start to take over, and you'll create a lot of things for yourself to do and a feeling that you need to be productive (for example).

Whatever you experience already is likely to be what you'll experience no matter how you arrange your life.

The real freedom you crave isn't in rearranging your life (although that can be helpful), it's in changing how you experience life. Let's take a look at how you can do that.

The real

freedom you

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life.

A Spacious Experience of Life

No matter what we're doing, we can experience it as rushed and stressful, or we can experience it as spacious and peaceful. We can have any kind of experience of the activity.

For example, if you're out for a walk, you can be on your phone checking messages and feeling the anxiousness of all the things you still need to do. Or you can experience the spaciousness of the walk, feeling expansive wonder about all the nature around you and feeling the freedom of being outdoors and being alive.

In any moment, we can experience peace. Whether you're responding to messages and emails, writing, washing a dish, talking to someone, sitting in on a meeting, or doing something courageous and inspired.

The thing to recognize is that it's a choice. You can choose to feel anxious and rushed in any moment or to feel at ease. You get to choose your experience of any moment.

As you practice moment to moment, you can expand how spacious your life feels as a whole. You go from feeling constantly rushed and behind to feeling life as abundant, free, and calm.

How to Practice

So how do you practice this miraculous way to create spaciousness in your life? It's all yours for the low price of \$500—kidding! Try to practice right now, as you read this:

Week 39, 2022 THE EPOCH TIMES

- 1. Take a moment to sit still and allow your awareness to expand outward, so you feel more expansive.
- 2. Allow your breath to be deeper and wider, so you feel a spacious nourishing breath.
- 3. Allow yourself to feel as wide as the sky, so all of life feels expansive.
- 4. Allow yourself to slow down for a moment, so life feels more spread out.

This is the kind of practice you can do in any moment, with any activity. You don't have to do all four of these steps, but you can try whatever helps you feel peace and freedom in each moment.

Try moving a little slower, so you aren't so rushed.

Try savoring each moment.

Try imagining that you can do anything within a wide open fresh expanse of the

What would it be like if your life could be experienced with greater spaciousness?

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



that life feels more spread out.

Allow yourself to slow down for a moment, so



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