

7 Secrets Of *Health*



A 7-DAY CHALLENGE
TO FEEL RENEWED

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1. Emotional
Management

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HOW TO

QUITE OFTEN, STRESS LEVELS ARE HIGH BECAUSE WE ARE DEALING WITH EITHER 1 MAJOR LIFE CHALLENGE OR MANY SMALL THINGS PILED ON TOP OF EACH OTHER. OF COURSE, THESE WILL NEED REAL ADDRESSING TOO BUT AT ITS CORE, THIS GUIDE WAS CREATED TO PROVIDE SIMPLE LIFE HACKS TO SUPPORT THE BODY'S PHYSIOLOGICAL FUNCTIONS AND HELP BUILD RESILIENCE.

EACH DAY HAS A FEW SIMPLE TASKS, FROM LIFESTYLE EXERCISES TO TRYING NEW FOOD RECIPES. PRIORITISE THESE TASKS AS BEST AS YOU TO RESTORE YOUR BODY & MIND.

GOOD LUCK & ENJOY
NICOLE BURSKA



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DAY 1: EMOTIONAL MANAGEMENT

Many of us are not taught how to manage emotions. But learning how to process emotions is an essential life skill that can significantly improve quality of life. Negative emotions are a message that something in life needs attention and potential change. Once the negative emotion is experienced, then motivation can occur. Not accepting negative emotion or ignoring the change can result in recurrence of the negative emotion and therefore increased sympathetic activity in the nervous system. This keeps your body in 'fight or flight' mode where health declines, instead of 'rest, repair & regulation', where health improves.

CHOOSE 2 OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING FOR THIS DAY:

- ☐ **JOURNAL EXERCISE: LIST EMOTIONS & WHY THEY ARE THERE.**
- ☐ **ISOLATE SELF IN NATURE AND SIT DOWN. LET YOURSELF FEEL.**
- ☐ **TAKE A WALK AND LET YOUR MIND EXPRESS ITSELF**
- ☐ **15 MINUTE MEDITATION**
- ☐ **30-60 MINUTE EXERCISE OF CHOICE**

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DAY 2: MONDAY MOVEMENT

Exercise has shown to lower stress levels and rid the body of excess energy. Exercise has been shown to inhibit the development of anxiety by the following: Releasing feel-good endorphins and other natural brain chemicals. These brain chemicals help calm the amygdala in the brain which calms down anxiety. Movement also helps improve many cognitive functions such as memory, intellect, reasoning and emotional regulation.

TIP: Make sure you ENJOY the activity and it keeps you engaged. This will keep it sustainable when implementing it on a regular basis.



CHOOSE 2 OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING FOR THIS DAY:

- ☐ **MORNING RUN - MINIMUM 30-60 MINS**
- ☐ **30-60 MIN YOGA SESSION - [LINK HERE FOR ONLINE CLASS](#)**
- ☐ **60-90 MIN GYM SESSION**
- ☐ **60 MIN SWIMMING SESSION BEFORE OR AFTER WORK**
- ☐ **30-60 MIN CYCLING**
- ☐ **OTHER ACTIVITY**_____

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DAY 3: BALANCING BREAKFAST

Eating foods that release their sugar too quickly can lead to blood sugar spikes and dips. These dips can lead to excessive amounts of insulin and stress on the body, as well as increased cravings for sugar and caffeine.

Chronic stress can lead to constant elevated blood sugar levels and weight gain. Thus, start your day with a breakfast that releases its sugar and energy slowly. Include natural foods with fibre and/or natural proteins, this slows down their glucose breakdown. Lastly, avoid processed foods which release their sugar quickly e.g. cereals.

CHOOSE 1 OF THE FOLLOWING RECIPES BELOW:

☐ **OVERNIGHT BIRCHER MUESLI OATS**

OR

☐ **SMOKED SALMON AVOCADO TOAST**

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OVERNIGHT BIRCHER MUESLI OATS

INGREDIENTS

- 2 CUPS OATS (ROLLED)
- 1/4 CUP UNSWEETENED SHREDDED COCONUT
- 1/4 CUP SLICED ALMONDS
- 2 TBSPS GROUND FLAX SEED
- 1/4 CUP RAISINS
- 1/4 CUP HEMP SEEDS
- 1/2 TSP CINNAMON
- 150ML UNSWEETENED ALMOND MILK
- 200 ML UNSWEETENED COCONUT YOGHURT
- 1 APPLE (MEDIUM, GRATED OR CHOPPED FINELY)

DIRECTIONS

1. IN A LARGE BOWL, COMBINE THE OATS, SHREDDED COCONUT, ALMONDS, FLAX, RAISINS HEMP SEEDS & CINNAMON.
2. STIR IN THE ALMOND MILK, YOGHURT & APPLE. MIX WELL. COVER AND LET SOAK IN THE FRIDGE OVERNIGHT.
3. DIVIDE INTO BOWLS OR JARS IN THE MORNING AND ENJOY!



SMOKED SALMON AVOCADO TOAST

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 RIPE AVOCADO
- 1-2 SLICES SOURDOUGH BREAD (TOASTED)
- 50 GRAMS SMOKED SALMON (CUT INTO BITE SIZE PIECES)
- 1/8 WHITE ONION (THINLY SLICED)
- 1/2 TSP CAPERS
- 1 TSP FRESH DILL (CHOPPED)
- 1/4 LEMON (JUICE)

DIRECTIONS

1. MASH THE AVOCADO ON A CHOPPING BOARD WITH A FORK. SPREAD THE AVOCADO MASH ON THE TOAST
2. ADD THE SALMON, ONION, CAPERS, DILL, LEMON JUICE & ENJOY!
3. (OPTIONAL) CAN BE SERVED WITH A SIDE OF ROCKET LEAVES, CHERRY TOMATOES AND CUCUMBER.



DAY 4: REST & REHYDRATE

One of the best hacks you can learn is the importance of switching off and prioritising rest. Lack of rest usually leads to impaired insulin signaling the following day as well as increased (oxidation) reactive oxygen species in the body. The body will find it difficult to regulate its energy production (and emotions) hence why cravings are at an all time high.

Water is essential to support the body in cleaning out used up hormones, toxic metabolites and pathogens. Studies have shown that even as little as a half litre of dehydration can bring your cortisol levels up!

TIP: Get hold of a stainless steel bottle and sip it throughout the day.

CHECK OFF ALL 3-4 OF THESE (+1 BONUS!)

- ☐ **8 HOURS OF QUALITY SLEEP (DARK ROOM, COOL TEMP, 0 NOISE)**
- ☐ **2-4 LITRES FILTERED WATER (OR GLASS BOTTLE BOUGHT)**
- ☐ **60 MINUTE WORK BREAK**
- ☐ ***BONUS* 10 MINS OF BREATHWORK (DEEP BREATHING)**

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DAY 5: LUNCH

A major life hack that will help is to cook double portions for dinner then eat leftovers for lunch the next day to save on time and energy. Then you have more time to relax and renew yourself for the rest of your working lunch break. Whether that's taking a walk in a local park or catching up with colleagues.

"Generally speaking, the more time and energy give to your food. The more energy your food will give to you."

However, if there are no leftovers, then here are some very quick, time saving lunch recipes you can do.



CHOOSE 1 OF THE FOLLOWING QUICK RECIPES BELOW:

☐ **LENTIL & FETA TABBOULEH**

OR

☐ **MEDITERRANEAN TUNA PASTA SALAD**

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Lentil & Feta Tabbouleh

INGREDIENTS

- 1 TIN GREEN LENTILS OR CHICKPEAS
- 2 TOMATOES (MEDIUM, DICED)
- OPTIONAL: 150 GRAMS FETA CHEESE (CRUMBLED)
- 1/2 CUP RED ONION (FINELY DICED)
- 1/4 CUP EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL
- 1/2 LEMON (JUICED)
- 2 TSPS CINNAMON (GROUND)
- SEA SALT & BLACK PEPPER SEASONING

DIRECTIONS

1. TOSS ALL INGREDIENTS IN A LARGE BOWL UNTIL COMBINED. SEASON WITH SALT & PEPPER. DIVIDE INTO BOWLS AND ENJOY. STORE IN THE FRIDGE TO 3 DAYS IN AN AIRTIGHT CONTAINER.



Mediterranean Tuna Pasta Salad

INGREDIENTS

- 2 CUPS BROWN RICE OR BUCKWHEAT FUSILLI PASTA (COOKED)
- 1/4 CUP EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL
- 1 LEMON (JUICED)
- 1 TBSP ITALIAN SEASONING (OREGANO, BASIL ETC.)
- SEA SALT & BLACK PEPPER
- 1/2 CUP GREEN OLIVES (SLICED)
- 1/2 CUP SUN DRIED TOMATOES (SLICED)
- OPTIONAL: 1 CAN TUNA (DRAINED & FLAKED)
- 8 CUPS ROCKET LEAVES
- 1/4 CUP HEMP SEEDS

DIRECTIONS

1. COOK THE BROWN RICE OR BUCKWHEAT PASTA ACCORDING TO DIRECTIONS TO THE PACK (USUALLY QUITE QUICK)
2. WHILST COOKING, COMBINED OLIVE OIL, LEMON JUICE, SEASONING IN A SMALL BOWL AND COMBINE. ONCE DONE, DRAIN AND RINSE THE PASTA WITH COLD WATER.
3. IN A LARGE BOWL, COMBINE PASTA, TOMATOES, TUNA, ROCKET OLIVES & HEMP SEEDS. ADD DRESSING A MIX. ENJOY!



DAY 6: SUNLIGHT & CONNECTION

The sun has received bad press in the recent decades. But quite often, humans do not get the daily minimum exposure that we need. The sun gives us more than vitamin D. Researchers found that sunlight triggers your skin's production of nitric oxide, which also happens when we eat beetroot -i.e it benefits our blood pressure and cardiovascular system. Additionally sun exposure has shown the following benefits:

- Increased endorphins
- Improved sleep cycle (and more deep sleep)
- Improved skin conditions
- Improved melatonin levels which is a natural anti-cancer substance our bodies make (3).



CHECK OFF THESE TASKS (MORE TASKS ON THE NEXT PAGE)

☐ **15 MIN OUTSIDE EXPOSURE**

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DAY 6: SOCIAL CONNECTION

It's easy to get buried in life projects and forget about our loved ones. Feelings of isolation can **seriously** depreciate our mental health (thank you COVID-19) and trap us back into unhealthy habits as we try to cope. Find your close ones and commit to connecting. That means, open up to them, let them open up to you, listen and sympathise. Commit to finding and having friends that are good at empathising and friends who may be good company or having fun with. If you notice you have none then it's time to consider searching for them. There are plenty of resources (e.g. hobbies, classes, apps, online games, book clubs etc.).



CHOOSE 1 (OR MORE) OF THE FOLLOWING FOR THIS DAY:

- ☐ **BREAKFAST/LUNCH/DINNER WITH FRIENDS**
- ☐ **MEET SOMEONE NEW**
- ☐ **ACTIVITY WITH FRIENDS/FAMILY**
- ☐ **QUALITY TIME WITH LOVED ONE**
- ☐ **ZOOM/FACETIME A FRIEND IN ANOTHER COUNTRY**

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DAY 7: DINNER

Dinner is your chance to make the most nutritious meal of the day simply because we usually have the most time for it (but not always the energy). Additionally, a shared meal with close ones is a great way to strengthen mental health.

Depending on how stressful the week has been for you, the weekend is the time when we are most at risk to let go of the reins (sometimes a little too much). Decompression is important, but see if you can fit in a nutritious dinner in at least. Below are 2 nutrient dense recipes for you to try:



CHOOSE 1 OF THE FOLLOWING RECIPES:

☐ **PEANUT BUTTER CURRY CHICKPEA STEW (MY FAVOURITE)**

OR

☐ **SWEET POTATO, TURKEY & KALE BOWL**

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Peanut Butter Curry Chickpea Stew

INGREDIENTS

- 1&1/2 WHITE ONION (MEDIUM, DICED)
- 3 GARLIC CLOVES (MINCED)
- 1&1/2 TBSPS GRATED FRESH GINGER
- 2 TSPS CUMIN + 2 TSPS CORIANER (SPICED)
- 2 TSPS TURMERIC + 2 TSPS SEA SALT
- 1&1/2 TSPS CINNAMON
- 1/2 CUP 100% PEANUT BUTTER
- 750ML VEGETABLE BROTH
- 300 MLS UNSWEETENED ALMOND MILK
- OPTIONAL: 1 CAN TUNA (DRAINED/FLAKED)
- 8 CUPS ROCKET LEAVES
- 1/2 CUP WATER
- 1&1/2 RED BELL PEPPER (SLICED)
- 1&1/2 COURGETTE (SLICED)
- 3 CARROTS (MEDIUM, PEELED & SLICED)
- 2 TINS CHICKPEAS (COOKED)
- 1&1/2 LIMED (JUICED)
- 1/2 CUP FRESH CORIANDER (CHOPPED)
- 1&1/2 TBSPS COCONUT OIL

DIRECTIONS

1. HEAT A LARGE SAUCEPAN OVER MEDIUM/LOW HEAT AND MELT THE COCONUT OIL. ADD THE ONION, GARLIC AND GINGER. COOK FOR 2-2 MINUTES. STIRRING FREQUENTLY.
2. ADD THE SPICES AND COOK FOR 1 MINUTE, UNTIL FRAGRANT. ADD THE WATER TO DEGLAZE THE PAN, THEN STIR IN THE PEANUT BUTTER. ADD THE VEG BROTH & ALMOND MILK. STIR UNTIL COMBINED, THEN ADD THE SPICES/SALT.
3. STIR IN THE CHOPPED PEPPER, COURGETTE, CARROTS AND CHICKPEAS. SIMMER UNCOVERED FOR 20 MINS, STIRRING OCCASIONALLY.
4. STIR IN LIME JUICE + CORIANDER. DIVIDE INTO BOWLS AND ENJOY!



Sweet Potato, Turkey & Kale Bowl

INGREDIENTS

- 2 SWEET POTATOES (MEDIUM)
- 2 TBSPS EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL
- 1 TBSP CHILI POWDER
- 1/2 TSP CAYENNE PEPPER (OPTIONAL)
- 1 WHITE ONION (DICED)
- 500 GRAMS EXTRA LEAN GROUND TURKEY
- 1/2 TSP SEA SALT
- 1/2 TSP BLACK PEPPER
- 8 CUPS KALE LEAVES (FINELY DICED)

DIRECTIONS

1. PREHEAT THE OVEN TO 200C AND LINE A LARGE BAKING SHEET WITH PARCHMENT PAPER.
2. WASH AND DICE THE SWEET POTATOES INTO HALF INCH CUBES. TOSS IN 1 TBSP OF OLIVE OIL, CHILLI POWDER AND CAYENNE PEPPER. SPREAD ACROSS THE BAKING SHEET AND BAKE FOR 20 MINUTES.
3. MEANWHILE, HEAT A LARGE SKILLET OVER MEDIUM HEAT. ADD REMAINING OLIVE OIL THEN THE ONION, GROUND TURKEY, SALT/PEPPER AND STIR WELL TO BREAK UP THE TURKEY.
4. ONCE THE TURKEY IS COOKED, DRAIN OFF EXCESS LIQUID AND RETURN TO HEAT. ADD THE KALE. STIR UNTIL WILTED THEN REMOVE FROM HEAT. DIVIDE INTO BOWLS, TOP WITH THE SWEET POTATO AND ENJOY!

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Congratulations!

THAT'S EVERYTHING. I HOPE YOU FOUND THE
CHALLENGE REJUVENATING AND HELPFUL.

FEEL FREE TO SEND ANY FEEDBACK TO
INFO@CORTADERIAWELLNESS.COM

Nicole

RESOURCES

1)

[https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3061260/#:~:text=Positive%20emotions%20also%20result%20in,%2C%20%26%20Watkins%2C%201995\).](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3061260/#:~:text=Positive%20emotions%20also%20result%20in,%2C%20%26%20Watkins%2C%201995).)

2)

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31488729/>

3)<https://westcoastintegrativehealth.com/nitric-oxide/>