

Live Your L.I.F.E. Well!

Your Wellness Guide

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Living a healthy and satisfying life is done when all areas of your lifestyle are in balance. For example, you cannot be all that happy when your finances are A+, but your relationships stink, and your health is in the toilet!

Likewise, getting healthy isn't merely taking enough of the right supplements. In other words, you cannot carry bitterness in your heart for another person, sit around watching TV all day, then take a handful of supplements and expect a thriving life and happiness!

Health and happiness is the result of the actions you take that are driven by something deep inside of you; an inside-out flow, not necessarily from a pill. This checklist is broken up into four segments of behaviors as it relates to how well you are balanced in these main areas of a 'L.I.F.E.':

L = LOVE: Give & Receive

I = INTEGRITY: Dream & Do

F = FOOD: Feed & Flow

E = EXERCISE: Move & Rest

This is why we like to say; ***“Live Your L.I.F.E. Well!”*** and while there is much more beyond this short list, in a holistic context, these are the key areas to pay attention to when creating a ***thriving*** life. A thriving life isn't just reaching a certain physical health destination at some point in time, it is more of an active journey of personal growth and improvement.

A thriving life is one where your best inner self is maximally manifesting itself outwardly, bearing good fruit not only in your life, but in the lives of people around you. When you are **thriving**, you are **living well** daily and it is noticeable, measurable and fulfilling; physically, chemically, emotionally and even energetically to the degree that you lead others into their own wellness journey!

Below is a checklist with added resources help you take inventory and improve your health and lifestyle habits. This is designed for you to be able to go through each item, one by one, and make corrections in a few areas at a time. Don't try to go nuclear and change it all right away, you'll crash, get frustrated and give up. *(There is an abbreviated checklist at the end of this article for your convenience.)*

Your job is to pick an area you can easily get started with, make a few reachable goals, then once reached, pick some more. Perfection is for God and improvement is for mankind, so don't expect to have everything down 100%, just do a little at a time.

"Do your best then let God do the rest!" -Dr. Noble

1. LOVE: Give & Receive **Your Mental & Spiritual Health**

- Get grateful! "Gratitude is the Attitude that sets the Altitude for living!" (Pastor James MacDonald)** Everyone wants to be happy, but the default human setting is unusually to focus on what's wrong with life and complain about it. This then fills the mind and bathes your emotional experience, resulting in frustration and sadness. The secret is to find things you are currently grateful for then focus on those things, which in turn, bathes you with gratitude and happiness. A grateful attitude is a healthy one, so here are some simple ways to generate gratitude in your life:
 - Start (and continue) to **say "thank you"** to everyone whenever they do something good or that you ask for, even children.
 - **Take an inventory** of all the good things you have or have had in your life, like your home (whether you rent a hole in the wall or have a 10 bedroom mansion), your health, your family, your mind or your finances.

- A great way to reprogram negative thinking habits is to **keep a “Gratitude Journal”**, where you write down 3 things that you are grateful for that day. Do that every night before bed for at least 3 weeks, but the challenge is that you can never use the same thing twice!
- **Smile often.** People are watching and when you smile at them or say; “thank you”, you are sending those ‘happy vibes’ out to the universe and you are making an impact – even if it is in small increments. Even doing the physical act of smiling stimulates the ‘happy’ areas of your brain and will actually release some of those much needed ‘happy’ chemicals in your brain! Try it!

Regularly experience fun, joy, peace and laughter in life.

- Do something fun. Regularly! Go bowling, play mini-golf, play an instrument, read a book, etc. Schedule it and make it a priority. (Keep it legal and moral of course!)
- To the best of your ability, surround yourself with people you can relax or laugh with. Life is too short to be in defensive mode around the people you spend your time with.
- Be willing to loosen up and have a good laugh with others. You’re not as important as you think you are.
- Schedule a “quiet time” every morning to sit and pray, meditate on nature, or just sit quietly on your back porch and think about what you are grateful for before the world wakes up and distracts you with its noise.
- Listen to your kids (especially while they’re young!) because they say the funniest things! Take video of them and write down the funny things they say.
- Play with your pet. Research has shown the stress reducing benefits of petting and playing with pets like lowering blood pressure.
- Watch funny movies & TV shows and make a regular thing of it with your spouse or kids.
- Memorize and share a couple good jokes or funny stories.
- Put a funny image on your phone’s home screen or your computer’s desktop.
- Search YouTube for good comedians and subscribe to their “channel”.

Love & serve people. Make time to maintain healthy relationships with friends and loved ones.

- Know what it means to truly love, by giving away some of your, time, talents or treasure to serve someone else. True love is about sacrifice, not

necessarily about getting what YOU want. True love is about putting your needs, desires and even your rights down for another. ...not easy, but true.

- Serve people without expecting anything in return. Be willing to really give of yourself. Jesus, himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'
- Make time for what and who you believe is important. (Hint: family first!) Schedule special times and dates with your spouse and with your kids/grandkids doing what THEY want to do.
- If you have aging family members, visit them. I know you are busy too. **"Life is what happens while you are busy making other plans."** -John Lennon
- Take regular breaks from Social Media; days or weeks at a time. The degree to which you find that impossible is directly related to the level of your addiction to it and therefore your need for fasting from it! There is mounting evidence that points to social media fast becoming a common source for depression. We weren't designed to take in so much relational data in such quick and large doses, always having access to others' lives so we can compare their highs with lives in their totality; it's a no-win situation!

Find Identity, purpose, direction and meaning in your life. Are you a parent or a supportive role for someone? Do you make a positive impact on humanity in a large or small scale? Is your character developing and are you growing in maturity or responsibility? Your legacy matters, but life is bigger than just you, so don't sweat the small stuff.

- Write up an integrity or identity statement for yourself. Who are you, what do you believe and what do you stand for? Who or what are you willing to die for?
- What do you hope to become? When you die, what will people say about you at your funeral? Take some time, dream and write your life's story. What ripples do you want to make in the pond of humanity? Dream big, dream small, but DREAM. Where do you want to be next year at this time? How about in 3 years? 10 years? Retirement plans? Do you have a will? Do you have a financial plan? Be you fully.
- Take somebody who you trust and respect out for a coffee and let them critique you. Ask them what they think of your character, how much they trust you and ask for any suggestions that would make you a better person. The rules are that you will not defend yourself, explain yourself or get mad. They have to know that it is safe to be honest.
- If you are a parent, take a child out for a treat and ask them what kind of parent you have been and if they ever felt wronged by you. (Same kind of thing as above.) If they communicate any sort of hurt or resentment from

you, be ready to own it and apologize for everything, no deflections or blame shifting!

- If you don't currently contribute to humanity in any way, find something. Maybe volunteer time at your church, a local homeless shelter, a food pantry or maybe an elderly neighbor or family member needs help. Find a church or other worthy cause to support financially.

Become aware of your strengths and weaknesses and be willing to accept criticism from others.

- Take a few personality or strengths finding assessments online. The online tests are either free or really cheap and they can help you dissect your temperament so you can stop working against the grain and work with your 'flow'.
- Read books that help you understand who you are and who your spouse is (or future spouse should be) so you have a better chance of success and peace in the home. I recommend; "The 5 Love languages" by Gary Chapman, "Love & Respect: The Love She Most Desires; The Respect He Desperately Needs" by Emerson Eggerichs and "Why You Act The Way You Do" by Tim LaHaye.

Have faith in God. This really should be the FIRST thing, but many can't (or won't) confront this reality. 'Something' can never come from 'nothing', unless there was a super-natural intelligence and/or force applied.

Consider for a moment, that no matter where you fall in the 'faith in God' arena, that having faith in God is medically, socially and psychologically beneficial and therefore crucial if you want a thriving life!

Below are some bullet points from an article published in the Daily Mail.com written by a sceptic, Tom Knox. So, if you don't believe in God, then consider this section as the 'science' of faith:

- In 2006, the American Society of Hypertension established that churchgoers **have lower blood pressure** than the non-faithful.
- In 2004, scholars at the University of California, Los Angeles, suggested that college students involved in religious activities are more likely to have **better mental and emotional health** than those who do not.
- In 2006, population researchers at the University of Texas discovered that the more often you go to church, **the longer you live**.
- In 1990, the American Journal of Psychiatry discovered believers with broken hips were **less depressed**, had **shorter hospital stays** and could

- even **walk further** when they were discharged compared to their similarly broken-hipped and hospitalized, but comparatively heathen peers.
- Scientists have revealed that believers **recover from breast cancer quicker** than non-believers; have **better outcomes** from coronary disease and rheumatoid arthritis; and are less likely to have children with meningitis.
 - A 1999 study found that going to a religious service or saying a few prayers actively **strengthened your immune system!**
 - In 1998, the American Journal of Public Health found that depressed patients with a strong ‘intrinsic faith’ (a deep personal belief, not just a social inclination to go to a place of worship) **recovered 70% faster** than those who did not have strong faith.
 - In 2008, Professor Andrew Clark of the Paris School of Economics and Doctor Orsolya Lelkes of the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research found that religious believers, compared to non-believers, record **less stress**, are **better able to cope with losing jobs and divorce**, are **less prone to suicide**, report **higher levels of self-esteem**, enjoy greater ‘life purpose’ and report **being more happy overall**.
 - One of the latest surveys to suggest that religious people **are happier** than the non-religious was conducted by Professors Chaeyoon Lim and Robert Putnam, from Harvard, and published last year.

Other surveys have found that intrinsic faith is also important.

- For instance, a study of nearly 4,000 older adults for the U.S. Journal of Gerontology revealed that atheists had a notably increased chance of dying over a six-year period than the faithful.
- Crucially, **religious people lived longer** than atheists even if they didn’t go regularly to a place of worship. This study clearly suggests there is a benefit **in pure faith alone** — perhaps this religiousness works by affording a greater sense of inner purpose and solace in grief.

Whether you are a ‘praying’ person or not, pray to God like you are just having a conversation with him and ask him to show up in your life. Life isn’t necessarily about which religious club you belong to, it is really about what kind of relationship with God you do have.

2. INTEGRITY: Dream & Do

Your Personal Stewardship

Firstly, perfection is for God and improvement is for mankind, so don’t get stuck on reaching perfection; aka. “analysis paralysis”! Life is motion, so decide and do.

Secondly, do what you say you're going to do and do things rightly as far as it depends on you. How many of us make tearful declarations of changing our diet or telling people we're going to do something big or crazy, but we just can't get out of our rut?

We are given limited amounts of time, talents and treasures, so steward them wisely (Matthew 25:14-30) by taking care of yourself and your sphere of influence. It is impossible to thrive if you are 'stuck', always in a reactive mode or always in a panic that is most likely due to circumstances that resulted from a lack of proper stewardship.

Too often I meet a person for the first time as a new patient in our wellness center when their health (or life) is falling apart (and has been for years), but 'now' is when they finally decided to do something about it and they want immediate results. My advice to you is; don't wait for a diagnosis or bankruptcy court to START correcting your beliefs and behaviors!

Today is all we have, because *"...tomorrow never knows"* -John Lennon.

Make goals and review them.

- Know what you want to accomplish, write down these goals (with target dates) and review them regularly.
- Make smaller, more easily attainable "micro-goals" (with shorter target dates) and write out HOW you plan to get there. Review these regularly. How do you eat an elephant? ...one bite at a time!
- Make and keep logs to track the status for your micro goals. For instance:
 - If fitness is a goal, keep track of your workouts on a sheet of paper or notebook, so you can see the progress overtime your workout. This will boost your confidence, build up your resolve to keep going and prove your success.
 - If clean eating is a goal, keep track of what you are eating and note the good stuff as well as the bad stuff. Nothing like seeing that junk food on your food log to give you an honest and immediate assessment as to your success! This will also be powerful in motivating you to make the changes you are striving for!
 - If you always find more month at the end of the money, then track your spending for cryin' out loud! Same thing applies here; you get to see where your money is going, and this will empower you to make some smart (and probably difficult) decisions that may radically change the direction of your life.

Keep your home, your car and your workspaces clean and organized. The areas that you live, work and function in are not only a reflection of who you are, but

also a major influencer of where you're going. A messy home or work environment creates additional stress to an already (usually) overwhelmingly stressful existence. Research has shown that the brain is much more 'active' (processing at a high level) when there are things out of place within your field of vision. This translates to a source of mental distraction that impedes your production.

In fact, you are less likely to be able to concentrate on your work when there are other things that your brain must focus on, evaluate and consider. This translates to more work time, more stress and less production. Chaos produces stress, while order allows production.

- Read this article! [Why Mess Causes Stress: 8 Reasons, 8 Remedies](#) By Sherrie Bourg Carter from PsychologyToday.com
- Schedule a time or weekend where you clean your car inside and out once a month.
- Every month clean your main work space – your paycheck may reward you!
- Schedule and do a 'spring cleaning' in your home every change of seasons.
- Schedule specific activities; Vacuum, dust, and wipe areas clean weekly. Do smaller tasks like doing dishes and putting clothes away daily, etc. (If possible, enlist the ones around you)

Live within your means and budget your spending monthly. Telling your money where to go on a regular basis is much nicer than not knowing if you'll make it to the end of the month, every month! One of the top causes of both depression and divorce is financial stress.

- This can be difficult, but cause yourself to do it. You'll need to know how much you make and how much you spend so you can make a budget for yourself.
 - Start by just recording every dollar you spend.
 - Then highlight and categorize the things that are "needs" and necessary to live on (mortgage, groceries, etc.).
 - Now, separate out the things that are "wants" or impulse buys (you know like that fur-lined sink and your gold-plated rocket car).
 - The NEEDS become your next month's budget and from there you can create a spending plan that you tweak every month.
- If you're in major debt and or have serious financial trouble, then I strongly suggest getting a professional involved or at least going to [Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace Online University](#) – Fantastic teaching and practical instruction there!

- Brush and floss your teeth very regularly.** Not only are these behaviors great for dental health, but also for your whole health! Consider for a moment that your mouth is only one end of a long fleshy and muscular tube called the digestive system. When one area of the tube is unhealthy, the mucosa (lining) of the entire digestive system can be reactive which creates dysfunction and symptoms down the line. What I am saying is, that poor dental hygiene literally creates dysfunction and even disease in your digestive tract over time.
 - Floss and brush your teeth every night just before you go to bed = Essential!
 - Brush every morning = Essential!
 - Floss your teeth after any meal where food gets stuck = Ideal
 - Also brush after every meal if you can arrange it = Ideal

- Avoid harmful habits such as tobacco, alcohol and fast foods.** Not much needs to be said here, this is an obvious thing - *but, a reminder wouldn't hurt!*

The multitudes of toxic chemicals in these items when ingested not only cause inflammation on the mucosal surfaces of the digestive system when they make contact, they also create something called “Free Radicals”. These free radicals bounce around inside your body and basically create cellular damage to everything they touch until they get neutralized by “anti-oxidants”.

Anti-oxidants come naturally from vegetables and fruits as well as from high-quality supplements. Control the poisons going into your body that you at least know about, because there is so much more out there that we cannot control so easily!

- For tobacco addictions, whittle down your usage to half of what you are used to, then schedule a 1-day fast to get a small victory. Follow that with scheduling a 3-day, then a 7-day fast. If you can do 7 days, you can do much more! Prepare for temptations by recruiting people around you to help you through it, stay away from alcohol and keep a journal to record how you feel while focusing on your identity as a “non-smoker”. If you believe that you are a non-smoker, you CAN quit, *that's how I did it!*
- For true alcohol addictions, get professional help. For mere negative alcohol habits that you want to change, follow the same steps as tobacco; schedule short fasts, then longer fasts while keeping a journal and focusing on your identity as a “non-drinker”.
- For fast foods, you can begin right away by ordering the healthier items on the menu; salads instead of fries, water instead of soda, smaller burgers, less burgers, no buns, and NO Super Sizing! There are chemicals in those

foods that are designed to be addictive, this is not a joke! Also learn to prepare healthier snacks to go to with you when you leave the house, like; raw almonds, fruit, baby carrots, etc.

- Avoid relationships with negative or self-destructive people.** Not all relationships are going to be perfect all the time, but for the most part, a good relationship makes you feel secure, happy, loved, respected and free to be yourself. From spouses to children to friends, parents, siblings and significant others, healthy relationships build confidence, improve mental and emotional health and help you live a fuller life.
 - Firstly, if you are in a relationship that makes you feel fearful, humiliated or controlled, or are a victim of physical, emotional or sexual abuse, It's not ok! **Call 911 or contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 800-799-7233.**
 - Most relationships you can choose, but some such as in immediate family, you are thrust into. Give grace to the ones you love, be willing to forgive and keep your communication open. When you hold unforgiveness in your heart, you have become your own enemy.
 - Evaluate the health of your friendships. There is research that suggests that we attract others to us by a subconscious desire to fill a void in our own psyche, which may be why you often see that 'opposites attract'. A [2014 study published in the Journal of Consumer Research](#) found that friends often bond by providing one another with moral support to resist a particular temptation as well as to conspire together to enjoy indulgences. Do you support and encourage your friends? or are you a part of the problem? What would they say about you? If they are poison to you – time to move on.

3. FOOD: Feed & Flow

Your Hydration, Diet and Elimination

Our bodies are a collection of highly complex and interconnected 'flow-through' mechanisms designed to work together symbiotically for its collective survival. Stuff comes into the system and stuff goes out. Things like oxygen, proteins, water, thoughts, energies, etc.

Many times, your brain function, blood pressure, heart rate and digestion are less than optimal simply because you may be dehydrated, toxic or your diet is full of harmful, processed and nutrient deficient foods.

Your body needs regular nurturing. Simple things like deep breathing, eating raw foods and drinking clean water provide nurturing essentials that feed individual cells so they can perform their functions and produce the next generation of cells.

FEED: Water, Nutrients & Oxygen

The foods (and non-foods) you daily ingest get broken down into small molecules and are placed into your cells for the sole purpose of functioning and rebuilding that cell. Hmm, so your mom WAS right when she said; “You are what you eat”!

Also, think of the foods (and non-foods) you eat as the actual ‘replacement parts’ you are providing for your cells to use when cells get rebuilt or replaced.

In other words, would you rather eat genuine replacement parts or knock-offs and look-alikes? So the ideal is that you daily eat raw and cooked vegetables with the least amount of human and chemical contact as possible.

FLOW: Digestion, Lymphatics & Elimination

Hair, skin and nails are a great window to your diet and digestion, so if you are eating and digesting well, it will show in your hair, skin and nails. Your bowel formations and movements are also a good way to “read” your insides. In other words, well-formed and easy passing stool tells us that you are most likely eating and assimilating nutrients well.

If on the other hand, you are having constipation, diarrhea, bloating, heartburn or indigestion, then you may have enzyme deficiencies, possibly food reactions or even inflammation in the gut.

More significantly, if you are experiencing anything listed above as well as any recurring joint pains, brain fog, sinus symptoms, fatigue and skin conditions, it may be due to a condition known as “Leaky Gut”, a lymphatic system back up or both!

“Leaky Gut”, otherwise known as; Intestinal Permeability, is where your immune system reacts to various food proteins that have made their way into your blood stream by slipping through the delicate lining of your intestines. This can develop into an autoimmune or chronic inflammatory condition over time that people often mistakenly blame on aging.

Your lymphatic system is a vital part of our immune, detoxification and elimination functions. When it becomes clogged or sluggish from dehydration, our junk food diets,

medications and other toxins, we don't move the fluids that carry that bad stuff out of our bodies and it backs up into tissues. If we are "backing up" not only do we begin to experience the symptoms listed above but may also develop infection or disease if not corrected.

- Drink 6 to 8 glasses of water daily!** Water is probably the most underestimated essential nutrient our bodies need to function optimally. It should be noted that the human body can survive for up to 5 weeks without protein, carbohydrates, and/or fats, and only 5 to 10 days without water! Water performs many important biological functions in the human body: It provides turgor and form to the body, it provides the fluid environment required for normal cell metabolism, it helps regulate the temperature of the body, It flushes toxins from our systems, helps lubricate the bowels for good movement and so much more! **Water is critical to every function of the body!**
 - In the morning it is actually beneficial to mix in a ¼ teaspoon of Himalayan salt with your first glass and only use charcoal filtered (or better) water all day.
 - Ideally avoid all those soft plastic bottles due to the toxicity of the plastic and use a stainless-steel container. (BPA free containers aren't the best either, but better than soft plastic)
 - Ideally, you should have 2 bowel movements every day with little need to wipe at all. (A lot of bowel trouble stems from the person being dehydrated.)
 - We suggest that if you are having trouble with your bowels, to see a Functional Medicine professional to figure out why that is happening so that it doesn't continue and cause degenerative changes to your gut. Call us at 847-426-2121 to learn more or to schedule your personal and thorough functional health assessment!

- Get your Lymph Flowing!** Unlike your circulatory system, in which the heart pumps the blood around your body, the lymphatic system relies on body movement as its "pump".
 - **Exercise.** Gentle to moderate activity is all you need for this effect, such as walking, brisk walking, and any "cardio" type of exercise. (More about exercise in the section; "EXERCISE: Move & Rest")
 - **Stay hydrated.** (See "Drink 6 to 8 glasses of water daily!" above) Also caffeine and alcohol are compounds that when consumed regularly can congest the liver and eventually cause damage to the liver and affect its ability detoxify and perform its many metabolic functions.

- **Slow & Deep Breathing.** Most people in modern society breathe with the upper part of the chest all day, taking shallow breaths and sometimes even hold their breath without realizing it. This is a normal stress response when in a crisis (majority of our day) but tends to starve us of oxygen and it slows down lymphatic flow.
 - To wake up your brain, and increase your lymph & oxygen, take a deep breath in while seated, hold for a few seconds, take a second one in on top of the last one, and then another on top of it. After holding this triple breath for 10 seconds, blow it ALL out completely, then repeat a few times.
 - To relax your brain and re-establish a lymphatic rhythm, lie down or sit very comfortably, breathe slowly into your belly (take 4 seconds), hold your breath for 4 seconds, release your breath (take 4 seconds), then hold your breath OUT for 4 seconds. Repeat this a few times. It may seem impossible at first, so start with 2 or 3 second intervals. Performing slow and relaxed 'belly breathing' is a simple way to activate the lymphatics and promote recovery from stress or injury.
 - **Dry Brushing.** This is an age-old process of literally brushing skin to stimulate the lymphatic flow from the skin (Lymph vessels are in the skin), improve circulation and actually help (to a degree) with cellulite. Use a soft natural bristle brush on dry skin, starting at the bottom of your feet, move in long, sweeping motion toward your heart. (Stroking away from your heart can put stress on your vessels possibly causing damage to them).
 - **Proper clothing fit.** Tight fitting clothes like bras and tight underwear, will restrict lymphatic movement which will inhibit detoxification and increase the potential for disease in those restricted areas.
 - **Eat whole foods.** Dark leafy green veggies, low sugar fruits and nuts like walnuts & almonds help promote lymph flow. Processed and packaged foods, on the other hand, deliver a multitude of chemicals into the body which clog up the lymphatics, so avoid those.
- Feed your body real food-based nutrition!** We are supposed to eat for the purpose of feeding our cells. Proteins and fats are primarily what our body is made of and it needs the vitamins, minerals and even carbohydrates from our food to remain functional and healthy. The concept is simple but living this out

can be confusing with all of the seemingly contradicting info presented to us every day. Below are several mini-plans to begin doing:

- Aim to get plenty of raw veggies or 1 to 2 salads daily. However, if you get most of your sustenance through a drive-through window, then at least order from the fast food salad menu for starters. Then over time, begin to ween yourself off of using commercial dressings that are typically made up of GMO soy oil anyway.
- Plan to snack on raw veggies, by packing some baby carrots, cut up broccoli, or celery with some hummus or natural peanut butter as a snack bag for the day.
- Alkalize your body through diet! There is research that shows how cancer cells require an acid environment to flourish, while healthy cells require an alkaline environment to flourish. We offer a take-home pH test kit for about \$10 to find out where you rank.
- Plan to snack on raw nuts, like almonds, pecans and walnuts for healthy fats and carbs.
- Learn to eat and enjoy avocados, coconut oil, organic butter and other high-density nutritional fats and foods. (Never eat foods that are labeled as “Low Fat”; they are typically loaded with sweeteners or chemicals to provide taste)
- High-quality protein shakes, powdered greens and whole food nutritional supplements are great short cuts to getting solid nutrients into your body. It is almost impossible to eat well enough in today’s modern world to get all the nutrients we should get into our bodies, so QUALITY supplements are a must!
- **Eat right for your metabolic, oxidative or genetic type!**
 - There are blood tests that can tell you which foods you may be reactive too, both in allergy (immediate response) and delayed food sensitivities (3 days to 3weeks AFTER ingesting that food).
 - Get DNA testing to find out what your body does best with and what to avoid.
 - Call **847-426-2121** and ask us about our one-on-one nutritional coaching to learn more about what is specifically best for you!

Go Dairy-Free, at least for a couple weeks and see how you feel. If you experience eczema, dandruff, bumpy or dry skin, allergies, sinus problems or

rashes you may be having a reaction to milk and dairy products or at the very least, have an enzyme deficiency. If you completely go off all dairy for at least 2 weeks and you feel even a little better, then you may want to look into that more.

- Eggs are not really “dairy”, but can have the same allergy type reactions, so for this trial, include eggs as well.
- Low dairy foods would include; fresh mozzarella and Swiss cheese.
- **Consider consulting with a holistic or functional medicine practitioners if having difficulty to help you determine the real cause.*

- Go Gluten-Free or Grain-Free.** Grains like; corn and wheat tend to generate inflammation in your body. This inflammation is usually systemic and causes digestive disorders, joint pain, brain fog, fatigue, allergies among other things. ...and if that weren't bad enough, sometimes people are having a toxic reaction to the pesticides and herbicides in the food itself from it's farming.

Sometimes, it is the specific food proteins or the insufficient enzymes that creates those symptoms. Corn or wheat is used in most processed foods, which makes it difficult to cut out completely, but if you pull it out of your diet for 2 weeks and you feel even a little better, then you may want to look into that more.

- Replace carbs with “Pseudo Grains” or more complex carbs such as sweet potatoes, quinoa, wild rice
- **Consider consulting with a holistic or functional medicine practitioners if having difficulty to help you determine the real cause.*

- Maintaining Blood Sugar!** Your blood sugar must be stable in order for your body to be able to heal fully to utilize stored fat for fuel and to give you energy all day. A baby's eating habits are a fantastic example of how to stabilize blood sugar by having little meals throughout the day. Some promote this idea by eating every 3 to 4 hours, and some promote a concept called; “Intermittent Fasting”. There are different set of reasons and benefits for doing either one. Consult your physician as to which why is better for you, every one is unique.

- **“Carbs” vs. Sugars.** Carbohydrates (“Carbs”) are a classification of micronutrient that comes in simple and complex forms. Sugar is a simple form and starches are complex forms.
 - **Simple Carb Foods:** Raise blood sugar very fast and stimulate Insulin and fat production. They include; white sugar, white

rice, sweets, soda, fruit juice, many breads, pastas and pastries.

- **Complex Carb Foods:** Take longer to metabolize, and are found in things like; brown rice, oats, sprouted grains, beans and lentils.
- **Insulin:** When there is too much sugar in your blood, insulin is secreted by your pancreas and stores it as fuel reserves into your liver, muscle and your “Non-Essential” Fat areas (love handles). Too many ups and downs of blood sugar will distort how your body responds to it and will cause excess fat accumulation, insulin resistance or diabetes.
- **Avoid Hidden Sugar Foods!** They hide in things like; cereals, breads, pancakes, snacks, granola bars, “Low Fat” processed foods, yogurts, sauces, dressings, condiments, “fruit” snacks and Restaurant meals!
- **They can be labeled as:** High Fructose Corn Syrup, brown sugar, cane crystals, cane sugar, corn sweetener, corn syrup, corn syrup solids, crystal dextrose, evaporated cane juice, fructose sweetener, fruit juice concentrate, honey, liquid fructose, malt syrup, maple syrup, molasses, pancake syrup, raw sugar, sugar, syrup and white sugar.
- **Read; “Lick The Sugar Habit”, by Nancy Appleton, PhD.**
Learn about the dangers and toxicity of sugar consumption.
- **Eat like a diabetic; Low Carb!** Intentionally balance your blood sugar levels much like a diabetic person has to do. Start by adding healthy fats and removing simple sugars to your diet. This only seems hard because we have become so accustomed to the high amounts of sugar in the Standard American Diet (SAD), when in reality the recommendations for the diabetic is something we should all just follow as being closer to NORMAL.
- **If you are a child, teen or healing, eat like a baby!** Babies eat when they feel hungry (every few hours), and stop when satisfied. This is how we are meant to feed when our body is in a growing and or healing mode. This is also really good for those who have really stressed or exhausted adrenal glands.
- **If your everyone else, eat like a “caveman”; eat, then fast, then eat.** There is a lot of great information on this concept (too much to list here), but it is worth trying to see if it is right for you. Essentially you

would pick a portion of the day to “fast” (typically the first half of the day), then eat for the next 6 to 8 hours (usually from 11am to 7 pm).

- [Intermittent Fasting benefits:](#)
 - **Lowers Insulin levels & helps insulin resistance**
 - Increases Human Growth Hormone
 - Supports cellular repair
 - Helps burn belly fat!
 - Reduces inflammation & oxidative stress
 - Helps cardiovascular health
 - Helps brain health
 - You can read what [Dr. Mercola](#) and [Dr. Axe](#) have to say about this subject by clicking on their names

Track and regulate your bowel movements. You should have about 2 to 3 well-formed and easily passed bowel movements every day. (Generally speaking, for every meal going in, there should be a meal going out). You may not have a lot of control over your bowels, ...or so you think. By following some of the steps above you may already see BM improvements because most of our bowel symptoms come from bad diets and dehydration. They also originate from dysfunctional digestion ‘higher up the tube’ that also come from bad diets over time. However;

- If you have blood or mucus in your stool, see a professional. You may be developing ulcerative colitis.
- If your symptoms are not as violent as that, then you may be able to correct them yourself. Start with following the water steps above, adding 3 to 4 apples everyday (not at the same time) and record your results. You can add things like; more high-fiber plant foods, L-Glutamine, probiotics and psyllium husk supplements to help further. You could also eat additional lettuce, broccoli or celery. If things get worse, see a professional.
- Our office has a bowel transit time test, various blood tests and even DNA tests to rule out a sluggish bowel, food reactions and other causes, like genetic predisposition to Gluten Sensitivity.

4. EXERCISE: Move & Rest

Your Youth, Energy & Repair

Life is motion and when you spend most of your time not moving, the soft tissues of your skeletal system shorten, tighten up and lose their elasticity. This is one reason why older people get so stiff as they age.

Body movement in general helps improve circulation and lymphatic flow, which helps get nutrients to your body parts and helps eliminate waste products and toxins from your tissues for optimal health and longevity.

Exercise done right for your body type and fitness level accelerates weight loss, improves mood, boosts your energy promotes high quality sleep and improves sexual function. Exercise is absolutely crucial for thriving health but needs to be balanced out with adequate rest and recovery; sleep!

Stay active and flexible (Don't sit all day).

- Make new daily habits that will add up to a lifestyle of continual motion; pick a further parking space, walk the dog, walk by yourself or take the stairs, make up reasons to get up from your desk and take plenty of “micro-breaks” (Every 15 minutes or so).
- Record your steps by getting a “Fitbit” to wear so you can count your steps and track your progress.
- Take walks that last at least 20 minutes, 3 to 4 times a week.
- Engage in some other standard Cardio activity like; stair climbing, rollerblading, bike riding. *(FYI-Cardio may burn calories, but not fat.)*
- Have an organized stretching plan. Muscles will shorten and weaken when they are not used. Stretching keeps the circulatory system active, helps remove toxins from tissue and keeps your body overall youthful and able to do life!
- Sitting is the enemy of your core! You are only as strong as your weakest link and that link is the “core” for most in modern society. Strengthen your core with any of these activities 2 to 3 times a week; Pilates, yoga, Swiss ball and squats. If you use the correct core strengthening strategy, your core will work for you; protect your spine, prevent injuries and enhance your posture. Building your core isn't just doing sit-ups, rather it is mainly pelvic position and hip flexor tonality. These things are highly influenced by your posture, foot flatness and daily activity level.
- SEE A CHIROPRACTOR! Yes that is biased because I, the author, am a Chiropractor, but I stand by it. Regular Chiropractic adjustments are key to keeping our aging spines and bodies from becoming weak and unstable. Its

this instability that causes our back muscles to spasm and to lock up little by little, increasingly restricting our spinal ranges of motion, causing 'old-person syndrome'. I suggest keeping up with regular chiropractic visits at least 1 to 2 times every month.

- **Have an Exercise Plan!** Different types of exercise yield different types of results. Make sure you have a goal and a plan, then follow through! Don't try to do it 'all' or break world records, rather be realistic and track your own results.
 - **Flexibility & Balance:** Unless you are in an organized sport, this is the most over looked area of exercise to perform.
 - **Stretching** helps elongate and condition muscle so that it can continue to grow, function optimally and help move waste products out of that tissue. Good flexibility keeps you feeling young, but when you are stiff from inactivity, inflammation or whatever, you feel "old". Good stretching is a slow and deliberate motion (NO BOUNCING). Hamstrings, Neck & back (all ranges) and shoulders are key areas to work on for sustaining youth and flexibility. Yoga is a great physical practice to get into for this, but make sure you are working at a level suited for you.
 - **Balance**, similar to stretching, is also beneficial in keeping your youth and is often over looked. Ask an older person how valuable their ability to balance while walking or standing is to them. Fortunately balance usually improves along with doing other weight-bearing exercises, so you don't have to put a lot of additional energy into this. However, if you do have trouble in this area, doing "cross-crawl" type movements are great for this, like; the "Morter March", Yoga poses, and anything that uses an inflatable yoga ball or balance board.
 - **Core Strength & Posture:** Both of these are, yet again, important for feeling young, having energy and over looked when it comes to personal maintenance. A strong core not only helps prevent injuries while doing activities, but also props up your posture, keeping your back strong. A good posture supports your core and also prevents injuries from aberrant body movements.
 - **"Core" is NOT "abs"**. The core strength of the body comes from the junction of the lower lumbar spine (low back) and the sacrum (pelvis). A weakened core results from when your bottom lumbar bones (L4 or L5) are not positioned well in conjunction with pelvic positioning or movement, causing your entire skeletal frame to be in a relative weak and compromised state. You strengthen your

core by stretching your hip flexor muscles, strengthening your buttock muscles and having your chiropractor make sure L4 & L5 are where they need to be. Secondly, making sure you have decent arches in your feet and your head stays over your shoulders. No amount of sit ups will fix these things!

- **Posture = secret to key to fitness, success & long life!** When you slump or have less than ideal posture, you change the ideal mechanics of the entire body (raising probability of injury or joint inflammation), you lower your efficiency (more stress and fatigue) and you lower your attractiveness (unfortunately, people treat you according to how you present yourself), losing social respect, looking heavier than you really are and maybe getting passed over for promotions or opportunities by a boss or by your peers.
- **Cardiovascular:** This is exercise intended to strengthen the cardiovascular system (heart, lungs and blood vessels). These exercises include; walking, biking, jogging, swimming, etc. and should be done at your level of conditioning (Don't be a hero). The truth is that if you do this type of exercise for too long of an interval, it releases excess cortisol (stress hormone) and can actually cause damage to the very system you are trying to protect! Many people will do "Cardio" workouts to burn calories and get healthy when ironically may be doing more harm than good.
- **Interval Training:** This is any "cardio" that incorporates high intensity bursts of speed to accelerate a higher heart rate like, sprinting, hill climbing, jogging and roller blading. Same rules as the Cardio above, so you want to keep the bursts short and give yourself some recovery time.
- **High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT):** This type of exercise is similar to interval training, in that you are expelling short bursts of intense activity, but in a more controlled regimen. HIIT not only great for building muscle and raising your metabolism, but it is also great for re-calibrating your daily energy cycle and boosting our main youth hormone, called "Growth Hormone" (GH).
 - Exercises like; pushups, pull ups, jump squats, burpees, and variations of these comprise HIIT-type exercises. Google "High Intensity Interval Training" and find some specific exercises you would like to do yourself.
 - HIIT incorporates high-intensity short bursts of activity to quickly raise your high heart rate then alternates that with periods of rest to allow the heart rate and any stress hormones to return to normal levels. The general rule is that the rest phase should be about twice

as long and the burst phase. The secret is in the rest phase for stress recovery and it is this up and down physiology that boosts GH.

- GH helps us build muscle, makes our brain healthier, gives us energy and helps us keep our youth. HIIT is time-efficient, burns fat, is great for your cardiovascular system, needs little to no equipment, you lose fat weight because your metabolism will respond to the burst/rest component of this. (Remember; Muscle weighs 3 to 4 times more than same volume of fat, so body composition is more important than the bathroom scale.)
- HIIT should be limited to 20 minute sets and be done about 3 times every week.
- **General Strength:** Resistance training (weight lifting) promotes Growth Hormone, muscle growth and improves bone strength. This translates into more fat burning and available energy. Ideally you use free weights because machines may not have the mechanical arcs and movement patterns that are best suited for your body.
- **Rest & Recover.** All exercise is best when you rest 1 to 2 days for recovery of that muscle group or body region.
- **Keep Track.** Always keep a log of your exercise activity; date, reps, sets, etc. This will help you keep yourself accountable for doing it and prove your improvement which encourages you to continue.
- **Keep your body guessing.** It responds well to doing “cycles” of exercise plans. In other words, commit to an exercise plan for 4 to 6 weeks, then change it up for another period and focus on another area or goal.

Don't consume caffeine beyond lunch time. Caffeine is a drug that stimulates the central nervous system and elevates mood, raises blood pressure and releases stress response hormones. Some people are affected by caffeine, the stimulant in coffee and “energy” drinks, more than others. Experts have been able to measure blood levels of caffeine and found that it has a 6 hour half-life, which means that you still have half of the original amount of caffeine in your system 6 hours after your coffee or Red Bull!

Science has also found that caffeine interrupts the normal flow of the hormone Melatonin (the chemical that is secreted by the pineal gland deep in the brain and puts us to sleep.), which will lower your quality of sleep and significantly disrupt the sleep in some who are more sensitive.

- Cut down on your power drinks in the [afternoon \(3pm\)](#). Red Bulls, Monsters, Starbucks, etc. are not only addictive due mainly to the caffeine and sugar, but they are expensive both financially and to your health.

These levels of caffeine have been shown to [directly disrupt your quality of sleep](#).

- You could switch to decaf if you really need that coffee taste, but from one coffee fan to another, it just isn't the same! (Besides, harmful chemicals like; bromine and chlorine are used to decaffeinate the coffee.)
- Perhaps have your first coffee later in the morning or water it down so you are getting less caffeine.
- Begin recording your daily usage in a calendar, then make a plan to taper your intake. Getting off of caffeine cold-turkey is not the best plan because your brain chemistry may not tolerate the change and reward your behavior with a nice headache, so a slower reduction is always a better plan.

- Design a sleep plan and retrain your body's clock.** When you were a kid, you had (or at least you should have had) an official "bed time". It was good for you then and it is good for you now! Quality sleep comes from having (among other things) regular sleep and wake times. You may be asleep, but is it high quality? Quality sleep is necessary for not only physical body repair, but also for cellular cleansing and psychic regeneration (brain recovery from stress).

Sleep is nurturing to the brain. Not getting good sleep impacts your hunger and fullness hormones, namely **Ghrelin** and **Leptin**.

- Ghrelin signals your brain that its time to eat (appetite).
- Leptin signals the brain to stop eating.
- When you are sleep deprived, you make more ghrelin and leptin causing a bigger appetite, less self-control and a bigger waistline!

Sleep is part of a 24-hour daily cycle that is regulated by your pituitary gland. It is primarily initiated by light exposure early in the day and is also helped by exercise and other morning stimuli. Below are some steps to take for re-setting your sleep cycle:

- Wake up at the same time every day around 6 am or earlier, even if you have to set an alarm. It is more ideal if you don't need an alarm to wake up, but do what you need to. This will help train your brain to get going and demand sleep in the evening.
- It is also very helpful to expose yourself to bright light right when you wake up to stimulate your pituitary gland. This will also help train your brain to get going and demand sleep in the evening. Sunlight is best, or you can use sun lamps which are better than room light or just plain old lamp lights, which are most convenient.

- Exercise intensely in the morning – only. Evening exercise is too stimulating and may distort your daily body clock when done at other times of the day.
- Plan to go to bed around 9 to 10 pm most nights. (Have a “bed time”) Create a calming ritual that you repeat every night to train and signal your brain into falling asleep.
- Do not watch TV, computer or device screens or do anything stimulating just before bed time as this will crank up your brain activity and it will take that much longer to come down from that stimulus. Even if you are a self-titled “night owl” (I’ve used that excuse too!) you still CAN retrain your brain if you want to. Just remember that every minute BEFORE midnight is about equal 10 minutes of sleep AFTER midnight; quality-wise.
- Limit your starch and sugar intake all day, but more so at dinner and any time after dinner. Blood sugar level dips that happen in the middle of the night commonly wake people up around 2 or 3 in the morning.
- Avoid alcohol and caffeine (coffee, tea & chocolate) in the evenings as they are also known for disrupting your brain waves and sleep pattern.
- Lights out! The darkness cues your pituitary to release melatonin, a sleep hormone.

There you have it! A Wellness Guide to help you along on your own personal health journey. The above suggestions are of course not to replace any competent medical advice that you are or should be receiving and you should consult a physician before making any radical changes to your diet or starting any exercise program. There is at no point, any indication that you should change any prescriptive medications that you are currently on.

On the last page, you will find an abbreviated Wellness Checklist for you to consider:

Your Wellness L.I.F.E. Checklist:

1. L = LOVE: Give & Receive

- Get grateful!
- Regularly experience love, joy, peace and fulfillment in life.
- Love & serve people.
- Find Identity, purpose, direction and meaning in your life.
- Become aware of your strengths and weaknesses and be willing to accept criticism from others.
- Have faith in God.

1. I = INTEGRITY: Dream & Do

- Make goals and review them.
- Keep your home, your car and your workspaces clean and organized.
- Live within your means and budget your spending monthly.
- Brush and floss your teeth very regularly.
- Avoid harmful habits such as tobacco, alcohol and fast foods.
- Avoid relationships with negative or self-destructive people.

2. F = FOOD: Feed & Flow

- Drink 6 to 8 glasses of water daily!
- Get your Lymph Flowing!
- Feed your body real food-based nutrition!
- Go Dairy-Free.
- Go Gluten-Free or Grain-Free.
- Maintaining Blood Sugar!
- Track and regulate your bowel movements.

4. E = EXERCISE: Move & Rest

- Stay active and flexible (Don't sit all day).
- Have an Exercise Plan!
- Don't consume caffeine beyond lunch time.
- Design a sleep plan and retrain your body's clock.