

Relaxation and Exercise

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Guard well your spare moments. They are like uncut diamonds. Discard them and their value will never be known. Improve them and they will become the brightest gems in a useful life.
-Ralph Waldo Emerson

From the Garden

August in the garden is when we really get to rejoice in nature's bounty: tomatoes warm and sweet from the sun; nectarines and peaches so ripe the juice runs down your arm when you bite in. Store bought just can't compete.

Growing up, we always spent the last two weeks of August on my

Relaxation and Exercise

Summer is often a time for serious play, time off and deep relaxation. Many of us use the summertime to rebuild our reserves for the rest of the busy year. In our work-crazed society we can lose sight of the benefits of slowing down and taking time to rest. Now that summer is in full swing, it's time to enjoy the restorative powers of reconnecting to your body through movement and relaxation.

Summer is a unique time of year when we can do both our relaxation and our movement out in nature. Take a nap in a hammock and enjoy the smell of freshly cut grass. Go to the park and meditate or read under a favorite tree. One of the greatest places to rest in the summertime is by the water. There is something magical and restorative in water, and we naturally crave to be near it, by it or in it. Heading to the water, whether it is the beach, a lake, or a kiddie pool, can be relaxing and rejuvenating.

Just as much as the body loves to relax, the body loves to move. Even though our body is most healthy when it is getting appropriate physical activity, we often feel dread and boredom when we hear the word "exercise." Think for a moment of what type of movement you would consider fun, as opposed to torturous. Perhaps you loathe the idea of a gym, but miss taking dance classes. Maybe you secretly want to try yoga or rollerblading. You could play touch football with your kids, walk with a neighbor in the mornings or go for a swim. The summer offers so many choices - it's simply up to you to choose which style of movement excites you. Your heart will thank you, your soul will be gratified, your limbs will be more fluid and you'll sleep better at night.

Whether you are relaxing, exercising, or both, notice that being outside in nature has a profound way of quieting the mind and reconnecting us to ourselves. Often this relaxation and peace of mind are what our bodies crave the most. So while summer is with us, strap on your sandals and enjoy to the fullest the rich elements of sun, wind and water and the nourishment that they bring.

Food Focus: Water

Most of us are aware of the importance of drinking enough water. Getting our daily requirement of water helps our organs perform their functions, keeps our skin clear and hydrated, and allows physical action in our bodies to flow smoothly. Even with this knowledge, it can still be challenging to drink all the water our bodies deserve daily. In the summer, when we tend to play hard, sweat, and spend prolonged time in the sun, drinking plenty of water is critical. Those who are not drinking enough may experience poor digestion, sluggish thinking, skin breakouts, headaches, bad breath and general fatigue.

grandparents' farm in Chemung, NY. My grandfather was born there, but my grandmother was a city woman through and through. They retired to the farm, though, and in August her vegetable garden yielded at least 3 fresh vegetables each night. What they didn't grow, my Aunt Debba, a couple of towns away, had plenty of. We kids were sent to pick the corn only after the water went on the stove to cook it.

This time of year, I'm planning all the things to do with tomatoes (make coulis, sauce, paste and just freeze some), basil (pesto, pesto, pesto), string beans (blanch and freeze), beets (eat the greens, store the beets in a cool dry place), radishes (put on salads and in omelets), peppers (blanch and freeze), and all the herbs (harvest and hang to dry).

Of course, now that I'm growing things in Chicago, I'm competing with squirrels and raccoons for the best tomatoes.

If you've been to the farmer's market you've seen the first tomatoes too. And the squash, beans, peaches, blueberries, sour cherries, raspberries that are on offer. Let me know if you need

To start your day right, set a large glass of water by your bed each night and drink it when you wake up. When the first thing that flows through your body each morning is water, it pulls out toxins left over from the previous day and freshens your system for the day ahead. Keep a bottle of water accessible throughout the day, whether you are on the go or at a desk. Having one close by will remind you to take a sip when thirsty. The first sip will usually let you know how much more water you need. A sip or two may be enough, or you may need a big glass. If you drink most of your daily water before early evening, you most likely will not be thirsty before bed. This is good, because drinking before bed and then waking to use the bathroom disturbs your peaceful night's sleep.

What about quality? Some people like bottled water, while others prefer filtered water. The key is to like the taste of the water you are drinking, and the water should agree with your body. If the taste of plain water is unappealing, experiment to see how you can make it tasty and drinkable. Try adding a few mint leaves, a wedge of lemon, a sprig of parsley, slices of cucumber, a twist of lime or a squeeze of orange to make water more tempting, or to jazz up your routine. Also, drinking tea or juice and eating raw fruits and vegetables contribute to the hydration process. So, splash in the waves, swim in the sun, drink plenty of water and enjoy the summer fun!

Recipes of the Month:

Sun Tea

Prep time: 2 minutes

Cook time: 24 hours

Yield: 2 liters

Ingredients:

3-4 tea bags of your choice
water

Directions:

1. Fill an extra-large mason jar with water, add 3 or 4 of your favorite tea bags, and cover with lid.
2. Place in sun for one full day and let the shining rays pour in heat and energy, bringing out the wonderful tea flavors.
3. Sweeten if so desired with natural sweetener, serve room temperature or cold over ice.

Note: Garnish with mint leaves or lemon wedge.

Ginger Drink

Prep Time: 7 minutes

Cook Time: 24 hours

Yield: 6-8 servings

Ingredients:

1 pound fresh ginger root
2 quarts of water
juice of 2 limes
maple syrup or agave nectar to taste

some ideas on how to save them for the winter months.

Until next month, best wishes for healthy eating.

Natalie

Directions:

1. Thinly peel the fresh ginger, grate and mix with water in a large saucepan.
2. Bring to a boil and simmer for 4 minutes. Cover the pan, turn off the heat and leave for 24 hours.
3. Strain the liquid through a fine mesh sieve.
4. Add the lime juice and maple syrup or agave. Stir until dissolved. Serve chilled.

There are many ways to become a client:

- Individual coaching programs to help you meet weight loss or healthy living goals
- Employer programs to reduce absenteeism, increase productivity, and teach employees about things like healthy eating on the go and stress reduction
- Group cooking classes to learn how to put healthy meals on the table in fewer than 30 minutes - if you have a group of four to ten friends we can do a single or series of cooking lessons based on the skills of the group
- Eating for Peak Performance - Programs for athletes of all ages from middle school to adulthood to learn to fuel your body correctly
- Group coaching programs if an individual program is too much of an investment

[Contact me](#) to learn more about any of these services.

Let me know what you think

Thanks for reading this edition. Is there something you'd like to know more about? Anything you would rather never see again? I'd love to know. Please feel free to [email me](#) your suggestions.

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