

MINDFULNESS MONTH

MASTERING YOUR MORNING

7 Simple & Scientifically Proven Morning Habits to Transform your Life, Health & Happiness

MINDFULNESS MONTH IS ABOUT HOW YOUR HABITS AFFECT HOW YOU FEEL (MENTALLY AND EMOTIONALLY), AND HOW THAT AFFECTS YOUR PHYSICAL BODY.

Mindfulness month is about how your habits affect how you feel (mentally and emotionally), and how that affects your physical body.

One of the biggest secrets to your overall well-being is:

How you start your day massively affects how the rest of your day goes.

This does not mean you have to spend one hour on it, our intention is to show you that even 1-2 minutes each morning can make a difference.

Here are our Top 7 Simple (& scientifically proven) habits that can help you Master your Morning. Pick one that resonates with you and give it a go for 21 days, it might transform your morning and maybe even your life.

Are you ready...

1. LEMON WATER
2. MOVE YOUR BODY
3. MEDITATE
4. COLD EXPOSURE
5. JUST BREATHE
6. NOURISH YOUR BODY
7. PRACTICE GRATITUDE

That's it!

Now let's give you the HOW and the WHY behind it so that you can challenge yourself to begin one or more of these morning habits

LEMON WATER



How:

As soon as you rise, drink a glass of filtered water with the juice of a freshly squeezed lemon or lime to cleanse your body and stimulate digestion. Out of citrus? A big glass of filtered water is still a great way to hydrate your body and flush out toxins.

Why:

Adding lemon juice to your morning glass of water is such a simple and powerful way to improve your overall health and wellbeing. When you sleep, your body is busy removing waste and excreting excess acids, which is why our urine is usually more acidic first thing in the morning. Creating an alkaline state in your body by drinking lemon water early in the morning can boost your immune system function and prevent disease (7). It's also a powerful way to detox your body as it stimulates bile production, which is the substance responsible for removing waste products from the liver. Additionally, it gets your digestive system ready for the day by producing more stomach acid and promoting healthy bowel movements (8). Lemons contain compounds known as flavonoids, which have an array of health benefits. These flavonoids have antibacterial, antifungal, antidiabetic, anticancer, and antiviral activities (9).

MOVE YOUR BODY

How:

Take 10 minutes to move your body and get energy flowing through the body. We love to practice sun salutations in the morning, finishing with pigeon pose on each side. Choose your stretch or movement of choice to boost your energy, mood, and focus for the day. It also helps improve posture and alleviate aches and pains.

Why:

Movement has been found to improve cognition and mood, which may be due to the release of Brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF)(1). Yoga, in particular, has been found to reduce feelings of depression and anxiety (2). Those who practice yoga regularly have been found to enjoy additional benefits, including lower inflammation levels (3), improved heart health (4), and better quality sleep.



MEDITATION

How:

Once you've finished your movement, lay in savasana or take a crossed legged position and take a few moments for visualisation or meditation to calm your mind and create your ideal day.

Why:

This allows you to unlock a sense of stillness and peace, even in the busiest times. A study found that patients who just visualised their paralyzed limb moving increased blood flow to the paralysed limb enough to reduce the amount of tissue death in those areas (5). There is so much science emerging around the impact that visualisation can have on our health and happiness (6).

COLD EXPOSURE



How:

Turn the water to cold for the last 10 seconds of your shower for a hit of invigorating cold water. If you're not a morning shower kind of person, try splashing your face with cold water over the basin.

Why:

Cold water immersion supports the body's innate healing power by activating the immune, lymphatic, circulatory, and digestive systems (10). It is such a simple yet profound way to boost your health and vitality. Coldwater immersion has been found to activate your 'disease-fighting' white immune cells. It also upregulates your lymphatic system, a network of vessels that support the body to cleanse itself of waste, bacteria, and microbes. Cold water therapy causes these vessels to contract and pump the lymph fluid around the body, thereby removing accumulated waste (11). It also stimulates blood flow, forcing blood to vital organs and oxygenating your whole body. Lastly, it increases what is known as "brown fat," this is a metabolically active type of fat that uses energy rather than storing it! Unlike white fat, Brown fat has been linked to increased metabolism and a lowered risk of obesity (12).

BREATHWORK

How:

Take at least 1 minute to consciously breathe before you start your day. Counting your breath in for 4, then out for 4 is a great way to start. Later this month there will be more in depth breathing articles and resources.

Why:

This ancient practice is one of the simplest ways to reduce stress, increase alertness, and boost your immune system function. Practicing breathwork is an incredible way to quickly switch from being in the sympathetic branch of your nervous system, which is your fight or flight stress response, to being in the parasympathetic branch of your nervous system. When your body is in this mode, your heart rate slows, your digestive system functions beautifully, and you feel more relaxed.



NOURISH

How:

When you enter your kitchen, make a nourishing breakfast to set your cells up for success during the day. The key is to not overcomplicate it. Look to eat a combination of 3 components: high-quality fats, fibre, and protein.

Why:

Starting your morning with nourishing wholefoods sets you up for the rest of the day. Adding a form of quality protein, fat, and fibre to your meals will help you balance your blood sugar levels, avoid "energy slumps", and reduce sugar cravings throughout the day. Here are a few examples of food sources that contain these nutrients:

High-fibre food sources

- Eg. Vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, and whole grains.

Good fat sources

- Eg. Avocado, olives, nuts, seeds, coconut oil, olive oil, and butter.

Quality protein sources

- Eg. Eggs, hemp, chia seeds, tempeh, grass-fed animal protein, nuts, and clean whey or plant-based protein powders

The additional benefit to adding all three nutrient types to your meal is that you will feel satisfied after the meal and you will feel full for longer in between meals - win, win.

www.chirobalance.co.nz

Contact us: info@chirobalance.co.nz

04 233 8705



GRATITUDE



How:

Whether you're just taking a moment to think about one thing that you're grateful for or writing for 5 minutes in a journal, practicing gratitude first thing in the morning can have a profound impact on your day. Here are 5 of our favourite gratitude prompts, try one of these tomorrow morning...

1. What's something that you are grateful to have today that you didn't have a year ago?
2. What's something about your body or health that you're grateful for?
3. Open the door or window and look outside. What's something you're grateful for outside?
4. What's an accomplishment you've achieved that you are proud of?
5. Write about someone that you're grateful for in your life?

Why:

Gratitude is the emotion that relates to feeling and expressing thankfulness and appreciation. Research shows that expressing gratitude improves mental, physical, and relational well-being. By taking the time to be grateful for even the small things, you will begin to experience a positive attitude that actually creates a ripple effect into your physical life. Studies have found that those who habitually focus on and appreciate life's positive aspects through a gratitude practice experience greater levels of happiness and well-being. The benefits range from improved moods, stronger relationships, better health outcomes, and overall satisfaction (6).

CONCLUSION: THE SECRET TO SUCCESS

Now you have been reminded of these habits, how do you actually give yourself the best chance of getting the benefits?

The answer is to have a plan. Stick to your plan for as many mornings as possible for 21 days, and these new habits will start to become your routine. Keep it simple, keep it short, keep to a plan.

Tomorrow morning I will get up at _____

The morning habit I will use is _____

I will do my best to commit to this daily ritual for _____ days or weeks

And after this time period, you may decide to try a different habit, or you may choose to add another habit to your morning routine.

There is no right or wrong or failure, the key is to continuously learn and trial what works for your body and your life.

Watch out for more tools during Mindfulness month to help you be at your best.

References

- <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0022395614002933>
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19341989/>
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4525504/>
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15255625/>
- <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2173580815001637>
- <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0272735810000450>
- <https://www.hindawi.com/journals/jeph/2012/727630/>
- <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.3109/09637486.2011.627841>
- <http://interscience.org.uk/v3-i1/8%20ijahm.pdf>
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4049052/>