

Lift Your Spirits

Adversity is a fact of life and can't be controlled. But in the face of life's challenges, you can nurture yourself in different ways to find peace of mind and feelings of optimism and joy once again. Here are some suggestions.

- Learn how to rest well, says stress expert Eli Bay, who is president of The Relaxation Response Institute in Toronto. Take a structured program such as meditation or relaxation training, or try a guided meditation (on CD) or a restorative yoga class.
- Put your problem into context by asking yourself: 'How important is my issue in terms of the bigger picture?'
- Think about the positives in your life, and be grateful.
- Journal. Writing down thoughts and feelings about what you are going through helps to process events and release emotions.
- Seek inspiration (faith, a book, etc.)
- Volunteer and/or find a hobby.
- Enjoy the innocence and beauty of nature (birds, puppies, etc.)
- Confide in someone you trust.
- Take a vacation.
- Have a massage – relaxing your muscles can change your mental state, says Bay.

Visualization Exercise

Visualizing something calm can help you deal with difficult situations. Here is a simple visualization exercise to try from Eli Bay. Imagine a turbulent lake. Now imagine the wind dying down...and the water calming down too. See the calm, tranquil water as you repeat "I am calm, I am calm".

To find support groups in your area or for more information to help you deal with life's hardships, check out the Find Support directory or Be Brave section at morethanmedication.ca

Visualize for inner strength | What one doctor wants you to know about hope
Knowing what to say may mean saying nothing at all

How to Communicate with your Partner

Effective communication is the cornerstone of a happy relationship. But it's not always the first thing we do after a hard day at work! Here are a few ways that will help keep your conversations honest, open and rewarding.

- Pay close attention:** Once couples become comfortable with each other they tend to pay less attention to one another. Listen carefully, even when discussing a contentious issue, and be aware of how negative you might sound to your spouse.
- Fight fair:** We're all critical at times, but when people are criticized they can become defensive. The result? A counter-attack leading to an argument about who is more wrong, rather than each of you trying to understand the other's point of view.
- Get help:** Sometimes couples need outside counselling. Talking to someone else helps focus the issues, diffuse situations and can help you really talk and listen to each other.
- 20 questions:** Try this exercise with your partner. Over dinner, just the two of you, try asking each other 20 questions. Find out what kind of pet they'd choose. Ask what their favourite colour is and why? What is their favourite food and how do they like it cooked? Though you may think you know the answers, sometimes the responses will surprise you. And the simple act of talking about these things, helps make your relationship seem fresh.
- Bring back the romance:** Nothing helps start a happy conversation better than bringing romance into it. So say, "I love you". Or make a playlist of favourite songs, or show up with a surprise gift – it doesn't have to be expensive. It all helps you communicate without a lot of words.

How Well Do You Know Your Partner?

Answer each of these questions with a yes or a no. When you are done, count up the number of no's you have – then check our answer guide on the side.

- Do you remember your partner's birthday or anniversary?
- Do you tell your partner you love him/her frequently?
- Do you always make up before you go to bed after a quarrel?
- Do you know your partner's favourite song, movie or book?
- Do you know when your partner is depressed or stressed out from work?



For more information on effective relationships and personal skills development, check out the following articles in the Relate Better section of morethanmedication.ca

Full esteem ahead! | Kids and confidence: know your ABCs | Life made simple | Are you stuck in splitsville?

How much exercise do you really need?

It's not nearly as hard as you think! Staying happy, healthy and toned – even shedding a few pounds – doesn't always require sweating it out at a gym. Between 30 and 60 minutes of moderate activity most days of the week should do the trick. We'll show you the fun and easy things that you already do at home that are helpful – and healthy!

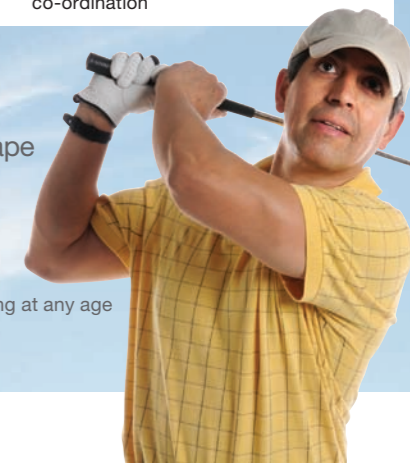
Activity Chart

Activity	Duration	Calories Burned*	Results
Golf (with a cart)	One hour	263	Overall fitness, co-ordination, keeping limber
Cleaning the car	One hour	218	Bending, stretching and strengthening muscle groups
Mowing the lawn	One hour	323	Cardiovascular exercise, leg and glute strengthening
Gardening	One hour	338	Increased muscle strength, tone and agility
Alpine skiing	One hour	600	Increased muscle strength, tone and agility
Slow walking	One hour	248	Overall fitness, lower blood pressure, cardiovascular exercise
Light housework	One hour	188	Improved cardiovascular system, increased muscle tone
Yoga	One hour	188	Reduced stress, lower blood pressure, keeping toned and limber
Dance	One hour	338	Improved cardio, blood pressure and co-ordination

*Based on a 165-pound adult

For more great information on how to stay in shape mentally and physically, check out the following articles in the Strengthen Your Mind and Body section of morethanmedication.ca

Find great activities your family can enjoy | Simple weight training at any age
Train your brain | Be well where you dwell



ANSWERS: 0 or 1 NO = great communication skills 1 or 2 NO's = you know your partner pretty well – is there a question you're not asking? 2 or 3 NO's = take a few minutes each day and check in with each other 3 or 4 NO's = sit down together and devote some time to communicating 4 or 5 NO's = time to take time to rebuild your communications skills

Colour Code Your Grocery Chart

Want to boost your energy? Then load up your grocery cart with Reds, Greens, Blues, Whites and Yellows. Dark green leafy vegetables such as spinach, kale, collards, and vegetables such as broccoli, Brussels sprouts and cabbage contain high levels of Vitamin K, which have been shown to contribute to the strengthening of the bone matrix and help prevent osteoporosis, according to the Dietitians of Canada. Carrots, butternut squash, corn and bananas are

rich in beta carotene, another powerful antioxidant as well as potassium which helps strengthen bones and helps lower blood pressure. Likewise, orange-red fruits and vegetables such as tomatoes contain lycopene – a strong protector against prostate cancer – along with lutein and zeaxanthin to help keep older eyes healthy.



Colour Food Group Chart

Take this chart with you when you go grocery shopping, and make sure your cart has at least one choice from each colour group!

GREEN	BLUE	YELLOW	RED	WHITE
Spinach	Blueberries	Carrots	Red peppers	Bananas
Broccoli	Blackberries	Oranges	Strawberries	Potatoes
Brussels sprouts	Purple grapes	Sweet potatoes	Tomatoes	Cauliflower
Kiwi fruit	Eggplant	Cantaloupe	Red Apples	White mushrooms
Green beans/peas	Plums	Mango	Cherries	Pears
Honeydew melon			Beets	

For more helpful information on your nutritional needs, check out these related articles in the Eat Better section of morethanmedication.ca

Family fun: Take our family nutrition quiz! | Crack the nutrition label code | Craving Satisfier Food with function

Healthy Living – it's More Than Medication

We all have questions when it comes to making sure we are living healthy lives. But do you really know all the facts to help you achieve that?

Living a healthy life is about finding a balance between your mind, your body and your spirit, and we are committed to helping you discover the simple things you can do every day that will help you become mentally and physically fit. Because we believe to be truly healthy, it takes more than medication.

Do you know the simplest way to relax?

Why eat blue food?

How well do you know your spouse?

What fun activities are good for your body and help burn calories?

Can you name five things that will lift your spirits?



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How to beat stress

Stress is part of our everyday lives, but there are strategies you can use to keep stress from becoming too overwhelming and unhealthy, says stress expert Eli Bay, president of The Relaxation Response Institute in Toronto. “When you breathe as if you are relaxed, you start to become relaxed.”

Here are 10 tips to help you reduce stress by breathing more healthfully.

1. Consciously monitor your breathing.
2. Don't hold your breath.
3. Centre yourself by taking deep inhalations and exhalations.
4. Touch the palate with your tongue, says Bay, to quiet the mind.
5. Breathe in through the nose.
6. Breathe down into your back and imagine it expanding out.
7. Breathe right down into your tummy.
8. Let your tummy be soft when you breathe in.
9. To relax, breathe in for 4, hold for 3, breathe out for 7. Repeat.
10. Sign up for regular mind/body classes such as yoga and Tai Chi.

How stressed are you?

Want to know how stressed you are? Take our quick quiz. Answer each of the following statements with a yes or a no.

- I feel nervous or anxious a lot.
- I am a shallow breather.
- I suffer from depression and/or fatigue.
- I have chronic tension in parts of my body (raised shoulders, etc.).
- I have ongoing health problems (hives, headaches, indigestion, etc.).

If you answered yes to three or more, stress management techniques might be beneficial to you.



SIGN UP TODAY!

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For more helpful information on how to relax, check out these interactive videos and audios in the Manage Stress section of morethanmedication.ca

Inhale. Exhale. Breathe | Anytime, anywhere, everyday meditation techniques | The 5-minute stress buster

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