



# The Nine Essentials of Health

– *YOUR GUIDE TO A HEALTHY, HAPPY LIFE!*



A fun-to-read, easy-to-use book of ideas on how you can live a full, ecstatic life

by Dr. Claire Fitzpatrick

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– *YOUR GUIDE TO A HEALTHY, HAPPY LIFE!*

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*Nine Essentials of Health – A Daily Primer*

*Copyright: Dr. Claire Fitzpatrick*

*Published: 8th March 2013*

*Publisher: Dr. Claire Fitzpatrick*

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### About the Author

DR. CLAIRE FITZPATRICK is an authority in the fields of chiropractic, natural longevity, healthy human empowerment and Western mysticism. She is founder of *Places to Go, People to See, Things to Do*, a blog and podcast dedicated showing us how to optimize our bodies and minds to living a full, spiritual life in the Western world.

She began her spiritual and healthcare career in the late 1980s. During this time, she studied with masters of Eastern and Western mysticism and pursued a career in natural health care in an effort to understand the physical and scientific principles behind living a spiritual life. She teaches that there is a unifying theme between maintaining a healthy body, living a happy, fulfilling life, and the capacity for love and compassion toward others. Her forthcoming book reflects these teachings and will be available by the end of 2013.

She currently practices chiropractic in New York City and is a regular presenter and speaker on chiropractic, Western ecstatic spirituality, and natural longevity in the tri-state area. Her online hub for *Places to Go, People to See, and Things to Do*, which encompasses her blogs, podcast, news, natural health, vitality, and longevity products, and upcoming events in the tri-state area are at [drclairefitzpatrick.com](http://drclairefitzpatrick.com) and [fitzpatrickspinecenter.com](http://fitzpatrickspinecenter.com).

# Introduction

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In every life, a little health advice must fall.

I am a lover of natural health, and as such, I have made my profession about spreading the love of natural health.

Chiropractors love natural health. If all we chiropractors were to have our way, there would be no pain, no sickness, no dis-ease; when we were finished with Life, we would stretch our still healthy, functional bodies, say goodbye to all our gathered loved-ones, go to bed, and quietly sleep our way into the next world. If many New Age-y chiropractors (like me) had their way, every human body on this planet would be one chiropractic adjustment away from ecstatic sublimation to the next level of human evolution.

Regardless of my dreams for a sublime human population, let's start with what we have.

What we have is a U.S. population who is obsessed with health, yet we are not very healthy. According to Aneki.com, the US ranked #6 in the world for quality of life, which isn't bad...however, we're behind Norway, Sweden, Canada, Belgium, and Australia, and Americans don't like to be behind anybody! We're not even in the top 10 for life expectancy anymore; we're #33!

Our health care ranking is #19 worldwide (up from #33 in 2004, thank the gods), but we're still the most expensive country in terms of the cost of health care. The average U.S. citizen spends \$6,719 per person per year on health care. Most of that cost is going to treat the top three causes of death in our country: heart disease, cancer, and stroke. These are health conditions that we can control. We are spending mega dollars on health care when all we need to do is live healthier, happier lives.

I learned from my ex-husband, an excellent property-casualty actuarial fellow, that if you need to understand real trends, look to actuarial tables. Insurance companies want to know how to gauge their rates based on health trends, and they go far beyond what we, the general public, know.

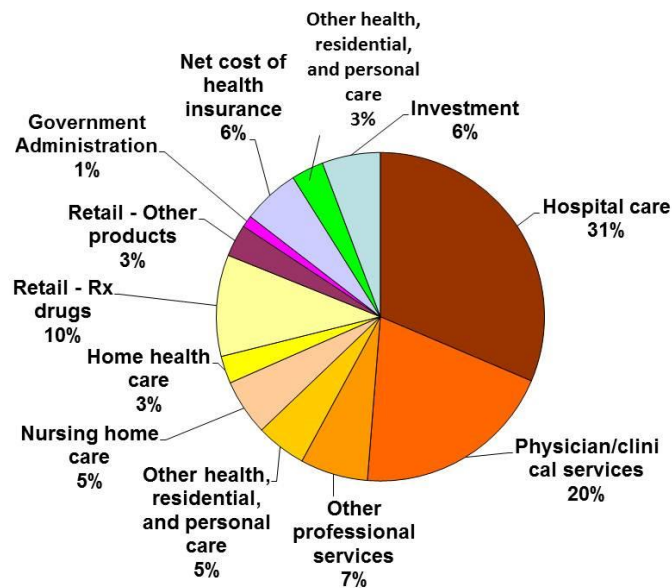
The following is commentary by Kaiserdu.org. The text in parentheses are my commentary.

According to Kaiserdu.org,

- Health expenditures in the United States neared \$2.6 trillion in 2010, over ten times the \$256 billion spent in 1980 (whoa!).
- The rate of growth in recent years has slowed relative to the late 1990s and early 2000s, but is still expected to grow faster than national income over the foreseeable future.
- Since 2001, the cost of employer-sponsored health coverage for family premiums have increased by 113%, placing increasing cost burdens on employers and workers.
- Total government spending has increased considerably, straining federal and state budgets. In total, health spending accounted for 17.9% of the nation’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2010.

(Here’s a great pie chart from Kaiser that describes where this \$2.6 trillion went:)

**Figure 1: National Health Expenditures, 2010**



Total = \$2.3 Trillion. Source: Martin A.B. et al., “Growth In US Health Spending Remained Slow in 2010; Health Share of Gross Domestic Product Was Unchanged from 2009,” Health Affairs, 2012.

(By the way, I don't get why there are two separate "other health residential and personal care" pie slices. So as far as I'm concerned, it's 8%. I can't even wrap my noggin around what \$2.3 trillion dollars looks like. I think I heard some analogy that it looks like a stack of dollar bills that reaches from the Earth to the moon twenty times over. I don't know if that's true, but the image bears contemplation.)

What is driving all this health care spending?

- Technology and prescription drugs – The availability of more expensive, state-of-the-art medical technologies and drugs fuels health care spending for development costs and because they generate demand for more intense, costly services even if they are not necessarily cost-effective (in other words, what's the latest gadget to diagnose and treat you?).
- Rise in chronic diseases – (Because of increased mortality rates and the increased development of chronic disease conditions), it is estimated that health care costs for chronic disease treatment account for over 75% of national health expenditures. In particular, there has been tremendous focus on the rise in rates of overweight and obesity and their contribution to chronic illnesses and health care spending.

(Stop and think about that for a second. 75% of \$2.3 trillion is \$1.73 trillion dollars. That's 15 stacks of \$1 bills to the moon, if the previous analogy is right – that's from health issues that built up over time that we could have controlled earlier if we had done the right things!)

- Administrative costs – At least 7% of health care expenditures are estimated to go toward for the administrative costs of government health care programs and the net cost of private insurance; e.g., administrative costs, measures, taxes, profits/losses. Some argue that the mixed public-private system creates overhead costs and large profits that are fueling health care spending.

These are crazy numbers. These are crazy figures driven by unnecessary business policies and, most importantly, preventable health conditions. These are not, "I have the plague" or, "I have a genetic defect" numbers: these are "I eat, drink, wear,

wash in, clean with, and inhale too much of the wrong things so I have heart disease, cancer, neurological disease, inflammatory disease, depression, and anxiety” numbers.

They are also a result of a socially-embedded belief that we have no control over our lives, our choices, and our health, so we leave it up to “the system” to solve our problems. But it’s the system that is causing our problems!

Most people fear change, and we fear that which is not familiar. That is one of the banes of being Homo sapiens; we evolve at an astronomical, exponential rate, and loathe every minute of it. Consequently, humans are, by far, first among all species that maim and kill other species -- and even other humans -- for reasons other than survival or nourishment...in other words, for fear, spite, sport, inconsideration, malice, and hatred.

I won’t belabor you with worldwide hatred and atrocity statistics. We don’t need them. We experience this process every day, from the mild, thoughtless day-to-day prejudices of our coworkers, families, and friends, to the worldwide outrages we see every time we turn on the news.

We just don’t know, as a collective, that we make vital choices every day that either contribute or interfere with our ability to live well. We live according to short-term necessity, expedience, and emotional gratification as opposed to the long term. Consequently:

- In an effort to make life easier and more enjoyable, our bodies are toxic beyond reason from the chemicals and radiation we have put into our food and environment; therefore, we cannot possibly think straight.
- 66% of us work directly for 1% of the population; 99% of us work indirectly for that 1%, and most of us have no vested interest in our jobs.
- As Americans, we are taught that we should be independently wealthy as opposed to cooperatively wealthy. As John Steinbeck put it, “Socialism never took root in America because the poor see themselves not as an exploited proletariat but as temporarily embarrassed millionaires.”
- We have a rampant adult anxiety/depression rate, because we are told that we are all supposed to be perpetually 21 years of age, beautiful,

white, English-speaking, and able to successfully navigate the American Dream.

- We have a rampant juvenile anxiety/depression rate, because we are told that we are all supposed to be perpetually 21 years of age, beautiful, white, English-speaking, and able to successfully navigate all that is expected of us by a system that is broken.
- We are kept so busy trying to achieve this American Dream that we scarcely have time to reflect on what is happening to us, and we are growing sicker and more dissatisfied by the moment, looking for someone else to blame.
- We have socialized fear and ignorance regarding the tenets of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. We also have socialized fear and ignorance regarding Socialism, Atheism, Paganism, Feminism, Masculism, Nature-worship, Goddess-worship, Voudon, Ceremonial Magic, Masonry, Shamanism, Witchcraft, Spellcraft, Homosexuality, Humanism, Polyamory...the list goes on; hence, we have irrational fears regarding those who identify with these terms.
- Our fears are the smart person's money-making and power opportunity: fear of others, fear of failure, fear of success, fear of dying, fear of disability, fear of poverty, fear of loneliness, fear of rejection, fear of being different, fear of the unknown, are all opportunities for the smart marketing professional and the want-to-be autocrat.

In short: fear sucks. Powerlessness sucks. Feeling as if you aren't living the life you are supposed to be living sucks. Feeling like a victim sucks. That internal judge who criticizes you every chance it gets sucks.

Optimal living is living a life of gratitude, in full knowledge of our inner divinity, enjoying every moment and every experience that our divine self has led us to experience. Optimal living is rejoicing in the ability of our other Selves – that is, anyone and anything that is not consciously “Us” -- to do the same.



In the end, relinquishing our fears, living a full, rich, wonder-filled life with those we love, and leaving the world a nice place for our brother and sister species and our children (or others' children) is all that matters, and all that is worth living for.

According to Bronnie Ware in her book, *Top Five Regrets of the Dying*,

“When questioned about any regrets they had or anything they would do differently, common themes surfaced again and again. Here are the most common five:

1. I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.
2. I wish I didn't work so hard.
3. I wish I'd had the courage to express my feelings.
4. I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends.
5. I wish that I had let myself be happier.”

How many of these wishes are we violating? How many of us, right here and now, are finding ourselves on a straight-line path of regret and remorse? Once you allow yourself to do so, living a life that's true to yourself is easier than you think.

Remember that scene in the movie, *Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade*, when Jones took his Leap of Faith? He thought he was walking into a pit, and took the step despite all his fears and sensibilities...and found a bridge waiting for his foot, a bridge to the other side, to freedom.

This is what it means to be human. We have a bridge waiting. The bridge is each other. Daring to live well is a leap of faith.

How do we move from paralyzing fear, resentment, and sickness to living a life of happiness and optimal health?

First, we have to really, *really* want it. Second, we have to identify just what it is that we want.

So let's go.

# What is Health?

## Part I: Complete Health

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A lot of people have the erroneous idea that health is a state of “not hurting.” Nothing could be further than the truth.

I did a Google keyword search under “what is health.” I found that globally, 83,100,000 conduct searches monthly on this phrase, and locally to me – NYC – there were 37,200,000 individual hits per month. More, there was low competition as to content, which means that despite the fact that so many people want to know just a basic question...“What is health?”...there is little practical guidance available on the Internet.

Amazing.

I'm a doctor. It's just part of my day to day life, what health is. I don't think we doctors ever think of that as a question for most people. We think everyone knows what health is. I guess we're wrong, huh? I suppose it's just one of those questions one only thinks to ask when alone and contemplating their lives and state of being.

So, hopefully, knowing that you are not alone in wondering "what is health," is helpful to you. It is to me. I'm going answer the question, What is health?, right here, right now, so wherever you are on the spectrum of health, you know where to go from here.

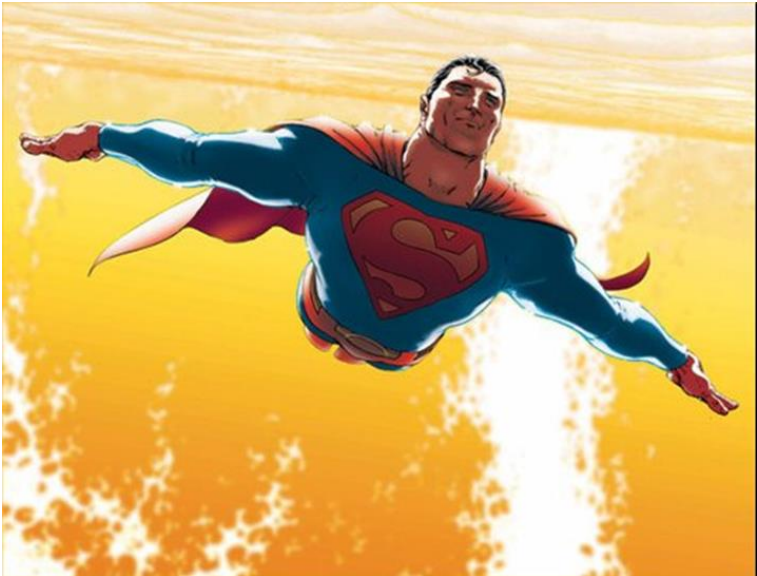
There is actually a very good definition of health available to you. The World Health Organization defined this term in 1948 and rightly has never changed it. Here is their very nice definition:

"Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."

Now, we're going to break this statement down into its components so it is useful to us. We're going to do this in three parts. Part one is the use of the word, Complete.

# Complete

Body



Mind



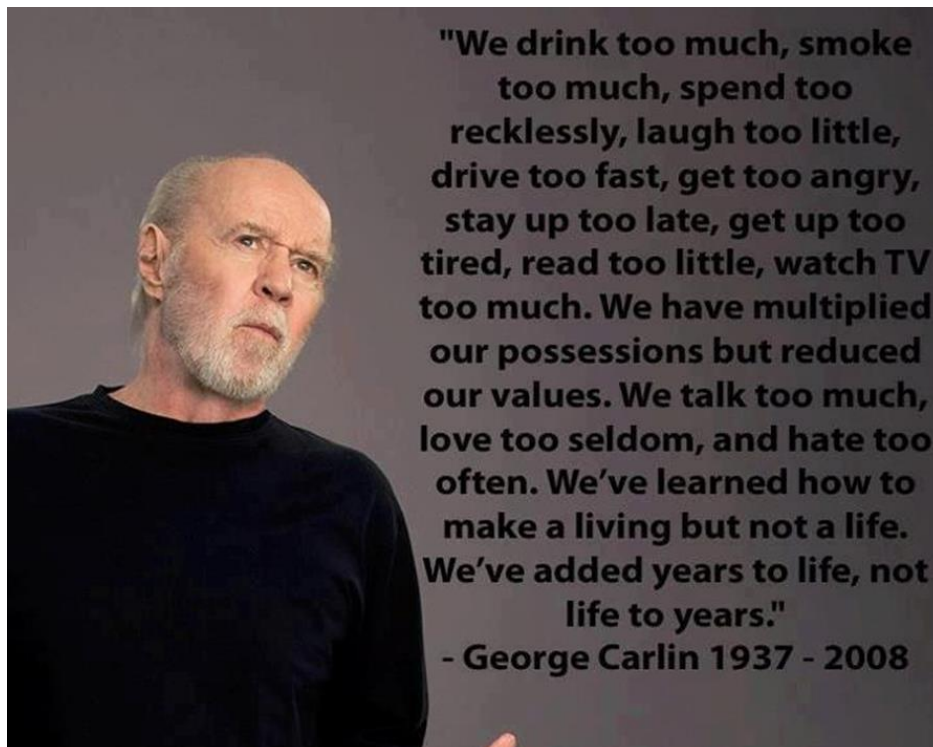
Spirit



The World Health Organization specifically chose the word, “complete,” to describe these states of well-being. I do not believe they meant to imply that one must be a Clark Kent, Isaac Newton, and Benjamin Franklin rolled into one in order to be categorized as healthy. I believe they used the word as a special emphasize in order to contrast the second half of the sentence (not merely), which happens to be what most people think of as health: “the absence of disease or infirmity.”

Real health is a positive experience – not a negative experience. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being, “Oh, my God, throw me under a car and put me out of my misery; 10 being, “I’m so perfectly healthy that I’m sublimating to a higher life form,” to say “there is nothing wrong with me” is a 4.5 and “I’m fine,” would be a 5.

No one should call himself or herself “fine,” unless they believe they are particularly good-looking. George Carlin (we call him St. George around my household – we canonized him last year), was spot on when talking about the word, “fine.” He saw “fine” as a weak word. “How are you? Fine? Bull\*\*\*t! Nobody is fine,” he said in his 1982 concert tour. “Hair is fine.” He’s right. Fine is a weak word. Fine does not imply health – it implies that one does not want to acknowledge personal habits and/or factors that contribute to the eventual development of disease and infirmity, such as a poor diet, lack of exercise, and an inauthentic approach to one’s life.



**"We drink too much, smoke too much, spend too recklessly, laugh too little, drive too fast, get too angry, stay up too late, get up too tired, read too little, watch TV too much. We have multiplied our possessions but reduced our values. We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often. We've learned how to make a living but not a life. We've added years to life, not life to years."**

**- George Carlin 1937 - 2008**

On the scale of 1-10, 5 is not healthy, because if you think yourself as merely lacking disease or infirmity, you are inherently not as well as you could be, probably not as healthy as you want to be, and you're on a slow creep down the scale toward noticeable illness.

When someone asks you how you are, you want to be great, and you want to mean it when you say it.

**Truthtime question:** When someone asks you how you are, how do you answer?



# What is Health?

## Part II: Physical Health

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If your body has the capability of performing all its functions at optimum efficiency, you are experiencing good health. If your body is having difficulty performing any or all of its required functions, you are experiencing a state of dis-ease – better known as disease.

Many people think that if they are not in pain, they are healthy. Lack of pain is not a sign of good health.

If I have five shots of vodka and you ask me how I'm feeling, and I say (or mumble, with spittle oozing down the side of my mouth as I slide off my barstool towards the bathroom) "Great," I'm not healthy – I'm drunk. I have flooded my body's cells with a sugar that penetrates the blood brain barrier and depresses my amygdala (my "don't do it!" brain center) and other brain centers of awareness. As the alcohol

deprives my cells of oxygen, it produces a form of formaldehyde upon metabolism. Yes; I said formaldehyde. I'm literally pickled.



I've given my body crappy fuel that my body is trying desperately to get rid of, stressing my liver and kidneys unnecessarily. A lack of pain can be very unhealthy.

**Q&A Time:**

**Q:** If I am a runner and I've pulled a tendon in my leg, and I have to run with the aid of muscle relaxers in order to get through my routine, am I healthy?

**A:** No. I'm not giving my body the opportunity to heal properly, so I am inducing further injury; and because I cannot feel the pain, I am unaware of the extent of the injury. I could be causing permanent damage for all I know. Despite the fact that I no longer feel the pain, I am causing myself harm.





Let's make this a little more interesting.

**Q:** If I catch the flu and I run a temperature of about 101 degrees Fahrenheit, get chills, have to blow my nose, get diarrhea, throw up a few times, feel achy and have to stay in bed for a day or two drinking clear liquids, am I healthy?

**A:** Yes. My body is responding normally and effectively against an invader, and is petitioning my otherwise oblivious consciousness that I need to take it easy for a few days and let my cells' innate intelligence destroy and eliminate those pesky viruses.

**Q:** If I catch the flu and my temperature runs over 106 degrees Fahrenheit, and I suffer a massive bloody red collapse of my digestive and respiratory system, am I healthy?

**A:** No. My body, for whatever reason, is being overwhelmed by the effects of the invader. My innate intelligence does not have the necessary stamina and ability to fight the virus, and I should have gotten medical attention long before my stool and coughs became bloody.

Now. In the second scenario:

**Q:** Was I sick before the virus came and found me hard at work living my life?

**A:** Yes. I just didn't know it. I felt no pain, but for whatever reason, my body was out of alignment.



We chiropractors like to use that word a lot when describing optimum health: alignment. Alignment doesn't just mean spinal alignment; we're after a perfect alignment of the body's metabolism, or the body's ability to maintain a stable homeostasis. Ultimately, we're after the alignment of body, mind, and spirit. All three are related, and all three affect one another.



Many factors can throw that alignment off. A familiar anachronism chiropractors like to use – but it’s still pretty handy as a memory device -- is the three Ts: Trauma, Toxins, and Thought.

**Trauma** — From small little viruses invading cells to a piano falling on your head. Also included is sitting in one position all day, either at work or at home in front of the TV. That’s called repetitive motion trauma. Sitting in one place for hours causes more physical health problems than any other trauma. When you get sick or in pain and you say, “I didn’t do anything,” that’s probably why you are sick. So get up and move around!

**Toxins** — Such as artificial chemicals in food (or just way too much frickin’ food), artificial bath products, and carbon monoxide exhaust. The results of toxins can be immediate poisoning, allergies, and terrible disease states like diabetes mellitus (type II diabetes) and cancer.

**Thought** – A terrible attitude toward life, yourself, and your day-to-day experiences. Can be caused by negative experiences in your life, early and otherwise, and definitely can be influenced by the previous two Ts.

# **STRESS** Causes Subluxations

Stress comes in 3 Forms and can be either positive or negative.

	+	-
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cardio Exercise – 2-3 times/week.</li> <li>• Strength training – 2-3 times/week.</li> <li>• Daily Stretching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over work</li> <li>• Poor posture</li> <li>• Poor sitting habits</li> <li>• Poor sleeping habits</li> <li>• Repetitive stress</li> </ul>
Mental Psychological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Praying/Meditating</li> <li>• Hobbies/Sports – Golfing, fishing, etc.</li> <li>• Setting &amp; achieving Goals</li> <li>• Positive Affirmation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arguing with spouse</li> <li>• Impossible deadlines</li> <li>• Unreasonable Expectations</li> <li>• Living above means</li> <li>• Negative Affirmations</li> </ul>
Bio-Chemical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular meal planning</li> <li>• Taking supplements</li> <li>• Cleansing</li> <li>• 5-6 small meals</li> <li>• 1 oz H<sub>2</sub>O/2lbs weight</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over indulgence</li> <li>• Too much fat</li> <li>• Too much sugar</li> <li>• Too much salt</li> <li>• Too much alcohol</li> <li>• Drugs/Smoke/Fumes</li> </ul>

A Chiropractic Wellness Lifestyle strives to increase the positive stress, while reducing the negative stress. Negative stress is better tolerated when positive stress levels are high.

A subluxation is a term chiropractors use for some form of subtle interference to the full-functioning of nervous system, which is caused by the three Ts (your medical doctor would call a subluxation a dislocation of a joint easily visible upon imaging. Chiropractors include the subtle misalignments in that definition). A way to remember the impact of a subluxation is to break the word into its components: sub = falling short of; lux = SI unit of illuminance; ation = the result of an action or process. To have subluxation is to have a physical process that is experiencing a state of reduced light. So when you hear your chiropractor use the term subluxation, remember this breakdown

and understand he or she is saying that your nervous system is expressing reduced power and function.

Subluxations are a short-term method the body uses in order to function under continued stress, but they must be removed before they cause long-term damage, because interference to the nervous system is what we call “bad.” We generally remove the interference at the junction of the central nervous system and the peripheral nervous system — otherwise known as the spine. That’s why lots of people come to us when their backs and necks feel pain. Removing interference to the nervous system often relieves pain at the site of the subluxation. But more than that, we teach our patients how to keep their bodies free of subluxations through a positive, healthy, happy lifestyle.

***Truthtime question:*** Do you replenish your body with fresh, locally-grown and raised, natural, non GMO foods, and animals that wander freely, aren’t genetically modified or shot up with antibiotics, and have a decent life before they become your meal, as well as exercise, stretch, and meditate/pray 4 to 5 times a week, knowing that if you don’t have your health, you have nothing?



# What is Health?

## Part III: Mental Health (a.k.a., Emotional Health)

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Mental health is better described as emotional health.

There are conditions known as psychoses that often require medication and/or constant vigilance by way of a full-time, well-trained medical staff, especially in cases when the patient is a danger to himself and others due to his or her distorted perception of self and collective reality. Those conditions are beyond the scope of this article, except to say that they can often start as a result of neglect, abuse, and chemical toxicity as far back as three months prior to conception. So if you're thinking of having a baby, cut the smoking, drinking, pharmaceutical/street drugs and artificially grown and processed foods now, and make sure your partner is a happy, healthy, emotionally stable and supportive person.

There is a reason I am a chiropractor and not a psychiatrist/ psychologist. I don't have patience to listen to someone try to consciously work through their issues by discussing them week after week in order to try to get them to realize their subconscious motivations. I'm more direct; I say, "Do this, this, and this, because this is

going on and you can change it by changing your habits. And by the way, lie face down so I can check your spine.”

Psychologists and the like try to reach the subconscious through the conscious mind. Bless their ever-loving hearts! That is really tough, because, by design, the conscious mind does not readily understand the workings of the subconscious. In my humble but rather educated opinion, unless there is truly severe and possibly permanent neurologic damage, one will have great difficulty understanding their subconscious motivations until they can come to understand the workings of their bodies.



If you want to know the workings of your subconscious mind, look at your body. Your body is the physical expression of what is going on under the surface.

Mostly, the conscious mind is resistant to understanding the workings of its subconscious, because that is where it stores that which it hasn't the easy capacity to cope. Your body's job is to service the will of the mind. Therefore, when you are under

emotional duress, your body will attempt in its beautiful wisdom to keep you going by storing as much stress as it can in its systems. Your body is the very expression of your subconscious mind.



It's no mystery. We walk around with what is going on in our lives every day. The subconscious is not a nebulous concept consigned to the netherworld of dreams and R.E.M. sleep. We wear our subconscious mind every day in the way we walk, in the way we interact with others, in the way we choose to live our lives and feel about ourselves.

If we, by conscious choice or not, live our lives with a bundle of stress from day to day, hour to hour, that has a very real effect on our physical health. If we have trouble with our physical health and see the difficulty as an insurmountable obstacle to living a rich, full life, this has a very real effect on our mental –aka, emotional health.



This is a topic upon which volumes are written. Let me just say that there are repetitive steps that one can take in order to encourage emotional health. The subconscious mind works through habit. It is sort of a recorder. It records things that make it feel good and things that make it feel bad. This is functional and healthy within reason. If you are a child and you run into the street and you almost get hit by a car, chances are you never want do that again. So the brain gives you that memory; “Oh yeah; last time I ran out into the street, I almost got hit by a car! I better not do that!”



If you have good parents or guardians, you need never run out into the street to learn that lesson. They will say, “Before crossing the street, look both ways to make sure you don’t get hit by a car,” a few thousand times, until your brain learns the lesson without having to actually live the experience. That’s called conditioning. Our brains are wired for this sort of conditioning, especially during the ages of 0-7.



When conditioning gets dysfunctional is when those who have no business laying their unhappiness in your innocent mind are able to do so, and whether deliberately or inadvertently, they record a message in your mind that states repeatedly that you are unworthy of love, that you are incapable of loving others, and that you are unworthy of self-respect and goodness. That's when the mind struggles with life and develops habits aimed at relief that aren't necessarily healthy habits; and that's when the body tries to help the mind cope with a paradox by storing the stress. At first, it's not all that noticeable, the health problems that begin. But over time, as these habits continue, they become very real problems for our health, as well as the health of our society.



We have to make a concerted effort to erase those inappropriate recordings and replace them with positive ones. The keys are:

- A powerful, all-consuming willingness to achieve perfect health;
- A conscious plan in order to achieve the work, backed by consistent action;
- A deliberate conscious override of negative influences, including those by well-meaning friends and family AND MOST ESPECIALLY OF SELF;
- A supportive person or persons in alignment with your mission who will help you follow through with your intention.
- Don't give up no matter what!

Napoleon Hill delivered these keys in a book called *Think and Grow Rich* back in 1937. He stated them a little differently, intending them for an audience who wanted to acquire material wealth and success, but they work in any and all situations - especially health. It is the mind that must decide whether to listen to old programming or not. The programming is powerful, but not all-powerful - its power lies in that the programming is tricky to recognize.

Hill also said that the seven most constructive emotions - the ones with which we must replace the negative emotions of fear, jealousy, hatred, revenge, greed, superstition, anger (I'm adding apathy, depression, and hopelessness), are these: "Desire, Faith, Love, Sex, Enthusiasm, Romance, Hope."





I rather think that most of these are drives, as opposed to emotions – particularly sex, but the others too – so they are easier to achieve than one would think. They are ingrained in our makeup; they are the emotions that our bodies want to express in their task of exploring the wonders of life.

It takes a concerted outside effort on the part of influencing person or persons, or an institution, to override these drives. When these negative influences occur, we must help each other back to health.

These seven drives are why I am even writing this. I can adjust spines until the cows come home, but until we begin to own our drives and take the Wheel of Life into our own hands, we will never really experience the perfect health and happiness that we can – and neither will the people in our lives.



**Truthtime question:** Do you begin projects like weight loss or fitness by going top speed out of the gate with enthusiasm, only to quit a few days or weeks later with excuses like, "I don't have time," or "This is too hard," or "I feel guilty devoting this time and effort to myself when my \_\_\_\_\_ needs me to be there for them."?

# What is Health?

## Part IV: Social Health (a.k.a., Spiritual Health)

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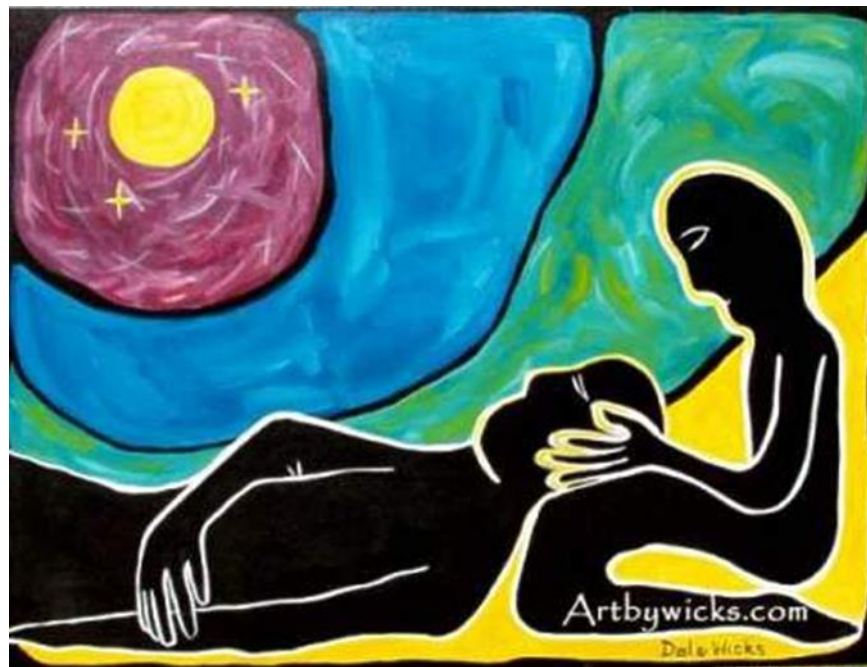
*Preface note: As per many historical wise people's instructions, the terms "brother" and "sister" are used to describe people and forces upon which all of us depend for survival, nourishment, and growth.*

The way we treat our brothers and sisters, and the way our brothers and sisters treat us, creates cultures of health as well as cultures of disease. The extent that we influence others, and the extent that we allow others to influence us, directly affects the extent of health and disease conditions in our immediate contact culture. Likewise, the way we treat our animal, insect, and plant brothers and sisters, as well as the way we treat our brothers and sisters of the air, earth, and water, directly influence our collective health and disease states. Either we all move forward together, in growth and diversity, or we all collapse together in disease and decay. It's just that simple.

This is not news to any of us. All the great peace leaders of all time have told us so. We need go no farther than the (real) teachings of Jesus, the Buddha, Mohammed,

Abraham, Plato, Socrates, as well as the mythological teachings of cultures worldwide to know that humanity has always understood this simple truth.

These same teachers of truth, peace, and health live, breath, explore, create, and teach us now in our culture. They are the voices of inspiration, compassion, and hope. They are the activists of consideration and thoughtful choices. They are the givers and teachers of tools that make us all better friends and family members to ourselves as well as our brothers and sisters of all creeds, species and elements.



They are the broad, long thinkers, the broad, long lovers. They are as easy to find as the lady on the sidewalk setting aside the morning appointments in order to help an injured pigeon. They are as quiet as the parents who read labels at the grocery store to make certain the ingredients in the food and products they buy are safe for their children and the environment. They are as close as the cat or dog in your home who knows when you are sad and comes around to cheer you. They are as near as the friend who sat with you for hours when your heart was broken. Their teachings are as available as the first page of Google when you type in the keywords, “peace leaders in history.”



Everyone carries around some form of emotional baggage that they have acquired from some unhealthy person or persons. The brain seems to retain a vast amount of negativity with no problem. If you are fortunate enough to have been born into a nurturing, supportive environment with parents who taught you compassion and a loving appreciation for all life forms and their struggles, then call me. I need you to guest blog for me. Most of us, however, have to struggle day by day with the compelling voices of fear, anger, despondency, hopelessness, and agony.





It is very easy for us to be cynical and defensive. Sadly, it is useless to deny that we are in a collective soup of strife worldwide. Those of us trying to spread our personal vision of perfection are easily frustrated by seemingly ignorant people who insist upon a vision different than our own. Worse, it is easy to persuade those who are steeped with anger, pain, and fear to follow a course that promises easy relief, even if that course leads to even greater fear, pain and anger, as well as self-righteousness, vengeance, thoughtlessness, and destruction.



It is much more difficult to persuade those who seek relief from physical and emotional anguish to follow a slow, rocky course of cooperation, patience, compassion, and open-mindedness. Yet these are the steps that nature follows in order to create wondrous variations of life and love. If there is one lesson that you must garner about the acquisition of health, is that you must follow the ultimate example of the processes of life: nature.





Nature's expression of universal intelligence shows us that it is the actions we take day by day, minute by minute, hour by hour, that determine the course of our lives. Occasionally she presents the Earth and its inhabitants with abrupt, drastic changes, like erupting volcanoes and tsunamis, but in her infinite wisdom she has created a species with the consciousness to understand past, present, and future consequences, and she has endowed this species with the intelligence to weather such changes through right living, planning, consideration, compassion, and love.



That didn't come overnight. That took time to develop, and it is still developing. We call her Mother Earth because we come from her; but also we, among all other species, were gifted with the qualities of caretakers for our brothers and sisters of all kinds. We are at the point now when her children – us – must stand up and take the lessons she has taught us through her example and, through compassion, love, and the awareness of our interconnectedness, prepare ourselves and our earthly environment for our budding adulthood. We are the creators of peace and war. We choose compassion or apathy. We choose love or malice. We choose whether we all move forward into marvelous, adaptive, collective life, or fall into disrepair, disaster, and destruction.



Nature created our expression of life over time, and it was never a steady progress. It was always filled with periods of expansion and contraction. It is the way of things. Similarly, our lives are never a slow, steady, continual process of expansion. We cannot grow and change into excellent beings without periods of trial and challenges. That is the way of life in all its forms. It is okay to experience periods of struggle. The lesson is that we have each other to help out during these times!

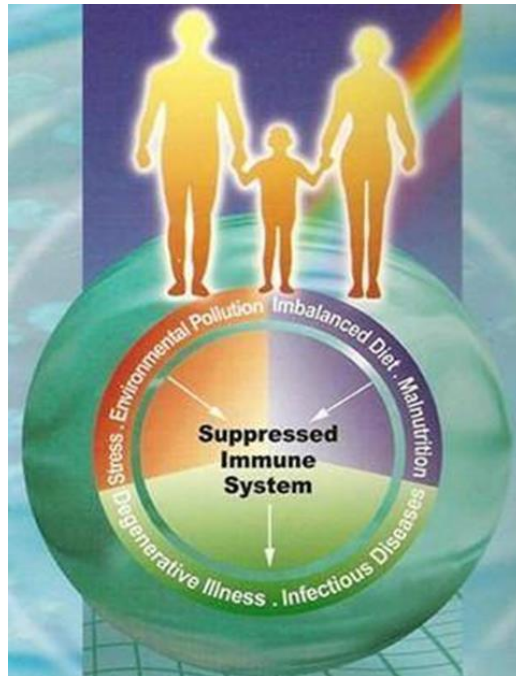


Social health begins with each individual body. If we learn to love our personal gifts and challenges, and to be patient and compassionate with ourselves during the challenging times, we can express the same to our brothers and sisters everywhere, and together we will express social health like the world has never seen.



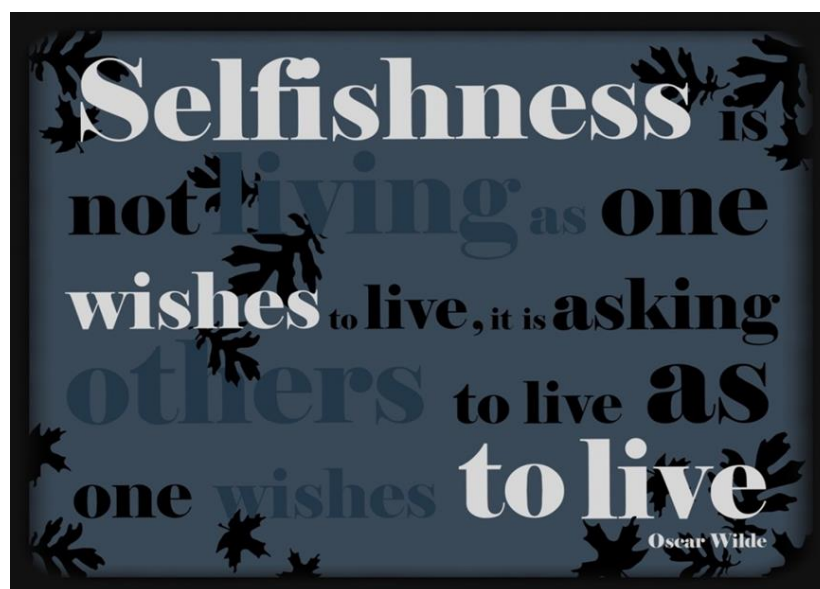
In Part II, Physical Health, I presented the example that when we have a flu and get mildly feverish, achy, fatigued, and often vomit and have diarrhea, and that this is an expression of health. An expression of health is not always a cheerful expression. Sometimes we have to go through trials in order to be stronger, smarter, and healthier on the other side. Our immune system needs these challenges to work effectively.

If our immune system overworks – i.e., destroys the body in order to destroy the internal virus – that is not an expression of health. That is an expression of disease. If we suppress our immune system with toxins, bad lifestyle choices, and lack of caring about ourselves, those viruses will find our weakness and destroy us. That is also an expression of disease. No parasite can live on a host that dies. No body can live without the will of the mind.



Likewise, when we face our brothers and sisters with challenges that we see, and we express love, compassion, thoughtful decision-making, helpful persuasion and collective cooperation, we create an environment of healthy progress. The body moves forward through the collective will of the people.


If we let our base emotions of fear, anger, hatred, selfishness, apathy and impatience rule our relationships and we persuade through lies, physical and emotional torture, and hate-bating, we all fall together. No parasite can live on a host that dies.





So let's start at the beginning. Let's start with what we can do every day in order to achieve long-lasting physical, mental, and social health. We start with our choices we make for ourselves every day, every minute.


Here are the nice steps to perfect health in all its forms.



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## **The Nine Essentials of Health**

### Rest

Get 7-8 hours of sleep a night. If necessary, take in a 45 min-1½ hour day nap.

### Stretch/Exercise

*Don't skip stretching!* Stretch/Exercise 4-5 times a week.  
For stretch examples, go to [fitzpatrickspinecenter.com](http://fitzpatrickspinecenter.com) and click "Events and Links")

### Proper Inner and Outer Environment

Eat small meals the size of your fist 5-6 times a day every 3 hours. Lean protein, low glycemic vegies and carbs, good fats. Avoid processed foods, wheat, and GMO-ultra pasteurized dairy. Add whole food supplements, digestive enzymes, amino acids, and probiotics daily.  
*Eat food grown and raised locally. Know your farmer! Choose supplements carefully.*  
Soap, lotion, beauty and cleaning products: If you would hesitate to eat it, don't use it!

### Meditation/Prayer

Back and neck are in a straight line. Breathe deeply into your belly – drop your shoulders. Pay no attention to head chatter. Start with 5 min/day. Work up to 30 min/ day, twice a day.

### Laughter/Active Appreciation

3-6 hours a day spent in pursuit of your bliss. Yours to choose.  
Share your bliss with like minds and hearts. If your work is your bliss, all the better for you!

### Proper Posture

Straighten your spine, chin forward, tuck in, roll shoulders back and drop them, unlock your knees, point big toes forward, and breathe from your belly – not your shoulders.

### Brush and Floss!!!

You can decrease the chances of everything from the common cold to a heart attack by brushing and flossing twice a day at least.

### Drink Plenty of Filtered Water A Day

Not tea, not coffee, not soda, not Crystal Lite, not bottled spring water...  
**CLEAN, FILTERED WATER!**

### Make Weekly Bodywork a Priority; in Particular, Chiropractic

Get your spine checked regularly by an excellent chiropractor like me.  
*"Align the spine and the mind with the Divine and you'll feel fine!"*

*Dr. Claire's Nine Essentials of Good Health*

**Rest:** Get 6.5-7.5 hours of sleep. If necessary, take in a 45 min-1½ hour day nap.

**Stretch/Exercise:** Don't skip stretching! Stretch/Exercise 4-5 times a week (for stretch examples, go to [www.fitzpatrickspinecenter.com](http://www.fitzpatrickspinecenter.com) and click "Events and Links").

**Proper Inner and Outer Environment:** Eat small meals the size of your fist 5-6 times a day (every 3 hours). Lean protein, low glycemic veggies and carbohydrates, good fats. Add whole food supplements, digestive enzymes, amino acids, and probiotics; food quality isn't what it was 100 years ago.

Eat food grown and raised locally. Know your farmer! Choose supplements carefully. Soap, lotion, beauty and cleaning products: If you would hesitate to eat it, don't use it!

**Meditation/Prayer:** The health benefits are astounding. Make sure your spine/neck is in a straight line. Breathe deeply into your belly. Pay no attention to head chatter. Start with 5 minutes a day. Work up to 30 minutes a day, twice a day.

**Mental Exercise/Laughter:** AT LEAST 3-6 hours a day spent in conscious pursuit of your bliss. Yours to choose. If your work is your bliss, all the better for you!

**Proper Posture:** Straighten your spine, chin forward, tuck in, roll shoulders back and down, unlock your knees, point big toes forward, and breathe from your belly — not your shoulders.

**Brush and Floss:** When food gets stuck between your teeth and gums, it decays. That bacteria can be toxic. You can decrease the chances of everything from the common cold to a heart attack by brushing and flossing twice a day at least.

**Drink 8 Cups of Filtered Water A Day:** Not tea, not coffee, not soda, not Poland Spring, not Crystal Lite, not milk...CLEAN, FILTERED WATER!

**Bodywork, Especially Chiropractic:** Get your spine checked regularly for subluxations and have them removed so that your body has the best opportunity it can have for a healthy expression of its nervous system. As a famous chiropractor once said, "Align the spine and mind with the Divine and you'll feel fine!"

In the following chapters, I will cover specific examples and methods that we can all use to easily incorporate these nine steps to perfect health into our lives. We are all in this together.



**Truthtime question:** Which of the nine steps do you regularly incorporate into your day right now?



# The Nine Essentials of Health, # 1: Rest and Sleep

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Ahhhh...sleep is the best. I love settling in after a good day, shutting off the lights, cracking the window for fresh air, putting one pillow under my thighs and one under my head, tucking in nice and snug in comfy sheets and blankets, and dropping off into perfect slumber. “To sleep, perchance to dream...”

As adults, how long do we need to sleep? Researchers go back and forth with this, but the repeated results remain that sleep needs differ among populations. Some people (like me) do best with 9 hours, some can sleep 5 and be perfectly fine – but that last is rare. The safe bet is that most adults have a basal sleep need (the amount of sleep our bodies require regularly in order to perform at an optimal level) of 7-9 hours of solid sleep a night.

What a lot of people don't count on is the fact that many (most) of us need to crash for a little while during the day. Our circadian sleep rhythms (daily cycles of sleepiness and wakefulness that we can entrain to an extent) periods during the day/night when we are more sleepy than at other times.

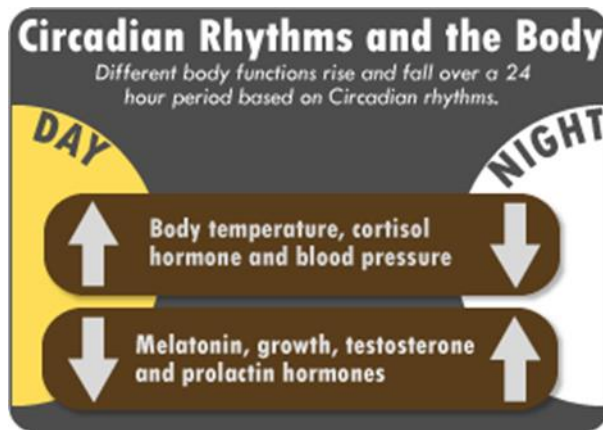
Notably, one of these occurs in the mid-afternoon. I call it “hitting the wall.” Our brain seems to be useless and we get cranky during these times – for me, it is at

about 2:00 p.m. — and we have to give ourselves a 45 minute to 1/12 hour nap in order to revive our brains and bodies. Otherwise, we accumulate what researchers call sleep debt, which is sleep lost to stress, sickness, forcing ourselves to stay awake unnaturally, or those stupid upstairs neighbors partying at all hours of the night (sorry – that last was last night for me. See? I’m cranky. I need a nap).

Scientists used to think that once you lost sleep, you couldn’t make it up. Well, don’t fret: it appears that, yet again, our grandparents were right about most things – in this case, advising us to “catch up on some shut-eye.” We can work down sleep debt. Nice.

There is also such a thing as getting too much sleep. There is a relationship with depression, oversleeping and disease. It’s okay to sleep long and late once in a while in order to catch up on your sleep debt, but if you find yourself sleeping 10+ hours a night on a regular basis, you may want to do an evaluation on your physical and emotional wellbeing.

Having said that, we heal during healthy sleep. During the day, we tend to use the sympathetic nervous system processes (fight or flight), which is associated with using the body’s energy for survival, much more than the parasympathetic system (rest and relaxation). During sleep the opposite is generally true. The body’s metabolism needs the shut-down period for maintenance of the nervous, endocrine, immune, somatic, and visceral systems of the body that don’t normally get that kind of reparative attention during the hustle and bustle of the day.



We are a nation that prides itself on its hustle and bustle and its apparent commitment to fatigue. Caffeine is the #1 over-the-(coffee-)counter drug in this nation

(by the way: even decaf coffee has caffeine. It's more "lightly" caffeinated than decaffeinated). Besides the morning hours, coffee cafes nationwide do their best business from 2-4 p.m., when other countries institute a nationwide nap time. They have dinner later than we do, but they are more rested and consequently healthier emotionally and physically. When we accumulate sleep debt, our extended fatigue contributes to emotional and physical imbalances that, over time, may not be so easily undone by our catch-up sleep.



If we deprive our bodies of regenerative activity by not getting enough good sleep, our physical and mental performance suffer greatly, as does our work and personal relationships. Chronic inflammatory illnesses flourish in an exhausted body because there is not enough time to replenish and repair damaged tissues in our bodies. Neurosis and psychosis flourish in an exhausted mind because there is not enough time to restore the chemical and energetic balance of our nervous systems.

Maybe that's partially why our teenagers have such a difficult time adjusting to their transition from childhood to adulthood, and why our kids are the #1 kids in the world likely to be prescribed some form of anti-depressant. Teenage circadian rhythms are naturally programmed to stay up relatively late in the evening and to awaken later in the morning than our school systems allow. As a result, our teens have trouble falling asleep at 10:00 p.m. and definitely have trouble waking up at 5:-6:30 a.m. It's not that they are lazy – their natural human systems require a different sleep schedule. Why we haven't addressed this pressing parenting and academic issue in this day and age is

absolutely beyond me. Our adolescents are still children – big children, but children – and like all children they need a lot more sleep than adults – at least nine hours every night (remember when they were infants/toddlers and they didn’t get naptime or to bed early enough in the evening, and we all experienced the traumatic effects of their emotional “meltdowns?” Same thing!). How are they supposed to progress in body, mind and spirit into healthy adulthood when we force them into a sleep-deprived model of education? It’s insane.



So this leads us to a nice chart of how much sleep our families need a day/night. These are averages. Again, individual bodies do not read charts and textbooks. These are tendencies, not absolutes.

How Much Sleep Do You Really Need?	
Age	Sleep Needs
Newborns (0-2 months)	12-18 hours
Infants (3 to 11 months)	14 to 15 hours
Toddlers (1-3 years)	12 to 14 hours
Preschoolers (3-5 years)	11 to 13 hours
School-age children (5-10 years)	10 to 11 hours
Teens (10-17)	8.5-9.25 hours
Adults	7-9 hours

*Source: National Sleep Foundation*

Babies normally go to bed early, around 7 p.m., and wake early, with a 2 hour nap period during the day. Toddlers slightly less, but they need their naps. School-aged children can go to bed a little later, but they need their naps, too. So do teens. So do we adults.

Am I getting a point across here? As a nation, we need to nap. That's why at a lot of chiropractic offices you can't get an appointment from 1-4 p.m.. Chiropractic is a labor-intensive job. Not only are we catching up on our paperwork, we're taking 45 minute-1 ½ hours to flop down on our massage tables with the lights off and the soothing ocean music playing in the background. How else are we going to perform at our optimum for the second shift, from 4-7 p.m.? A tired chiropractor is a cranky chiropractor. Not a pretty sight nor a pleasant experience.



We would be a lot less likely to start individual and collective fights with one another, we would increase our productivity and work satisfaction, and we would cut way back on our use of psychopharmaceuticals, pain relievers, and stimulants during the day and artificial sleep "aids" like wine and sleep pills at night if we all simply got our nap-time. We would also save scads of money. Our bodies and our lives would really benefit from the elimination of these chemical, psychological, and physical stressors.

Here's what we all can do to encourage excellent sleep patterns:

- Be consistent with sleep, and make it a priority of a healthy routine. We can't just "fit in" a bit of sleep in our schedules. We must create a deliberate time and space for sleep. We need to establish a regular schedule so our circadian rhythms are consistent as well.

- Create a deliberate evening routine that encourages sleep at least an hour before bedtime, like meditating for 20 minutes, a nice shower, or some good loving/cuddle time with our significant others (or ourselves, for that matter). There is nothing wrong with deliberately scheduling nightly love time. That has its own health benefits (we'll delve into that a lot in future blog posts). Turn off the news, will you?
- Create a comfortable and restful sleep environment that is dark (dark is important for melatonin production - use an eye mask if you have to), quiet, and cool with a bit of fresh air.
- Invest in the proper mattress and pillows. See your chiropractor to be certain of the types you need.
- Your bedroom should be your temple room for sleep and lovemaking. Keep the computer, phones, TV and books out of the bedroom. Put those in the study/living room and leave them there when you go to bed.
- It's okay to have a small 100 calorie meal/snack before bedtime, but nothing with processed sugar, caffeine, alcohol, or wheat. Brush, floss, and use the toilet before lying down for the night.
- Regularly exercise during the day and do some nice stretches about two hours before bedtime.
- Give up smoking, and don't go to bed full of anger or worry. Make amends with your partner and yourself.  
Cuddling/meditating/lovemaking will help that.

If you or your family members have implemented all of the above, as well as the other essentials of health that I describe, and are still experiencing interrupted sleep patterns, snoring, leg cramps/tingling, apnea (difficulty breathing when asleep), and anxiety waking in the night, it's time to consult your trusted health professionals for answers as to what's going on. That's what we're here for.

For more information, the National Sleep Foundation has some great information (like the chart above). If you are a science geek like me, the journal *Sleep* is fun.





**Truthtime question:** Do you lie on your bed/sofa with your neck propped up in a sustained hyperflexed position and sometimes fall asleep like that?

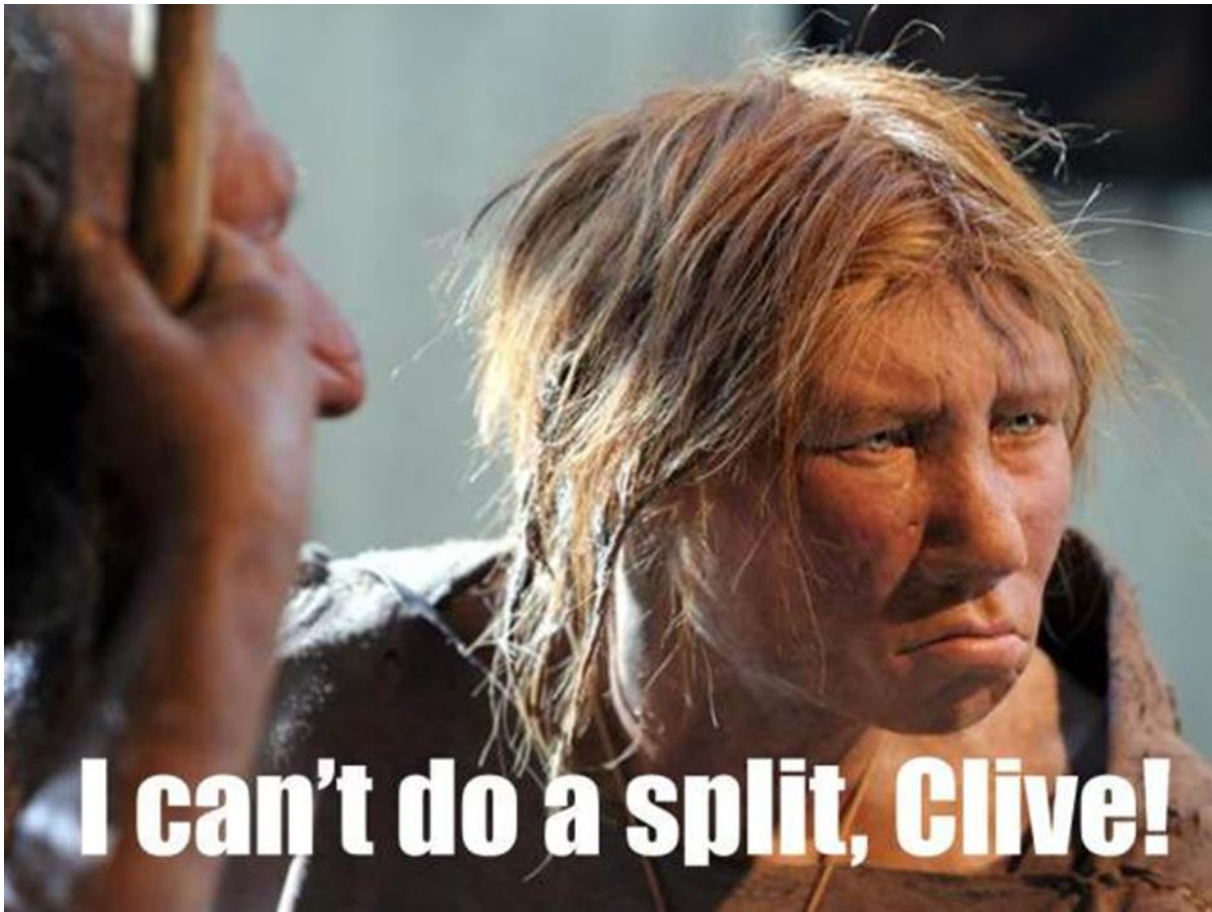
# The Nine Essentials of Health, # 2: Stretch/Exercise

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I believe I have the Neanderthal gene active in my physiology. I've never been tested, but I'm VERY light skinned (I am in fact, pink, because my skin is so translucent that my coloring – apart from my freckles – is due to capillary visibility), we have red hair in my family, and I couldn't do a split to save my life.

I can't do anywhere near a split in any direction. I do a "V." Or rather, an "A" without the bar in the middle. But there might as well be a bar in the middle, because I can't split my legs any farther than an A can flatten itself out and remain an A.

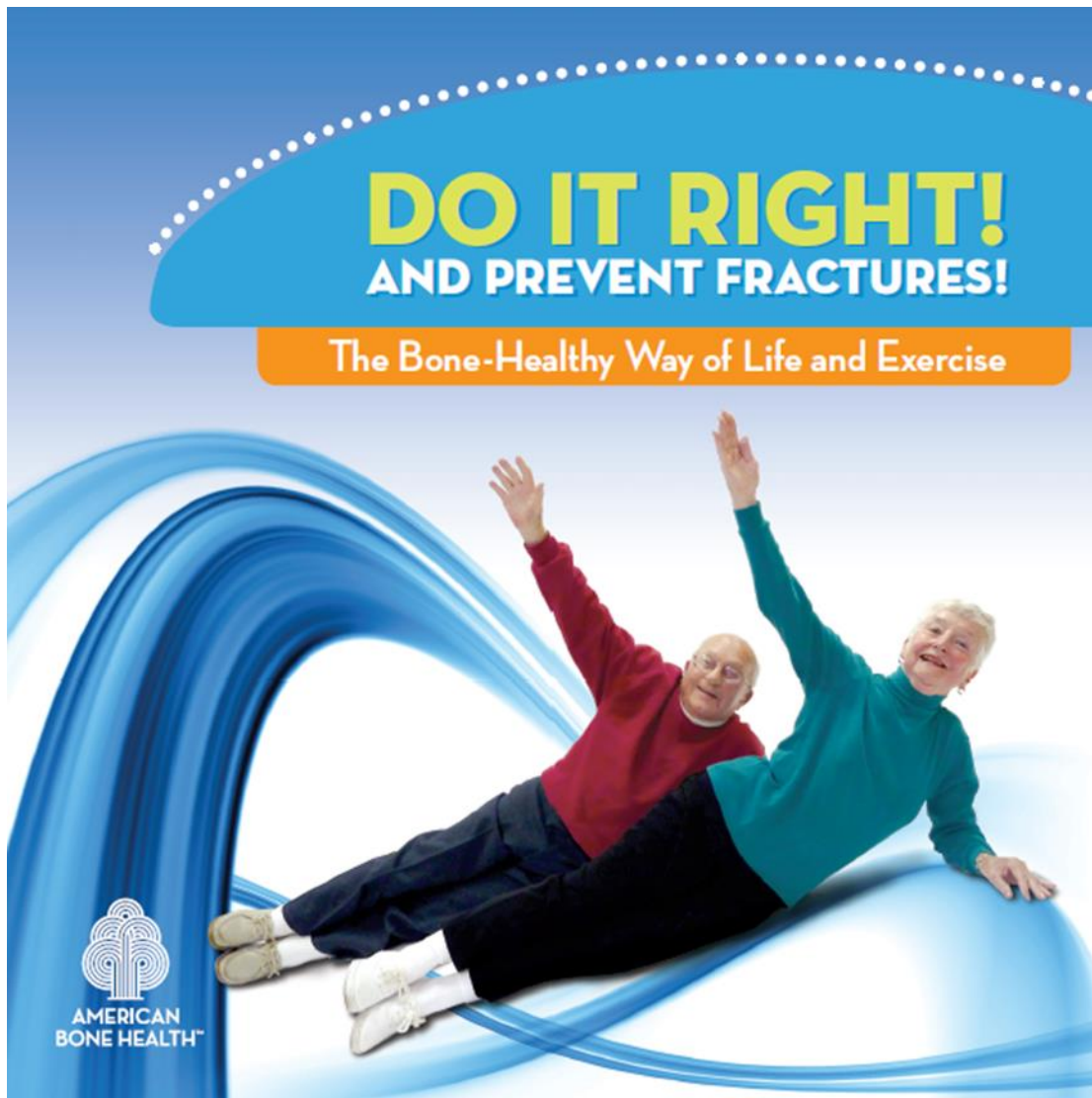


Yet, every morning, I embarrass myself before my mirror, stretching my short little A legs as far as they can go in every direction. Why?

Because I'm 46 years old and I have run out of time.

I see it. I stand in the mirror and look at myself. Yes; for a woman my age, I'm pretty darned good-looking. I'm still proportional, the lines on my face are mostly laugh lines, and I was even carded last summer in Charlotte airport when I ordered a glass of wine (my daughter hates when I repeat that story). But if I don't stay on myself, Time is going to catch up with me, no matter how many nutritional supplements I take!

I walk about four miles a day, like any normal New Yorker. That's why I look as good as I do – particularly my legs. But I'm going through a change of life, and I know that change is signaling a reduction in my ability to hold calcium in my bones. If I don't get serious about weight-bearing exercises now, that calcium won't stay in my bones.



My ligaments and tendons get their nourishment from a “pumping” action as I move. They lose the ability to receive nourishment over time if I don’t move my body in all directions! Soon they will lose all flexibility and be as brittle and short as scar tissue. Any free mobility – and pain free mobility – will be gone! And that includes the spine. Once the spine loses flexibility and starts to produce scar tissue in place of healthy tissue, that’s all she wrote. No more pain-free days ever again! Tons of money at the chiropractor or God forbid, the orthopedic surgeon, and she’s going to tell me I knew better all along.

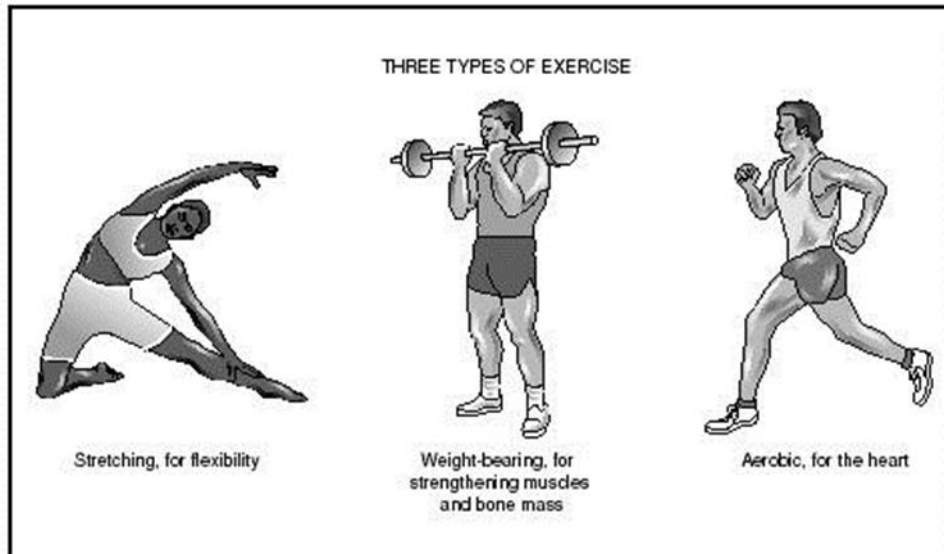




She's right. I do. I knew better all along. In fact, I tell my patients every day that they have to do these things called stretching and exercising. They have to. This isn't an option. You have to sleep, you have to eat, you have to go make potty, and you have to exercise and stretch.

Look. I know how hard it is to get your rump up and make stretching and exercise a priority. Everything, absolutely everything seems to take precedence! Getting the kids to wherever, getting to work and back on time for everybody, running that dumb errand that you've needed to run forever, just chilling the "f" out after being run ragged all day...stretching and exercising on a regular basis seems as far-reaching a possibility as living on a luxury cruise liner.

But there is no two ways about it. You have to do it. There is simply no other way to be present for your job, your family, and your ability to enjoy your life in any way resembling healthy than to take two hours out of every four-to-five days – that's eight to ten hours a week – and do this seemingly impossible thing.



I must tell you: the easiest patients I have are the ones who have been exercising and just need a quick adjustment to right that little subluxation that pooped up in their spine. It's so nice, because they are so present in their bodies that I don't need to convince them the sky is blue. They tell me: "Doc, the sky is blue, and I need an adjustment here and here and here..."



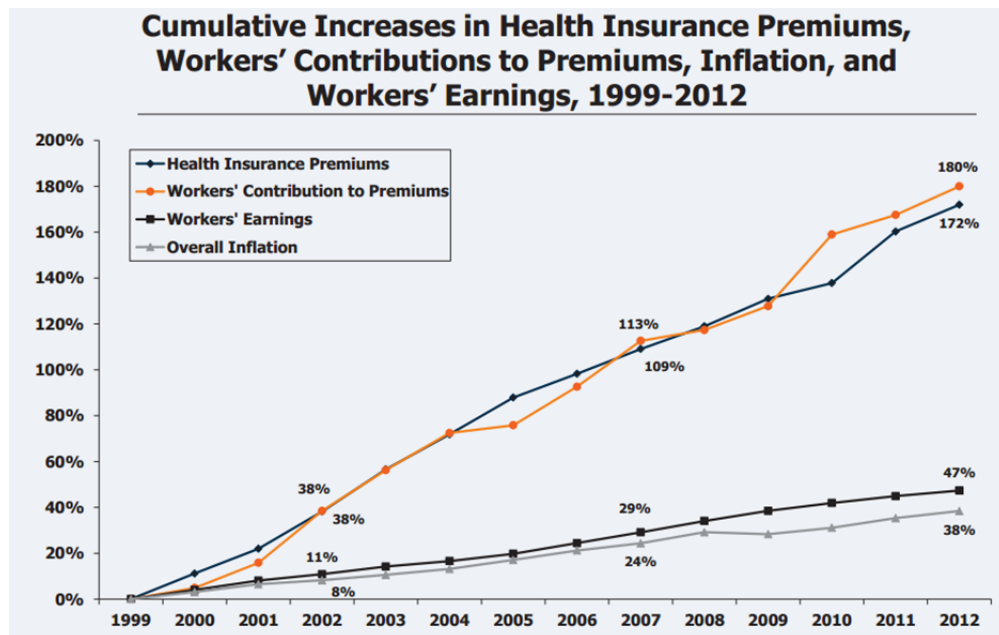
I'm playing with the idea of opening an office in a gym. What a simple, easy life not to have to convince somebody to shell out money for six weeks of three-times-a-week chiropractic care in the hopes that they might be functional at the end of it if they listen to me and just include stretch and exercise in their daily routines! All I would



ever need to do was quick-adjust some bouncy healthy spine and they can say, “thanks doc!” and be all better! Whew. Talk about The Life!

What about all that money I could make on the hapless stationary souls who ruin their spines sitting at desks for 10-30 years, or the day laborers who never balance their workaday physical toil with stretching and exercise, or the parents or caregivers who drive minivans full of kids and groceries for 10-20 years...what about all the money I could make off these folks who are now left with wrecks for backs that they want me to “fix” as soon as possible?

I take no joy from telling someone they need a year’s worth of intensive care with me. They take no joy in that either. They go crying to their surgeon’s office that their chiropractor tried to rip them off by insisting they needed 18 months’ worth of three-times-a-week care, so they spend tens of thousands of insurance dollars torturing their physical therapist by expecting miracles from them and/or surgery that very often has permanent long-term negative repercussions. No one wins there except the pharmaceutical and insurance companies.



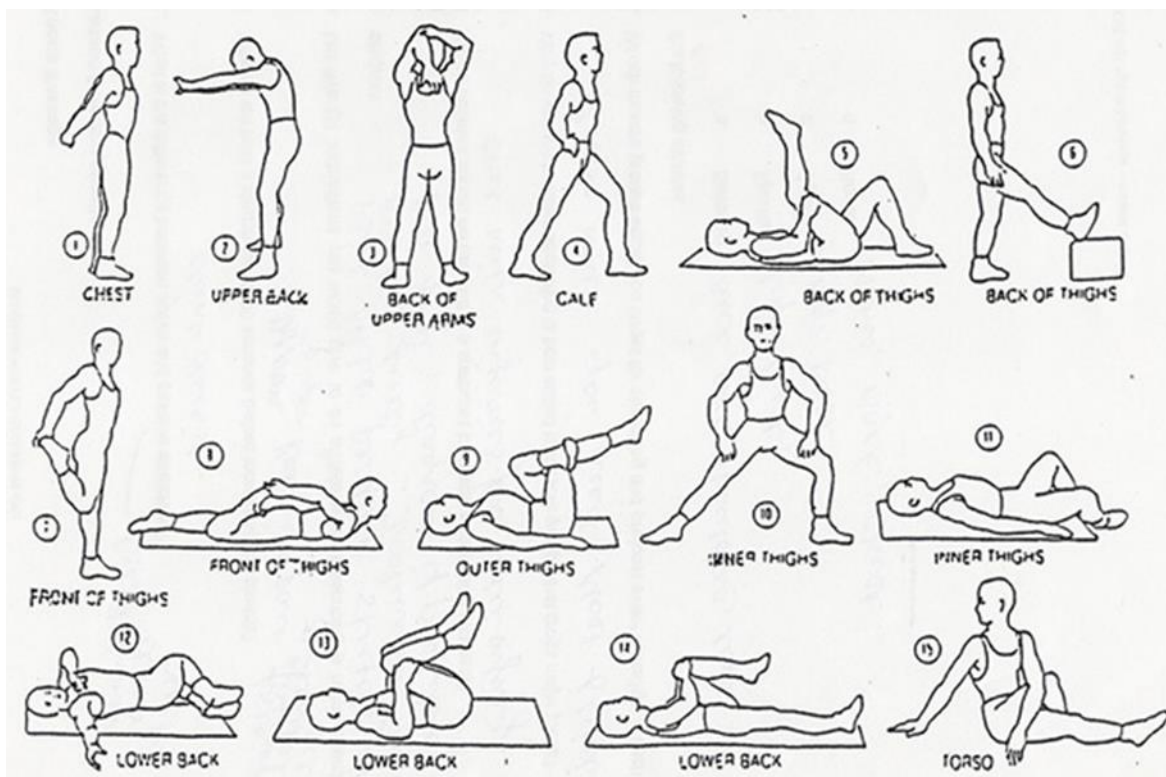
I’d much rather have the happy occasional patient than the sad invalid who keeps telling me, “I didn’t do anything! Why am I like this? Why can’t you fix me?” Because you didn’t do anything. That’s why. And you’ve run out of time.

I'm not even talking about the other health benefits, like heart, lung, anti-cancer, mental, emotional, digestive, sexual and reproductive, anti-aging, anti-diabetes, on and on and on...

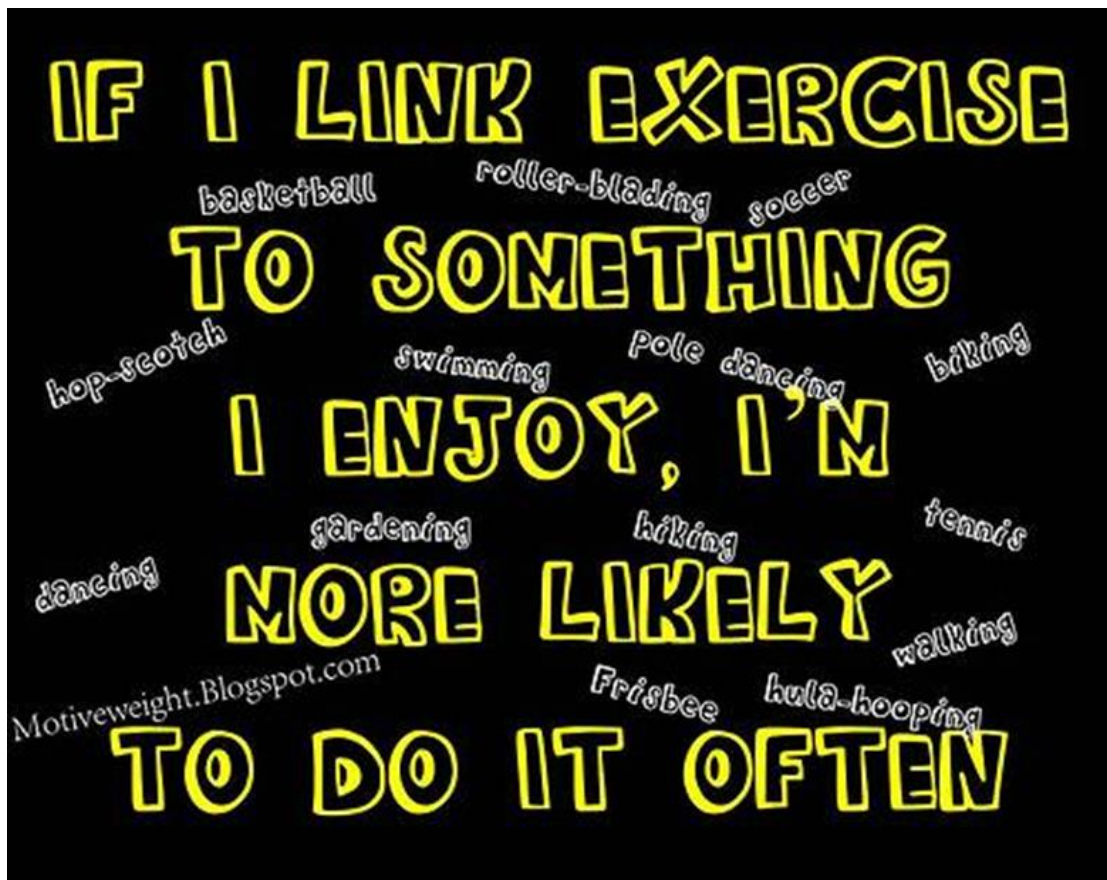
There are not "ifs," "ands," or "buts," about it: you will end up in someone's doctor's office, and then the rest of your long life, with calamitous health issues, or you will get off your duff and stretch and exercise 8-10 hours a week.

And I mean, "STRETCH and exercise!" Not just one. You must stretch before and after exercise! Every day!

There are bags of resources on this, so I will only belabor you with my own website: [www.fitzpatrickspinecenter.com](http://www.fitzpatrickspinecenter.com), under the "links" tab, I have mined Youtube for some great examples of dynamic and static stretching. Have at them.



What's the best exercise? Fluid-type exercises. Swimming, hydraulic weight-bearing, marital arts, yoga, Pilates. What's the best way to exercise? With professional training, well-rested, well-hydrated, with a not-full-but-not-starving belly, AFTER DYNAMIC STRETCHING! What's the best post-exercise activity? STATIC STRETCHING! And water. And a small healthy snack. And more water.



**Truthtime question:** Gallup reports that there has been no major change in the amount of Americans – around 51% – who exercise three times or more a week on a regular basis. Are you one of them? How often do you stretch and exercise?

# The Nine Essentials of Health

## #3: Proper Inner and Outer Environment

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*Eat small meals the size of your fist 5-6 times a day every 3 hours. Eat lean protein, low glycemic vegies and carbs, good fats. Avoid processed foods, wheat, and GMO-ultra pasteurized dairy.*

*Add whole food supplements, digestive enzymes, amino acids, and probiotics daily. Eat food grown and raised locally. Know your farmer! Choose supplements carefully. Soap, lotion, beauty and cleaning products: If you would hesitate to eat it, don't use it!*

When is the last time you woke up at 5:00 a.m. in order to get out into the fields by 6:30 and begin bodily farming duties that would last non-stop until noon, then pick up again at 12:30 and last until sundown?





When is the last time you woke up at dawn and headed out to hunt for deer or with which to feed your family? Can you remember the last time you woke up at dawn and gathered your fishing gear together so you could climb onto your boat and fish for that evening's supper?





If you did any of those three activities in the last year, did you see a fast food restaurant or coffee shop in the forest or the fields or the ocean? Were you unable to order pizza or Chinese food delivery for lunch, or run out for a quick giant iced coffee and a chocolate pastry at 2 p.m.? Were you able to sit comfortably in your car or commuter train for an hour each way to work, or did you travel by foot, tractor, or boat to and from home?

Well, then, I can understand why you would eat a plate of bacon, eggs, potatoes, toast, coffee, juice, and pastry for breakfast. I can understand why you would try to replenish with a huge sandwich or a big platter of hot something-or-other for lunch, and why you would be hungry for a big slab of meat, pasta, stew, beer, wine, bread, greens, and pie for dinner. I can understand that you need all those calories for the physical energy that you expend all day, every day, before you pass out at 8:30 p.m. at the latest so you could wake up at the crack of dawn the next day and start your laboriously-filled day all over again.



At least, that's been the Western model of eating for eons. We hid away in caves or whatever in the deep dark of night, rose with the sun, and made sure we got out and hunted down our meat and gathered our herbs, berries and veggies. There was no pizza delivery, no fast-food restaurants, and no coffee shops. We traveled with the seasonal growths and the migratory patterns of animals. Nothing was ever certain. So we loaded up on as many calories as we could in one sitting.



Our bodies have changed very little since our days as early Homo sapiens. Evolution takes time (that is Redundant Wisdom quote #s 1 and 2). Our bodies take in nourishment, use what they immediately need, and convert remaining nourishment for storage in our fatty tissue. During times of hunger, our bodies survive by reconverting the stored nourishment into usable fuel until we can eat again. We as a species evolved in a state of feast and famine, and our bodies have not caught up to our modern day lifestyle.



Today, when we are hungry, if we don't know better, we load up on fatty, carbohydrate-laden foods until we are full. Because the food we eat is not in its pure,

natural form as it once was, our bodies use what little utilizable nourishment is available almost immediately and stores the remainder in our fat. So, despite the fact that we have food all around us, we are malnourished. Because of this, and because our food is often specifically engineered to stimulate our appetite, we grow hungry very quickly – even after a large meal – and end up noshing throughout the **day while still gorging ourselves at mealtime.**



Simultaneously, we do not use our fuel as we once did. About 49% of us are completely sedentary. We sit in our cars, we sit at our jobs, we sit when we get home, we lie down and go to sleep. The 51% of us that do exercise take their exercise deliberately, because we have been educated to do so, not out of necessity.





We simply do not need to gorge ourselves, nor do we need to space our food out between only two to three meals a day. Indeed, if we do, our bodies believe we are in a very tenuous eating condition and acts as if we need to conserve our energy. Our metabolism slows; we have very little energy and are even tired after we eat. We cannot just stop eating to lose weight, because the same thing happens, only worse!

The answer is to tell our bodies that we are all right; that we have sufficient stores of good food so we can use energy in the food we do eat right away. We do this by eating five or six small meals every two to three hours – meals no bigger than the size of one fist – and making certain those meals consist of a good balance of whole food proteins, fats, carbohydrates, and soluble fiber.



We also drink a sufficient amount of filtered water a day – but we'll cover that aspect in a future blog post.

What's more, and what is not widely understood, is that we must consider the quality of life our food had before we eat it.

What do I mean by that? All right; let's consider two cows.



One cow was conceived and born naturally in an open grassy prairie setting. It was able to run free and commune with other cows and bulls, and live a happy, natural life eating good grass and drinking pure water. Because it was happy, its muscles develop well and its blood did not have a bunch of stress hormones running through it. Instead, it had a bunch of happy, contented hormones in its blood. It was killed in a humane manner after living well, so even its death was easy and did not invoke a lot of free-flowing stress hormones when it died.

That cow brings forth our milk and eventually becomes our food. Because its milk, meat and juices contain health and happiness, it brings our bodies health and happiness.

Let's consider the other cow.





The other cow is conceived and born in a small, crowded cage of another cow who is miserable; who was altered genetically to have fatty muscles, enlarged organs, and grossly enhanced mammary glands to bring forth as much milk as possible. It, therefore, is the same. It is sick and stressed its whole life. So it is fed antibiotics constantly in a swill consisting of genetically-altered grains, the remains of its fellow sickly stressed out cows, calves, and bulls, and whatever else is lying around. It is perpetually impregnated and never let loose to roam around, and dies miserable, without consideration to humane treatment, in a factory setting.

Therefore, its meat, milk, and juices are made of stress, sadness, confusion, and poisonous illness.

This analogy is not fantasy. “Conventionally” farmed animals create our illness. Free range, happy animals create our health. We are literally what we eat.



The same goes for our plants. Don't think our plants do not suffer when we overfarm them in soil until there is no natural nutrients left, alter them genetically and feed them pesticides and artificial fertilizer. I won't go too far into it in this post, but a sick, unnatural plant treated inconsiderately has little-to-no nourishment for us. Mostly, it gives us poison through the chemicals in its leaves, buds and roots. Energetically, a sad plant makes us sad and sick.



By contrast, a plant harvested in its natural environment, raised among other cooperative plants in healthy, nourishing soil, in proper sunlight, water, and season, yields happy, potent, nutritious food for us.

Along with a proper inner environment, we need to surround ourselves with a proper outer environment. Everything we wash with, adorn our face and bodies with, and clothe ourselves in affect our health and our perception of the world. If our bodies don't recognize what is on them as natural, it cannot respond naturally. We can just as easily poison ourselves with skin crème and hair dye as we can with poison that we eat. Therefore, every toiletry and piece of clothing we use and wear should have the same criteria for our use as our food.



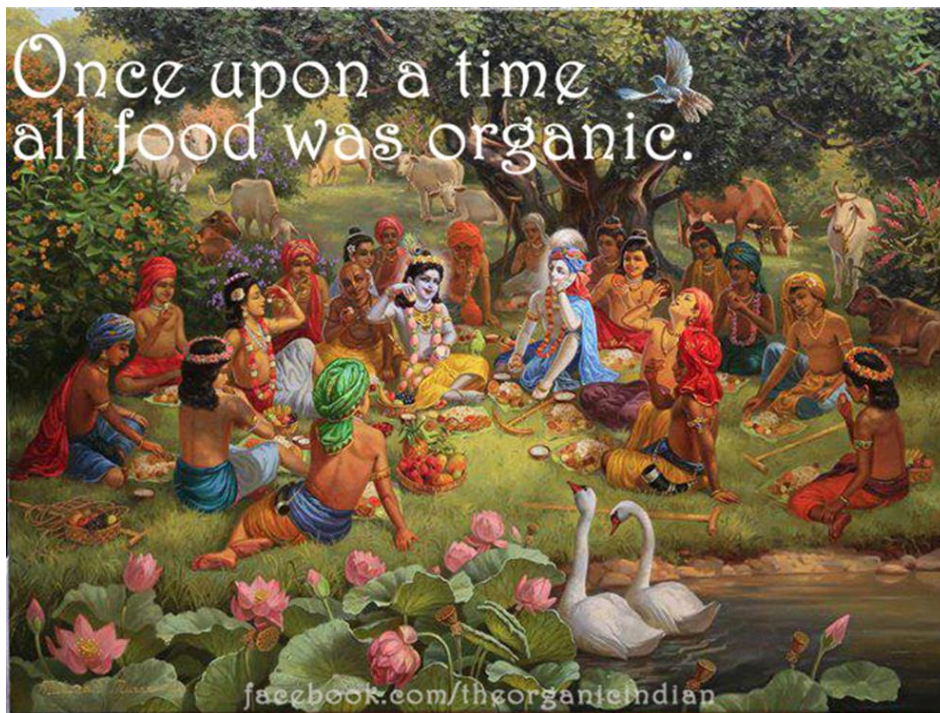
That means we live consciously, and treat our environment well. We know who our farmers are, what ingredients they use, how they raise their products, and whether or not they are honorable people. We live with awareness, without blindly going through a drug or grocery store and throw food in our carts without considering its constituents. We avoid fast food restaurants and opt to cook our foods ourselves, freezing what we do not immediately need in environmentally safe packing and containers.





It takes awareness, and consideration. It seems a waste of time, but in fact, it is a time saver that favors sustainable health and personal relationships that get easier over time.

Try it. You'll like it!



**Truthtime question:** What did you eat for breakfast?

# The Nine Essentials of Health

## #4: Meditation/Prayer

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*My arms and legs are heavy and warm.*

*My heartbeat is calm and regular.*

*My breathing is free and easy.*

*My abdomen is warm.*

*My forehead is cool.*

*My mind is quiet and still.*

*– Autogenic Training, as interpreted by Dr. Norman Shealy*

This morning, I woke up feeling refreshed. After morning coffee with my husband, I went to my computer to start my day. I found an email from a friend of mine, the tone of which seemed tense with a miscommunication we apparently had earlier in the month. I had not known there was a miscommunication, but unfortunately, that is the nature of miscommunication.

My friend had been sitting on this miscommunication for a while, apparently, and letting it get large in her mind and heart – so when she addressed it with me, it



seemed extremely curt and accusatory. So, also, in the nature of miscommunication, there is now embarrassment and hurt feelings all around.

I am, by nature, a hotheaded American Irishwoman. My natural reaction to situations like this is, therefore, is to become defensive and to cast about for blame in everything and everyone other than myself. Along with that comes the shame of knowing that I am reacting poorly, and anger at myself for 1) miscommunicating, 2) causing hurt feelings, and 3) leaving a poor impression of myself.

So in a matter of moments, I have gone from calm and refreshed to anxious, angry, resentful, shameful, disappointed, and sullen.



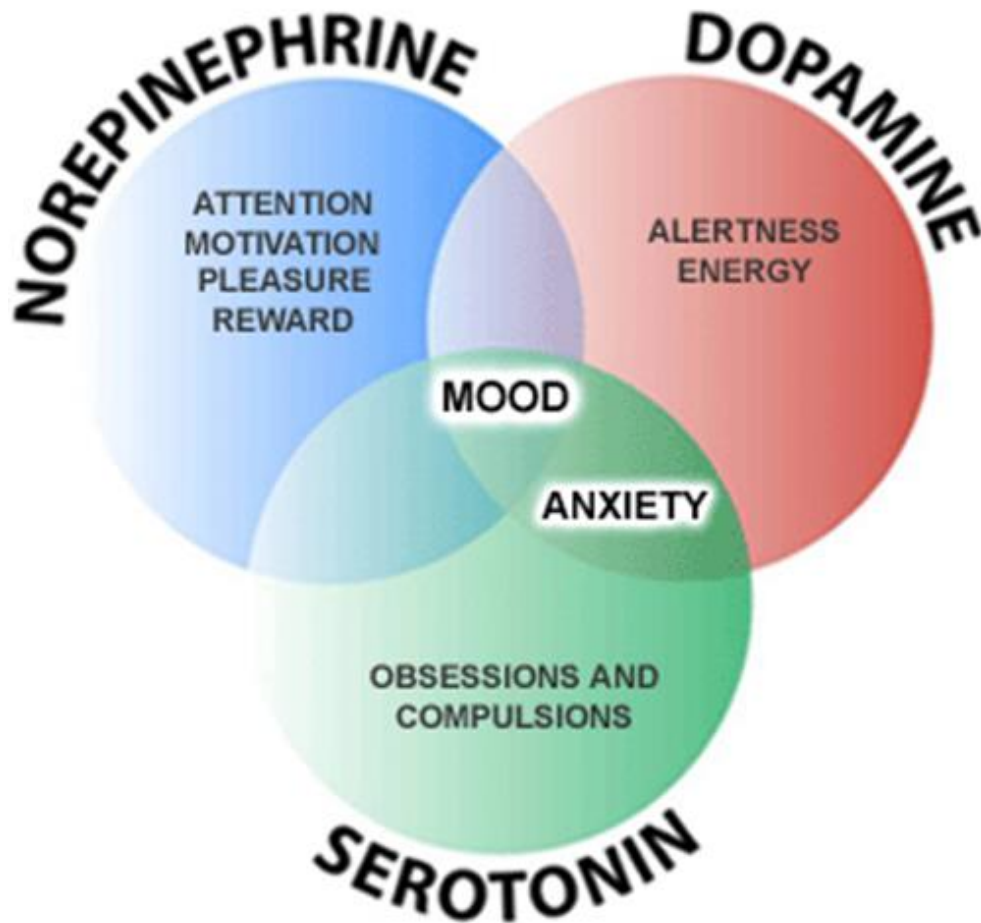
This is what happens to our bodies when we feel shame, anger, resentment, and sadness:

**Norepinephrine, a fight-or-flight neurotransmitter, rises.** Norepinephrine tells the body it is under attack. It signals stress hormones to release into the system that raise our blood pressure, speeds up our breathing, and shunts blood to our brain centers that deal with immediate survival (and away from cortical centers that help us think through a situation).

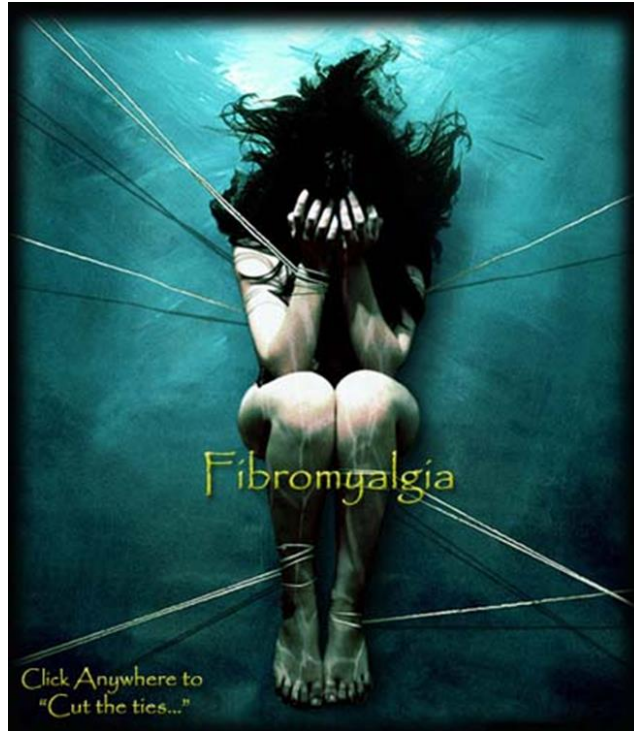
**Serotonin levels drop.** Serotonin, among many other functions, is our "at ease" neurotransmitter. We feel content and safe when serotonin is at normal levels. When

serotonin drops, we feel panic, aggression, and self-loathing. We crave carbohydrates, our blood pressure is high, and our kidneys work overtime (overactive bladder).

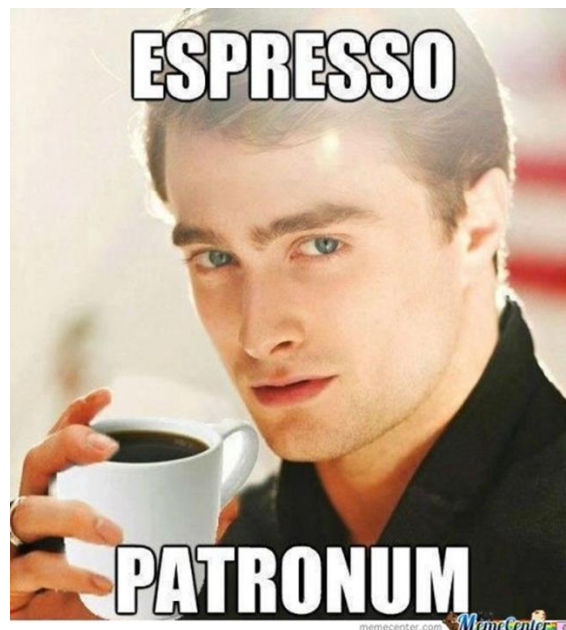
**Dopamine levels rise.** When in balance, dopamine works with the other neurotransmitters to bring us peace. When dopamine rises (safely) in concert with serotonin, we feel excitement and inspiration. However, when dopamine rises as serotonin falls, we feel anger and aggression. We also get interference to our digestive system, heart function, skeletal muscle control, and thyroid function.



**Gamma Amino Butyric Acid (GABA) falls.** This neurotransmitter, GABA, interacts with 25% to 40% of our brain synapses. GABA helps us think straight, calms us down, and helps us not feel pain. When GABA drops, we feel high anxiety, we can't sleep, and everything starts to "feel wrong."



**Acetylcholine rises.** Acetylcholine facilitates metabolic reactions throughout the body. It is the happy helper. Aside from its normal day-to-day functions, whatever other neurotransmitters are active in the body, acetylcholine helps their jobs along more efficiently. Wherever acetylcholine is present, your body's attention is present. Wherever acetylcholine is not, your body's attention is not. Think of it like that extra shot of espresso that you put in your café mocha to give you that extra boost.



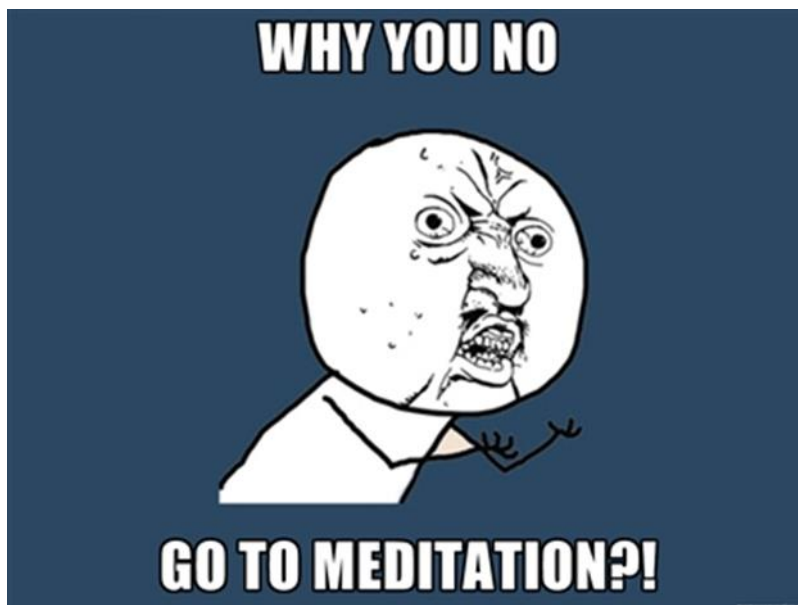
So. These neurotransmitters are in play. Therefore with regard to our hormones:

- Dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA) falls.
- Estrogen falls.
- Progesterone falls.
- Testosterone rises.
- Cortisol rises.

...and a whole host of other hormones go out of whack, the bulk of which lead to increased aging, all body processes getting gummed up, and inflammatory markers.

No joke: if I were to allow this situation to fester and last for weeks, months, and years, my skin will lose elasticity, I won't be able to sleep well, I will not be able to digest my food correctly, and my oxygen intake will be reduced. I will develop heart disease, digestive disorders, bone loss, joint malfunction, skin aging, cognitive dysfunction, a high risk of cancer facilitation, obsessive-compulsive disorder, paranoid states, and suicidal thoughts.

Wow! All from one misunderstanding! Imagine if I suffered from misunderstandings every day!



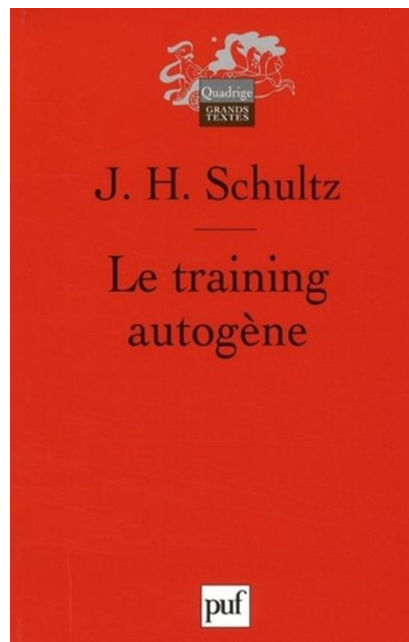
Luckily, I know this about myself. Also, having the self-awareness to know that I'm a hothead, and that this is one of my not-so-socially-functional traits in my personality, I have trained myself not to react to anything that stresses me out.

Instead, I'm going to take a few minutes out to calm the f\*\*\* down.

I go to a quiet area, sit down, and make sure I'm comfortable and that my neck and back are supported in a straight line. I breathe deeply through my nose into my belly for a count of four...1...2...3...4...about four times, hold it for a second, then release my breath to a count of four with my mouth slightly open. Then, to this rhythmic counting of 4s, I say to myself the following:

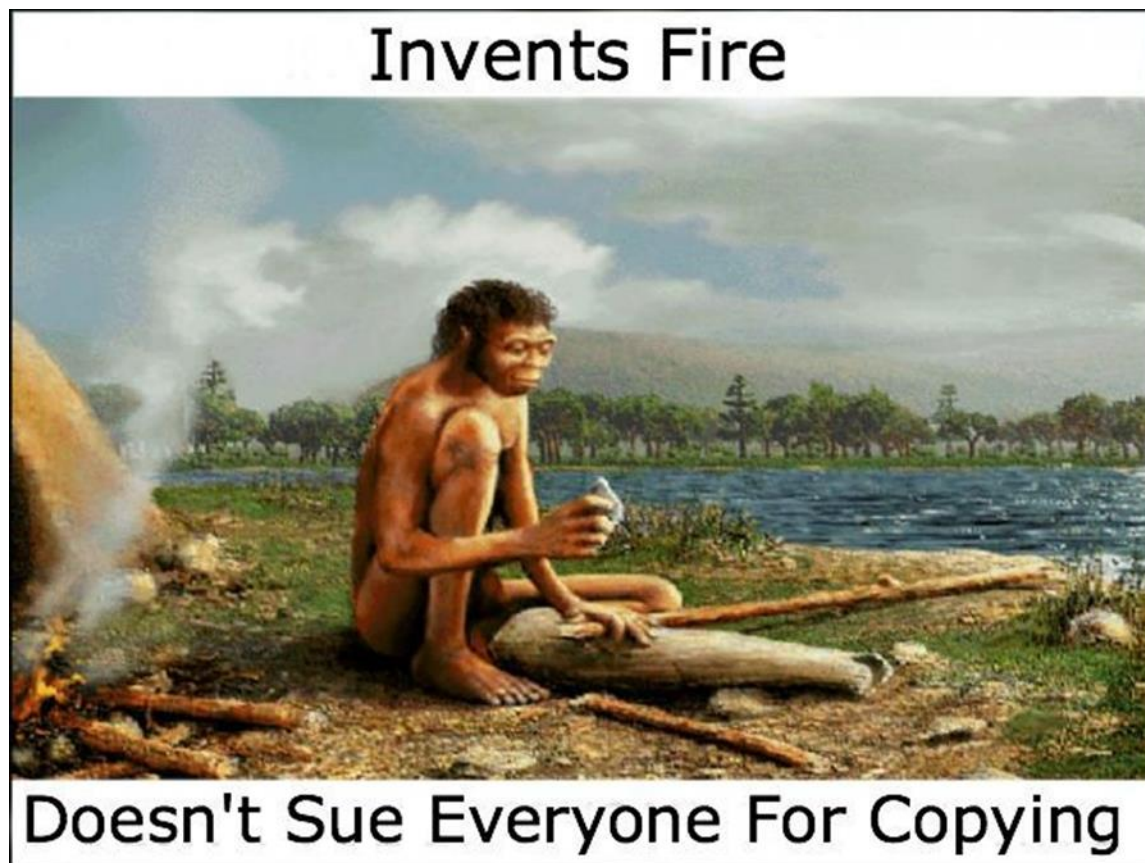
- [breath in] My arms and legs [hold; breath out] are heavy and warm.
- [breath in] My heartbeat [hold; breath out] is calm and regular.
- [breath in] My breathing [hold; breath out] is free and easy.
- [breath in] My abdomen [hold; breath out] is warm.
- [breath in] My forehead [hold; breath out] is cool.
- [breath in] My mind [hold; breath out] is quiet and still.

I didn't invent this. It's called autogenic training, and a doctor named Norman Shealy first introduced me to it back in 2003. He modified it from that which a psychiatrist named Johannes Heinrich Schultz invented back in 1932 as a means of accessing the autonomic nervous system (fight or flight response) consciously. By repeating these steps to ourselves, we are training our bodies to respond to our conscious will, as opposed to simply reacting without conscious direction to its environment.





This isn't the only way to do it, of course. Conscious breathing and relaxation techniques have been around since we began to harness fire, I suspect, when people started sitting around and interacting with each other and finding out that we can really irritate the sh\*t out of one another. The first yogi was probably someone who had to deal with a batch of whiners around the fire pit every night. It makes me wonder if the human prefrontal cortex developed so quickly not because of cooked food, but because some of us had the good sense to walk away from the irritating complainer at the fire and sit for a few minutes to calm down.



WeKnowMemes

Of course, we need our autonomic nervous system to run automatically. We can't tell our heart to beat, our kidneys to filter, our blood vessels to constrict, and our breath to function every moment of our lives.

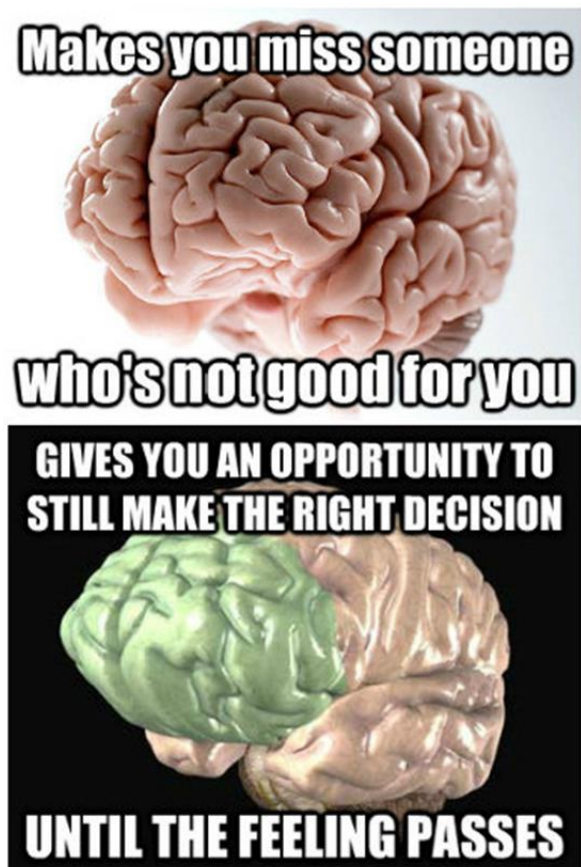
We also cannot anticipate when a bear is going to come out of the woods and challenge us for our picnic lunch. So when we are in danger from a bear at work tearing apart our salami sandwich, we need our bodies to react, either by beating the bear up (not likely) or running for our cars and speeding off (more likely). That's where

those neurotransmitters come in: to save our lives when thinking about the situation (“well, if I just reason with the bear, we can share the lunch”) is a dumb move.

But how often are we in the woods with a picnic lunch these days? More likely, we are at work reading e-mails that are miscommunications, or cut off in traffic by someone who has a completely separate crisis about which they are freaking out, and in the process, making us pissed off because of our own perception of inconsideration. That’s when those ancient reactions come into play these days...and they happen all the time now, almost every hour. You and I both know it.

When functioning optimally, our neurotransmitters react to our environment to help us survive and flourish. However, compared to our ancient environment, we live unnaturally and are in an almost constant state of self-induced environmental stress. By telling our bodies to calm down, we are consciously telling our neurotransmitters to respond differently than evolution has trained them to react.

That’s the beauty of having a prefrontal cortex! One of the things that makes being human such a fabulous thing is that we have a choice!



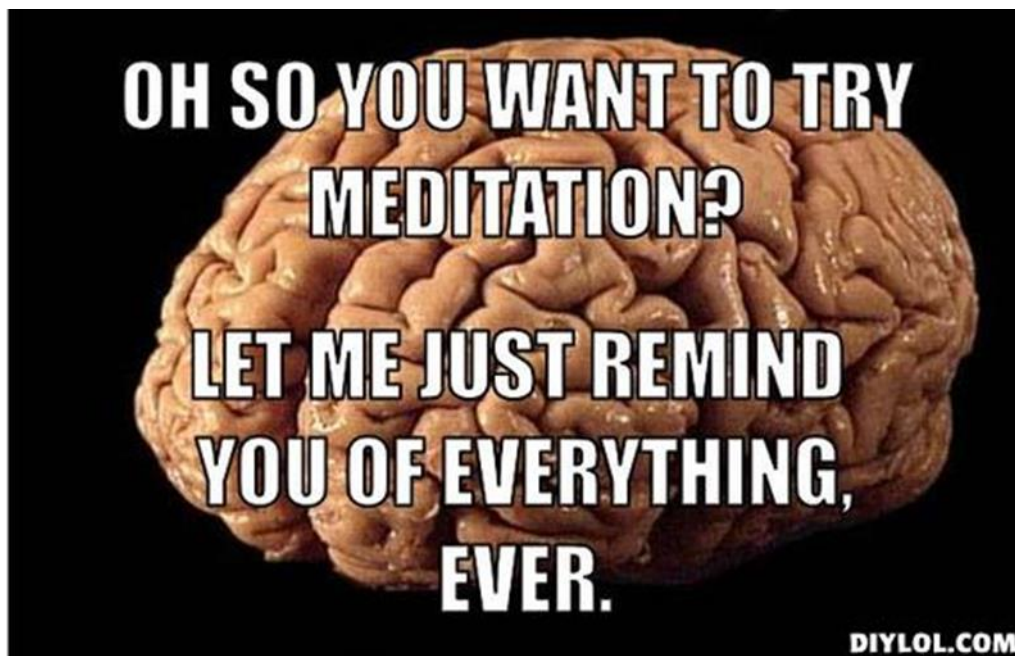
We all know that when we go see an action movie, or witness an aggressive exchange on the street or in the workplace, our own bodies get tense and ready for action. Our bodies react as if we are personally in danger! Likewise, if we receive a bunch of memes with kittens or puppies in our email box, or someone we love gives us a hug, our breathing slows and deepens and we feel a sense of “awww.” That’s our neurotransmitters evening out and calming us down.

So ultimately, it’s a good thing to have happy, clean, loving and natural environments, so our bodies are able to respond with calm and peace. Luckily, when we are unable to reach a calming environment, we can facilitate a peaceful environment in ourselves through deep breathing methods that lead to meditation.

Deep breathing is not like learning Mozart or Beethoven. You don’t need years of training before you can approach the work. You just need the will to take some time out and calm the f\*\*\* down.

We can do this through yoga, when we walk, when we run, when we exercise, when we sit, lie down, or stand calmly...when we choose to breathe deliberately, slowly. That is the major key: make yourself breathe deeply and slowly.

The second key is to think of something nice; or, at least, when that panic-y head chatter comes in trying to get your attention, let it go without focusing on it.



Even if you don't think you are doing it right, immediately, as immediately as the irritant made you stressed, this kind of breathing will tell your neurotransmitters that you are safe. Your mental and physical health immediately improves, as well as your ability to deal with your situation and life in general.

If you do it every day, working up to 20 minutes twice a day, when personal or environmental irritants do enter your sphere, you have the capacity to respond rationally, as opposed to react haphazardly...and your mental and physical health improves by leaps and bounds. Also, for those of you who care about anti-aging, this is a great way to keep yourself young!

Chronic, self-imposed stress is quite possibly the #1 underlying cause of deadly preventable disease in this country today. Collectively, a great deal of heart disease, cancer, and self-destructive behavior like overeating and recreational/prescription drug taking can boil down to stress – to the inability to accept a situation that is, at least in the short-term, unalterable by the will of the one experiencing the situation.





If we are not able to accept our situation enough to be calm in its face, we will suffer stress. If we experience stress for a long enough period, we will make ourselves really sick. Being calm in the face of adversity is worth its weight in health platinum.

The easiest way to calm down is to close your eyes, sit, stand, or lie straight, and breathe deeply into your belly. Your breath is locked into your heart rate. If you will yourself to breathe deeply and easily into your diaphragm, your heart rate will slow down. If you calm your heart, you calm the mind. If you are able to do this regularly, you won't freak out at stupid stuff. You also will have better mental faculties to deal with serious stuff. More, you can literally save your health.

I have used the title, Meditation/Prayer, as the #4 step to a good health; yet, I have not approached the topic of meditation or prayer yet. Just the effort to reach a state of meditation and/or prayer can lead you to better health. Once in meditation/prayer, the health benefits escalate at a geometric rate.

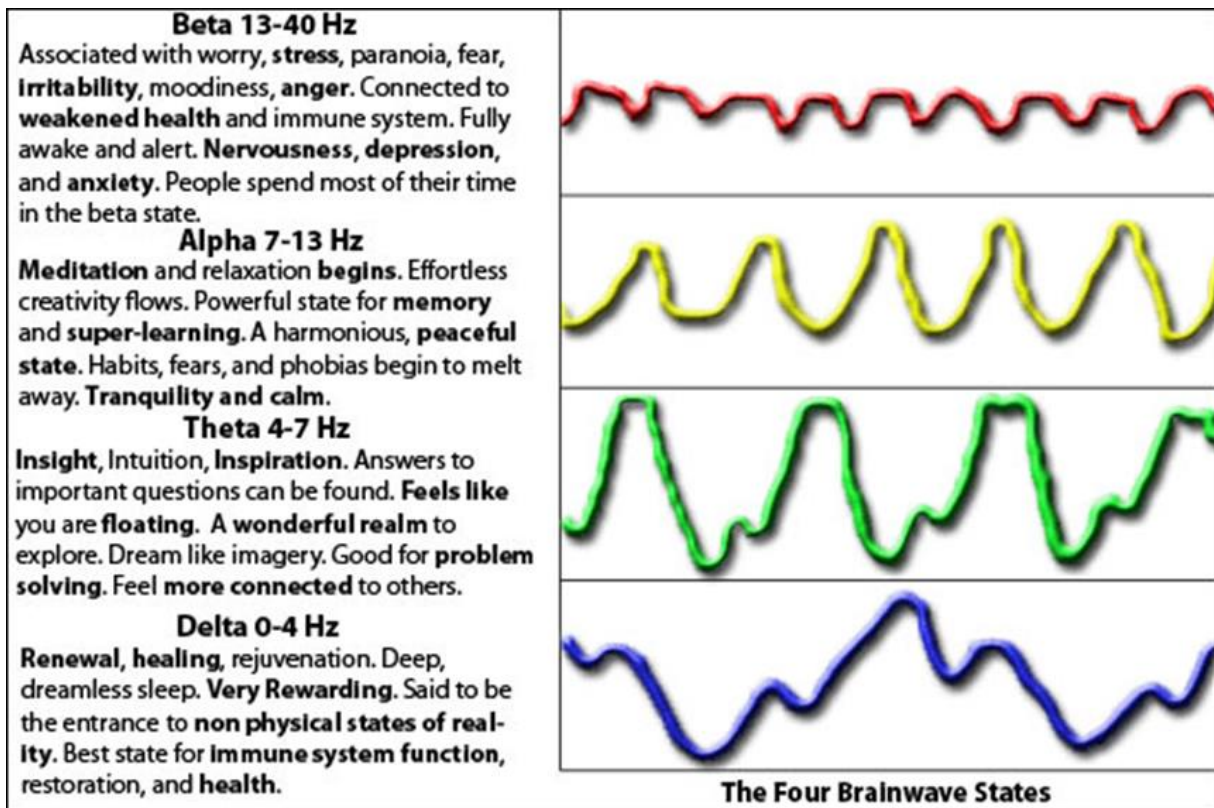


Meditation, technically, is not simply sustained deep breathing. Meditation is what happens after you reach a state of contentment after deep breathing, and your



mind is open to possibilities. Scientists tell us that is when we meditate our brainwaves are at a frequency called Theta. Deep breathing gives us a state of Alpha, while meditation gives us Theta state. Delta state is deep sleep.

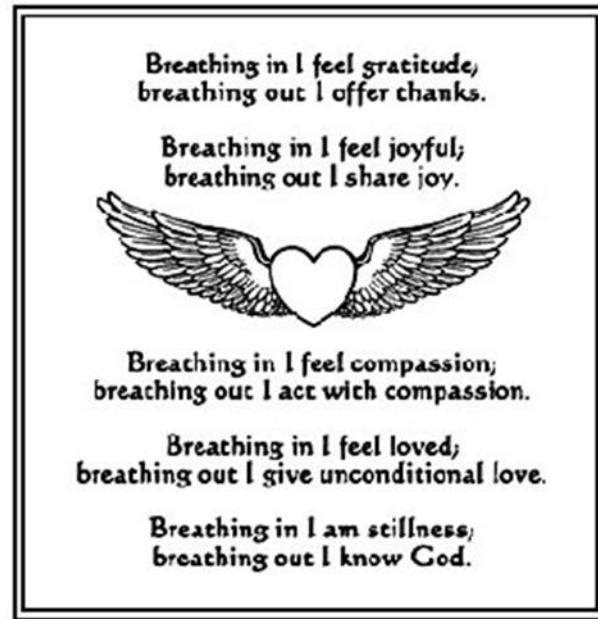
Masters of meditation can reach High Gamma coupled with Theta, but let's start with what we have: Alpha to Theta.



The way to reach meditation – Theta state — is to use conscious techniques for calming down on a regular basis. When you are in Theta state, you are in a state of self-induced hypnosis, and you can feed your subconscious mind positive direction and overwrite bad habits recorded there in youth. When you do this, your life will change for the better, seemingly metaphysically. That's where body, mind, and spirit meet, and it is a bit beyond the scope of this post. Sufficed to say, your body grows healthy, your mind grows healthy, and your spirit is much more capable of navigating this thing we call Life.

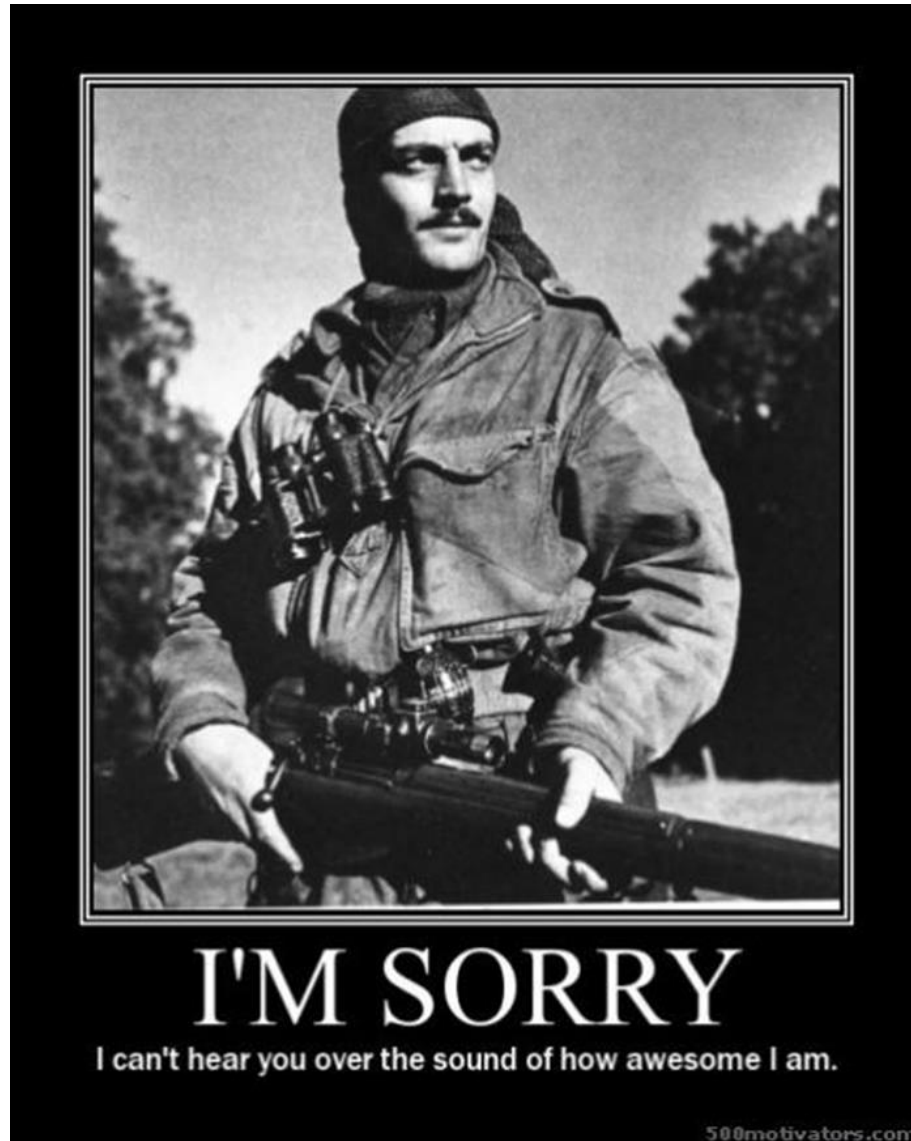
I include the concept of “prayer” equally along with “meditation” in my recommendation. For those of us who have strong faith in Deity, prayer to a “Higher Power” has the same benefits as meditation.

Although prayer is commonly used to describe the act of asking a deity for help, when I use the term prayer, I mean that special communion one feels with their Deity when one opens oneself to that interaction through an induced state of calm.



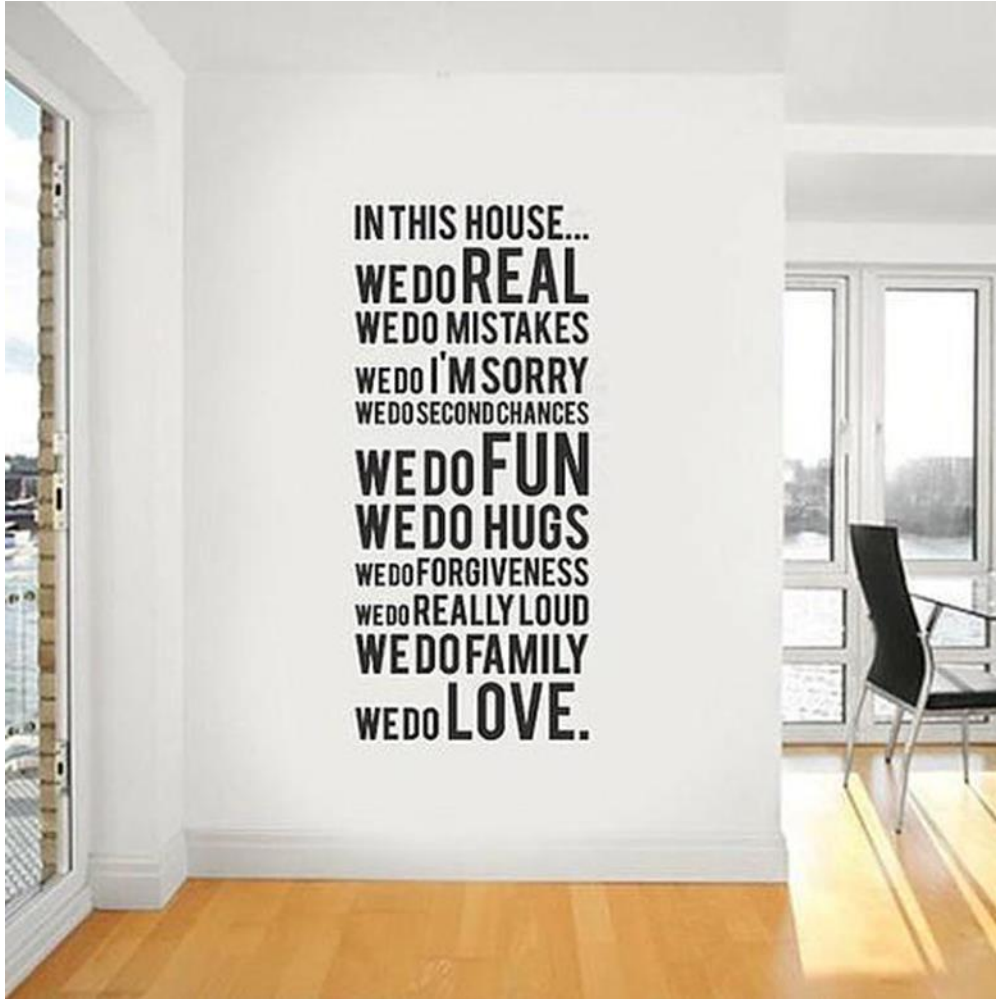
-- *St. Francis of Assisi*

So...now that I've taken some time out, breathed deeply, and calmed myself, I know where the miscommunication arose. It actually is my fault, because I thought I heard a response from my friend regarding a request I made of her...a response that I wanted to hear. I wasn't listening to the fullness of what she was saying, not only in words, but in tone and knowing her personal situation. I heard what she said through my own filters. I heard what I wanted to hear.



It happens. No need to bash myself, and it certainly wasn't her fault. Writing a response e-mail might lead to more misunderstanding, because she does not have the benefit of hearing the tone of my voice or seeing the set of my face when I respond. She might think my response is passive-aggressive or condescending, considering the state of mind in which she seems to be. However, I could be misreading the tone of her email entirely...

I'll call her up and invite her to lunch so we can hash it out in person. That's the civilized, right thing to do...to return to the fire pit and speak lovingly with my companions who I know, underneath bristly, hurt words, love me, too.



Plus, we'll both live longer...and better!

**Truthtime question:** Am I calm enough to forgive myself and others, and to get busy making things right?



# The Nine Essentials of Health

## #5: Laughter/Active Appreciation

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You know when you just see an image and you can't stop laughing...in fact, as you look at it you laugh even harder, until you're doubled over, you can't breathe, and your friends are laughing at your feverish laughter?

Like almost everyone around Connecticut (and elsewhere, I expect), I was struck with profound sadness by the tragedy in Newtown in December 2012, only to be enraged that the Westboro Baptist Church Tweeted it wanted to come to Connecticut and picket the funerals of the dead.

I have to tell you; this latter group really challenges my commitment to free speech in America. I still believe in free speech, but really, my brothers and sisters, I do NOT like what this group has to say!

It is so easy to lose faith and get so angry at the human condition when things so clearly go wrong. It is also easy to lose faith in humanity during times like the Newtown shootings of those sweet children. Despite my knowledge that people can be beautiful in their expression of love and creativity, sometimes the knowledge of the human capacity for malice, bitterness, hate and destruction can be overwhelming, and maintaining my hope for our future can be difficult.

Also at that time: as a parent, I knew I had to say something to my daughter to keep her connected to life in a positive way, and to let her know she was not alone in her confusion, anger and fear. Such is the proper duty of a parent – not to be Superhuman, but to be encouraging, supportive and present. But how was I going to be there for her when I was finding it difficult to be present for myself?

So I was “faking it until I made it,” and my daughter and we went out to Cusi for a spell. I indulged my daughter’s suggestion of surfing Youtube with her while we supped on their hummus platter. One video had a series of comments, and one of the comments was made by someone who had adopted the following image as their avatar:



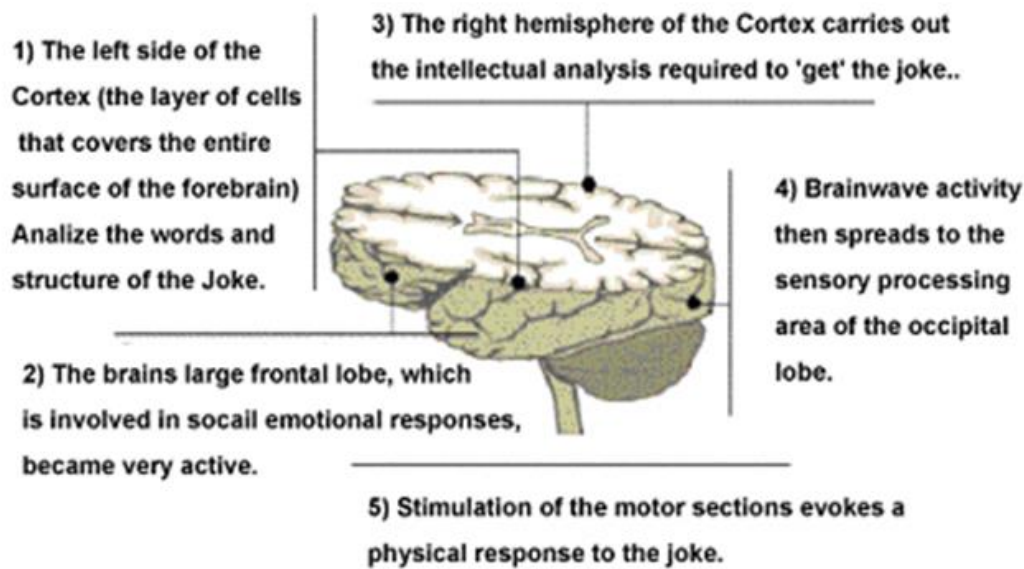
Something about this bunny seemed to reflect how I was feeling inside, and it tickled me in just the way I needed tickling. You would have thought I was thirteen

years old, the way I doubled over in the booth, open-mouthed, screaming huge tracks of laughter, smacking the cushion searching for breath between guffaws.

My daughter did not think the picture was as funny as I did, but thought my reaction was so funny that she began laughing as hard as I was; we both sunk to the seats of the booth with hysterical laughter, tears streaming out of our eyes. Thank the gods it was a rainy Sunday afternoon, so there were few witnesses to our spectacle. I have to tell you, now that it's a day later and I can look at this rabbit without laughing (as much), I'm so glad I ran across it.

As stated to in [The Nine Essentials of Health: #4, Meditation/Prayer](#), anger, depression, confusion, sullenness, and sadness has terrible effects on the body, and they begin immediately upon the experience of the emotional waves. Immunity goes down, digestion problems arise, heart rate increases, breathing becomes more shallow, our skin becomes less elastic and sags, and inflammatory markers start to affect nervous, muscle, joint, and skeletal tissue. If these markers continue for an extended period of time, all kinds of preventable chronic diseases develop, up to and including death. Meditation/Prayer can bring the emotional body into equilibrium or, even better, into an ecstatic state, which promotes health on every level.

Laughter and its cousins, intellectual and artistic appreciation, provide the same health benefits as meditation, and like the more destructive emotions, can deliver the benefits of creative emotion in large doses immediately upon the experience. With laughter and awe, our bodies respond with a decrease in cortisol, 3,4-Dihydroxyphenylacetic acid (DOPAC) and adrenaline, and an increase in beta endorphins and human growth hormone (HGH) which boosts our immune systems.



When we subject ourselves to large, consistent doses of laughter and the thrill of intellectual discovery, our inflammatory markers drop, our heart rate is rich and healthy, our breathing is deep and potent. Our skin becomes more pliant and supple, our nervous systems experience joy and anticipation, our muscle, joint, and skeletal tissue experience not only pain relief, but they thrive with the body's preparation of more wonderful things to experience on the horizon. Life expectancy increases, some say as much as five years, in a happy, fulfilled person, and certainly quality of life increases.

When we are able to laugh, we are able to approach situations that are normally unbearable and make healthful assessments of them. We are able to connect with others and help raise spirits instead of allowing everyone to collectively fall into sullen isolation. We are able to take ourselves less seriously, and in so doing, we enable ourselves to reengage in a healthy manner in our society and the world.

When we allow ourselves to laugh, we ideally avoid destructive attitudes and behaviors that lead to horrible tragedy. We have capacity to listen, to act calmly, and to forgive.

Likewise, when we are able to find intellectual and artistic ferment, life-enriching hormones and neurotransmitters come into play. Serotonin and dopamine rise at complimentary levels, blood and nourishment shunts to the prefrontal cortex, digestion maximizes its resources to promote stimulation to the nervous system, muscles, joints

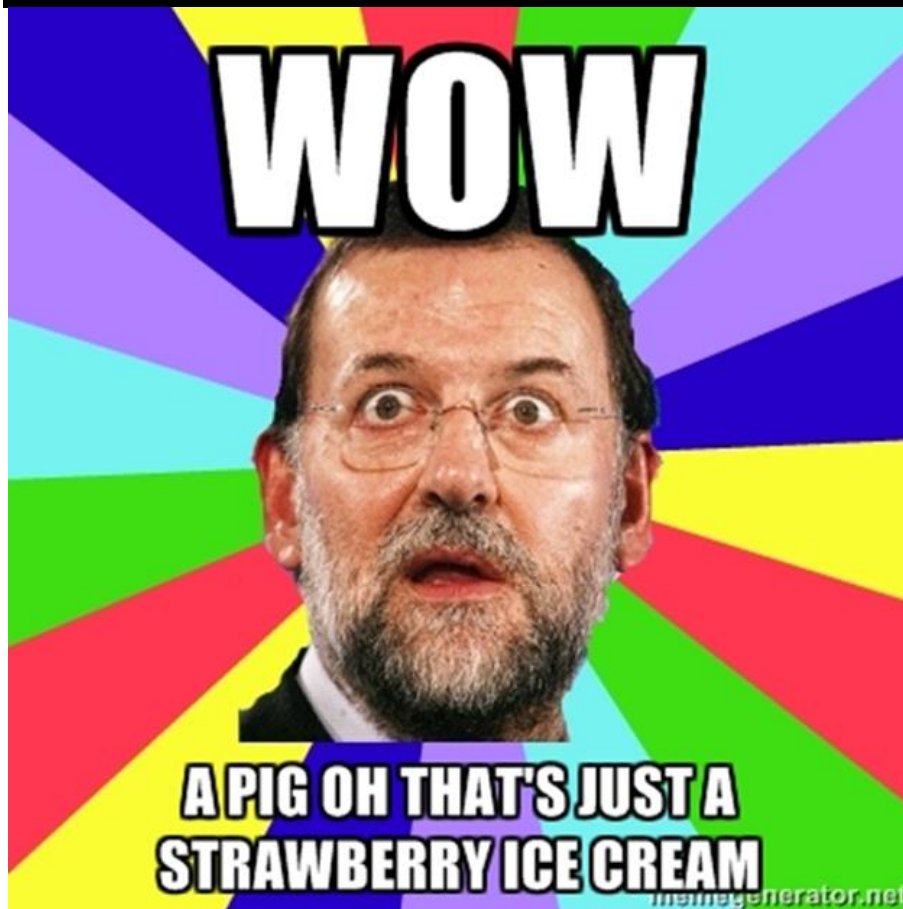


and connective tissue become pliant and full of energy so that we can bring our ideas to fruition and thus help society in this way. We become healthful, useful members of our world, and fine examples for all of us to follow.

$$AA = \frac{r_o \left( \left[ P + U + \frac{K_f}{K_d} + \frac{I_f}{I_d} \right]_o + r_a \left[ \left( P + \frac{I_f}{I_d} + \frac{K_f}{K_d} \right) + G + M \right]_a \right)}{t + m}$$

Where,

- AA= art appreciation
- r<sub>o</sub>= mental set or readiness of observer
- r<sub>a</sub>= mental set or readiness of artist
- P= psychophysical stimuli and mental reactions
- U = the Unconscious, including the irrational
- K<sub>f</sub>= knowledge of social origin that facilitates liking a specific something
- K<sub>d</sub>= knowledge of social origin that debilitates liking a specific something
- I<sub>f</sub>= Personal individual perceptual and Cognitive framework that facilitates liking something
- I<sub>d</sub>= Personal "preferences" that debilitate liking something
- t = time
- m = medium (-a) used
- G = goal of the art work
- M = material manipulation or transformation (technique)
- o = observer's
- a = artist's



Saying that there is no time for recreation, that there is no time for pursuing what stimulates your intellect and creativity, and experiences that bring laughter and joy are frivolous, useless time wasters is missing the point of your existence entirely, and you will kill your body with misery. It is just that simple.

It works like this: yes; we have time to pursue what we have always wanted to pursue, because this is our life, here and now, and if we do not take time for ourselves, we will never have it. Tomorrow never comes, and we have “nothing but a lot of empty yesterdays,” as Professor Harold Hill so eloquently put it in the play, *The Music Man*.



If we do not take time out to experience the joy, humor, and wonder of life, we will never appreciate all that we can experience and we will make others miserable around us. Ultimately, we will all die lonely, miserable, and sick.

Effective leaders laugh. They also influence by example. Studies show that leaders laugh more than subordinates do; so leaders, get out there and teach your subordinates to laugh like you do. Luckily, you have mirror neurons on your side. Mirror neurons encourage people to mimic behavior like laughter. That is why watching a video of someone laughing makes us laugh. We are literally wired to laugh when others laugh. We are wired to appreciate the creative and intellectual merits of others, as well!



Also, leaders, make certain that your employees and/or assistants are in appropriate departments that encourage their creativity and engagement. Their productivity will go up with their enjoyment, everyone's health will improve, and you will save on health insurance benefit costs. What's more, everyone will go to work happy. Win-win all around.

So make sure you take 1-3 hours out of your day to pursue your bliss. Make sure you challenge your brain cells with the things you love. If you don't know what that is, go find it. You will. Take time to find the humor in things about yourself and your response to life. Allow others to experience your humanity through mirth and appreciation. Humor and awe lead to appreciation.

After my daughter and I finally calmed down, I copied the bunny picture with the intention of using it as my avatar for a while (I changed my mind, so don't bother looking). As the afternoon of camaraderie progressed, we came back organically to the shootings in Newtown, were able to explore the situation with less tension. We were able to talk about it, read about different reports on the Internet, and reflect on the heroic actions of teachers and authorities, the lives they gave, and the emotions we felt. Every time we came to a point when we both acknowledged anger and confusion, we called up the bunny and laughed at ourselves.

In this way, we were able to reflect about ways that we could improve our relationships with others and perhaps help others deal with the aftermath of pain and suffering. We talked about what the future can hold, and began to pursue creative,

healthy ways of approaching life. We talked about how music can be a tool for healing, and listened to some wonderful music that sparked our ability to appreciate the art of music while held hands and cried for the dead. At the end of the day, when we hugged, we were both present in our appreciation of one another.

Be well, everyone.



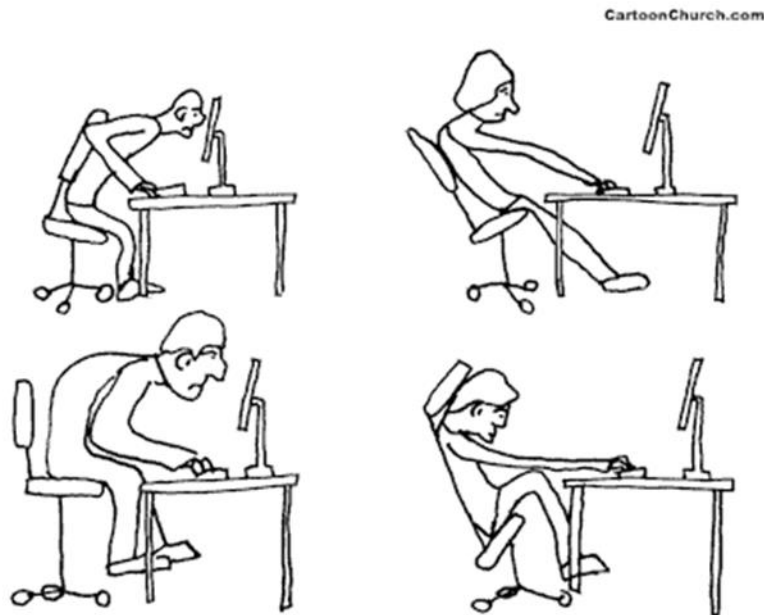
**Truthtime question:** When learning of senseless acts of violence and hatred, are you able to calibrate your feelings so that they do not physically sicken you?



# The Nine Essentials of Health

## #6: Proper Posture

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BAD POSTURE (EXAMPLES OF)

*Straighten your spine, chin forward, tuck in, roll shoulders back and drop them, unlock your knees, point big toes forward, and breathe from your belly — not your shoulders.*

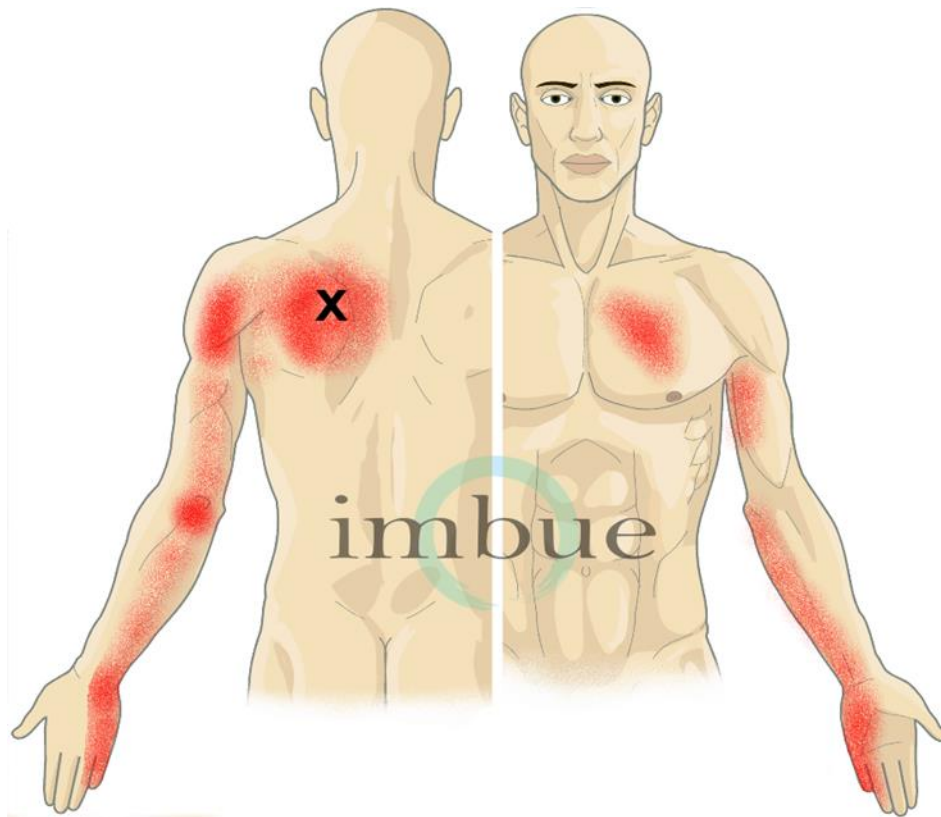
“Never name the well from which you will not drink.” It is a line from the fantasy classic, *The Mists of Avalon* by Marion Zimmer Bradley. I believe Merlin was saying it to Morgan Le Fay, but I can’t find my copy at the moment to clarify and Google isn’t helping me.

Anyway, it isn’t who said it that is of particular interest to me at the moment; it is the meaning. I take it to mean the same thing as “never say ‘Never.’” It’s like challenging the Universe. When you profess to live by a certain code, the Universe will make certain you live or die by your word. As a chiropractor and health advisor, I have made it my life to advise people to live their lives a certain way – the Healthy Way. I also have a particular adversity to hypocrisy, so when I do not live up to the

standards I set for others, I suffer the consequences about three times as badly as others might who don't care about living the life that they profess others should live.

With this in mind, I am loathe to report that, at the moment, I feel as if I swallowed an ice pick sideways and that it is stuck in my esophagus. I feel as if someone made a dolly likeness of me and ran its left shoulder through with a knife. I feel as if there is a spiky tennis ball in the region of my left breast that is stuck behind my sternum or in my left lung as I move.

None of these harrowing metaphors are real, of course. What is happening in reality is that my left rib, Rib 3 to be precise, has rotated downward and is impinging on the intercostal nerve that lives between Ribs 3 and 4. Consequently, muscles in the area (most definitively, serratus posterior superior) are spasming like a m\*\*\*\*r f\*\*\*\*r and setting off trigger points that are causing crazy pain around my lung and heart and close to the nerve supply that innervates my left side, underarm, the length of my arm, and my left pinky — like so...



...except I'm a girl...

So I'm finding it difficult to breathe, my heart feels inflamed, and my left arm is weak. If I were anyone else, I'd be in the emergency room thinking I was having a heart attack. My husband indeed was frightened I was having a heart attack or a stroke. I had to let him listen to my heart and ask me questions like, "What's your name? What day is this? Where are you?" before he agreed not to take me to the hospital. Had I not answered correctly, I would have had thousands of dollars in tests done, two overnight stays, only go home with a prescription for Percocet after the medical doctors found nothing.

But I know better, and Rib 3 is rotated inferior on Rib 4, because my spine went just enough out of alignment to rotate the vertebrae to which Rib 3 attaches, Thoracic 3 (T3), inferior left. This in turn twists the rib just enough to impinge on the nerve supply, which in turn chokes the nerves that supply the surrounding musculature, and consequently makes my life a living hell.

Why? Because I've not been practicing what I preach. I've been hanging on my laptop writing for hours on end, my arms too high for my seat, without moving around and stretching every half hour. I got wrapped up in my work and didn't work out because "I didn't have time." I leaned forward and slumped in my seat for hours. I got up only when my stomach and bladder complained loud enough to tear me away for a few moments.

I've not been paying attention to my side-posture adjustment maneuver at work either. I was taught by the best to pay close attention to the position of my shoulder when I adjust, because I'd be out of a career if I didn't. Lately, I've been getting ambitiously sloppy.

Also, I've been dragging my office with me in my backpack as I travel around anywhere that the MTA can take me. My backpack is too full for my frame and the straps are not even. I didn't stretch before and after I wore it, either.

So, just before bed on Monday, I was cleaning the cookies from my computer and I felt it start – that hideous, involuntary twisting of my musculature just underneath my scapulae. I literally stopped and told it, "No, no, no!" It didn't listen. Too late.

I lifted my left arm and tried to stretch to the right in a last ditch effort to bargain with my body, to avoid the inevitable.

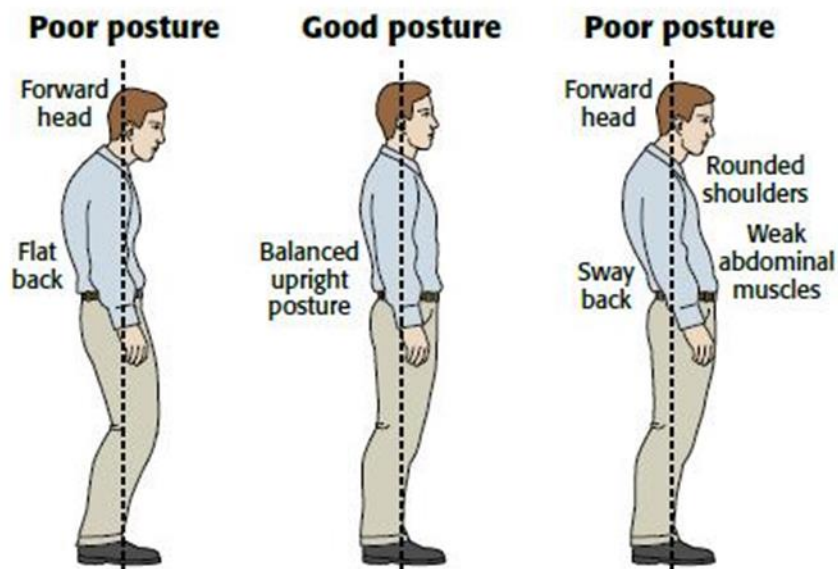
My body was cruel and unyielding. “No, Claire; you played the Hypocrite. Your posture has sucked for days, you did nothing to correct it, and now you pay!”

The level of pain an impinged nerve and a muscle spasm can deliver is beyond comprehension unless you experience it. Ask any mother giving birth naturally. Even if it’s a tiny muscle, it can cause absolute havoc with your quality of life. The pain is not only debilitating, it’s exhausting!

After an almost-sleepless night, with my tail tucked squarely between my legs, I limped off to my friend’s chiropractic office for help. After a very fine adjustment, Dr. Isaac Lichy admonished me that the pain wouldn’t go away right away, that healing takes time. I’d also need to come back three times a week for a few weeks until my body was back to normal. Meanwhile, drink plenty of water, take anti-inflammatory enzymes, ice the area and after a few days, apply wet heat...etc...etc...etc...the usual spiel I tell my patients...humiliating but appropriate.

Doctors are the worst patients, they say. \*sigh.\* But this stupid episode marks a perfect introduction to [The Nine Essentials of Health — #6: Proper Posture](#)

### Standing:



Tuck in your chin. Roll your shoulders back. Now drop your shoulders. Point your big toes forward. Unlock your knees. Your spine is as aligned as you can get it. If you're wearing a back pack, make sure it is appropriate for your height and weight, has great waist support as well as shoulder support, and not full of extraneous stuff.

Don't give up. Pretend you are Superman. Or Wonder Woman.



Maybe not so much Superman here...but Wonder Woman is doing it right.

You may feel awkward at first. You are not used to standing with proper posture. You feel pretentious. You feel like you look foolish. You don't. You looked foolish before. Now you look strong and solid. You look confident and sexy. And when you allow yourself, you feel confident and sexy too, don't you?



## Sitting:



Sit straight. Uncross your legs. Lift your chest. Put your feet on the floor. Make sure your knees are at right angles, over your ankles. Roll your shoulders back. Now drop your shoulders. Rest your hands high on your thighs. Again, Your spine is as aligned as you can get it.

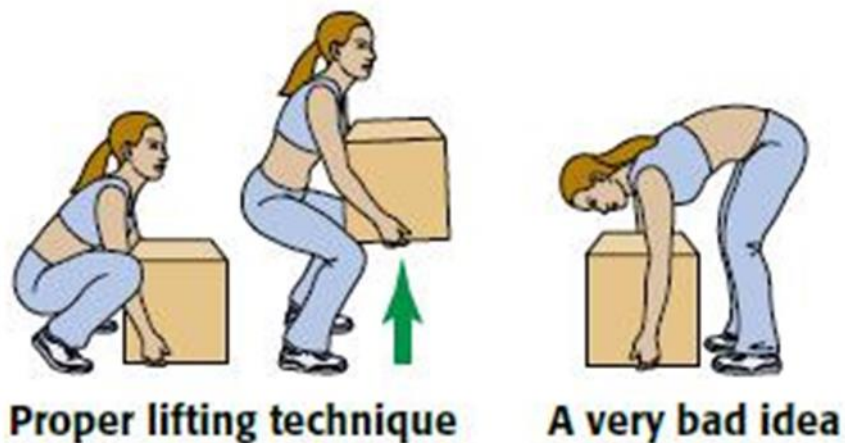
Don't give up. Don't slump. And get up and move around every ½ hour or so. We were never built for sitting long-term.

Pretend you are important. Pretend a lot of people depend on your strong form and your Great Work. Pretend that every turn of your keyboard, your pen, your knife, your hammer, or your steering wheel, is one more step toward saving the world. You know what? If you will it, it is!



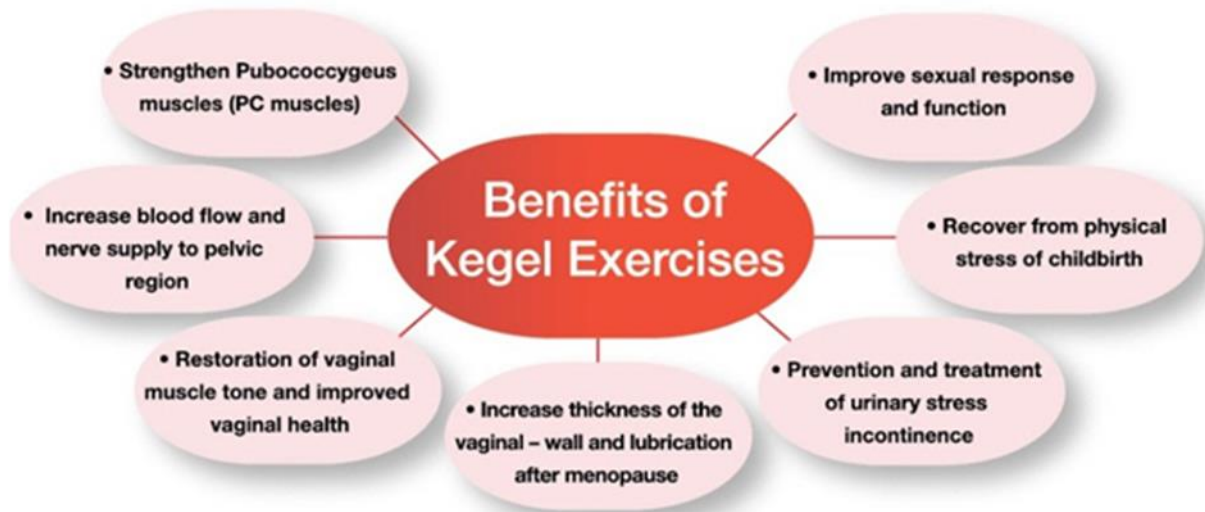
*J. Adam Wilson*

**Lifting:**

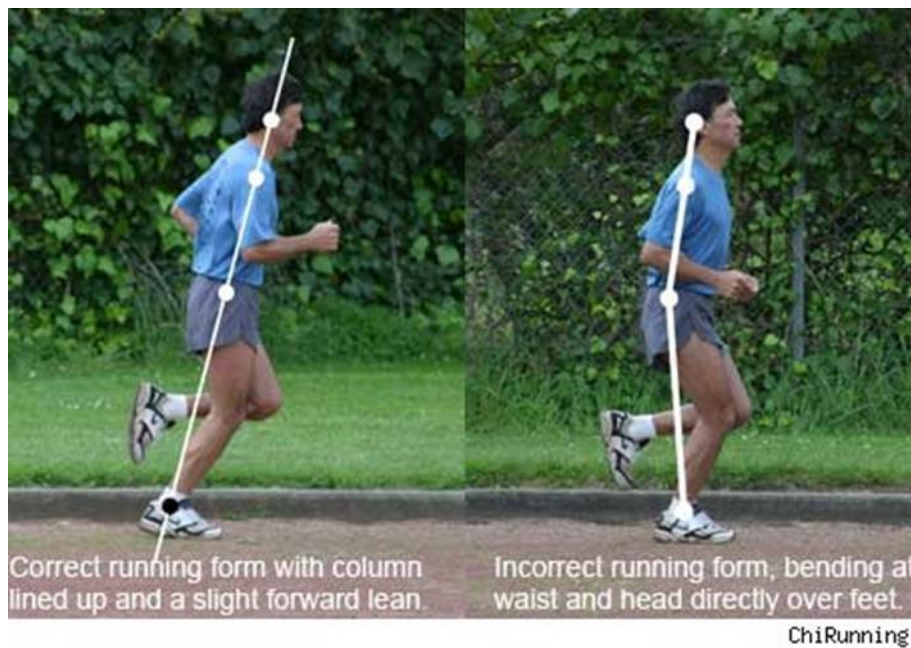


Take your time. Small manageable boxes are preferable to large unwieldy ones. Hold the heavy part close to your body. Your biggest muscles, besides your heart and your tongue, are your leg muscles. Use your legs.

As you lift, clench your pelvic bowl like you have to go to the bathroom. This will help stabilize and strengthen your low back. This exercise is inspired by a Dr. named Kegel.



**Running:**



Straight forward lean, tucked-in chin, foot fall fluid – don't stomp! Be like water.

Pretend you are Ethan Hunt running through Shanghai in *Mission Impossible III*.





### **Gardening/Cleaning:**

If you're going to do something dirty, embrace the dirt! Get in there knees first. Kneel with your back straight. Don't lean. Bring the dirty goodie to you.

Pretend you're six.



### **Sleeping:**

Sleep on your back and sides. Make sure your neck and back are comfortably supported and in alignment. A pillow between your legs or behind your knees help take pressure off your low back. Lower pillow height is preferable to a stack of pillows under your head. Your mattress should be not too hard, not too soft.

Pretend you are Goldilocks.



### **Shoveling/Pushing:**

Take your time. Opt for many light loads instead of a few heavy ones hoping you'll save time. Keep even. Switch hand position and sides often. Drink lots of water. Again: use your legs to push off! Use your whole body. Don't twist and throw off-balance.

Pretend you're a chiropractor.





*My friend Dr. Jennifer Falcone*

Good posture in everything you do is day-to-day healthy upkeep for not just your spine, but your knees, shoulders, elbows, feet, hips, wrists, and every other joint in your body. If you are good to your body from day to day, it will be your faithful and pain-free vehicle in which you live your fabulous life. If you take it for granted and get sloppy and lazy, your ability to function will shorten and diminish much more quickly than you ever anticipated. And when your body sounds the alarm that you are moving awkwardly towards the point of no return, you will most definitely know it! The pain feels like the end of the world! Don't ignore it with pain killers. Do something about it

(I mean, get to your friendly neighborhood chiropractor and other trusted bodyworkers) and get back on track!

If the instructions in this blog seem impossible for you just out of sheer incomprehension, please set up an appointment with a good chiropractor (me, for instance,) and she or he will help very nicely! By the by, a massage therapist friend of mine, Selina Rifkin, L.M.T. reminded me that there is a great organization called Feldenkrais that teaches people how to “be” in their bodies. Here’s that link: <http://www.feldenkrais.com/>.

**Truthtime question:** are you slouching right now?

# The Nine Essentials of Health

## #7: Brush and Floss!!!

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*You can decrease the chances of everything from the common cold to a heart attack by brushing and flossing twice a day at least.*

What in the world does a chiropractor know about brushing teeth and flossing gums? Enough to know that everyone of us should brush and floss twice a day. I have a set of teeth and gums, like you do (hopefully). I learned the value of brushing and flossing way back in kindergarten, when the local dentist visited our class and had us chew on red pills that stained my teeth and showed us where plaque lived (for me, it looked like it lived all over my mouth).

Remember this early childhood trauma?



As I aged and became a carefree teenager (yeah, right..), I was the hapless recipient of six years' worth of braces. I learned the value of keeping my gums free of food particles through the horror of bleeding gums and bad breath. For me as a teenager, the thought of my peers thinking I had nasty breath and gross gums was enough to make me convulse.

As I aged into my twenties and thirties and became increasingly interested in health living, I learned that diet has a lot to do with oral health. There was a dentist named Weston Price who founded and chaired the research institute of the National Dental Association (which became the American Dental Association) from 1914-1928. In 1939, he wrote a book called *Nutrition and Physical Degeneration*, in which he details his research of tooth cavities and gum degeneration among cultures all over the world, with particular emphasis on their diets and nutritional intake. In his book, he correlates our adoption of processed fats and carbohydrates in our Western culture to not only tooth and gum decay, but many health problems in our society.





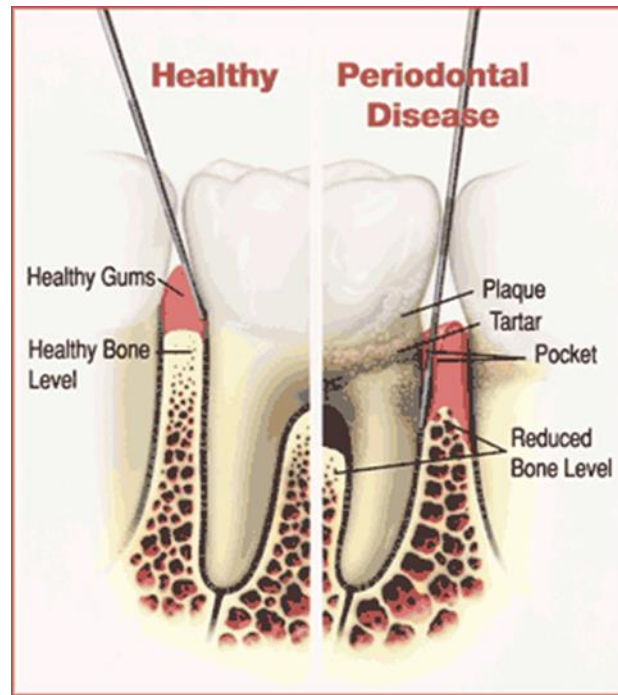
*Weston Price*

He also emphasizes in the book that the proper structure of the face during human development – influenced by proper nutrition – lends itself to the health of the body, because when the jaws develop properly the teeth have room to grow in the mouth. There is an organization called the Weston Price Foundation, founded in 1999, that advocates a farm-to-table dietary lifestyle, inclusive of animal fats and fermented vegetable proteins (for more information, visit <http://www.westonaprice.org/>).

Dr. Price's ideas are controversial in the dental and medical professions, but to me, as a chiropractor, they make sense (in chiropractic philosophy, whether you are a vegetarian or an omnivore, living and eating as closely to nature as possible makes sense). In any case, any dentist will tell us that, unless we brush and floss at least twice a day, food gets stuck in the little nooks and crannies of our mouths. The food breaks down thanks to bacteria in your mouth.

The foods we eat is also food to the bacteria; and we need the help of bacteria to break down the food in our mouths. However, food is not supposed to stay in our mouths. Our mouths are only the first stop along a long and adventurous trek through our digestive systems, all the way to our anuses and bladders. Like any life form, bacteria proliferates where there is a favorable environment full of a steady food source. So if we don't brush or floss, this bacteria, whose job is to break down food into proteins, begins to break down our gums and teeth because – hey – they are made of

protein! Our gums and teeth are comprised of living protein, but when they get prolific and aggressive enough, they will kill our living protein to make food for themselves! Bacteria are very adaptable.



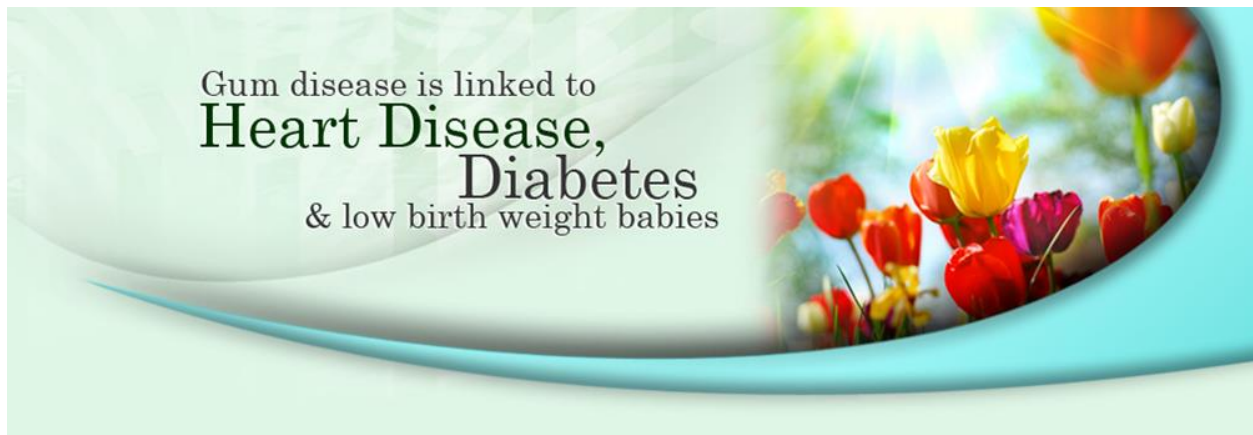
As the degeneration continues, the bacteria find their way to our blood systems through oral capillaries and tiny vessels. Like a river, they find their way to the source, and get into the major arteries and veins and travel all over the body.

What do we know about allergies? Allergies are immune responses to what the body considers are dangerous pathogens. Through their action, they cause inflammation of our mucus membranes, but they also cause inflammation everywhere they think there is a problem.

Our blood goes to almost every system of our bodies. If our blood system is rampant with bacteria from our mouths, bacteria whose job is to break down proteins, living or dead, the immune system sets itself on overdrive to kill bacteria globally throughout the whole body.

Hello, allergies! Hello, "fibromyalgia!" Hello, colds and flu! Hello, inflammatory bowel disease (IBS)! Hello, arthritis! Hello, lung and heart disease! Hello, kidney and liver disorders! Hello, mysterious nerve disorders like multiple sclerosis (which is a symptom of a problem, not a disease, as I will detail in a later blog post).

Hello, emotional disorders caused by interference to the endocrine systems via the nervous systems!



Here's the gist of life, folks, if you haven't already noticed from all these posts: everything we do matters. The small stuff is the stuff that matters most. Grandiose events that aren't fatal, like car accidents and eating something we shouldn't have eaten while on vacation, aren't the problem. The body can and will heal very nicely from these events if given the proper environment. The stuff we do for our bodies every day – eating right; exercise; stretching; sleep; meditating; flossing; brushing; – gives the body a fighting chance to heal itself when these things occur.

When we let these simple necessities go, nature will find a way to eliminate our chances of survival. Making the right choices for our bodies is a necessity; not an option. Nature favors those who show up for duty every day and do what they need to do for themselves every day.

We can't hope to run a marathon when we've been sedentary for weeks and months. We can't expect to live a happy, healthy life if we refuse to do the things we need to do to prepare for a happy, healthy life.

We have to be vigilant every day in every way. It is not a chore to make the right choices every day if we love and honor our bodies and ourselves. Putting what is necessary off until "tomorrow," and the next day and the next, is condemning ourselves to an early, painful death.

It takes very little time to brush and floss. Twice a day, morning and night, is minimum duty. Also, go visit your dentist twice a year, for goodness sake. I prefer

holistic dentistry, but most dentists agree on the important health matters, so go to your favorite.



**Love your teeth  
for longevity!**

By the way, be critical of your fluoride use. I'm not going to go full into it here – I'll address this topic more in the next chapter, The Nine Essentials of Health #8: Drink Plenty of Filtered Water A Day. Sufficed to say, read credible material on all sides of the argument as to whether or not fluoride use is a good choice for you. Personally, I say no – but you have to make your own choice on the matter.

**Truthtime question:** When is the last time you flossed?

# The Nine Essentials of Health

## #8: Drink Plenty of Filtered Water A Day

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*Sedna's Love by Tammara*

Water; oh, how I love thee. Let me count the ways... one... two... three... four... etc...

Water is one of five ancient elements that early philosophers believed made up the Universe. The ancient alchemists placed water in the second step of the purification process, dissolution, right after fire and its process, calcination.

Mystically, water is considered a conductor – a medium between the worlds of the physical and the spiritual. Myths of gods and goddesses worldwide speak of journeys over or in water to visit the lands of the dead, the spirit world, renewal and rebirth.

Chemically, water is considered the universal solvent. Because of its H<sub>2</sub>O polarity (each molecule looks like Mickey Mouse – remember?), it has the ability to



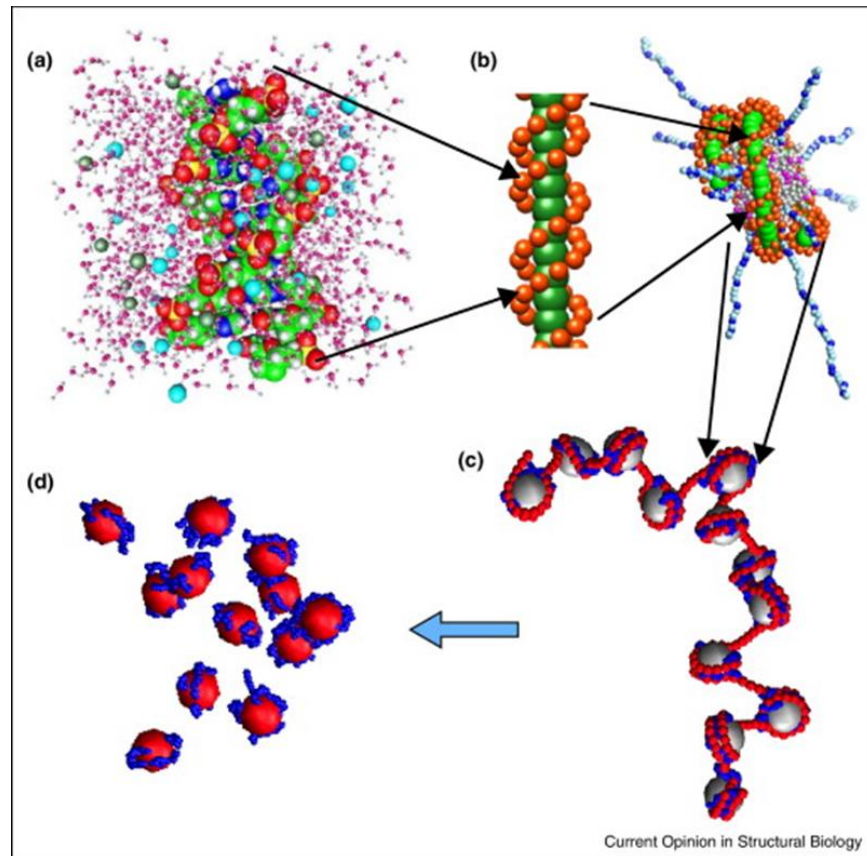
break up all kinds of compounds; in fact, it dissolves more substances than any other type of known liquid.

It has surface tension, so we can float paper boats on it, and it tastes so good when we're thirsty!



The reason water tastes so good when we are thirsty is because 75-85% of our bodies are made of water. Imagine that – most of what makes us who we are is just one compound!

Physically, water, by itself (pure H<sub>2</sub>O), is not a good conductor of electricity. However, it is a great solvent; and in nature, contains minerals and ions that make it a great conductor of electrical signals. Our bodies – in particular, our nervous systems – contain sodium, chloride, calcium, magnesium, and potassium. These are the very ions that fire the electrical signals that our neurons use to transmit signals. Once the water in our bodies contain these ions it will conduct neural electricity throughout our bodies as this electricity seeks out oppositely-charged ions in the water.

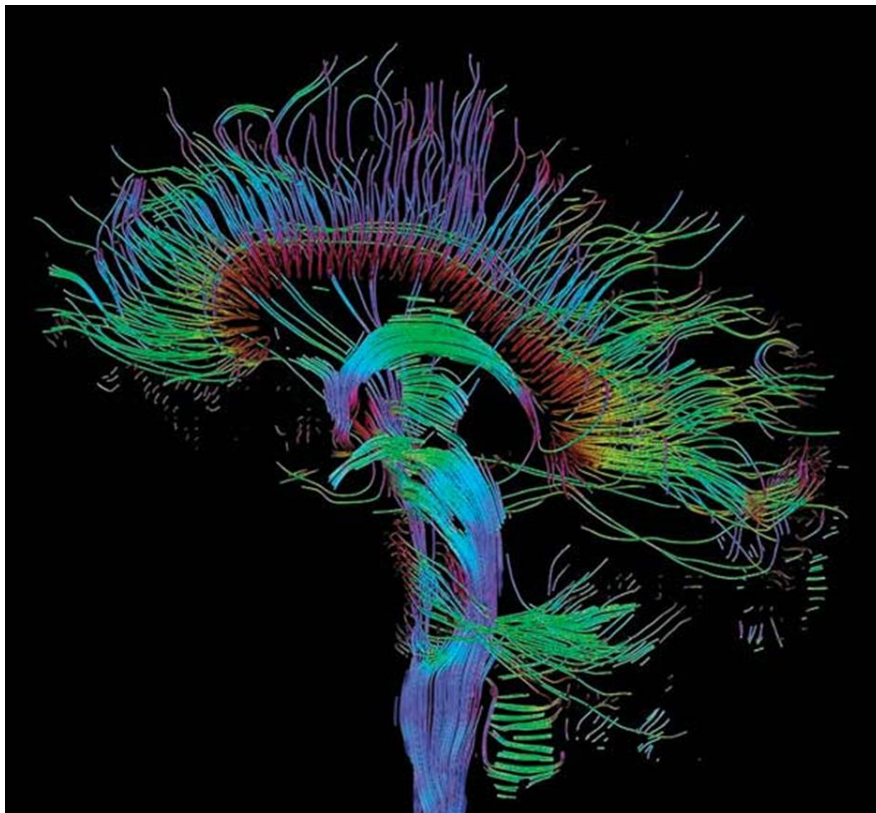


**Figure 3.** A hierarchy of DNA/chromatin models: (a) At the most detailed level, an atomistic description of DNA in the presence of mobile ions and explicit water is considered, which can form the basis for a simulation in an all-atom description of DNA, explicitly including all the ions and the solvent water molecules. (b) To the left is shown a CG model of DNA that includes a sequence of beads representing base pairs (green) with explicit charged phosphate groups (red). To the right in (b) an illustration of a detailed CG model of the nucleosome core particle (NCP) including DNA as shown to the left, encompassing a detailed histone structure with one bead for each amino acid and with explicit charges in the core region and in the histone tails, as well as explicit mobile ions. The DNA backbone is green, phosphate groups red, histone octamer (HO) core grey, histone tails are blue, with dark blue charged groups (ions not shown). The negatively charged groups of the histone octamer surface forming the ‘acidic islet’ are highlighted in magenta. (c) At the second level of coarse-graining, the whole histone octamer core is represented as a single bead while the DNA is modelled as one bead per each 6 base pair fragment, having grafted chains of charged beads representing the histone tail amino acids (the number of beads is equal to the number positive tail charges (each tail bead representing 3–4 aa)). (d) Finally, the super coarse-grained model consists of red beads, each representing the whole NCP with grafted tails, having charged beads. The model (d) was used in the works [0020 and 0165], modelling the multivalent cation-induced folding of a chromatin fibre (see Figure 2(c)), while the model in (d) was used to model NCP aggregation induced by cations [0150 and 0270]. Within a multiscale approach, an atomistic simulation of one or more DNA molecules as in model (a), may be used within an inverse MC approach, to obtain solvent-mediated effective potentials, going from model (a) to the DNA in model (b). These interaction potentials can be used for DNA–ion interactions in a model corresponding to the NCP to the right in (b) and would enable simulations with implicit effects of the solvent water included in the ion–DNA interactions. Such results may then, in principle, be mapped to even coarser descriptions going to models (c) and (d). Source: Science Direct.

The nervous system, made up of neurons and supporting cells that collectively constitute the brain, spinal cord, and peripheral nerves, controls all bodily functions and make sure they run smoothly together. It controls the functions of our every system of our bodies – our hormones and neurotransmitters, our muscles, our digestive systems, our immune systems, our emotional systems, our heart, our lungs, our sexual system – everything!

Neurons use electromagnetic fields to conduct the power it takes to run these systems. The nervous system is literally our electric wiring, and the reason why we have life.

Water is essential to this life process. Ionized water, because it is such a fantastic solvent, will conduct electricity in all directions at once. Therefore, when we have a thought, thanks to the medium of water, our bodies respond instantaneously to the electrical charge that carries the thought.



**Figure 4:** Diffusion tensor imaging (DTI) records the movement of water molecules within neurons, using these to reconstruct a three-dimensional image of the neuronal system on a computer. Another article on Technology Review gives some background on this. Water diffuses throughout our bodies, but within axons—the long thin “bodies” of neurons—they tend to diffuse along the length of the axon (the myelin sheaths covering axons traps

water within the axon). DTI exploits this property to map axons within a patient's brain. Source: Technology Review

Isn't that great? Isn't that amazing? Our bodies are frickin' amazing! Water conducts our life through our bodies the way that water carries our souls through the stuff of myth and legend! Fantastic! Doesn't that fact alone make you want to go to chiropractic school? Doesn't it make you want to go back to school and study ancient philosophy, history, and mythology? Doesn't it make you want to get a drink of water?

*\*Ahem.\** Anyway, if we don't have adequate water intake in our bodies, we do not have proper conduction of neuronal signals, so none of the systems of our bodies work as well as they should. That's why your chiropractor cares about water intake. What is good for our nervous systems makes us chiropractors happy.

Here's some fun facts about water and the body:

The standard model is that we should drink  $\frac{1}{2}$  our body weight in ounces of water a day. There is controversy about this. I say that it is a good standard. The more active you are, the more water you need; but we shouldn't stray far from the above model day-to-day.

For example, a kid who is 86 pounds should drink 43 ounces (5  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups) of filtered water a day – not juice, not coffee, not sports drinks.

## Sports Drinks



Many people ask me about drinking sports drinks in lieu of water. For most people, nothing replaces clean, filtered water for healthy hydration; however, if you are a power athlete, some quality sports drinks can help you improve performance and rate of hydration. High carbohydrate drinks (more than 10% carbohydrate) are best before high-intensity exercise; hydrating sports drinks (4-9% carbohydrate, 10-25 mmol/l sodium) are meant to be consumed during and after training.

This is not so for the occasional or not-so-occasional exerciser. Water is better for you.

Don't give your child sports drinks, because developing bodies absorb liquids differently than adults, and the ratio of sodium to glucose in the drinks affect their rate of fluid absorption.

In both children and adults, higher exercise intensities slow the rate at which fluids and fuels are digested. However, this occurs to an even greater extent in children who are exercising at high intensities, and the maximum amount of fluid that a child can absorb per hour while training will be about 20-24 ounces.

Water is a food. We do not get enough of it, especially during workouts

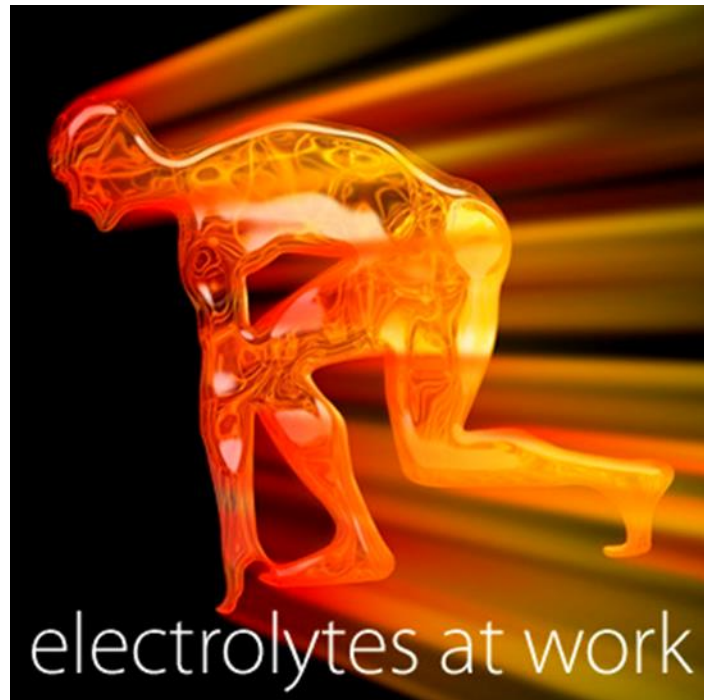
Fluid loss during exercise can equate to weight loss just after the workout. You do not want to lose water weight directly post-workout! If you weigh 2 pounds less just after exercise, you have lost 2 pounds of water.

Sweat rate is heavily influenced by:

- exercise intensity
- ambient temperature (rm. temp)
- humidity



## For Your Kids: Proper Mineral Balance and Hydration



A direct threat to heart health is electrolyte imbalance, which can occur when we are dehydrated and not eating enough of the right nutrients. Remember: muscle, including the heart, is 75%-85% water.

The heart, in particular, has its own electric circuitry that is regulated by proper hydration and electrolyte balance. In particular, children become dehydrated much more quickly than adults, and the dehydration and electrolyte deficiency that can occur during athletic training and sport events can be dangerous, even life-threatening.

Water levels and minerals like sodium, chloride, calcium, potassium, magnesium, and phosphate in proper quantities and ratios are all necessary for the heart to function properly.

Sweat losses during 2 hours of exercise can equal 2 liters (68 ounces) of fluid or more. For this duration, your child should drink 8 oz (1 cup) of filtered water every 15 minutes! The child needs to replenish during training in order to keep hydration at proper levels.

A good rule of thumb for your child athlete is the following chart:

### Figure 5: Water Intake

- 2 hours before exercise, 2-3+ cups
- 15 minutes before exercise, 1-2+ cups
- Every 15 minutes during exercise, 1 cup
- After exercise, 2-3 cups for every pound lost

Source: American College of Sports Medicine Position Paper, 2006.

### Keeping Up with Our Hydration Status

Monitor urine color (should be a light straw color).

#### ARE YOU DEHYDRATED? Check Your Urine

1, 2, 3 Well hydrated	1
	2
	3
4, 5 Hydrated but not well	4
	5
6, 7, 8 Dehydrated - You need to drink more	6
	7
	8

- 3 is good. If your urine is clear, you're drinking too much water.
- 4-8, not enough.
- If your urine is regularly 8, you definitely need to improve your relationship with water and possibly see your primary care physician.

Focus on fluids all day, not just during workouts and practice.

## Water and Heartburn

### 5 ADVANTAGES OF DRINKING WATER IN THE MORNING

- #5 - Drinking water on an empty stomach purifies the colon making it easier to absorb nutrients.
- #4 - Increases the production of new blood and muscle cells.
- #3 - Helps with weight loss. Drinking at least 16 ounces of chilled water can boost your metabolism by 24% in the morning.
- #2 - Glowing skin. Water helps to purge toxins from the blood which help keeps your skin glowing and clear.



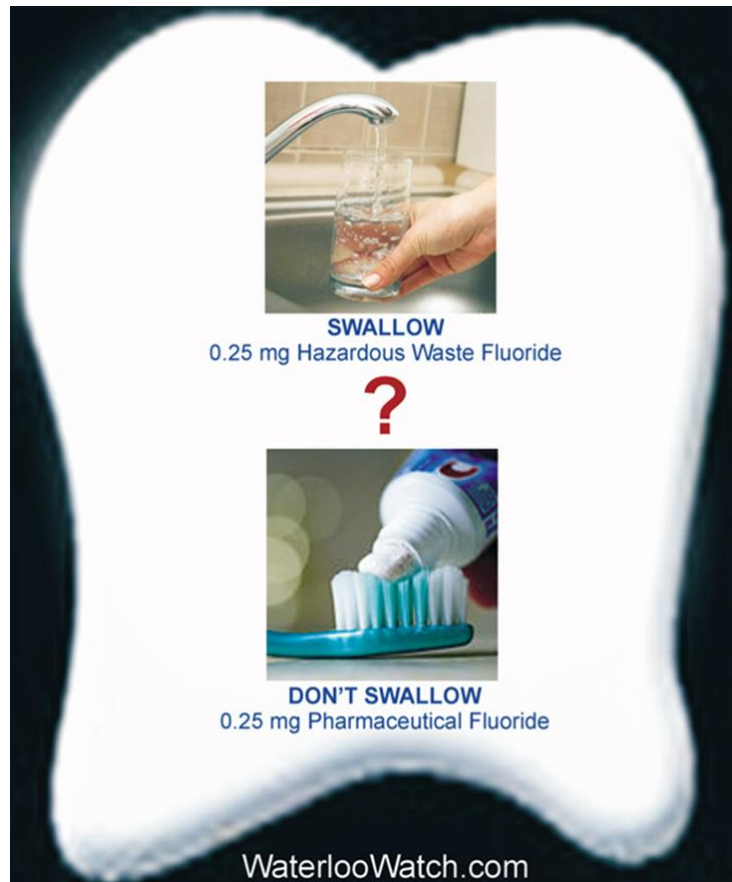
Acids washing back from the stomach into the esophagus primarily cause heartburn. Too much water too fast can overfill your stomach and back up stomach acids, instigating heartburn. If this happens to you, sip room temperature water throughout the day (very cold water can tighten your esophagus).

Although this does not work with everyone, master vocalist Alice Garrott recently informed me that, for some of her clients with chronic heartburn, drinking 1-2 glasses of room-temperature water upon waking actually helps them overcome their heartburn by washing wayward acids from the esophagus back into the stomach. (for more information on Alice Garrott's remarkable voice training services, visit (<http://www.instantvocaltransformation.com/>)).

### Non-Fluorinated Water

In the fluorinated water controversy, I am squarely in the “don’t put fluoride in my water” camp. Without getting too far into it here, just consider the following: Fluoride is a known poison. Using fluoride toothpaste is considered adequate

protection for our teeth by the American Dental Association. There is a poison control warning on fluoride toothpaste, and we are admonished to spit fluoride toothpaste out after brushing rather than swallow it, to protect us from the hazardous internal effects of fluoride. So...tell me again: why do we want or need fluoride in our drinking water?



The last is a rhetorical question.

Carbon filters like Brita® and Pur® are much better to use than buying most bottled water, and better for the environment. However, they do not remove fluoride from water. Fluoride is a very small molecule, and it take specialized equipment to remove it from water.

**Reverse Osmosis Filtration:** Reverse osmosis filters are used by some companies to remove fluoride and other impurities from their water. They are really expensive, so they are uncommon for personal use. You should know that not all bottled water is defluorinated. Look to make certain the bottled water uses reverse osmosis filtration.

**Activated Alumina Defluoridation Filter:** These are financially accessible to the general public. They need to be replaced frequently, but they do remove fluoride from home faucets. They range in price from \$30-\$200 per cartridge.

**Distilled Water:** Distilling water removes most, if not all, of fluoride in water, as well as everything else. Not all distilled water is packaged as drinking water, so check the label before buying it. There is some controversy around distilled water regarding the leeching of minerals out of the body. Chemically, that is highly unlikely.

#### **For Water Conservation: Laminar Flow Faucet Aerators**

Laminar flow types are used in hospitals and medical clinics to prevent airborne bacteria from entering the water. They also are water savers because they restrict the flow of water from the tap without reducing water pressure. If you use an aerator on your water taps you can reduce the amount of water you use by more than 50%. You can purchase a tap aerator at most hardware stores and plumbing outlets, but make sure you are choosing the right insert for your flow rate. For instance, a 5 liter a minute aerator should be fitted to bathroom sinks, while a 7.6 liter a minute aerator is suitable for kitchen and laundry sinks.





There is so much more, and so many claims regarding ionization, oxidization, water cures, detoxification, and more. There are many documentaries covering these controversies so you can decide at your leisure how you want to proceed. Check out this site for documentaries on water, and go to the home page to discover many awesome documentaries on almost every subject you can think of:  
<http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/search/?results=water>.

Once again: drink close to  $\frac{1}{2}$  of your body weight in ounces of water a day – more or less as you exercise or are exposed to hot weather.



**Truthtime question:** How much water are you drinking a day, on average?

# Nine Essentials of Health

## #9: Make Weekly Bodywork a Priority; in Particular, Chiropractic

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**Do you know anyone  
who would like:**

- 60% less hospital admissions
- 59% less days in the hospital
- 62% less outpatient surgeries
- 85% less in pharmaceutical costs

A 7-year study showed that patients whose primary physician was a chiropractor, experienced the above results.

For the health of your loved ones...

**CHOOSE  
CHIROPRACTIC**

Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapy, May 2007; 30(4): 263-269,  
Richard L. Sarnat, MD, James Winterstein, DC, Jerrilyn A. Cambren, DC, PhD

Bodywork is when a health practitioner lays hands on you or uses external physical instruments with the intention of creating positive changes in your health and well-being.

Did you know that these health professions are, in part or in whole, dedicated to performing bodywork as a method and guiding principle for optimal health?

### **From the West:**

- Chiropractic
- Massage
- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Osteopathy
- Natropathy

### **From the East:**

- Acupuncture
- Acupressure
- Ayurveda
- Siddha
- Shiatsu
- Yoga Massage

There are plenty more...Applied Kinesiology, Rolfing, Feldenkrais, Alexander Technique...my friend, Selina Rifkin M.S., L.M.T. (<http://vitallivingnow.net/>) wrote a book entitled, *The Referral Guide for Complimentary Care* (available at Amazon.com) that has listing and explanations for all sorts of bodywork health professions and is an invaluable resource for every bookshelf;. Also, here's a good website that has a glossary: [www.massagetherapy.com](http://www.massagetherapy.com), but oddly enough doesn't include chiropractic, occupational therapy or physical therapy.

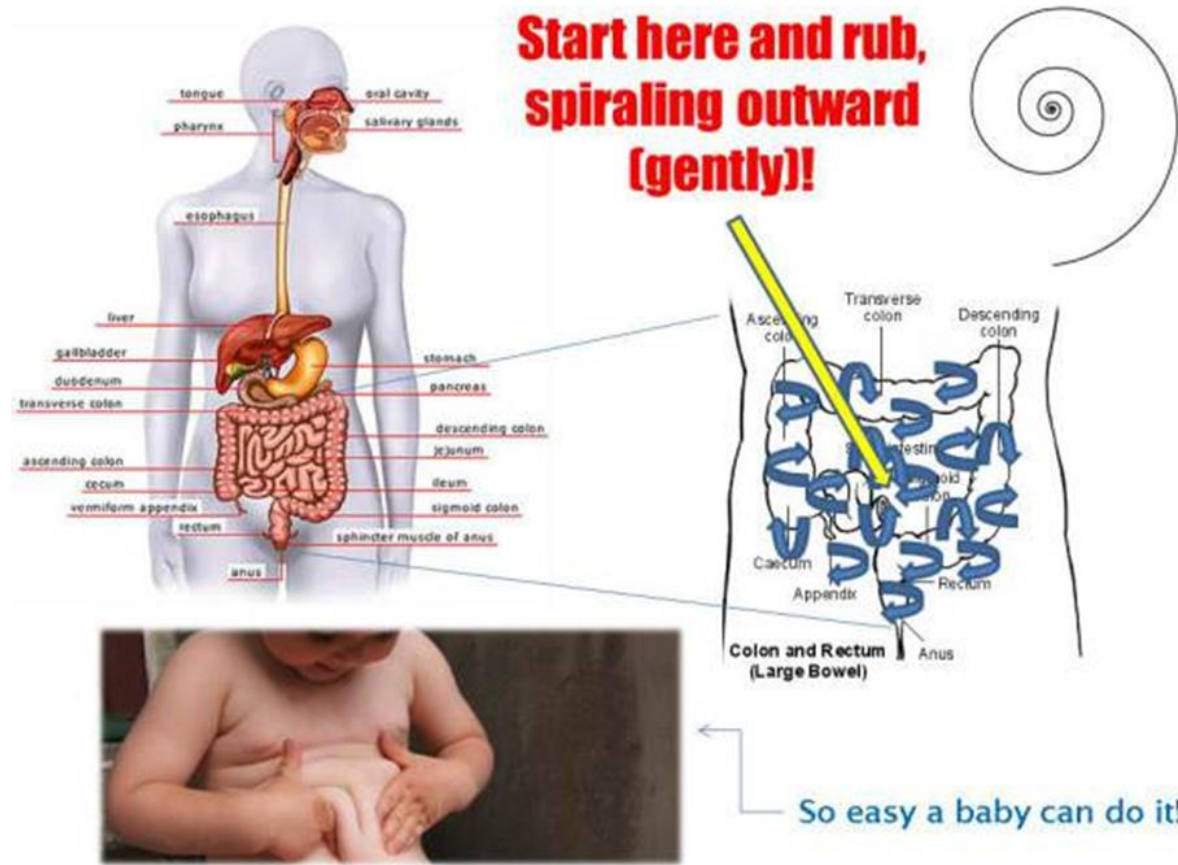
Bodywork has been around since people realized that a hug makes them happy and rubbing a sore muscle makes it less sore. It is no accident that there are so many modalities of bodywork available to us. We are not simply walking bags of chemicals. We cannot solve every health problem we have by ingesting drugs and vitamins.

We are pack animals. We are creatures who rely on one another for a full life. We are built to receive healing touch from another who is trained to help us, and healing touch from ourselves when we can reach the area that needs healing!

For instance: did you know that when you have chronic, painful gas and constipation, in addition to probiotics, prebiotics, digestive enzymes, and amino acids,

and all that other stuff, you can simply massage your belly to get the food moving through your gut?

Here's what you do: lay on your back with your legs bent, or with a pillow underneath your knees. Beginning at your belly button, take the pads of your index and third fingers of both hands and rub a spot clockwise for two or three turns. Then, lift your fingers and, moving clockwise in a circle, go to a spot beside it and rub it clockwise for two or three turns. Continue to do this in an ever-widening spiral until you run out of room to do so, ending at your pubis symphysis. If you feel a squishy area that is a little painful, work it a bit; but don't press so hard that you hurt yourself. Be gentle.

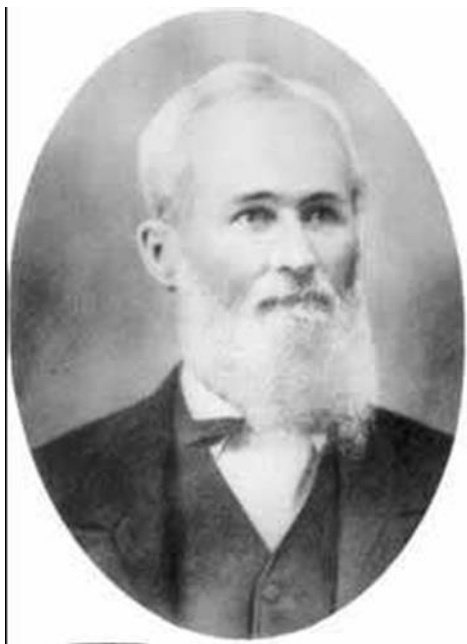


Do this every morning and you will find things moving along much more easily. Wow! Free and effective! You just took charge of your body and health, and did something for yourself that is very and loving! Terrific!

All the different types of bodywork have their own mission statements. Chiropractic's mission statement put forth by the Association of Chiropractic Colleges in 1996 is this:

“Chiropractic is a healthcare discipline that emphasizes the inherent recuperative power of the body to heal itself without the use of drugs or surgery. The practice of chiropractic focuses on the relationship between structure (primarily the spine) and function (as coordinated by the nervous system) and how that relationship affects the preservation and restoration of health.”

There is a term missing from this definition: “done by hand.” Chiropractic is a word that was invented in 1896 by Rev. Samuel Weed, a friend of the discoverer of chiropractic, Daniel David Palmer. Weed suggested combining the Greek words *cheiros* (by means of the hand) and *praktikos* (practical) to describe Palmer's treatment method.



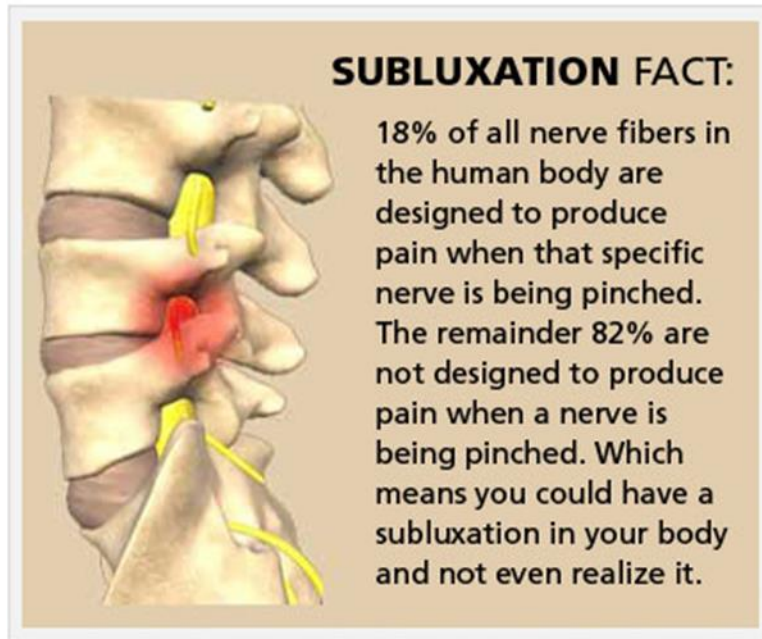
*Rev. Samuel Weed*

Chiropractors address the adjustment of the vertebral column and other parts of the body by hand or by specific use of non-invasive adjusting devices. The object of chiropractic is to clear physical interference to the nervous system so that the body can run properly and can heal itself naturally.

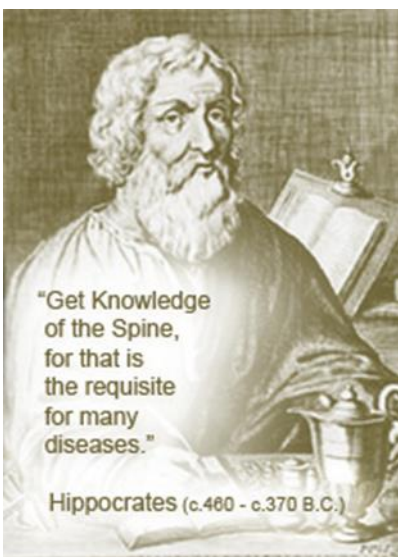
That's it.



Chiropractic is simple, effective, and natural. The body is supposed to self-adjust, but joints can get stuck sometimes. When vertebral joints get stuck out of alignment, they can really interfere with nervous system expression. Chiropractors call this interference subluxation (sub = less; lux = light; ation = nation – “state of less light”).



The longer the joints are stuck, the more problems arise. Usually by the time back and neck pain set in, the joints have been stuck for a long time. Let me be clear: **CHIROPRACTIC DOES NOT ADDRESS PAIN!!! CHIROPRACTIC ADDRESSES NERVOUS SYSTEM INTERFERENCE!!!** If pain relief happens – and it does, quite often – the relief is a side effect of chiropractic.



Chiropractic is not an expensive substitute for Motrin or Aspirin. It is a HEALTH CARE SYSTEM, the components of which have been described and outlined here in these Nine Essentials of Health.

The essentials of health are mostly addressed by you. This last one, bodywork, is best performed by a health care professional. For by-hand nervous system release, a chiropractor is the health care professional you want.

# COMMON SYMPTOMS AND EFFECTS OF VERTEBRAL SUBLUXATIONS

Your Nervous System controls the function of every cell, tissue and organ of your body;  
**VERTEBRAL SUBLUXATIONS** affect the function of your nervous system.

The result is a serious interference to health.

Some of the most common side-effects of VERTEBRAL SUBLUXATIONS are listed below;

## C1-C3

Headaches and migraine-like pain, neck and scalp tension, pressure and pain behind eyes, blurring of vision, dizziness, light-headedness, fainting, facial pain and numbness, ringing in ears, ear pain, jaw pain, reoccurring sore throat, nasal congestion, sinus trouble, loss of co-ordination, disorientation, symptoms of dyslexia, generalized malaise, childhood fevers, vertebral artery insufficiency, insomnia (loss of sleep), problems with memory, depression, irritability, loss of concentration, symptoms of allergies and hay fever.

## C4-C7

Pain and stiffness in the neck, pain in the shoulder, arm and hand, tennis elbow-like pain, hand and finger swelling, numbness and tingling in hands and fingers, pain of bursitis in shoulders, wasting of arm and shoulder muscles, reduced neck/shoulder movement, difficulty swallowing, nervousness, neck tension, chest pain, cold hands, poor circulation in the arms, twinges of pain which "seem to go away", loss of power and grip strength, whiplash, certain thyroid problems, speech difficulties, hormonal balance issues.

## T1-T3

Shortness of breath, chest pain and pressure, difficult breathing, pain between shoulder blades, rib pains, heart arrhythmias, bronchitis and related chest conditions, respiratory difficulties, reoccurring upper respiratory tract infections, functional heart conditions, asthma and allied conditions (especially in children), certain types of arm pain, angina-like pain.

## T4-T9

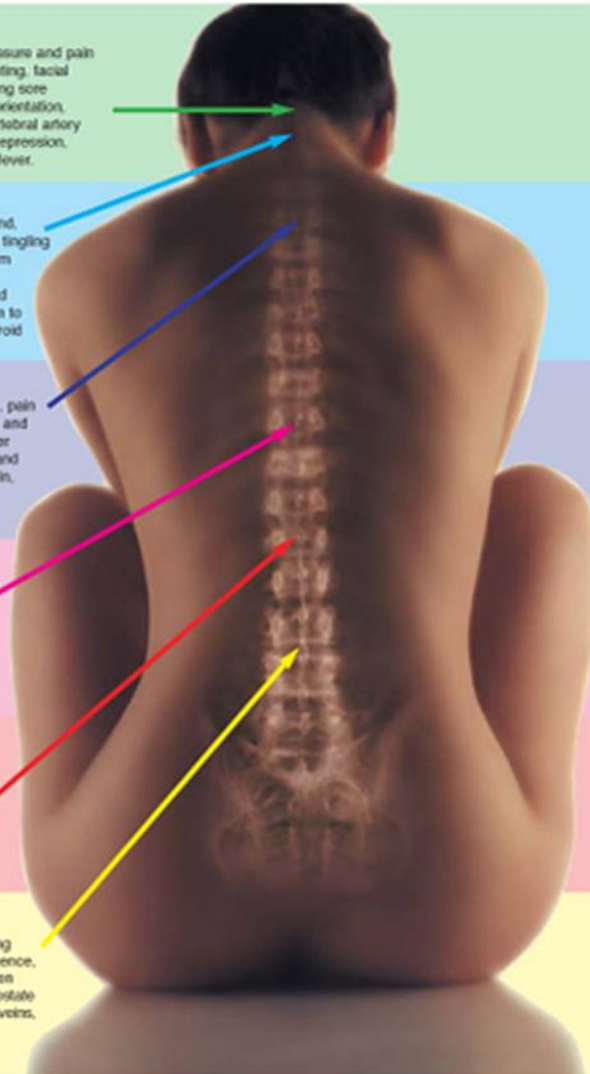
Pain between shoulder blades, chest pain and pain in ribs, liver and gall bladder trouble, jaundice in infants, stomach trouble, chronic indigestion, dyspepsia, heartburn, abdominal bloating, pancreas malfunction, hypoglycaemia, ulcers, gastritis, abdominal pain, trouble digesting certain foods, allergies, lowered resistance acne and other skin disturbances, abnormal blood pressure, sweet tooth cravings.

## T10-L1

Urinary problems, constipation, ulcerative intestinal conditions, spastic colon, lazy colon, adrenal trouble, appendicitis-like pain, abdominal bloating and pain, gas pains, frequent sighing, diarrhoea, fluid retention, allergies, fatigue, and mid-back pain.

## L2-L5

Low back pain, groin pains, weakness in legs, cramping, poor circulation in legs, numbness in legs and feet, childhood "growing pains", leg pains, gas pains, constipation, certain types of impotence, infertility, bed wetting in children, abdominal cramps, fatigue when standing, cold feeling in feet, menstrual cramps, bladder and prostate difficulties, sciatica (pain in leg), leg and ankle swelling, varicose veins, urinary difficulties, fatigue and leg weakness, spinal curvature, scoliosis, frequency (too frequent urination), knee pains, hemorrhoid pain, hip pain, ulcerative bowel conditions.



## CHIROPRACTORS CORRECT VERTEBRAL SUBLUXATIONS

*Resulting in normal nerve function and continued good health*

PROFESSIONAL CHIRO-POD  
 DRUGS, LAMPS, THERAPY, etc.

Because the vertebral column protects the brain, spinal cord, and peripheral nerve junctions, it is important to get a chiropractor to assess and address subluxations.

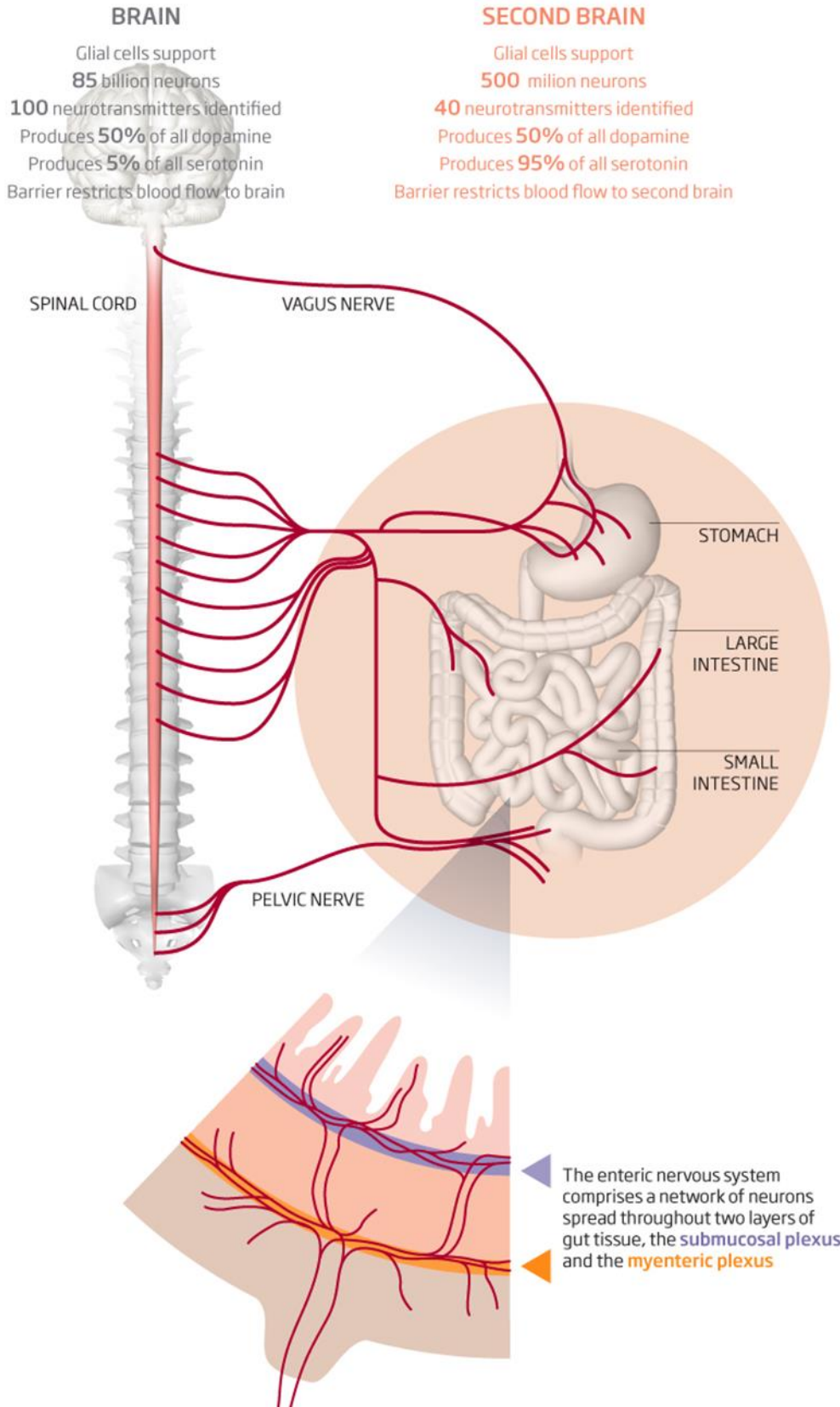
We have extensive training of anatomy, physiology, and kinesiology and are trained to physically address the spine and other joints of the body with care and precision.

What about the gut, you say? The gut is innervated by the enteric nervous system. It is a nervous system that communicates with the peripheral nerves via synapses at the site of the gut. If enteric nervous system expression is blocked, digestion goes badly — for starters the enteric nervous system runs its own hormonal and neurotransmitter system as well. Your emotional state can literally be influenced by what is going on in your gut. Adjusting the gut can be very effective in addressing the enteric nervous system directly.

# Two brains in one body

©NewScientist

The enteric nervous system in the gut, or "second brain", shares many features with the brain in your head. It can act autonomously and even influences behaviour by sending messages up the vagus nerve to the brain





Luckily, you can reach your gut. You can address it yourself. When this doesn't work, and the problem is beyond simple self-massage, you can then reach out to a qualified bodyworker for help.

When it comes to the spine, you can't reach it; and even if you could, would you really want to try to adjust it yourself without professional training?

Chiropractors can address it properly. It's what we do.


Chiropractic is the second-most-utilized health care profession in the world, second only to the medical profession (admittedly, there is a wide gap between the utilization of #1 and #2)! Chiropractic is safe. You don't believe me? Check our malpractice insurance rates compared to other types of health care professions' rates! Chiropractic is natural and works with your body's innate healing ability, so it is important to get the word out so more people can discover and use this form of health care.

## Do you judge health by how you feel?

- Can you feel if your artery is clotting?
- Can you feel if your liver is getting fatty?
- Can you feel if your disc is bulging?
- Would you know if your heart was beating a little bit slower than it should?
- Would you know if your body was unable to make sufficient amount of white blood cells?
- Would you know if your liver was cleaning your blood properly or not?

Call and ask me about how chiropractic could help you! One more time: y information is at [www.fitzpatrickspinecenter.com](http://www.fitzpatrickspinecenter.com) and [www.drclairefitzpatrick.com](http://www.drclairefitzpatrick.com).


All right; we've done it! We've addressed the Nine Essentials of Health. Now it's up to you. If you commit to taking daily steps for health, longevity and happiness, you have the information you need to achieve it.



## **Dr. Claire Fitzpatrick**

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OptimysticLiving@gmail.com*



Mac Giolla  
Dábháig

## ***The Nine Essentials of Health***

### **Rest**

Get 7-8 hours of sleep a night. If necessary, take in a 45 min-1½ hour day nap.

### **Stretch/Exercise**

*Don't skip stretching!* Stretch/Exercise 4-5 times a week.  
For stretch examples, go to [fitzpatrickspinecenter.com](http://fitzpatrickspinecenter.com) and click "Events and Links")

### **Proper Inner and Outer Environment**

Eat small meals the size of your fist 5-6 times a day every 3 hours. Lean protein, low glycemic vegies and carbs, good fats. Avoid processed foods, wheat, and GMO-ultra pasteurized dairy.  
Add whole food supplements, digestive enzymes, amino acids, and probiotics daily.  
*Eat food grown and raised locally. Know your farmer! Choose supplements carefully.*  
Soap, lotion, beauty and cleaning products: If you would hesitate to eat it, *don't use it!*

### **Meditation/Prayer**

Back and neck are in a straight line. Breathe deeply into your belly – drop your shoulders. Pay no attention to head chatter. Start with 5 min/day. Work up to 30 min/ day, twice a day.

### **Laughter/Active Appreciation**

3-6 hours a day spent in pursuit of your bliss. Yours to choose.  
Share your bliss with like minds and hearts. If your work is your bliss, all the better for you!

### **Proper Posture**

Straighten your spine, chin forward, tuck in, roll shoulders back and drop them, unlock your knees, point big toes forward, and breathe from your belly – not your shoulders.

### **Brush and Floss!!!**

You can decrease the chances of everything from the common cold to a heart attack by brushing and flossing twice a day at least.

### **Drink Plenty of Filtered Water A Day**

Not tea, not coffee, not soda, not Crystal Lite, not bottled spring water...  
**CLEAN, FILTERED WATER!**

### **Make Weekly Bodywork a Priority; in Particular, Chiropractic**

Get your spine checked regularly by an excellent chiropractor like me.  
*"Align the spine and the mind with the Divine and you'll feel fine!"*

I'll be here to help along the way. Good health!

