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Features include:

Making your life better in 2021

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Choosing the right therapist

The Energy Act

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Beauty editorial

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Well...it's been almost a year...

Who could have predicted what was to unfold 12 months ago when all our lives were turned upside down.

Coronavirus stopped schools, offices and halted our social lives, changing the world and the way in which we live, possibly forever.

We have all had to adapt to a new way of living and working, but what has really warmed my heart, is the effort friends and loved ones have gone to, to make others feel special and loved; and to keep in touch with each other. Some relationships haven't made it, but I believe any which have, have been strengthened forever.

We've seen people fighting for their lives and livelihood, people losing loved ones and homes: it has been a year where we have seen more than we usually would. I like to think we have developed as people.

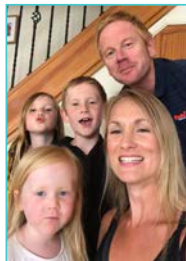
Amongst all of this, you have all still been there, supporting our family business, and we couldn't be more thankful than we are.

We have put together a magazine of ways to help you to make the best of 2021 and the best of you. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Lots of love and best wishes...

Emma

& the
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10 things you can do in 2021 to make it the best year of your life

2020 was particularly hard, and it has taught us some important lessons. It has also given us the opportunity to realise that we need to take control of our health: both mental and physical. Begin with these tips below.

1. Wake up naturally

If you are able to indulge in this luxury, then ditch the alarm clock, and go with your body's natural rhythm. Practice a routine of sleeping on time and waking up at the same hour every day. That's how your biorhythm should work, with no alarms to jolt you out of your slumber. Wake up naturally and start your day with a positive mood.

2. Begin every morning with a smile

We know life can take over, and it might feel like an ordeal to smile the first thing every morning, but push yourself to do it. Tell yourself it's going to be a day full of happiness and contentment, and paint a smile on your face. Positive thinking and imitations can lift your mood for the day and beyond. Fake it til you make it!

3. Exercise daily

Get moving. Anything from dancing, jumping on the spot, yoga practice or going for a run will do. Just get your heart pumping. Make sure you're incorporating 20 minutes of exercise every single day for your dose of happy hormones, and if you can exercise outside, you'll reap even more benefits.

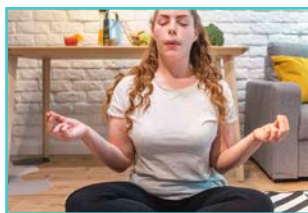
4. Sing in the shower

Haven't we all felt a sense of happiness when we come out of a nice shower after belting out our favourite song? Oh, and while you are at it, don't forget to put on your best-scented

body wash. Well, it is believed that our favourite aromas have pleasant olfactory memories associated with them that make us feel blissful. Now, that's a good enough reason to enjoy a warm shower and de-stress!

5. Practice meditation

We are often juggling responsibilities, and unfortunately, our culture glorifies that. We are never really told to slow down, But slowing down is vitally important for our wellbeing. Practising meditation for about 15 to 20 minutes every day is a healthy practice. In fact, research shows that our brain releases an anti-anxiety chemical called GABA when we practice meditation or yoga. A study in the Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine found there is a 27 per cent increase in GABA levels after an hour of meditation.



6. Eat breakfast

Often, many of us are in such a hurry in the mornings that we skip breakfast. This affects our mood and our energy levels. Start the day by enjoying a nourishing meal packed with your favourite flavours. It is a great energy boost, and can

also aid weight management, by stopping cravings or over eating later in the day.

7. Get into the habit of reading

Get a book from your favourite genre, and lose yourself in a different world. If books aren't for you, try a magazine instead. You could even begin writing your own book, or article for publication here at Foremost.

8. Focus on one task

We frequently tend to function on auto-pilot mode and perform tasks mechanically, often juggling several things at once. Try to focus on one task at a time. Multitasking actually affects your focus and causes stress. Perhaps men had it right all along!!!!

9. Take an afternoon nap

Taking an afternoon nap can be extremely helpful in boosting your mood. At the same time, it ensures "improved alertness and performance without interfering with your night-time sleep." Research also shows that when you do not take a nap in the day, you can become more sensitive to negative emotions.

10. Call your friends

There's nothing like venting out or sharing memories to improve your mood. What's more, you'll likely lift their mood too. According to a study published by the British Medical Journal in December 2008 by Harvard University, happy friends increase our happiness by 15.3%!



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Economic difficulties around the world are increasingly making people painfully aware of the need to effectively protect their families' financial future. One of the most pressing concerns for many families is the question what would happen if the household's main earner was to sustain a debilitating injury, become unable to work due to critical illness or die.

Life Insurance

Life insurance is the minimum protection you should put in place for your family. You never think that it will happen to you, and yet, we all know someone, or several people, who have fallen to some tragedy. Whether accidents, illness, or anything else. It's never an easy time for the loved ones that have lost. Life Insurance is to plan for the worst and hope you won't need it. But better have it and not need it than the reverse. Today, comprehensive life insurance policies can be taken out at an affordable outlay per month, especially in relation to the pay-out of the policy to look after your family if the worst should happen. Of course, there are numerous avenues that can and often should be taken in order to protect yourself and your family. Eat right, exercise regularly, do not make reckless decisions. But even with all of these, anyone can be struck down in tragic circumstances. And often it is the financial aspect that is the most immediate and problematic for those left in the wake of such events. Life Insurance means peace of mind.



Mortgages

At Assured FG, we believe mortgage advice is essential to receiving the best possible mortgage. We undertake an accurate assessment of your finances and needs and use this to determine the right option for you. This could be on a more straight-forward re-mortgage, to buying a second home or buy-to-let. We also believe adding value to our clients is crucial, which is why we go above and beyond in our service. From giving advice on the general house buying process, to speaking directly with estate agents and solicitors to help smooth out any issues, and take as much stress away from you as possible. Our friendly, knowledgeable advisors have access to a wide range of options from across the whole of the mortgage market and can evaluate which lender is right for you based on cost, speed of offer and many other factors. Whether you are looking to buy your first home, remortgage your existing property or buy additional properties; we have the right advice for you.



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Article by *Assured Financial Group Ltd*



Tony Welsh B.A. (Hons) DipFA
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Getting help with mental health issues.

This last year has been such a difficult time, but isn't it interesting how some people have coped better than others? That has a lot to do with their mindset.



That mindset can be all doom and gloom, or if you allow yourself to see the cracks of sunlight coming through, you will feel better able to cope.

Some people are more prone to feeling down and need help to adjust their thinking. That help can come in the form of therapy.

People in the media have been talking a lot about mental health issues, and how people should go for help if they are having problems. Yes, indeed they should.

Help is available through the NHS and through private therapists like me. When you hear mental health issues being discussed in the media, they talk about it as though there is no alternative to the NHS, but there is. There are hundreds of private therapists available to help you, and the chances are that you will be able to get in to see one quickly, rather than having to wait for weeks and weeks on NHS lists. I also know that NHS therapists are really overstretched, hence the long waiting lists.

Personally, I have always been reluctant to pay for something that is available for free on the NHS, but most people know that if you have insurance, or can afford to pay privately, you can get niggling health problems sorted quickly.

Although some private medical work can cost thousands, this is not the case for therapy. For just a few hundred pounds you may be able to get longstanding problems sorted quickly and easily, and if you are unhappy with the therapist, or the way the therapy is going, you can stop it at any time.

Obviously, you will need to choose your therapist carefully. Firstly, decide on the type of therapist you need, be it a hypnotherapist, like me (who incidentally deals with all aspects of mental health), or CBT therapists or psychotherapists.

Make sure that they are registered with a professional organisation, and that they are properly qualified. However, the most important

element of choosing your therapist is finding one that you can relate to. They need to be on your wavelength so to speak.

Do some research on your therapist too. They may have reviews posted on their websites from previous clients, or they may have recorded a welcome video, so you can see them in person and work out whether you could relate to them. There may be social media posts too which might indicate what they are like. Most private therapists also offer a short free consultation to help you decide whether you want to go ahead with them. There is a lot you can find out in advance these days to help you make your decision, so use that wisely.

I hope that you have found this useful, and if you want any further information about the work I do or the way in which I can help you, please visit:
www.carolynpotter.co.uk

Article by *Carolyn Potter* (Cognitive Behavioural Hypnotherapist)

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Get Physical

Have you been missing your workouts and spending longer in front of the TV than usual? If so, you are not alone. Almost half the population have reported to doing less exercise in lockdown three, than in lockdown one, and although the reason is different for many, the impact is often the same.

You're piling on a few extra pounds, and we know that isn't great for your physical health or risk of disease, but the problem goes far deeper than our bodies. This lack of physical exercise is affecting our minds more than you could perhaps believe.

Sleep

You wake in the morning, with dread at the thought of the monotony of the day, and you somehow make it through to the evening again, where you meet the television and a pile full of snacks, before going back to bed. This lack of physical activity and fresh air means our bodies are not getting tired enough to sleep. We're depriving ourselves of the deep sleep and REM which we need, to function properly the next day. This affects our mood and productivity, it affects our hormone levels, and can make us breed negativity even more; and so the spiral continues.

Depression and Anxiety

Exercise has been proven to work like an anti-depressant, fighting many symptoms of depression and anxiety, and making the world seem a little brighter and kinder. The endorphins released when we exercise, is well known, but did you know that you don't have to exercise at a high intensity to feel the benefits? Low intensity exercise, which is regular and sustained, is a proven way to improve brain function, and as a result, your mood.

I Want Some

So, you're sold. You want some of this magic medicine, which can supposedly fix the world's problems, but no matter how hard you try you can't stick to your workout schedule. There's no gym to escape to, and every time you get started, there comes a cry from next door, with your 9 year old needing help with his latest piece of literature and your best laid plans go forgotten, leaving you even more frustrated: sound familiar?

Do not give up. We can make a plan, and it can work for you. Let's just begin with 10-15 minutes per day. Make it pleasant, a walk outside, a short video online, or a dance around your kitchen while making the breakfast. It may sound pointless, but we have to start somewhere. Before you know it, you won't even think of this as exercise and you'll be ready to up the aim to 20, and then 30 minutes each day. You may find you're ready to push yourself with some of your workouts, or you may find that just a few longer sessions each week will work perfectly for you and your circumstances.

Quick Fix

The effects can be instant. You may start to feel improved after your very first workout, or it may take up to a few weeks, but you will feel improved over time. Not only will this help your hormonal balance, it will also improve your physical health, which can only make you feel better still. There really is no way of losing, just be kind to yourself and make your goals achievable and sustainable.



Yoga

An amazing way to work both the mind and the body is with yoga practice. You can strengthen, tone, lose weight, gain flexibility, and practice mindfulness, all in one session. Benefits can be seen with as few as one practice per week, but due to the nature of the exercise, you could up this to 3 or more, with minimal risk to your muscles and joints, due to the low intensity nature. In addition to this, mindfulness can improve every aspect of your life, with people claiming that they have slept better than they have in years after just one session. The benefits of mindfulness can help to reduce the risk of disease, as well as helping you to feel more connected, focused and satisfied with your life and yourself.

Get Started

It really is that simple, get moving and get yourself back on the right track. You can make the change in you. You can step away from the rest and look after yourself: body and mind.

Article by *Emma Baldwin* (Editor)

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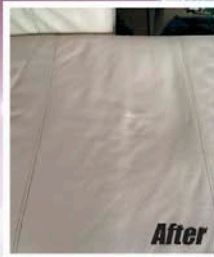
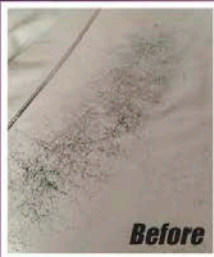
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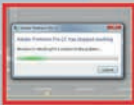
FOR A FASTER WINDOWS COMPUTER



1) More than one Anti-virus – Yes you need an anti-virus, and Windows 10 has a reasonably good one built in, but should you choose to have another you only need one anti-virus installed, installing more than one will cause them to clash and slow your machine.



2) Unwanted programs – Your computer uses a filing system known as the registry, this stores bits of information for each program; by removing unwanted programs you can help to tidy up the registry allowing it to be quicker when finding the information it needs.



3) Stop programs at start up – It stands to reason that the more you're asking your computer to do, the longer it will take to process it all. To help prevent this you can press ctrl-shift-esc together to access the task manager, from there you can click on the "Startup" tab and view programs that load when Windows starts and the impact they have on boot time. Some of these can be disabled, i.e. if you have your email loading at boot. Be cautious here because some programs here are required.



4) Hanging on to temporary files – Whilst in its normal course of use your computer produces temporary files as well as update files, sometimes they don't automatically get removed once done. By clicking on the Start button and typing "Disk Cleanup" you can bring up the Disk Cleanup utility, by selecting some of the check boxes there and clicking OK, you can clean the drive up. Again, caution here as since a recent Windows 10 update they now include the Downloads folder in this list, and you may not want to delete the contents of that.



5) Still lacking something – Even after these tweaks it may still be kind of slow and that may well be hardware related, one of the biggest bottlenecks in current computer is usually not the processor or the RAM but the hard drive. Today, modern technology known as SSDs or Solid state drives far outstrips that of older hard drive technology, offering speeds up to 25x faster and for a reasonably priced upgrade it can take a mediocre or slow laptop back in to something that's a joy to use. One of the bonuses is that with cloning software you can retain all of your programs and customisations and simply move over to a faster drive.

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The Energy Act

In 2008 the UK government introduced the Energy Act which compelled energy suppliers to allocate funds to improve insulation in domestic properties - known as ECO, the Energy Company Obligation.

Under this legal obligation, only accredited insulation companies can access the grant funding to pay for wall or loft insulation if it is necessary, meaning the resident has no cost to pay.

Installers obtain funding for households in receipt of certain benefits or those who meet the flexible eligibility rules set down by the relevant local authority, known as Flexible Eligibility for ECO.

Bracknell Forest Council are an industry award-winning local authority recognised for helping their residents to access these grants year on year, largely thanks to the commitment and determination of their Sustainable Energy Officer, Hazel Hill.

Following up on the successful delivery of earlier government ECO schemes, locally based Insta Group are again partnering with them to survey, install and guarantee as many home insulation improvements as possible while the scheme is running.



All the surveyors hold current City & Guilds Diploma qualifications in domestic energy assessments and are trained & equipped to conduct their surveys in a COVID-19 safe manner, maintaining social distancing throughout.

Wall insulation surveys involve the drilling of small inspection holes into the mortar joint between brick courses to check there are no issues within any of the cavities that would prevent insulation works from taking place.

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Funds are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis and this phase of the funding obligation, known as ECO3, is due to run until April 2022.



Dear Resident,

Warm & Well in Bracknell Forest Borough - Local Authority Flex Scheme
Make your home warmer in winter – Call 0800 083 8413

Bracknell Forest Council is working with Insta Group to provide insulation measures to homes in all parts of the borough including Bracknell and Sandhurst.

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This property has been identified as one which could potentially benefit from these measures and you may qualify to have cavity wall *and/or* loft insulation work done **FREE** under our Flex scheme.

The qualifying criteria includes households with **children**, or **pensioners**, or residents with **health conditions**, or based on **income levels below £35,000 after all your Council Tax/Mortgage/Rent and Utilities** have been paid. We hope you will be able to benefit from this offer in some way.

To enquire please ring **Insta Group** on **0800 083 8413** to arrange a survey and book your insulation works. This offer is available on a first come first served basis while funding is available and we expect the demand to be quite high.

You may have an assessor from Insta Group calling over the next few weeks and months to establish if you are interested in this offer.

Or, e-mail: hazel.hill@bracknell-forest.gov.uk if you would like any further information.

Yours sincerely

Hazel Hill
Sustainable Energy Officer
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**Bracknell Forest Council ECO Flexible Eligibility
Identifying eligible households**

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Address: _____

Resident's Signature: _____

The resident qualifies under our 'fuel poor' criteria if they meet one or more of the following criteria:

In receipt of any means tested benefit.		Cardiovascular conditions	
In receipt of disability-related benefit: including Personal Independence Payment (PIP) Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Attendance Allowance.		Respiratory conditions (in particular, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and childhood asthma)	
On the Energy Companies' Priority Services register (those at most risk from the effects of a power cut).		Mental health conditions	
Has a pre-existing long term chronic condition such as: heart disease, stroke or transient ischaemic attack (TIA), asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or diabetes.		Disabilities	
Has dementia, learning disabilities or mental ill-health that reduces individual's ability to self-care		Terminally ill	
Aged 60 and over		Suppressed immune systems (e.g. from cancer treatment or HIV)	
		Is pregnant	
		Responsible for a child under 16 living at the property	

Or the resident qualifies under our 'Low Income High Cost' criteria by meeting both A) & B), as below:

(A) **Is the resident in receipt of an income-related benefit?**

or

Does the household have an annual income of less than £35,000, after paying rent/mortgage, council tax and utilities bills?

And

(B) **Does the household have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of D or lower?**

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Looking after your body

Sports massage therapy isn't just for sports people, and it's not just about massage!

Many of my clients are runners or cyclists who either have regular maintenance massage sessions, or injury related sessions. These sessions will involve some range of movement assessments then treatments for the areas of the body which need attention. The treatment may involve different massage techniques, stretching, mobility exercises and myofascial cupping depending on the client's needs.

I also have a lot of clients who may not do any sports and have developed chronic pain in areas such as the neck, shoulders or back as a result of poor posture or repetitive movements at work. Sports massage therapy is extremely effective for these clients as we can identify the cause of the pain and use massage techniques (as listed above) to help to address these issues.

When I finish a session with a client, I often send them away with homework! This may be stretches, strengthening or mobility exercises, self-massage techniques, or (most commonly) a combination of these.

A large number of people are working from home at kitchen tables or other areas which are not set up as ergonomically as their previous office work spaces. This has led to chronic pain in the upper back area. So what can you do to begin to alleviate the pain? Here are my 5 top tips...

1: Your work desk set up

Look at the height of your work table / desk. Can you use books or something similar to either raise the table or your computer so that you are not hunched over? The hunched forward position puts strain on your rhomboid muscles in your upper back, causing pain. Making changes to enable a more upright position will ease the strain.

2: Mobilisation exercises.

At regular intervals throughout the day (maybe set an hourly alarm on your phone) to get up and walk around. Do large arm circles, forwards and backwards, and shoulder rolls. Move your head from side to side, (ear to shoulder) then rotate your head to look over your shoulders. 10 of each movement is enough to loosen up the muscles and help to prevent them getting fixed and stiff.

3: Stretches

Stretch out your pectoral (chest) muscle which shortens as you sit in a hunched position.



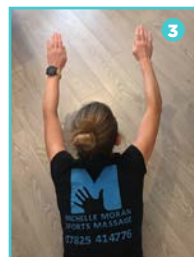
You can do this by putting your hands behind your head and pushing your elbows back (see picture 1).

4: Strengthening or activation exercises

A hunched posture leads to back muscles becoming lengthened, exercises which encourage these muscles to contract and become stronger are essential. Good exercises include:

- 1: lie on the floor face down in a superman position (arms out straight over the head), engage your stomach muscles then raise your arms and upper chest up off the floor, hold for 3 seconds then lower to the floor, repeat 10 times.
- 2: stay in the superman position, lift your arms and chest up, then bend your arms, pulling your elbows towards your waist, hold for 3 seconds then return your arms to the straight position and lower

to the floor, repeat 10 times. (See pictures 2 & 3).

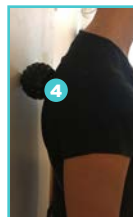


Both of these exercises can be made harder by holding weights in your hands.

5: Self-massage

A small massage ball, or tennis ball, is a great tool.

Position the ball in between your shoulder blade and your spine, then lean against the wall, squashing the ball between your back and the wall (see picture 4). Slowly bend your knees to move up and down, rolling the ball over the tight muscles. This feels amazing!



Remember, it may have taken months for the chronic pain to develop so it will take time and work to reverse the changes and reduce the pain and discomfort. A sports massage will help speed up the process and help to prevent the pain returning.

Article by *Michelle Moran* (Michelle Moran Sports Massage)

Sports massage therapy is effective at treating aches, pains, and knots which have built up over time.

You may be a long distance runner, or spend 8 hours a day sat working at a desk, or have a manual job involving heavy lifting. It doesn't matter what has caused the aches and pains, sports massage can help.

Benefits of a sports massage include:

- reduction in muscle tension, pain and discomfort
- increased range of motion (leading to improved performance)
- decreased muscle stiffness or soreness after activity
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- aids sleep

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After perfecting your makeup, setting spray is the essential finishing touch to help lock your look in place and ensure that it lasts all day.

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After applying your makeup, hold the setting spray bottle around 20cm from your face and spritz the mist lightly, 2 to 4 times. Follow a "T & X" shape to ensure full coverage of the forehead, nose and chin and then the rest of the face. Remember to close your eyes!

Pro Tip

Add extra intensity to your eyeshadow and increase longevity, by dampening your eyeshadow brush with setting spray prior to application.

Choosing the right one

There is an array of different setting sprays to choose from, depending on your own specific complexion needs and budget. Here are a few of my own personal favourites.

For superior staying power, my top spot goes to Urban Decay - All Nighter (118ml) - £26. Charlotte Tilbury - Airbrush Flawless Setting Spray (100ml) - £26, is another strong contender and has great customer reviews.



Warm copper eyes, glowing skin and a nude lip, using mainly Charlotte Tilbury products and finished with Urban Decay All Nighter setting spray.

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Morning Tips For If You Want More Energy

I don't know if you feel the same, but at times, lockdown has zapped me of my energy, my motivation and my mojo! I felt like my get up and go, just got up and went, and I didn't know how to get it back. Well, here we have for you a few tips to boost your energy levels if you are still stuck in that sleepy mode and want to find your way out.

Firstly, I'd like to remind anybody struggling that it is perfectly natural to be feeling like this. We are surviving a pandemic and our worlds and routines have been completely and utterly changed. It seems everyone is on an extreme at the moment, either juggling more than ever before, or with nothing to look forward to; or perhaps even, somehow a combination of the two. So much of what we love has been taken from us, and even for some who have enjoyed many of the benefits which lockdown has offered, it is still a lot for our minds (and bodies) to cope with.

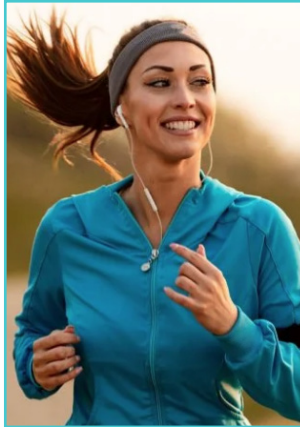
Without enough sleep, no morning routine can 'fix' you, but these tips could help to get you buzzing a little more once again.

Deep Breathing

Let's start the day positively, taking a few long, deep breaths upon waking. Deep breathing and a quiet moment is a great stress reliever, so start your day this way and reap the benefits it brings. Focusing on your own breath is a form of meditation, so you can work to focus your mind, improving your mood and concentration levels for the day ahead.

Hydrate!

Everything you ever read about improving any part of your physical or mental health, will include hydration. It is singly, the most beneficial and one of the easiest things you can do for yourself. Dehydration can zap energy, cause muscle fatigue and soreness, and lower your mood. Staying hydrated helps to prevent these, keeping you feeling refreshed and energised for longer.



Exercise

When you're tired, it is so tempting to sit on the sofa, drink coffee and watch TV. However, moving helps to keep you energised. It's well known that exercise has endorphin boosting properties, making us happy and ready to move more, but even gentle workouts have a positive impact.

A short walk, some gentle yoga or stretching, or something more energetic can have benefits to your day. When you start moving, your day begins and you are more likely to tackle your to do list and achieve what you were hoping too. In addition to this, movement helps with weight management and being of a healthy weight, also gives you more energy. It is also thought that moving in the morning encourages people to be more active the whole day through, so you're setting yourself up for success in every way.

Food

If you feel hungry, make sure you eat. Lack of food can make us feel lethargic and drained of energy. Be careful with your food choices, avoiding snacks high in caffeine and sugar where possible, to avoid those crashes. Natural sugars are great, proteins and healthy fats too as these give you energy, without the after effects.

Screens and Phones

Ignore your phone and emails at varying points. Schedule breaks from your distractions. Modern life has us thinking we need to be available 24/7, but this is not the way it needs to be. As a society, as families, friends and employees, we survived without constantly being available, and we can still. Ignore the calls, texts, emails and any other distractions for set periods and enjoy the freedom of your own time.

Also, try not to start your day with a scroll through of Facebook or catching up with the latest news. Seeing something negative can put you in a bad mood before your day has even begun, set yourself up before facing the world of media.

We hope these tips help you. And here's a little checklist for you choose some goals from and focus on for the month ahead. Let us know how you get on.

- Drink 2L of water
- Average at least 10,000 steps per day
- Eat at least 5 fruits and vegetables every day
- Get 7-9 hours sleep per night
- Meditate
- Screen Breaks

Article by *Emma Baldwin* (Editor)

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