

10 Healthy Habits to Live Better

Our lives are comprised of the things that we do over and over again. We are what we repeatedly do—our habits. Here are a few healthy habits that you can incorporate into your daily life to live better.

Read at least 1 page per day

- Reading is something we know we “should” do more of but often fall short. An entire book can be intimidating, but if you tell yourself to just read one page it makes picking up a book much easier.

Connect with a friend or family member weekly

- Humans are social beings, and sometimes it’s easy to forget that. Don’t go on Facebook to see what your friends and family members are up to, actually call them. It’s amazing how much better we feel after just a 15-20 minute call with a loved one.

Perform resistance training 2-4 times per week

- Muscle mass decreases after the 3rd decade of life, but you can stave off the rate of muscle mass decline with resistance training. This means lifting weights or using resistance bands. If you don’t workout currently, start with bodyweight exercises—pushups, pullups, squats, lunges. There are numerous free workout videos and templates on the internet that walk you through a workout regimen. You can see my exercise routine [here](#).

Complete 2-3 cardiovascular training sessions per week

- Heart disease and ischemic stroke are by far the [leading causes of death](#). Cardiovascular-specific exercise, can improve the functioning of the heart, lower blood pressure, and decrease the overall risk of death from cardiovascular disease. The mode of exercise doesn’t matter, pick something that you enjoy. A few examples include walking/running on the treadmill, biking, hiking, and rowing. Try to pick an intensity that you can sustain for 30-90 minutes per session.

Walk outside at least once per day

- This is great for increasing your step count and perspective. Being immersed in nature can help you realize just how small you are in the cosmic scheme of things, and can

provide relief from stressing the little things in life. Try to get outside without any electronic devices for at least 20-30 minutes daily. Also, many thoughts may arise in your mind while on your walk so bring a pocket notebook and pen to catch them.

Meditate for 5-10 minutes daily

- The benefits consistent meditation are profound. The extinction of boredom is a new phenomenon to humans, but it can be and should be reprogrammed into our lives. If you are always looking for stimulation, your mind will not have time to think and relax. I prefer to meditate either right after waking or before bed to get ready for the day or to calm my mind before sleep. If you are new to meditation, I recommend using the [Waking Up](#) app to guide you through the process.

Take a cold shower

- Cold water immersion increases the production of dopamine, adrenaline, and noradrenaline for hours even after the shower which helps to improve mood, alertness, and focus. It is also a great tool for building resilience to stress and increasing discipline. Getting into the cold shower doesn't get easier with practice, but if you show up daily, your tolerance to stress in other domains of your life will be higher.

Stick to a consistent sleep routine

- Sleeping less than 7 hours has detrimental effects on health including increased risk of heart disease, memory loss, weight gain, depression, and more. Aim for 7-9 hours of quality sleep each night. Also, ensure that you go to sleep and wake up at the same time each day, even on weekends.

Keep a journal

- Anne Frank said, "Paper has more patience than people." Writing your thoughts down can give you insight into what's going on in your head. Start small. Try writing down one sentence each day and build from there. Write down your ideas. The human mind is incredibly good at generating ideas, but it lacks the memory to hold them for long.

Increase your protein intake

- The Standard American Diet is simply inadequate in terms of daily protein consumption. The average American adult eats 91 grams of protein per day. Based on the general research consensus, we should be striving to get 0.7-1.0 grams per pound of body weight to maintain and grow muscle mass. You can try implementing a protein shake in your diet, or look for ways to increase protein in the meals you regularly have.