

Sleep Simple improvements in your sleeping habits can make a difference in helping your body heal—mentally, physically, and spiritually. Consider setting some structure to your sleeping habits by going to bed about the same time each night and arising at about the same time each morning. Plan a reason to get up at 9 AM Monday morning. Healthy sleep habits will decrease symptoms of anxiety and depression.

Love Yourself Learning to love yourself can be difficult. It is about self-esteem, self-worth, self-confidence and self-care. Including personal hygiene, daily affirmations, such as “I am a worthwhile person” ... “I am loveable” ... “I am deserving” and spirituality (e.g., going to church, reading the Bible). Love yourself is about learning to build mastery or competence into your daily activities. Have you considered ... positive mental attitude, taking time for yourself, smiling every day, meditation, journaling and developing a healthy support system?

Eat Balanced Meals Your eating habits can affect your mood, energy, and sleep quality. Consider starting the morning with breakfast (glass of orange juice, piece of toast, or cheese), have lunch and dinner. Include snacks throughout the day. Your body is like a car that needs fuel ... food fuels your body with energy to handle the activities of daily living. Nutritionists recommend that you eat about every three hours, small balanced meals and snacks (e.g., apple, yogurt). Do not forget the importance of drinking water—8 glasses (10 oz) of water daily is recommended to help our body function.

Exercise Daily for 30 Minutes The number one prescription for physical and mental health issues is exercise—30 minutes daily. If you are under stress, daily exercise can increase energy and a sense of well-being. This can make a particular difference after a loss, trauma or stressful event. Begin a walking program, walk the stairs rather than using the elevator, biking, swimming, buy an exercise tape, or simply do some housework instead of sitting on the sofa watching TV. Yoga is an excellent source of exercise, relaxation, stretching, and mindfulness practice. Your body needs to move to stay in balance and functioning well. Laugh a lot and remember to exercise your brain (e.g., crossword puzzles, word finds, Sudoku). What are you waiting for?

Pleasure Planned Daily • Passion • Potential Plan something pleasurable to do each day. Buy yourself flowers, play with your dog or cat, visit a friend, meet someone for lunch, devote time to your hobby (e.g., woodworking, needlecraft, bird watching), take a bubble bath or hot shower, get your hair cut or nails done, play sports or a hand of cards, visit the library or museum. Be creative ... be willing to take a risk and do something different. Find time to play every day to energize your body—games, sports, shopping or crossword puzzles. *Passion* – is defined as an intense desire or enthusiasm for something. It is important to try to spend at least one day a week on your passion. *Potential* – is defined as the capacity to develop into something in the future that you want to become—begin programming your passion through affirmations and self-talk. Just do it ... jump in!

Someone Else ~ Acts of Kindness Your self-care is important, but during that process remember other people that come into your life. Take a moment to say hello, or thank you, or do a small act of kindness—opening someone’s car door, carrying groceries, offering to take care of their plants if they go out of town, or send a card for no specific reason ... just because they are special to you. Smile at a stranger, lend a hand to parents, tag the ones closest, lend an ear, give a gift of books, honor your heroes, and consider volunteering which often provides a good opportunity to be exposed to people who may be in need of an anonymous act of kindness in their lives. What will you do today?

Spirituality What does it mean to you?

