

Physical wellbeing

Physical wellbeing is predicated on what we eat, how much we exercise, how much sleep we are getting.

Exercise

- 20 minutes of exercise boosts our mood for a day
- People who exercise at least two days a week are happier and have significantly less stress.
- These benefits increase with each additional day (but at 6 days, people reach a point of diminishing returns – so there is no need to get fanatical)
- A lack of energy often results from [physical] inactivity, not age
- The best time to exercise is when you feel you are too tired

Sleep

- Sleep is your daily reset button
- We learn and make connections more effectively when we are asleep than we do when we are awake
 - Each night of sleep allows our brain to process what we learned the day before
 - We remember what we learned if we get a sound night's sleep
- The right amount of sleep 7-8 hours
 - Both short amounts (5-6 hours) and long durations (9-10 hours) of sleep can cause problems

Food

With every bite and drink we take, we make a choice: We can select something that is a *net positive* and benefits our health or we can choose something that is a *net negative*.

This concept of *net positives* and *net negatives* refer to the fact that these decisions accumulate over the years and shape our lives.

The study makes a further claim that even if our genes predispose us towards contracting some of the familiar diseases like heart disease, diabetes and cancer, we might be able to control the *expression* of our genes. In other words, there are things you can do to either silence or amplify the expression of that gene.

Our ancestors ate a healthier diet keeping to a 2:1 ratio of omega-6s (found in meat and vegetable oils) to omega-3s (from fish, nuts and seeds). In contrast, the ratio today especially where a western style diet is pursued is 10:1. A higher proportion of omega-3s can

- moderate symptoms of depression,
- decrease impulsiveness,
- boost our daily mood,
- decrease inflammation (pain), asthma, diabetes and arthritis
- decrease the feeling of hunger
- boost energy levels.

Three Recommendations for Boosting Physical Wellbeing

1. Get at least 20 minutes of physical activity each day – ideally in the morning to improve your mood throughout the day
2. Sleep enough to feel well-rested (generally 7-8 hours) but not too long (more than 9 hours)
3. Set positive defaults when you shop for groceries. Load up on natural foods that are red, green and blue.