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FOUNDATIONS OF HEALTH



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8 FOUNDATIONS OF HEALTH

A patient's major focus is typically on the site of the pain in their body instead of overall health and we understand that, but we also understand how the body works as a whole and is only as strong as its weakest link.

Without some of the following prerequisites, your body doesn't stand a chance of dealing with a current injury or avoiding injury down the road. Many of these principles are commonly talked about but not fully understood and we like to make sure you know why we are asking you to make a modification in your life.

Think of this as getting all of the systems of your body working in harmony. Healthcare can appear very complicated when you look at parts of the body in isolation because you are constantly chasing symptoms and not dealing with the root causes. A healthy lifestyle isn't complicated, it's just challenging to change patterns, especially in a society that doesn't always support healthy decisions.

Pick just one of the following you think will help you and work on it, then another. Remember - Rome wasn't built in a day :) Whatever starts that

Goal Snowball!

Hydration + Diet & Digestion

You gotta be well hydrated so that your systems work at their potential, but also so that your fascia is not starving for its main source of lubrication, **WATER.**

Everyone thinks about water as H₂O and 8 cups a day, but that leaves out 2 very important other parts of the equation which are water quality and hydration from fruits and vegetables.

Additionally - It would be irresponsible for us to talk to you about diet and hydration without first talking to you about DIGESTION so let's do a deep dive there first.

Sleep + Stress

Are you getting 7 hours of sleep per night and feel calm throughout the day? Unlikely, especially in today's day and age.

Planning to catch up on missed sleep tomorrow? It doesn't really work like that. **How much sleep do I really** need and will it make me feel less stressed?

Sleep and **stress** are linked and luckily there are techniques to help you maximize your sleep and minimize your stress.

We also answer the question - **Is stress really that bad?**



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Exercise + Ergonomics

Don't have an hour a day to exercise? No worries - you can get a beneficial response from as little as **7 minutes of intense exercise**.

And really ... **how much physical activity do I really need??**

Also - Think your ergonomic set up could be better? You're probably right - let's take a look at that together here.



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Breathing + Connection

What could be more important than **breathing?!?** Sure, everyone does it, but let's make sure you are doing it appropriately.

Breath is a “back-door” way to access the involuntary nervous system (fight or flight vs rest and digest) and there are a lot of schools of thought on how you should breathe. We believe that you can breathe differently for different benefits.

We may come across as hippies here, but the research is iron-clad. Connection to yourself (a part of mindfulness), your community, and nature are all intricate in optimum health. Here we share some clever ways we recommend to connect.



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Dr. Michael Ruscio

Hydration + Digestion / Diet



Congratulations on the first step of taking back control of your health! Here are some very easy to use recommendations to nourish your body so that it is cooperative with your fitness and health & wellness goals.

We go into a lot of specifics down below, but really, you should start with 1 main focus - Eat Whole Foods! If you consume a lot of processed foods, start small with only having processed foods 2x a day for 2 weeks, then 1x a day for 2 weeks, then completely eliminating them and seeing how you feel. Also, when you eat matters - try to have 12 hours from when the last bite of food goes into your mouth at night until the first bite of food goes in the following morning. Again, this is not “Complicated” but it will be “Challenging”

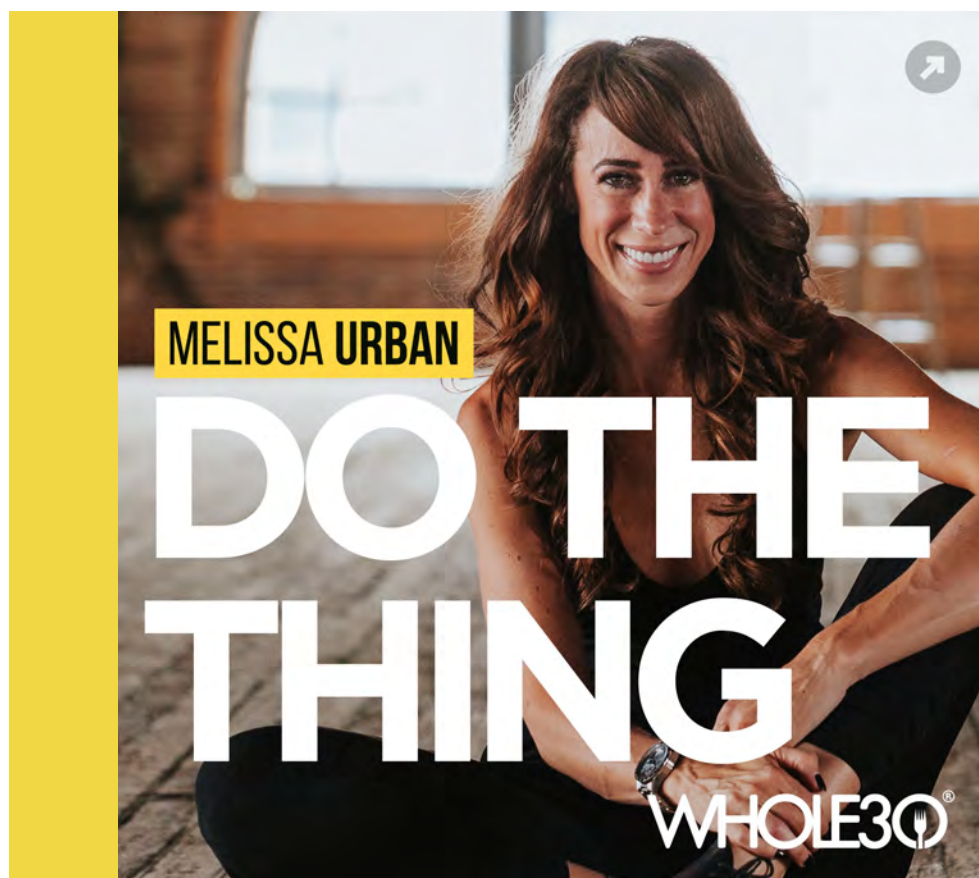
Get your Gut right

It would be irresponsible for us to talk to you about hydration & diet without first talking to you about digestion. They are all undoubtedly linked, but the focus on digestion always has to be first (it's similar to how you have to have the soil just right before you start thinking about which crops to plant) Have a **short watch** or a **longer listen** to **Dr. Michael Ruscio** chat about optimum gut health BEFORE you start to make changes in your diet. To take action here is step 1 of his **Great-in-8 protocol**. First do a **Modified Fast** for 2-4 days then

move on to a **Paleo-like diet** for 2-3 weeks. If you feel better, proceed to this **Paleo Low FODMAP diet** for 2-3 weeks, but if you felt no change after the Paleo-like diet, try the **Standard Low FODMAP** diet for 2-3 weeks.

Don't forget that gut issues don't always present as bloating, bowel issues, reflux, etc. They can range anywhere from anxiety and depression to fatigue, joint problems, thyroid problems, and very commonly skin issues. If you have recently switched to a more "healthy" diet and are having more trouble, be sure to listen to his advice on high FODMAP foods.

To learn even more, **check out this podcast** with **Chris Kresser** , another authority in the field and also **Dr. Jason Fung talking about obesity** through the lens of hormones vs calories.





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Dr. Dana Cohen

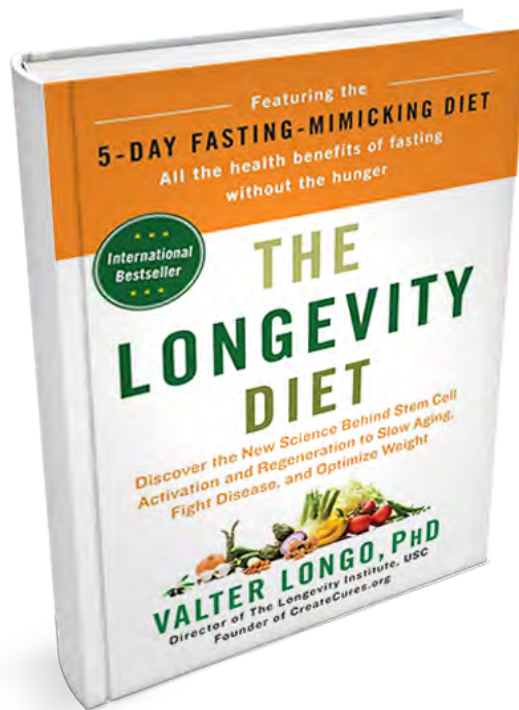
Hydration + Digestion / Diet

**From the woman who wrote
the book on hydration...**

Taking the walk to the water cooler is a start to being better hydrated, but that's not where it ends. Everyone thinks about water as H₂O and 8 cups a day, but there is growing focus on what is called "Gel Water" which is theorized to have the cell composition of H₃O₂. To picture the difference think about what's inside when you break open an aloe plant.

To find out more - **drink this info straight from the source with Dr. Dana Cohen** as she explains how to use thirst as a guide, how to eat your hydration (hint - soaked chia seeds, cucumbers, lychee, cactus plants and even boring-ass iceberg lettuce are dense with gel water), and also how important hydration is to everyone. Remember - Hydration is not just important for muscles, tendons and fascia, but also the lymphatic system which connects to the gut!

Water quality is equally as important so check out our personal favorite **Propur Systems here**



The Longevity Diet

Now that you have sorted out your digestion and hydration above .. let's talk about **DIET**. Want to live a long and healthy life? Who doesn't! Valter Longo is the head of USC's longevity center and they set out to answer just that question. What they came back with is to eat mostly vegan, plus a little fish, limiting meals with fish to a maximum of two or three per week. There are other rules regarding protein & age, and which types of those foods to choose so [click on the image to learn more](#).

Sleep + Stress

If you are under stress then you won't sleep well & if you are not sleeping well then you will feel more stressed. This is one of life's most beautiful Catch 22s, but we are here to help!

Sleep: Remember you need to get 7 hrs minimum and should shoot for 8 hrs - even more if you are younger and still growing. Drop the temperature of the room down and also, either use black out shades or a sleep mask. Darkness is a necessity and going to bed earlier vs later is always a safe bet (think better quality even if the quantity is the same).

Stress: Meditation, Cardio, and Prayer all have the same physiological effect on the body which is to reduce the influence of the sympathetic (fight or flight aka "wind up") portion of the nervous system and increase the influence of the parasympathetic (energy conservation aka "wind down") portion of the nervous system.

Here are some other things you need know



**BUY THESE
UGLY GLASSES**

Tips for Falling Asleep?

1. Establish a wind down ritual for 2-3 hours before bed - the nervous system has inertia so don't wind it up when you should be winding it down. Part of the wind down routine should also be blocking blue light.
2. Blue Blocking Glasses (see ugly picture on the left) - if blue light enters the eye it will tell the body to halt the natural hormonal cascade (including Melatonin release) that is supposed to happen before bed. **Recently, Warby Parker** started producing lenses that block 70% of blue light.. For Non-prescription and non-hideous glasses check out **Felix Gray here**.
3. A Bath or Shower - In general we want to drop the core temperature before we go night night. It may sound counter intuitive, but a warm bath may be just the trick according to **Matthew Walker - the guy who wrote the book on sleep**. The theory for why it works is because it moves the blood into the arms and legs and away from the organs of the body = core body temp drop. Other schools of thought would say a cool shower would be appropriate to trick the nervous system into a rest and digest state because if we still lived outside that would be the temperature we would be feeling - best way to find out is to try both and see what works for you!



Tips for Staying Asleep?

1. Sun light ASAP in the morning - get those peepers exposed to NATURAL light as early as possible to start the production of Melanopsin which is the precursor to Melatonin. PS - Make sure there are not eye glasses or contact lenses to obstruct that sweet sweet sun.
2. **Visualization meditation** - Dreaming, imagination, and visualization all have similarities in the brain. If you want to stay asleep longer, do some direct exercise for that part of the brain while you are awake by frequent visualization meditations. To find these types of mediations and learn more about the appropriate mindset **give a quick look and listen here.**
3. Ooler unit - remember when we told you that the body used temperature to get its cues on whether you should be awake or asleep? Well, this cold pad that goes under your sheets is a life hack to keep things colder in the morning so your body thinks it's still night time. Click to the left and purchase one of these dream machines.
4. Eye mask + Ear Plugs - your partner may leave you, but at least you are having restful sleep, am i right?? If you can't get the room dark enough in the morning put on **one of these eye masks** and see your way to sweet sweet slumber. They also come with free ear plugs so double covered!
Want to find out how you are sleeping? We recommend the **OURA ring** to get a glimpse into your sleep cycles along with your HRV, a metric that tells you how well your nervous system is recovered.



Stress - A Mindfulness Practice

We preach exercising the body daily as an important part of your routine and THE ONLY thing we would consider placing above it is exercising your mind. Having the ability to get just a little bit of space from emotions can give you a shot at understanding them that much better. We are also huge into education and **HEADSPACE** educates on the nature of the mind better than anyone else we have seen. Don't believe us? **Try it for 14 days on us by clicking on the image to the left or do 10 minutes right now and see how you feel :)**



Stress - Talk to a licensed Psychological Therapist

Emotions are like a faucet. On one side you have a "warm-positive emotion" water supply & on the other side you have a "cold-negative emotion" water supply. It would be nice if you could turn off the cold-negative emotions, but that's not how the brain works. You can either turn off the faucet as a whole and be numb or turn it on to some degree, but you don't get to choose which emotions you feel. If you want to start to feel warm-positive emotions you have to do that while draining the tank of the cold-negative emotions. Just like you would see a physical therapist to deal with a painful shoulder, you should hire an expert to deal with anything on your mind. Everyone can benefit from seeing a skilled Psychological Therapist to help them make connections and communicate better. Break the stigma!

FIND SOMEONE IN YOUR AREA

Exercise & Ergonomics

Exercise: Your body loves moving. Thousands of years ago when we had to forage for food, we used to have that box ticked off daily out of necessity to survive, now - not so much. Luckily, we can exercise to make our bodies feel the same as if we were roaming around all day to find our next meal

Ergonomics: We are big fans of standing work stations - especially if they have the option of switching back and forth from sitting to standing. The ideal ergonomic lifestyle will have a mix of standing, sitting, **laying down**, and walking - so don't limit yourself to just one. Equally important are your eyes, which are the part of your body most affected by aging. If you don't have an updated prescription for your eyes, get one, and your neck and back will thank you.



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TOTAL BODY WORK OUT

NO EQUIPMENT NECESSARY



It may not seem like much, but there can be positive physiological benefits from as little as **7 minutes of intense working out** - namely, improved blood pressure, blood sugar, and muscle capacity. A lot of people don't have time for 1 hour at the gym and we understand that, but there is a baseline level of activity that you need to be doing in order to keep things running right. Give this 30 minute exercise routine a shot and see how you feel! If you can only do the first 7 minutes because of time constraints that's cool too :)

Also, there are different guidelines for different reasons with exercise:

For Stress: **30 to 40 minutes of moderate exercise such as briskly walking or 15 to 20 minutes of vigorous exercise**

For Longevity: 150 minutes per week with 10% being fairly strenuous

PS - whenever possible, we like to be in bare feet. The nervous system has a direct relationship with sensation in and strength out (increase sensory input = increase motor output) **give these Pedestal socks a shot and let us know how it goes**



Standing Ergonomic Setup

Other than laying down, this is the easiest position on your lower back and neck. Current research is recommending at least a 1:1 ratio of sitting:standing **and some research even suggests more of a 1:3 ratio (45 min stand : 15 min sit)**

A few things to note to ensure you are doing this safely:

1. Set the top of the monitor at eye level, the elbows bent to 90 degrees and monitors directly in front of you
2. Work into it slowly - start with 5 minutes every hour and work your way up gradually. Grab a foot fatigue mat and **wear comfortable shoes**
3. Evenly distribute your weight between the heel and the ball of your feet and also keep the same amount of weight on your right and left legs*. Stand with your 2nd/3rd toes directly under your hips, feet facing front, pelvis slightly tucked under and shoulders back and down.

*If you think you have a problem with this grab 2 bathroom scales and see how you stand.

[View fullsize](#)

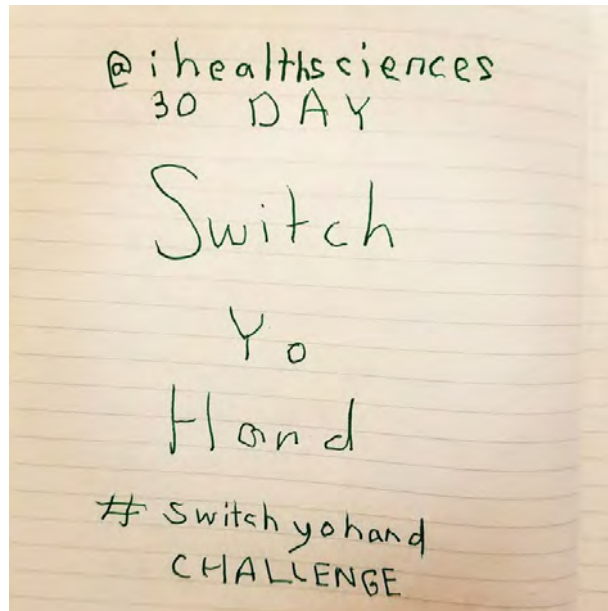


Sitting Ergonomic Setup

This is the setup that most of us have, but probably shouldn't. We're not saying that there aren't ways to make a sitting ergonomic setup more friendly, but research has shown that even with a recline and lumbar support, the pressure in the lower back is still less with standing and laying down versus ANY sitting position. That being said - this is the reality for many of us so let's try and make it as healthy as possible.

1. If you don't have a chair that can recline, get one. If you DO have a chair that can recline and you don't have a footrest so you can recline, it is useless. An \$800 "ergonomic" chair is worth \$0 without a \$20 footrest

2. The top of the screen should be at eye level and your forearms should be parallel to the floor
3. You have to have a lumbar support - an external one is better and can be purchased below.



Want to increase your brain strength? Lose weight? Have better digestion? Have an excuse for being a messy eater? Actually remember people's names?

The answer is right (or left) at your fingertips (see what we did there?) and can start today by accepting our **#switchyohand** challenge - you heard it here first people.

30 days and if you hate it feel free to spend the rest of your life normal

The 3 steps (once you start a step keep it up till the end)

10 days of brushing your teeth with your opposite hand

10 days of eating with your opposite hand

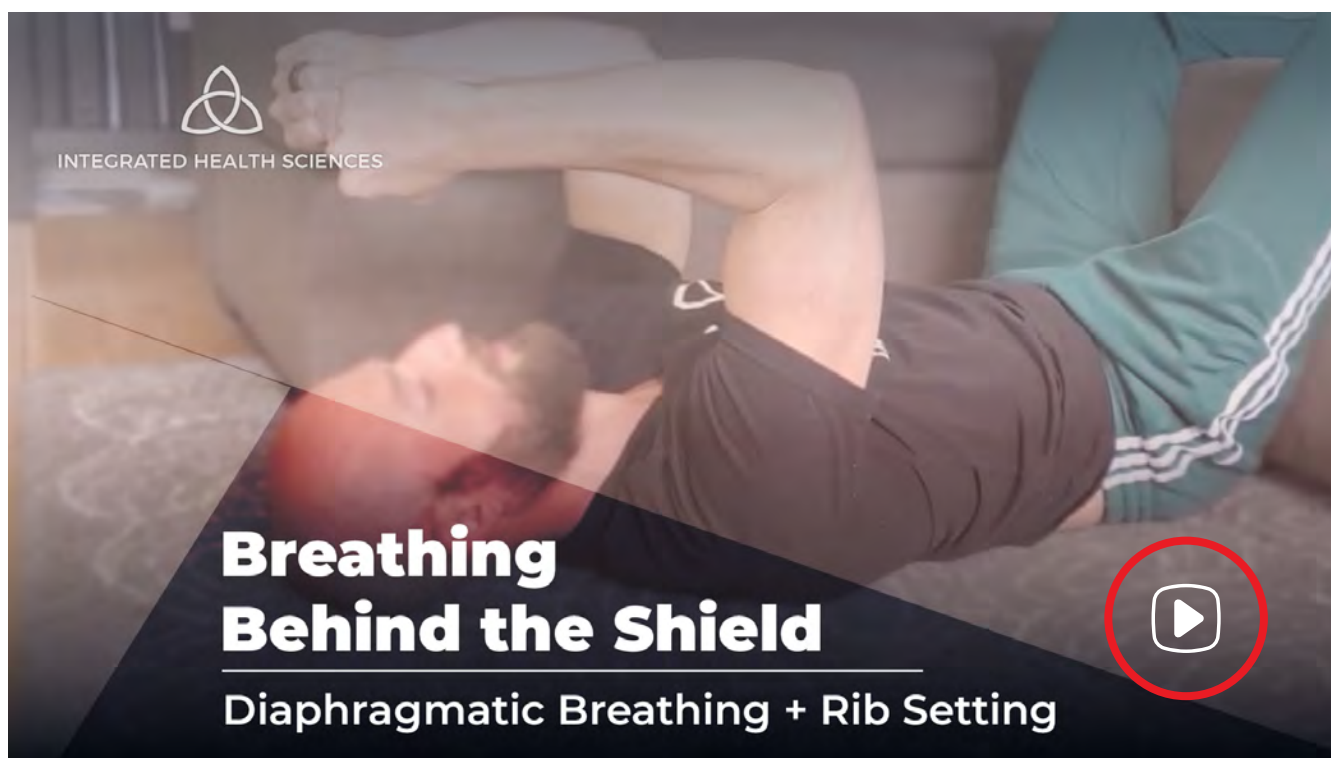
10 days of using your computer mouse with the opposite hand

Then start to sign your credit card receipts (frankly, nobody reads those anyway) and dedicate 1 side of your written journal to the task. We suggest breaking your journal down by the 2 sides of the book.

With your dominant hand, write on that side of the page “What’s on my mind” and with your non-dominant hand, write on that side of the page “What I’ve learned” It’ll help to really drive home “solution based thinking” - Go!

Breathing + Connection

Wanna bet that everyone who is reading this is also breathing? Sounds like a safe one, but we have to be sure that we are doing it correctly. Your diaphragm should be doing the bulk of the work when you are breathing at rest. Don't believe me? Take a look at a baby and see their belly goes up and down. If you are not using your diaphragm you are tightening the muscles of your neck, chest, and back with every breath. On a similar topic, connection to self, community, and nature all have scientific backing, don't believe me? Try some of our suggestions for yourself!



Diaphragmatic + Breathing behind the Shield

Your diaphragm was specifically designed for changing the pressure in your lungs to make them expand. If this isn't happening your body will lift the rib-cage off of the lungs by using the muscles of your neck (scalenes & sternocleidomastoid) along with the muscles of your chest and back most specifically your pectoralis minor. The beginning of this video is a great place to start. To make it a "Therapeutic Breath", try to inhale for 5 seconds and exhale for 5 seconds. After that, try to learn how to breathe behind the shield and use that new skill when you are performing our 8 Foundations of Exercise.



Ever been called a mouth breather? If not, consider yourself lucky because it is certainly not a compliment. The act of breathing through your nose has a world of positive and necessary physiological effects. If you or someone you know breathes through their mouth, you have to show them this video.



Tactical / Box Breathing

We are lucky that most of us don't have bombs and buildings blowing up around us on a regular basis, but for people in military combat that can, unfortunately, be a reality. Tactical / Box Breathing was developed by the Navy SEALs to stay calm in high pressure situations so don't think for a second that it won't work for you to unwind before you catch the next train to Sleepytown.

Want to spice it up? Try our Integrated Breathing by:

On inhale - Think about what's on your mind

On hold - Think about the next logical step

On exhale - Think about a serene place

On hold - try and relax every muscle in your body

It's great to do in your bedroom 15 minutes before you want to sleep.

Start with 5 minutes and work your way up 10 minutes.



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Connection to Self

Connection to self may be as simple as consistently familiarizing your mind with the feeling of happiness or contentment by doing something you enjoy. This one is personal, but needs to be done every day even if it's for a short period of time. Find something that gives you a sense of wellbeing and do it often. Suggestions are - dancing, exercising, singing, listening to your favorite song, surfing, spending time with your grandkids, spending time with your grandparents - whatever brings a simple smile. It may seem counter intuitive, but other ways to improve your connection to self and happiness are by being empathetic and kind to others. Try it and you'll see!



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Connection to Community

Connection to community is equally important, but can be a little bit more time consuming. **Because of the science**, we suggest volunteering weekly or finding a social or religious organization that suits your needs. We are all together in this world, but it doesn't always feel that way. Best bet is to try a few different crews and see who you want to roll with.



Connection to Nature

Connection to Nature is well proven in the literature **to reduce cortisol levels, lower pulse rate, lower blood pressure, greater parasympathetic (rest and digest) nerve activity, and lower sympathetic nerve activity (fight or flight)**, so go for a walk in the woods, sit under a tree, swim in the ocean or a lake for 30 minutes as often as possible and if possible do it BAREFOOT! Don't call us hippies, man, we just report on the research!



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