

Volume 9, Issue 12

# MOTIVATED

THE MAGAZINE THAT MOVES YOU!

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MEANINGFUL LIFE...TODAY!**

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Someone once said, the way to stay healthy is to live right, love right, eat right, exercise right, and sleep right. I think we can all agree with that statement. Doing it, however, can be an entirely different story.

We all want to be healthy, but it is not always easy to practice healthy living. I, for one, battle with this constantly. As much as I want to maintain the proper weight for my age, it is not easy to stay within my limits when there are so many special occasions and holidays that present me with not only those extra special sweet treats, but often cause me to miss my regular exercise time, too. Needless to say, the pounds or kilos pack on rather quickly, which makes me want to go on a diet and exercise extra to get back to the weight I should be.

I know that if I could maintain a healthy lifestyle consistently, it would be much better, so I recently decided to do a little research and look for stories and articles with well-rounded tips and advice on how to do better in every area of healthy living.

I compiled some of what I found in this issue of *Motivated*. One of the best tips I found is to start by making small changes every day to build new healthy habits. I am working on it, and if you need to improve in some areas, I hope you will, too.

Christina Lane  
For *Motivated*

# I Get It... I've Been There!

By Cheri Augustine Flake, LCSW, adapted excerpts

If you knew me fifteen years ago... you might not have recognized me—and you most definitely would not have believed that I was a therapist! The truth: I was a super stress case.

I had a long history of taking on work, hobbies and interests full speed ahead as they appealed to me, and with absolutely no system or execution plan whatsoever. I was really a mess trying to run a business, work full-time, and keep up with my day to day hassles. Of course, I was also interested in being healthy, having a social life, and spending time with my family. At one point, it all became just too much!

In psychiatry, versus other medical disciplines, we don't treat illnesses, we treat symptoms. And mine were out of control. Misdirected energy, lost ideas, loads of unfinished business, incessant worry about getting things done, chronic insomnia, and a short fuse were wearing me down. Dreams and goals were just making me feel bad as I just couldn't find any more room in my life.

I believe the reason why we have occasional pondering thoughts, desires, and yearnings to learn or try something new, is because our true self is trying to speak to us. I was lucky enough to be able to "hear" my true self tell me some idea of who I needed to be, and I couldn't ignore it.

Many of us know exactly what we

need to do to make ourselves healthier or happier. The problem is that we simply can't find the motivation, time, or stamina to keep it up.

I hear it all the time: "I want to exercise more," "I want to eat right," "I want to try yoga." The list is endless. Some of us have no idea why, but for some reason, we just feel unfulfilled. Making things worse, because we assume implementing change in our lives will cause us too much stress and be too hard, we give up the whole idea of change.

Yes, change can be stressful, but it can also be wonderful. I learned to perpetuate what I wanted in my life with the development of healthy habits.

You can work on all of your goals, big or small, without sacrificing your health and well-being. It's a matter of learning the process of habit development while nurturing your true self.

When you are working on exactly what you want to achieve, life is so much easier and pleasurable. You are an amazing power when you are living at the level of your utmost performance... healthy, productive, and bringing your dreams to life. You deserve this! It's so much more fun to "work," to play, and to live, without having life take a toll on your body, mind, and soul.

Now, let's pick up some new habits! Believe me, it's time. ■

# LIVE RIGHT

## 10 Ways to Start Living a Meaningful Life... Today!



Adapted Web Reprint

**G**o to work. Come home. Eat dinner. Go to sleep. Wake up. Rinse, recycle, repeat. Do you ever wonder, “Does my life even matter?”

There is magic and fear behind this question. Deep down inside—you know that you matter! You know your life has meaning! You know you have a purpose! But if your life matters, has meaning, and purpose, then ask yourself: “Why am I living each day stuck on repeat?”

You have to be intentional about the life you want to live. It’s just too easy to fall into the “rinse, repeat, recycle” pattern. Therefore the first step to living a meaningful life is to *choose* to live a meaningful life. Once you have made this choice, then you have to take action.

Below are 10 specific actions you can take today that will start to bring meaning to your life. Don’t try to do all 10 at once. Adopt one item from the list, and then slowly add others as time goes on.

**1. Focus on Being a Better Person.** What type of human being do you want to be?

A trustworthy friend? A loving partner? Filled with gratitude? The key is to step back and to ask these two questions: What type of character do I want to have? If I was that person, how would I act? Then immediately try to start acting in a manner consistent with your answer. We are what we do. Therefore, if you begin to act in a specific manner and continue to act like that, you will become that person.

**2. Commit This Moment.** Find somewhere quiet to sit. Take a few full breaths in and out. Become present in the moment. Then with conviction start having an intense dialogue with yourself. In this dialogue you are going to explain that “This moment is it! This is the moment when I commit to living a meaningful life!” Then explain why you are going to commit. Tony Robbins calls these “incantations”. Incantations are not statements that are merely said. They are words driven by deep emotions and passion. They are a commitment to the most important person in this world: yourself.

**3. Donate Your Time.** One of the greatest ways to bring meaning to your life is to help others in need. You can volunteer at a homeless shelter, help a friend move, read books to children at the library, spend time with an elderly person, the list goes on and on. When you give your time to make the world a better place it brings immense meaning to your life. Imagine being part of the reason the world is improving! Now, that's cool.

**4. Listen When People Talk To You.** Very few people actually listen during a conversation. We are social creatures. We all want to be heard. By showing how much you value others, you will bring greater meaning to your own life.

**5. Make Today "Book Worthy."** Have you ever read a book and thought to yourself "Wow! That was awesome!" Well, what if you could make today worthy of a chapter in a book. Think about this question: What would make today worthy of a Chapter in "The story of my life"? Answer that question and then take action on the most viable thing you can do.

**6. Do the Simple Things That Make You Smile.** What makes you laugh? What makes you smile? What fills your soul with joy? Maybe you like to read a good book, go out with some friends, watch Sesame Street, listen to music, take nature walks, or watch TV series or movies. What it is doesn't matter. All that matters is that it truly brings joy to your life.

**7. Write out a "Future Gratitude List."** Sit down with a pen and paper. Then write down five things you are thankful for that you want to happen today. For example "Have a wonderful lunch with a friend." Then fold up the list and put it in your

pocket. Carry it with you throughout the day. Then be intentional about making it happen. Essentially this is a fun way of planning out your day.

**8. Write Out Your "Life Dream List" and Take the First Step.** Take out a piece of paper, pen, and stopwatch. Set the timer for 15 minutes. Then start writing down everything you want to achieve in your life. Have fun with it, nothing is too big! Then at the end of 15 minutes, look at the list and ask this question: *Which achievement (from the list) would have the single greatest impact on my life right now?* Then follow that with this question: *What is the very first step I can take today to move in that direction?* Then immediately take the first step.

**9. Tell Those You Love... That You Love Them.** The danger is that it's easy to get caught in the trap of assuming "they already know I love them". But in reality, they might not know. Write down a list of the people that you genuinely love. Then identify which of them you have not told lately "I love you". Then go say it! It might be a little bit weird at first, but it will also be very powerful.

**10. Take Time to Reflect.** Take some time to think about the direction your life is going, and the effect you have on others. Are there some areas that could use some improvement? Meditate on how to make the changes that will both benefit you and those around you.

This list can ignite the first step towards a life of meaning and purpose... Or it can do nothing for you. That's on you. Today can be the moment you start to bring meaning to your life? ■

# LOVE RIGHT

## Let Love Be Your Guide



By Robyn Stratton-Berkessel, adapted excerpts

**T**he time to talk love, to think love, to show love, to give love, to receive love, to acknowledge and appreciate love is just as essential in our world today as it has always been. Love is the greatest universal positive attribute.

As a species, we need love. When love is unavailable, lost or destroyed, we feel the pain and the despair, as individuals and as collectives. The context changes over time, but the story of needing love to triumph is unchanging.

A personal story to illustrate:

Recently, my sister in Australia had a milestone birthday. I had planned to take a three week vacation around that time so I could be part of a big party she was arranging to celebrate. My work and some personal matters at her end (she broke her ankle) got in the way, and I decided to postpone the trip. We were both disappointed and she especially.

When I dug deep inside, I realized there was a fear that was holding me back. Fear of being away from work for so long, fear of not having such a great time because of her broken ankle, and a lot of other stuff that I

was telling myself. I started to realize I was thinking from fear instead of love. I knew I wanted to be with her. I knew how important it was to her that I was there to celebrate with family and friends. When I shifted my being from fear to love, a whole new energy (and solution) opened up. I could go for one week only and make her birthday the sole purpose of my visit rather than a detour in a bigger trip. I decided to not tell her I was coming.

When I walked into her kitchen two days before her birthday, and saw the joy, the delight, and the happiness on her face, I was overcome with gratitude that I had let fear go and let love be my guide.

We have the capacity to shape our world through love. When we believe in goodness and love, we notice it, we feel it, we see it, and we can make it happen. So we need to ask ourselves, what do we want to believe in more? Another way of saying this is, “Where the attention goes, energy follows.”

What fear might you let go of to let love be your guide? ■

# EAT RIGHT

## Eating Right Isn't Complicated



Adapted Web Reprint

**E**ating right doesn't have to be complicated—simply begin to shift to healthier food and beverage choices. These recommendations can help get you started.

- Emphasize fruit, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat or fat-free milk and milk products.
- Include lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs and nuts.
- Minimize saturated fats, trans fats, salt (sodium) and added sugars.
- Make your calories count, and eliminate empty calories by limiting sweets and carbs.
- Think nutrient-rich rather than “good” or “bad” foods. The majority of your food choices should be packed with vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients, and lower in calories.

Making smart food choices can help you stay healthy, manage your weight and encourage you to stay more active physically.

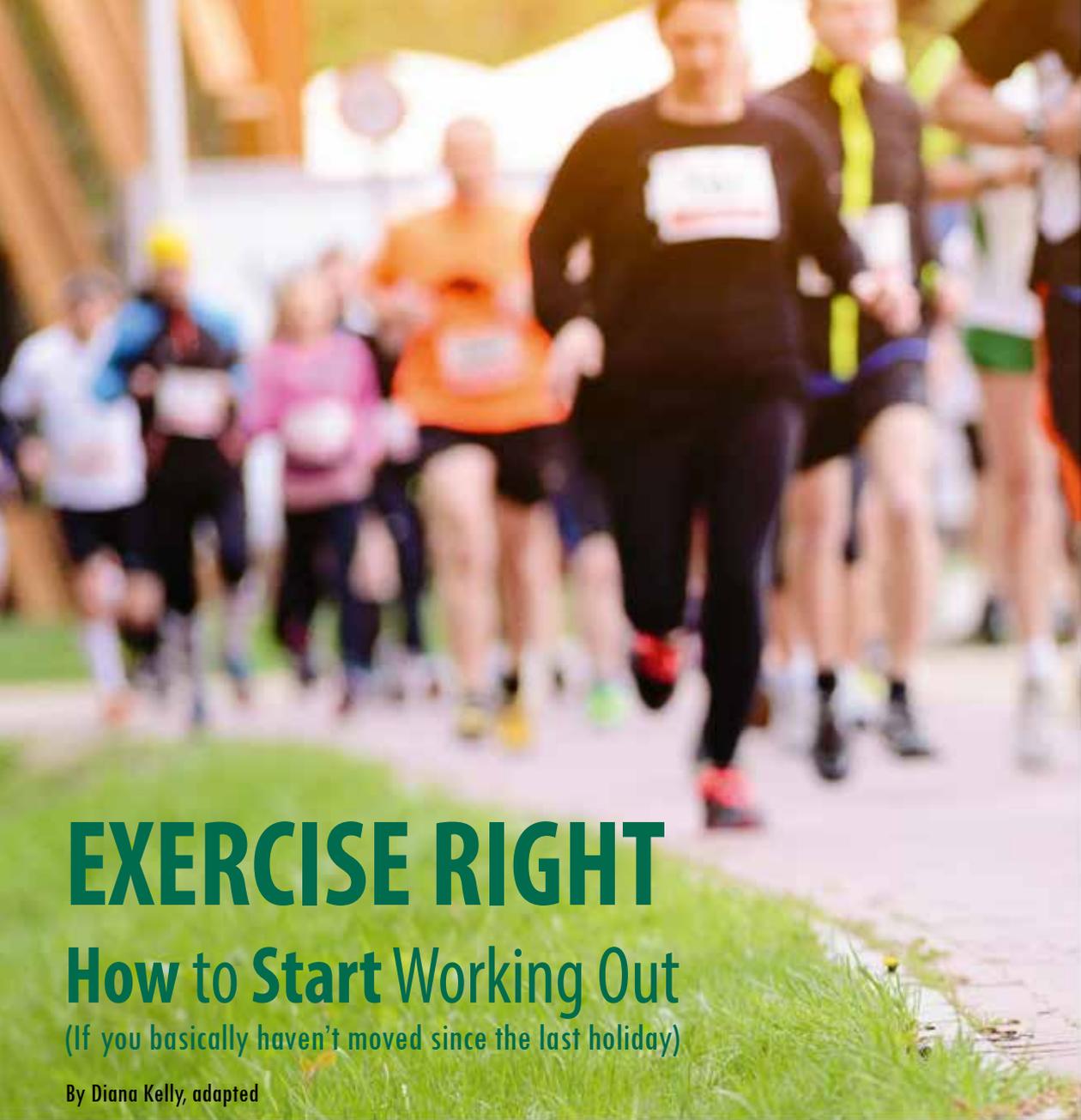
### Focus on Variety

Eat a variety of foods from all the food groups to get the nutrients your body needs. Fruits and vegetables can be fresh, frozen or canned. Eat lots of dark green vegetables such as leafy greens and broccoli and orange vegetables including carrots and sweet potatoes. Vary your protein choices with more fish, beans and peas. Eat at least 3 ounces of whole-grain cereals, breads, crackers, rice or pasta every day.

### Know Your Fats

To help reduce your risk of heart disease, look for foods low in saturated fat and trans fat. Most of the fats you eat should be monounsaturated and polyunsaturated oils such as olive oil, coconut oil, and avocado oil. Check the Nutrition Facts labels on food packaging. ■

Reviewed by Taylor Wolfram, MS, RDN, LDN, adapted



# EXERCISE RIGHT

## How to Start Working Out

(If you basically haven't moved since the last holiday)

By Diana Kelly, adapted

If the only workout you've done over the past few weeks is beating yourself up for being lazy, here's how to start exercising and establish a fitness routine you'll actually stick with.

**1. Focus on What You Love About You Now.** People often focus on their fitness goals—a certain dress size, weight, or athletic achievement, for instance—

without appreciating where their bodies are now. Rather than starting your fitness journey obsessing about so-called “problem areas,” begin from a positive perspective. In order to accurately track your progress, identify your starting point and then define your goal. Take measurements and some photos of your body so you'll be able to see how far

you've come. Do this every two to four weeks, so you can see you're losing inches, even on weeks when it seems the scale hasn't budged.

**2. Start Small.** So you haven't lifted a weight for months? Give yourself a break. The first week you're easing back into exercising, start small. Know that any movement is good movement. Commit to doing 10 minutes of exercise three days this week. This will help you establish behaviors and create the habit you want to have in place. Then look ahead at your schedule and establish modest changes to your routine. Written words are powerful! Write your goals down and keep them small and achievable so you'll be motivated by your daily victories.

**3. Plan Your Mornings.** Starting a morning workout routine is just like establishing any other new habit: It requires some plain-old hard work and dedication. Advance prepping and planning can eliminate decisions about your workout, clothes, or what you're eating that day—freeing up time to actually exercise.

**4. Overcome Your Fear of Being Seen.** Exercising in public can be intimidating for many of us, and if you're overweight, obese, or just plain inexperienced you might be afraid that people are staring or judging you. Most of the time, everyone around us is focusing on themselves, even the fittest, most attractive person you'll come across. When exercising in a gym, start with cardio machines to build up your comfort level, or use some weights in a quiet area.

**5. Expect to Fail.** There will be times when life will get crazy and you'll temporarily be derailed. Everyone fails.

It is part of the experience and you should expect it. The difference between failing and succeeding is that you either pick yourself up from the fall, or you use it as an excuse to quit.

**6. Be Ready for Week Three.** Between week three and week four is the classic time when people quit their exercise resolutions. Buy a new workout outfit or new workout shoes, begin a new fitness routine, try a new class at your gym, download some new songs, or reward yourself in another way meaningful to you so you will be inspired to keep going.

**7. Look Beyond Weight Loss.** Divorce the terms 'weight loss' and 'exercise' from one another. Exercise for the health benefits that aren't related to weight loss, like feeling more energized, happier, calmer, and experiencing better sleep.

**8. Find Something You Can Stick With.** The "best exercise" is the one you enjoy and will keep doing. Pick something you'll look forward to showing up for. That workout could be a dance class, yoga, swimming, a jog in the park, or walking with friends. You want to make this experience as pleasant as possible.

**9. Make New Habits.** If you can nail down a few fitness habits—whether that's getting up a few mornings a week or showing up to the gym when you don't feel like it—you're more likely to be successful. Habit is 75 percent of the challenge.

**10. Do It for Yourself.** Treat the fitness and health commitments you make for yourself like you would your job, family, and friendships. You wouldn't let important people in your life who are counting on you down, so why do it to yourself? ■



# SLEEP RIGHT

## 9 Surprising Reasons to Get More Sleep

By R. Morgan Griffin, adapted

**W**hat difference could an extra hour of sleep make in your life? Maybe quite a lot, experts say. Studies show that the gap between getting just enough sleep and getting too little sleep may affect your health, your mood, your weight, and even your love life.

If you're getting less than the recommended seven or eight hours of sleep a night, here are nine reasons that you should shut down your computer, turn off the lights, and go to bed an hour earlier tonight.

**1. Better health.** Getting a good night's sleep won't grant you full immunity from disease, but study after study has found a link between insufficient sleep and some serious health problems, such as heart disease, heart attacks, diabetes, and obesity. In most cases, the health risks from sleep loss only become serious after years. That might not always be true, however. One study simulated the effects of the disturbed

sleep patterns of shift workers on 10 young healthy adults. After a mere four days, three of them had blood glucose levels that qualified as pre-diabetic.

**2. Better love life.** According to a poll conducted by the National Sleep Foundation in the U.S., up to 26% of people say that their love lives tend to suffer because they're just too tired. Of course, not getting enough sleep can affect your love life in less direct ways too. If you're a 28-year-old who's so exhausted you're falling asleep during a date at the movies, that's not good.

**3. Less pain.** If you have chronic pain—or acute pain from a recent injury—getting enough sleep may actually make you hurt less. Many studies have shown a link between sleep loss and lower pain threshold. Unfortunately, being in pain can make it hard to sleep. Researchers have found that getting good sleep can supplement medication for pain.

**4. Lower risk of injury.** Sleeping enough might actually keep you safer. Sleep deprivation has been linked with many notorious disasters, like the destruction of the space shuttle Challenger and the grounding of the Exxon Valdez. The Institute of Medicine estimates that one out of five auto accidents in the U.S. results from drowsy driving—that's about 1 million crashes a year. When you're overtired, you're more likely to trip, or fall off a ladder, or cut yourself while chopping vegetables. Household accidents like that can have serious consequences.

**5. Better mood.** Getting enough sleep won't guarantee a sunny disposition, but you have probably noticed that when you're exhausted, you're more likely to be cranky. That's not all. When you're overtired, you're more likely to snap at your boss, or burst into tears, or start laughing uncontrollably.

**6. Better weight control.** Getting enough sleep could help you maintain your weight—and conversely, sleep loss goes along with an increased risk of weight gain. Why? Part of the problem is behavioral. If you're overtired, you might be less likely to have the energy to go for that jog or cook a healthy dinner after work. The other part is physiological. The hormone leptin plays a key role in making you feel full. When you don't get enough sleep, leptin levels drop. Result: people who are tired are just plain hungrier—and they seem to crave high-fat and high-calorie foods specifically.

**7. Clearer thinking.** Have you ever woken up after a bad night's sleep, feeling fuzzy and easily confused, like your brain can't get out of first gear? Sleep loss affects

how you think. It impairs your cognition, your attention, and decision-making. Studies have found that people who are sleep-deprived are substantially worse at solving logic or math problems than when they're well-rested. They're also more likely to make odd mistakes, like leaving their keys in the fridge by accident

**8. Better memory.** Feeling forgetful? Sleep loss could be to blame. While we sleep, our brains process and consolidate our memories from the day. If you don't get enough sleep, it seems like those memories might not get stored correctly—and can be lost. What's more, some research suggests that sleep decreases the chances of developing false memories. In several experiments, people were asked to look over a series of words. Later they were tested on what they remembered. People who didn't sleep in between were much more likely to "remember" a word that they hadn't actually seen before.

**9. Stronger immunity.** Could getting enough sleep prevent the common cold? One preliminary study put the idea to the test. Researchers tracked over 150 people and monitored their sleep habits for two weeks. Then they exposed them to a cold virus. People who got seven hours of sleep a night or less were almost three times as likely to get sick as the people who got at least eight hours of sleep a night. More research is needed to establish a real link; this study was small and other factors may have influenced the results. Still, you can't go wrong getting eight hours of sleep when possible. ■

WebMD Feature Reviewed by Louise Chang, MD on December 27, 2011

# Healthy Living

NOTABLE  
QUOTES



I believe that the greatest gift you can give your family and the world is a healthy you.—**Joyce Meyer**

Physical fitness is not only one of the most important keys to a healthy body, it is the basis of dynamic and creative intellectual activity.—**John F. Kennedy**

Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.—**Benjamin Franklin**

Keep looking up! Learn from the past, dream about the future, and look up. There's nothing like a beautiful sunset to end a healthy day.—**Rachel Boston**

Looking good and feeling good go hand in hand. If you have a healthy lifestyle, your diet and nutrition are set, and you're working out, you're going to feel good.—**Jason Statham**

Fitness starts at home. What you eat is what you will look, just as what you sow is what you reap. Eat good food: eat fruits, vegetables, healthy grains, and don't go for sweet and trite food.—**Rakul Preet Singh**

The body needs its rest, and sleep is extremely important in any health regimen. There should be three main things: eating, exercise and sleep. All three together in the right balance make for a truly healthy lifestyle.—**Rohit Shetty**

Being in control of your life and having realistic expectations about your day-to-day challenges are the keys to stress management, which is perhaps the most important ingredient to living a happy, healthy and rewarding life.—**Marilu Henner**

It's a wonderful thing to be optimistic. It keeps you healthy and it keeps you resilient.—**Daniel Kahneman**

A healthy attitude is contagious but don't wait to catch it from others. Be a carrier.—**Tom Stoppard**

