

BEGINNERS GUIDE TO CREATING A GREEN AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT A GREEN AND HEALTHY

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ABSTRACT

"Going green" doesn't have to mean expensive investments like solar panels, sustainable wood flooring, and nontoxic paints. Experts say that simple changes in your everyday life are all it takes to make your home a healthier, safer, greener place to be. But don't forget that human beings are creatures of habit, and change takes time. Begin with small steps. For example, make a commitment to change just one habit every month.

#1 - HOW HOUSE GREENERY CAN BOOST YOUR HEALTH

Did you know that home plants can help create the perfect home atmosphere? But also, thanks to them, you can improve your physical and emotional health.

Improve your health with house greenery

-The power of our green helpers

Many of us keep potted flowers or other indoor plants at home. Many do it because it is beautiful. But the most important is useful. However, not everyone is fully aware of the benefits that indoor plants bring, how they affect the emotional state of a person, and our life as a whole. Some plants can remove toxins from the air, others help to concentrate on important matters, etc. But not only this is the influence of indoor plants on human health. In this article, we will talk about the most useful in all senses of the word indoor plants.



House greenery treats injuries

The influence of indoor plants on human health is quite large. For example, aloe vera (*Aloe Barberae*), also known as a desert lily, is an immortal medicinal plant. It affects the human body and has many useful properties, including purifying the air in the home.

The juice contained in the leaves of aloe vera is used to heal cuts and burns, including sunburn. Already in Ancient Egypt, they knew about the properties of this plant, using it to treat burns, infections, and insect control. But not only this is its health benefits. So, steam from a decoction of aloe leaves is also used to relieve asthma attacks.



Indoor plants make the atmosphere cleaner

Plants have a significant impact on human life. NASA conducted a study to determine which houseplants help cleanse the air we breathe by eliminating harmful toxins. Chlorophytum (*Chlorophytum Comosum*) is one such greenery. This flower is very popular, its health benefits are undeniable. Besides, chlorophytum is very easy to breed.

The health of every person depends on air quality. Plants are beneficial in this case. Chlorophytum purifies the air of benzene, formaldehyde, carbon monoxide and xylene. All of these volatile organic compounds enter our home through furniture, carpets, and ordinary household products.

Ficus Elastica (*Ficus elastica*) is another houseplant from NASA's list. This popular ornamental plant with thick shiny oval leaves also has beneficial effects on human health.

This type of ficus perfectly cleans the air of formaldehyde. This toxin gets into the air through furniture, flooring, and products such as air fresheners, hair sprays, or nails. Over time, the effectiveness of the plant only increases, which means that the positive effect on the human body increases.



Thanks to house greenery you can breathe clean air

It is very important in which microclimate a person spends his day. It has been proven that it is the dry and warm environment created by central heating batteries, air conditioners, and UFO infrared heaters that promotes the reproduction and long-term preservation of viruses and bacteria in the air and on surfaces. According to sanitary standards, a person's air humidity is 30-60%, but in winter, due to heating and inadequate ventilation, it often falls below the permissible minimum, which is comparable to dry weather (in the summer in the steppe zone – from 27 to 11%) or air in the desert. Under such conditions, our well-being worsens, performance decreases, water metabolism is disrupted, due to the drying of the mucous membranes of the nasopharynx and oral cavity, their ability to cleanse themselves decreases, breathing is difficult, and as a result, weakened immunity and disease.



This is not news, but an important aspect. Many home plants produce oxygen. For example, *Sansevieria trifasciata Laurentii*, also known as mother-in-law's tongue, is a very unpretentious and widespread indoor plant with long dense leaves. It is able not only to decorate any room but also to positively affect human health.

We all know that when a person exhales carbon dioxide, plants perform the opposite effect, producing oxygen. Most plants do this during the day, but sansevieria is one of the few indoor plants that produce oxygen even at night, making it an ideal flower for the bedroom. You can put a pot with sansevieria within a radius of 2 m from the place where you sleep or spend a lot of time. Then the health benefits will be maximum.

They also indoor plants moisturize the air. About 10% of the air we breathe is humidified by plants. *Dipsis* (*Chrysalidocarpus Lutescens*) is one of the most popular indoor palm trees. This houseplant with juicy leaves has a beneficial effect on our life and health. *Dipsis* saturates the air with moisture, which is especially important in the winter months. Plants such as cacti or succulents also bring health benefits: they accumulate water and therefore produce little moisture.



Pleasure for your sense of smell

The influence of indoor plants on humans is not limited to the fact that they are important for health.

The use of indoor plants also lies in the fact that they can create a positive atmosphere.

Say, to fill your home with a refreshing aroma, it is not necessary to use household chemicals. Better get a plant with a pleasant smell – for example, kaffir lime (*Citrus Hystrix*).

This indoor plant that does not contain any chemicals will help not only to refresh the house but also indispensable in the kitchen.



Your stable emotional state

Studies have proven the influence of indoor plants on the emotional state of a person. Plants at home and work help reduce stress and fatigue, as well as increase employee productivity.

To feel the influence of indoor plants on a person, we advise you to put flowers with long leaves on the desktop in the office or at home, as well as in the room where your children do their homework or study. Soon you will understand the benefits of indoor plants. Indoor plants such as palm trees, primarily Chamedorea (*Chamaedorea Seifrizii*) or Benjamin's ficus (*Ficus Benjamina*), will regulate indoor air humidity and reduce carbon dioxide levels. And this is not a complete list of the effect of greenery on human life.

Moreover, some indoor plants help make sleep more enjoyable and deep. This is a very important aspect because we can better relax, gain strength, and feel more alert and healthy. We do not always manage to sleep the recommended seven or eight hours – especially when the brain is busy with constant thoughts about what happened during the day and what needs to be done tomorrow. But the influence of indoor plants on humans is manifested here.

According to studies, vapors of some plants – including lavender (*Lavandula*) and jasmine (*Jasminum*) – contribute to a more restful sleep. The smell of these plants creates a feeling of calm, which will help you better prepare for bed. As you can see, the influence of indoor plants on a person, his health, and mood are truly invaluable.



Just good mood

Plants also affect the mood of a person. When we are unwell, nothing improves the emotional state and does not raise the mood like a gift in the form of a plant in a pot or a bouquet. Studies have proven the beneficial effects of indoor plants on the health and emotional state of people. So, in hospitals, patients with flowers in their wards or windows facing the garden are recovering much faster than patients whose emotional health is not stimulated by plants.

Plants cheer up and help us feel more relaxed and protected. The benefits of plants are also that they help to cope with loneliness and depression. Caring for a living organism gives a feeling of satisfaction, especially when the plant that we cared for with love begins to bloom. As the first wards, choose unpretentious flowers, for example, Uzambar Violets (Saintpaulia). They bloom throughout the year and do not require special care.

#2 - WHAT IS GREEN CLEANING?

The term "green cleaning" can have a lot of definitions, but the main goal of the process is to use cleaning solutions and methods that keep us and our environment healthy and free of toxins. Exposure to chemicals and toxins can potentially cause irreparable damage to our bodies, water, air, and ecosystem. Green cleaning can fall mean using a green cleaning product or cleaning your home in a way that reduces waste that goes into landfills, for example.

For some, green cleaning means that they only use substances like baking soda, vinegar, and lemons to clean the home surfaces. These are considered to be natural green cleaners. Some households may seek out manufactured green cleaning products that are healthy for the environment (some are green brands). Green cleaning products typically have the following characteristics:

- No phosphates
- No chlorine
- No artificial fragrances
- No artificial colors
- Biodegradable or recyclable packaging

Organically grown ingredients using sustainable farming practices
Some green cleaning products may certify that their items are fair trade, meaning that the product meets certain environmental and labor standards by those who produced it. Other green cleaning products may not be free of additives or harmful chemicals—but they may donate a portion of their profits to environmental causes.

How "Green" Are Green Cleaners?

To tell if a product is green, read the label. Not that different labeling programs classify cleaning products. The United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Design for the Environment program mandates that labels are put on products that meet EPA's criteria for chemicals.

These products display the Design for the Environment (DfE) label. Others that are labeled as "low VOC" or "no VOC" means they have a lower concentration of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) or none at all.

- In recent years, there has been quite a bit of debate about the differences between green and traditional cleaners. There are three gray areas when it comes to comparing green and traditional cleaners:
- Labels with vague terms such as "environmentally friendly" and "non-toxic" are not regulated and potentially misleading which means that some green products may still have unhealthy ingredients in them.
- When it comes to effectively killing germs and stopping the spread of infection, for example, it is vital to have a product that cleans and disinfects. However, some people who turn to the EPA-registered disinfectant list, for example, may be wary of some green cleaners not on the list, and instead stick to trusted favorites such as bleach.

- Green cleaning items have also faced a backlash because they can cost more than traditional cleaning products.

#3 - GREEN CLEANING PRODUCTS GUIDE

People's interest is growing around green cleaning products that have less impact on individual health and the environment than conventional ones.

Many companies now create cleaning products that use more natural ingredients, avoiding harmful chemicals.

In many cases, conventional, nongreen cleaning products for the home and workplace are potentially hazardous. Besides the risk of developing a long-term illness, exposure to cleaning products can trigger asthma, leave burns, or be dangerous if someone were to ingest them.

Benefits



Green cleaning products should not contain hazardous chemicals, and so they are likely to pose fewer health risks. They are also, typically, much safer and more suitable for use around people with weakened immune systems or health conditions.

Green cleaning products are less hazardous for the environment, too. They do not contain chemicals that cause significant air or water pollution and are often in recyclable or recycled packaging.

Best green cleaning products

There is a wide range of cleaning products that the manufacturers advertise as being eco-friendly and healthier. It is important to know that some products may claim to be more natural and environmentally friendly than they actually are.

According to Clean Water Action, some aspects to consider in safe green cleaning products include:

- biodegradable or not
- nontoxic
- bulk packaging
- recyclable packaging
- packaging from recycled materials
- phosphate-free
- label with full disclosure of all active and inactive ingredients
- natural fragrances
- free of dyes, hypochlorite, and chlorine

The Environmental Working Group (EWG) are a nonprofit organization that research and report on green cleaning products. Some specific products and categories that the EWG recommend include:

General cleaners

- Poofy Home All-Purpose Cleaner Refill, Medieval Blend
- Earth Friendly Products ECOS Cream Cleanser, Lemon
- Aunt Fannie's Floor Cleaner Vinegar Wash Concentrate, Eucalyptus

Bathroom cleaners

- Seventh Generation Tub & Tile Natural Cleaner, Emerald Cypress & Fir
- Mrs. Meyer's Clean Day Tub And Tile, Lemon Verbena
- Mrs. Meyer's Clean Day Tub And Tile, Lavender

Dishwashing soaps

- Attitude Dishwasher Eco-Pouches
- AspenClean Dish Soap, Eucalyptus Rosemary
- biokleen Natural Dish Liquid, Lemon Thyme

Air fresheners

- Arm & Hammer Fridge & Freezer Baking Soda
- Aura Cacia Aromatherapy Mist, Lavender Harvest
- Aussen Natural room odor eliminator

It is also important to note that a cleaning product is not necessarily safe for everyone just because people consider it to be green. A person should still take reasonable precautions to store cleaning products in a safe and secure location where children and pets cannot access them easily.

Natural alternatives

Instead of buying green cleaning products, a person can easily make natural cleaners at home.

There are many recipes for green cleaners that are cheap and versatile. The ingredients are natural and do not cause environmental harm, including not causing indoor air pollution. They are also less likely than nongreen ones to affect a person's health.

Some natural products that can make good cleaning agents include:

- vinegar
- baking soda
- tea tree oil
- castile soap

The Green Building Alliance have identified a few different recipes to make green cleaning products at home. Some ideas include:

- **Disinfectant:** Mix 2 cups of water, 1 tbsp of liquid castile soap, and 1 tsp of tea tree oil to create a multipurpose disinfectant that helps remove germs.
- **All-purpose cleaner:** Combine equal parts vinegar and water in a spray bottle to create an all-purpose cleaner for many hard surfaces.
- **Glass cleaner:** Shake 1/4 cup of white vinegar, 1/4 cup of rubbing alcohol, 2 cups warm water, and 1 tbsp of cornstarch in a spray bottle. The mixture can clean glass surfaces, such as windows or stove tops.
- **Drain cleaner:** Pour 1/2 cup of baking soda into a clogged drain and follow this with 1 cup of vinegar. Let the mixture work for about 15 minutes and then pour boiling water down the drain.
- **Multipurpose scrub:** Combine enough water and baking soda to make a paste. Use the paste with a brush, sponge, or scrubber to clean the surface of sinks, stoves, and other hard surfaces
- **Air freshener:** Use either dried or fresh flowers, or boil water with vanilla, cinnamon, slices of lemon or oranges, or other spices. To deodorize a refrigerator or carpet, leave baking soda in an open bowl or sprinkle on the carpet. Let it sit on the carpet for a few minutes before vacuuming it up.

- **Laundry detergent:** Combine 1/2 cup of washing soda, 1 cup of soap flakes, and a 1/2 cup of baking soda. A person can add 1 to 2 tbsp of oxygen bleach if they wish.

#4 - BEGINNERS TIPS TO CREATE A GREEN AND HEALTHY HOME

Doing your part to protect the environment once meant separating paper from plastic in your recycling bin and buying organic greens that you carried home in a reusable tote. But these days, there is a lot more you can do to create a green and healthy home.

Global warming, soaring energy costs, and other environmental concerns are front-page news -- and eco-friendly living means conserving natural resources whenever and however we can. It also means making some lifestyle changes to help save the planet. But the good news is that these changes will help keep your family healthy, and they don't need to cost a lot - in either dollars or time.

"You don't necessarily need extra time or money, or the powers of a superhero, to do your part to look after the planet," says Joanna Yarrow, author of *1,001 Ways to Save the Earth*. Yarrow is a sustainable living expert and co-founder of Beyond Green, a company that focuses on sustainable communities. "Pretty much everything we do has an impact on the natural world. So changes to any of our daily activities represent an opportunity to look after the planet better without adding too much to our 'to do' list."

It turns out that "going green" doesn't have to mean expensive investments like solar panels, sustainable wood flooring, and nontoxic paints. Experts say that simple changes in your everyday life are all it takes to make your home a healthier, safer, greener place to be. But don't forget that human beings are creatures of habit, and change takes time. Begin with small steps. For example, make a commitment to change just one habit every month.

To help you get started, WebMD asked experts on environmentally friendly living for tips on how you can turn your home sweet home into home green home.

Creating a green and healthy home: Save energy

- Switch to compact fluorescent light bulbs: These bulbs - now available to fit many light fixtures - use just a quarter of the electricity of regular

incandescent bulbs. Plus, they last up to 10 times longer, Yarrow says in 1,001 Ways to Save the Earth.

- Turn off the lights: If you or others in your household are forgetful, install movement sensors so lights only activate when needed. Another way to save energy is to install automatic timers for lights frequently left blazing in empty rooms.
- Get unplugged: Electronic appliances, including TVs, computers, and CD players can consume almost as much energy when in standby mode as they do during the relatively small amount of time they're being used.
- Use appliances efficiently: Wait for a full load before turning on the washing machine, dryer, or dishwasher. Clear the lint filter after every dryer load and air-dry clothes when weather allows. Use the air-dry function on your dishwasher. Preheat your oven only when necessary.
- Let the sun shine: The cheapest and most environmentally sound heat and light source is just outside your window. Open blinds, drapes, and shutters to let solar energy warm and brighten your home naturally.

Creating a green and healthy home: Clear the air

- **Ban smoking:** The number one way to combat indoor air pollution is never to let anyone smoke in your home
- **Grow plants indoors:** Live plants around your home act as natural air filters, and some plants are particularly effective absorbers of harmful pollutants emitted from carpets, furniture, and electronic equipment. So clean your indoor air and "green" your living space by filling your home with spider plants, Boston ferns, rubber plants, and palm trees.
- **Install a carbon monoxide detector:** Carbon monoxide is an odourless gas and exposure to it can be deadly. To prevent carbon monoxide poisoning, pick up a detector at your local hardware store.

Creating a green and healthy home: Shun toxic products

- **Choose non-toxic cleaners:** Find eco-friendly alternatives to harsh chemical cleaners, which can cause health problems and pollute the environment as well. Several brands of non-toxic, biodegradable cleaning products are available at both natural grocery shops and chain stores. Or make your own: Baking soda is a cheap and effective all-purpose cleaner, scourer, polisher, and fungicide. Switch to natural disinfectants such as tea tree oil or citrus oils. Try borax and white vinegar as a toilet bowl cleaner.
- **Use cloths instead of cleaners:** Skip the cleaning products altogether and switch to micro fiber cloths designed to attract dirt on their own. Used

damp, the cloths clean most surfaces like glass, stainless steel, brass, wood, and ceramics. When dry, they give off a natural positive charge, which attracts dust. Simply wash the cloths after each use, and you can reuse them again and again.

- **Give bug spray the flick:** "You want to minimize the use of pesticides in your home - and that's what insect repellents are," says Philip Landrigan, MD, chair of the Department of Community and Preventive Medicine at Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York, and co-author of *Raising Healthy Children in a Toxic World: 101 Smart Solutions For Every Family*. Instead of using repellents, Landrigan says to keep insects out by sealing cracks and holes around doors, windowsills, and baseboards. And keep food stored away and kitchen and eating areas as clean as possible.

Creating a green and healthy home: Grow a greener garden

- **Plant an edible garden:** Grow your own salad greens, veggies, and herbs. A garden can help reduce soil erosion and reduce air pollution. Aim to plant a plot that doesn't use a lot of water and tend your garden without using toxic pesticides or chemical fertilizers. Instead, purchase organic and earth-friendly garden products at your garden store.
- **Compost kitchen scraps:** Eggshells, tea leaves, coffee grounds, fruit and vegetable peelings - pretty much any organic matter can find a home in a compost pile or bin. Mix with yard trimmings and add water and presto - you have a nutritious soil enhancer, and you're doing your part to reduce landfill waste.
- **Water wisely:** Water your garden in the early morning or evening when it's cooler - water evaporates more slowly when it's cool. Water that's been used in sinks, bathtubs, showers or the washing machine - known as gray water - can be used again to water the garden, if it contains only biodegradable soaps.
- **Leave grass clippings on the lawn:** Grass cuttings act as natural fertilizer when they decompose. So take advantage of them.

Creating a green and healthy home: Beyond paper, plastic, and glass

- **Use durable goods:** Ditch disposable razors for reusable ones. Swap plastic cups and paper plates for ceramic ones. Choose reusable food containers over plastic wrap. Choose rechargeable batteries over the conventional single-use kind.

- Buy recycled products: Look on labels for products - like writing paper and toilet tissue - with the greatest percentage of post-consumer recycled content. Choose food items like cereals and crackers packaged in recycled cardboard.
- Find creative ways to recycle household goods: Donate used toys to a worthy organization, or start a toy library in your community, rather than tossing them in the trash. Host a clothing swap for grown-ups, and set up a kids' clothing exchange. Do the same with books. Before you toss that cardboard box in the recycling, let your child turn it into a space ship, robot, dollhouse, or secret hiding space for hours or even days of earth-friendly fun.
- Create a green and healthy home: Conserve water
 - Wait for a full load: Don't turn on the washing machine or dishwasher until it's full. Each washing cycle uses more than 25 gallons of water; make sure that every drop counts.
 - Save baths for special occasions: A shower uses about half as much water as the average bath - as long as you keep it to less than 5 minutes. An egg timer suction-cupped on the shower wall is a good way of keep track.
 - Fill the sink to do dishes: You'll use a fraction of the water that's used by leaving the faucet running. Ditto on the rinsing front. If you don't have a double sink, use a tub for rinsing.
 - Think before flushing: Don't waste water flushing tampons, condoms, or flushable wipes down the toilet, where they can block the sewage system. Dispose of these items in the trash, and save flushing for when you really need to (hint: not after every pee). Up to a third of the drinking water that comes into the typical Western home goes straight down the toilet, says Yarrow, which is a terrible waste of this precious resource.

Create a green and healthy home: Household hazardous waste

Inside nearly every household's garage, basement or kitchen sink cupboard lurks harmful substances like old paint cans, used motor oil, garden pesticides and weed killers, used batteries, old computers or electronics, harsh cleaning chemicals, or pest killers. If you dump this noxious stuff down the drain, you'll pollute the water supply. And if you dispose of it in landfills, they'll leak dangerous chemicals. Instead, do some research to find the best way to dispose of your household toxic waste. Some cities or counties have monthly or annual pickups. Others have special drop-off sites. Call your local government to learn more.

#5 - CLEANING BLUNDERS THAT ARE MAKING YOUR HOUSE DIRTIER

House cleaning is one of the most unpleasant chores for most people. So, everyone tries to carry out the dusting of their house as quickly as possible. In doing so, they make several mistakes. Some of these mistakes make your household surfaces dirtier instead of cleaning them. Therefore, you must follow the correct methods and avoid using the wrong tools and techniques.

If you want to clean the rental property at the end of the lease period, any mistake can lead to conflict with the property owner. Therefore, you need to hire experts who provide the best bond cleaning in Brisbane.

They can thoroughly clean every corner of the house to improve the indoor air quality and the overall appearance. To get a good result by cleaning yourself, know about the mistakes possible for people to make.

Here are cleaning blunders that are making your house dirtier.

1. Use Of Dirty Cleaning Tools

Your cleaning routine will be effective only if the materials you use are clean. So before you start anything, it is advisable to ensure all the cleaning tools are entirely clean and in good condition. When you use clean supplies, it will prevent the spread of bacteria, dirt, and dust in your house.

Cleaning cloths, mop heads and scrub brushes should be washed frequently, and items with germs, like toilet brushes, should be disinfected after each use. To get the best performance, empty your vacuum when it gets full and wash the filter daily.

2. Disinfecting Without Cleaning

Cleaning and disinfecting are two different things. Cleaning physically gets rid of the germs from a surface, whereas for disinfecting, you need to use chemicals to destroy the germs. Therefore, if a household surface is contaminated with dirt and dust, the disinfectant will be of no use.

Therefore, cleaning must be the first step. Before using the disinfecting solution, ensure the surface is perfectly clean, so the chemicals can get the job done perfectly. If you hire trained bond cleaners in Brisbane, they also follow the same method to disinfect your home.

3. Rubbing Stains Instead Of Blotting

Spills and splatters usually require immediate action to prevent set-in stains, but if your first instinct is to start the scrubbing, you are most likely worsening the problem. When you rub a stain, your action may cause it to further spread and push the stain deeper into the fabric.

It can even damage the fibres of the upholstery. Blot stains with a clean white cloth to eliminate any residue before using a stain-removal method that will be appropriate for the material.

4. Not Concentrating On The Hidden Areas

People often overlook hidden spots during house cleaning. The areas collect more dirt and dust than other spots. That promotes the growth of germs and harmful bacteria. The posts include light fixtures inside the oven, window blinds, ceiling corners and

5. Not Vacuuming Carpets Frequently

You should know that vacuuming the dirty carpets only once every week is not enough to get the desired result. If there are children or pets in the house, your carpets will collect pet accidents, food particles, pet hair, spills and other debris. To get rid of all of these things, vacuum your carpets a minimum of three times per week. That is why cleaning your house regularly is important.

6. Using Wrong Tools And Methods

It is pointless to use a feather duster for dusting household surfaces. These tools only clean the dust from one location and then spread it to various places. It is essential to use something that can remove the dust instead of spreading, such as a vacuum cleaner and microfibre duster.

You may have tried to clean your window glasses on a sunny day and failed to achieve a streak-free finish. This is due to the fact that when you spray window cleaner, the solution evaporates before you wipe it away with a clean cloth. As a result, it leaves marks that are difficult to remove. As a result, always perform the task on a cloudy day.

7. Not Hiring Professionals

Cleaning your home on your own is one of the cleaning blunders that people often make. Regular dusting is a different task, but when it comes to deep

cleaning your house, you need experts. From carpets and windows to bathroom and kitchen surfaces, Professionals who offer bond cleaning Brisbane have expertise in cleaning all kinds of services.

No matter how much time you spend or how much effort you put in, it is not possible to match the level of a professional cleaner. Therefore, a DIY approach is not always helpful. You must hire professionals to clean your home perfectly.

8. Ignoring The High-Touch Points

You are making a big mistake if you ignore the high-tough points in your home. These posts are in charge of the spread of infectious viruses and bacteria. You should disinfect these areas as well as clean them. These points include door handles, doorknobs, light switches, TV remotes, kitchen appliance handles, etc.

Conclusion

Now you know how important it is to keep healthy plants at home. But the main thing is how to use them effectively with maximum health benefits. Try to follow our tips, and very soon you will feel positive changes in your health, emotional mood, and physical health.

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