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Simple Habits for a Healthy and Happy Life



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Abstract

Habits matter. If you've ever tried breaking a bad habit, you know all too well how engrained they are.

Well, good habits are deeply engrained, too. Why not work on making positive habits part of your routine?

Below, you'll find suggestions for daily, monthly, and yearly habits to help kickstart your quest. Just remember that everyone's version of happiness is a little different, and so is their path to achieving it.

If some of these habits create added stress or just don't fit your lifestyle, ditch them. With a little time and practice, you'll figure out what does and doesn't work for you.



Getting Started

When it comes to being healthy, there are so many rules—in fact, it's honestly pretty hard to keep up. Don't eat this, don't drink that, do more of this, do less of that—it's basically a never-ending list. So what should you actually take to heart when it comes to living a long, happy life? Well, it's actually fairly simple. Instead of focusing on the craziness of the health world—whether it's the trendiest new diet or coolest new workout—go back to the basics.

These healthy living rules are nothing fancy, but following them will help you look and feel just as great in 50 years as you feel right this second. (Or, you know, after you start checking some off your list.) And to get you on the right track, start by finding out the Single Best Thing For Your Health.

The Single Best Thing for Your Health

It feels like there's always some new, expensive exercise or diet program that promises to improve your health. From cleanses to CrossFit, there's always a plan that claims to be the cure for all that ails you. But what if getting healthier was easier than all that?



Ariane Hundt, MS, a nutrition coach and fitness expert, says the key to better health isn't what you're putting into your body. According to Hundt, what you're not eating makes the biggest impact. "Eliminating sugar from your diet can have dramatic instant and long-term benefits to your health," she says.

"Regular sugar intake is linked to a slew of health issues and those that consume it regularly can expect to deal with a higher incidence of diseases related to inflammation, immune system breakdown, faster aging, digestion issues, brain health deterioration, and degenerative diseases, such as cancer, Alzheimer's, and heart disease."

When you grab a donut or sip a sugary cocktail, your body responds by producing insulin. Over time, those insulin fluctuations can cause your endocrine system to work less effectively. "Constant insulin surges make the

body less responsive to insulin and insulin resistance ensues," explains Hundt. "This is linked to diabetes, inflammation, brain health deterioration, metabolic syndrome, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and auto-immune disease."

If you think you're playing it safe by sticking to fruit, you may want to reevaluate. "Sugar from fruit—fructose—is not better than sugar from other sources," says Hundt. "High fructose corn syrup, the cheapest sugar there is, is linked to fatty liver disease and mitochondrial dysfunction. Therefore, fruit should be limited to about 20 grams of fructose per day." That amount of fructose can be found in two small apples or three medium bananas.

While this doesn't mean nothing sweet can ever grace your plate again, it does mean sweets, including fruits, should be eaten sparingly. Opt for high-quality proteins, fiber-rich carbohydrates, and plenty of vegetables instead. In fact, after just a few days without refined sugar—and the subsequent insulin surges—you'll likely notice a sharp decline in your sweet tooth, anyway. And when you're ready to make a major lifestyle overhaul, ditch the Unhealthiest Foods if You're Over 40!

Here are 10 golden rules that we should pay attention to for a healthy life:

I. Eat Regularly



Nutrition is the most important point to be considered for health. Make sure to have breakfast every morning. In the evening, stop eating 3–4 hours before you go to sleep. Make sure to eat 3 meals a day. Eliminate excess fat, sugar, and salt from your life.

With a regular diet, your life becomes orderly. You will know your body better and you will feel more beautiful. When you eliminate fatty and unhealthy foods from your life, you will see that you wake up more energetic in the morning. You are more cheerful and happy.

II. Drink Water

Drink plenty of water for the inner and outer beauty of your body. Remember that water has numerous benefits to the body. Do not forget to drink at least 1.5–3 liters of water per day in proportion to your weight. In this way, both your headaches will decrease and your energy will be high. After all, 70% of our body is water. We need to balance this.



You can neglect everything, but never neglect the amount of water you drink. If you forget, I recommend you download reminder applications.

III. Stay Away From Harmful Habits

Hundreds of people suffer from different diseases every year due to the use of cigarettes and alcohol. To make your body more resistant and healthy, completely remove these habits from your life. I think of smoking as behavior that should not be in the world anymore. It's a shame for your money. It is ridiculous that you pay crazy money for this seriously expensive cigarette, and it increases the risks of diseases such as cancer.



It kills your energy. As a note, I would like to add that your sexual performance is seriously reduced. In the same way, I am not talking about a glass of wine 1 or 2 times a week, but the alcohol taken regularly every day has serious harm to you.

IV. Do Sports

Even if you spend 15 minutes a day doing sports, you will benefit greatly from it. According to your daily intensity, spend half an hour a week or a day for sports. Do brisk walks, jogs, and exercise moves in a certain routine. If you make a sports plan suitable for your diet, you will get very serious physical results. Never give up on sports for both your health and your outer beauty.

You can't even imagine the relaxation and energy after sports. Even if you don't like doing sports, tighten yourself up a little and go regularly for 21–30 days. Then you will become addicted. It will be very difficult for you to give up when you see the development in your abdomen or arms.



V. Think Positively

“Thoughts are also a part of us. “

Foxes spin in our heads every second. Factors such as a stressful life and negative thoughts pave the way for many diseases. Try to approach life and events in a positive way. I'm not saying be Pollyanna, but don't get caught in negative thoughts. Always try to look at the world positively. Both your problems will be solved faster and you will not let a small issue ruin your day.

After all, I am a strong believer in good energy. I believe that if we see our life as beautiful and radiate beautiful energy, the universe will bring beautiful things to us. For this reason, it is very important to think positively both for yourself and for you.

VI. Do Brain Exercise

Do not hesitate to try things that will constantly improve your mind and strengthen your memory.

Solve puzzles, read books, keep your mind alive with sudoku. For example, I love to play chess and I love it because it is both a mental activity and a good conversation in quality environments. Working iron does not rust, after all.

VII. Take Care Of Sleep

Do not sleep less or more than 8 hours a day.



Order makes your life better. Sleeping a lot will make you bearish during the day. Likewise, sleeping less reduces your productivity. In addition, the sleep quality that you will sleep on time is not the same as the late night sleep. Do not forget this. I say turn off your phone and try to sleep at a reasonable hour.

VIII. Be With Your Loved Ones

Is there anything better than the time we spend with our loved ones?

I try to spend time with the people I love as much as possible. With people who value me and make me happy. Travel with them, chat, tell them you love them. People who make you happy will help you connect to life and be happy. Besides, is there anything more beautiful than love in this life?

IX. Cleaning Is a Must

Take care to take a shower and take care of yourself every day. Pouch regularly. Take care to use the necessary products for your face, hair and body. Do not sleep or leave the house without brushing your teeth. With all of these, both your attractiveness and your health will come to a better level.



X. Keeping House Clean for Your Mental Health

“Cleaning your room is good for your health,” might sound like something your parents may have told you to get you to tidy up your toys as a kid, but turns out, there’s some truth to it. Our environment plays an important role in our mental wellness, and keeping a clean home, whether that’s your bedroom, apartment or house, has a variety of benefits you won’t want to ignore.

Learn about these benefits below, along with expert tips for cleaning your home and keeping it tidy.

Keeping Clean for Your Mental Health

“Our outer worlds invariably affect our inner worlds and vice versa,” says Danielle Roeske, Psy.D., vice president of residential services at Newport Healthcare.

Essentially, when our minds feel overwhelmed, our living spaces can also end up cluttered. In turn, a messy space can lead to stress, anxiety, difficulty

concentrating and relationship strain, says Peggy Loo, Ph.D., licensed psychologist.

Studies over the years have linked mental health to environmental exposure. A 1997 study indicates that childhood living conditions significantly impact health in adulthood, and a 2000 comparative study linked improvements in housing quality to residents' improved mental health.



The Relationship Between Mental Health and Cleaning

When some people are feeling overwhelmed or stressed out, they might try yoga, mindfulness, or even a massage, but for others giving the shelves a quick dust, wiping down the kitchen, or even organizing the closet is just as beneficial for their mental health as using a mindfulness app.

In fact, for some people the simple sight of a clean and organized home can help them unwind and de-stress even after an overwhelming day.

Here's a closer look at the impact of cleaning on your mental health, including the benefits of cleaning and how to incorporate a cleaning schedule into your life.

✚ Negative Impact of Clutter and Mess

Keeping your home clean and engaging in the cleaning process is good for you. In fact, research shows that cleaning—or the lack of cleaning—can have a direct impact on mental health.

✓ **Clutter May Contribute to Depression**

For instance, a study published in "Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin," found that women who described their living spaces as cluttered or full of unfinished projects were more likely to be fatigued and depressed than women who described their homes as restful and restorative. Researchers also found that the women with messy or cluttered homes had higher levels of cortisol.

✓ **Clutter May Lead to Decreased Focus, Confusion, and Tension**

Meanwhile, a study by Princeton University researchers discovered that clutter can make it difficult to focus on a particular task. More specifically, they discovered that a person's visual cortex can be overwhelmed by objects not related to a particular task, making it harder to focus and complete projects efficiently.



In some ways, clutter and mess is linked to negative emotions like confusion, tension, and irritability while an organized home tends to produce more positive emotions like calmness and a sense of well-being.

To the brain, clutter represents unfinished business and this lack of completeness can be highly stressful for some people. This fact is especially true when people have significant concerns pressing in on their lives.

Clutter and mess can create more stress and anxiety, but by cleaning, organizing, and reducing the clutter, people are able to take control of their environment and create a more relaxing environment that helps them focus better on the more pressing issues in their lives.

✚ Benefits of Cleaning and Decluttering

Research has found that cleaning can have a number of positive effects on your mental health. For instance, it helps you gain a sense of control over your environment and engage your mind in a repetitive activity that can have a calming effect.



It also has been found to improve a person's mood as well as provide a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. There are a number of reasons why cleaning can help you destress. Here's an overview of some of the benefits of cleaning and decluttering your home or office.

✓ **Cleaning Can Benefit Physical Health**

A clean home also impacts your physical health. According to a study by NiCole Keith, PhD, a research scientist and professor at Indiana University, people with clean houses tend to be healthier than those with messy or cluttered homes. In fact, cleanliness was even more a predictor of good health than the walkability of a neighborhood.

✓ **Gain Control of Your Environment**

When people feel like their life is out of control or they are struggling with some uncertainties, cleaning can be a way to assert some control in their life. Cleaning gives people a sense of mastery and control over their environment.

In fact, a study by the University of Connecticut found that in times of high stress, people default to repetitive behaviors like cleaning because it gives them a sense of control during a chaotic time.

What's more, clutter and disorganization can be really distracting and make it hard to focus or complete other projects and you can start to feel stuck in a rut. So, if you're feeling an urge to clean and declutter when you're stressed, your mind and body is probably looking for a way to bring some order to your environment.

✓ **Improve Your Mood**

Aside from the benefits of having a cleaner home, the relationship between a clean house and mental health can help you reduce your anxiety.

For instance, a study published in the journal, *Mindfulness*, found that people who were mindful when washing dishes—in other words they took the time to smell the soap and to take in the experience—reported a 27% reduction in nervousness, along with a 25% improvement in "mental inspiration."

What's more, studies have found that having clean sheets and making your bed are associated with a better night's rest. And, when you get more rest, that provides a whole host of mental health benefits including an improved mood.

Additionally, the Anxiety and Depression Association of America indicates that the physical activity of cleaning coupled with the end result of a cleaner home helps reduce stress, feelings of anxiety, and depressive symptoms.⁸ Cleaning can also reduce fatigue and improve concentration.

✓ Increase Your Focus

When your home is cluttered, messy, or exceptionally dirty, the chaos that the mess creates can impact your ability to focus. The clutter also limits your brain's ability to process information. In fact, researchers have discovered that people are less irritable, less distracted, more productive, and better able to process information with an uncluttered and organized work area.²

If you're having trouble focusing on a project, you may want to try decluttering your workspace first. You might find that devoting just a few minutes to organizing your things and clearing away any mess may make it easier for you to concentrate and get your work completed.

Limiting the number of possessions you own can have the same impact because it reduces the number of things vying for your brain's attention.

✚ How to Incorporate Cleaning Into Your Life

Whether you are struggling with depression, have a new baby, or just have a chaotic life, the concept of cleaning and decluttering can seem like an overwhelming task that is simply outside of your reach right now. In fact, many people wrestle with whether or not cleaning should be a priority.



But, knowing that having a cleaner environment will help improve your mood and make your life more peaceful, it might be worth pursuing. Here are some ideas on how to incorporate cleaning into your life.

✓ **Start Small**

Most people put off cleaning because the task seems way too big to tackle. But instead of expecting to get the entire house into order in one weekend, start small and do just a little bit each day. In other words, commit to doing one thing around your house or apartment each day and before you know it, your environment will be much cleaner and less stressful in no time.

For instance, pick one thing you want to do each day and then follow through. One day you might go through all of your mail. The next day you might clean the toilet and wash the bathroom sink. The next day you might clean off the kitchen counter, and the next day you might pick up all the clothes scattered around the house and put them in a laundry basket.

The key is that you don't make your to-do list bigger than what you can mentally handle or you will just increase your stress rather than reduce it.

✓ **Set a Timer**

Another option for getting a cleaning routine started is to set a timer and see how much cleaning you can get done in that time period. Or, you can use the time blocking method for scheduling to manage your cleaning.

For example, set aside 15, 20, or even 30 minutes to clean, set a timer, and then start in the primary living area of your home. Start by picking up things that are lying on the floor or on the coffee table and put them away. When the timer goes off, you are done for the day.

If you would prefer, you could start in a bedroom, instead of the living area. This way, your cleaning will help you create a more peaceful environment that will help you sleep better that night.

Even though setting a time for a few minutes may not seem like much time, you can accomplish a lot more than you might imagine. Plus, you aren't overwhelming yourself by thinking that you have to devote three hours of your Saturday to cleaning. You get what you can done and then you move on to something else.

✓ **Involve Others**

Sometimes you are at a point in your life where cleaning is just not something you can handle on your own. Maybe you're recovering from a major illness,

running your own business, raising a house full of kids, or trying to work and go to school—whatever your situation, if you know you cannot possibly accomplish everything that needs to be done without help, then you should consider involving others.

✓ **Ask Friends and Family For Help**

Although asking for help may be hard, most people are willing to help you if you ask. So, talk to your partner, enlist your kids, or ask a friend or family member if they will help you get organized. Plus, it's a lot easier to tackle big projects when you have the help of others.

✓ **Get Outside Help**

And, if you have room in your budget, you also could consider hiring someone to clean your house once or twice a month. To keep costs down, consider having them do the hard tasks like cleaning the bathrooms only and then clean the other areas of your home on your own.

You also could consider getting a robot vacuum so that you don't have to worry about the floors. Look for ways to simplify the cleaning that needs to be done and it will become more manageable over time.

When Cleaning Becomes a Compulsion

Although there is nothing wrong with being a neat freak and looking to cleaning as a way to calm your nerves and destress, it does become an issue when your cleanliness and need for order in your home starts to become a compulsion.

For instance, if you won't go out with your friends or you cancel plans because you haven't finished all your cleaning tasks for the day or week, then that could be a red flag that your desire for a clean home has become a compulsion.

Likewise, cleaning can become an issue if it's impacting your physical health, feels a little obsessive, or is interfering with your schedule like making you late for work or school.

If you are unsure whether or not your cleaning habits are constructive or bordering on a compulsion, you may want to talk to your doctor or a mental health professional for advice. A therapist can help you determine which

behaviors are healthy and which might need to be altered. They can also provide other coping mechanisms for depression, anxiety, or stress.

- **Mental Health Benefits of Cleaning**

While a messy space can put you in a mental bind, this also means that tidying up your home can help you feel better. The following are a handful of ways cleaning can benefit your mental health, according to experts.



- ✓ **Sense of order and control.** A 2017 study on young adults found that clutter was linked to procrastination, feeling overwhelmed and lower quality of life. Our outer environments can act as a container for our emotional and psychic states, Dr. Roeske explains. “When there is order and structure to our outer environment, it can help us feel more able to manage some of the internal feeling states and worlds,” she adds.
- ✓ **Familiarity and consistency.** Human beings prefer similar routines that offer us stability, even amid otherwise chaotic circumstances, Dr. Roeske notes. Keeping your household items in order can provide that familiarity. However, she adds that “order” doesn’t necessarily mean

everything is lined up perfectly and color coordinated, and that another person's sense of order may differ from yours.

- ✓ **Released endorphins.** The physical act of cleaning can also release endorphins, which Dr. Roeske states, "is hugely beneficial as a pain reliever, stress reliever and overall enhancement of our well-being."
- ✓ **Improved focus.** Having too many items in our field of vision distracts the brain's processing capacity, according to a 2011 Princeton Neuroscience Institute study. Clearing away clutter allows the brain to focus on items and tasks one at a time.
- ✓ **Regulated emotions.** The act of cleaning also requires us to slow down, which can offer a calming effect during overwhelming situations and help us explore and manage our emotions. "Deep cleaning can be a great constructive physical outlet for frustration," says Dr. Loo.

Dr. Loo notes that while cleaning can help support better mental health, mustering up extra energy to tidy can be difficult for folks with anxiety, depression or burnout. In this case, it may help to see a mental health professional as well to learn other evidence-based coping strategies.



- **10 General Rules for a Clean and Tidy Home**

A few tasks a day keep the cleaning at bay.

The best way to keep a house clean, I've realized, is to fend off encroaching messes every single day. I do this by following a few basic rules that make the job much easier and prevent the house from reaching disastrous levels of chaos. Family members are aware of these rules and are expected to help out whenever possible. Of course, it doesn't always go according to plan, but it does help a lot.

1. Take your shoes off.
2. Be ready for laundry.
3. Swap out dishcloths and tea towels regularly.
4. Store leftovers in see-through containers.
5. Empty the dishwasher immediately.
6. Tackle paper clutter as it enters.
7. Everything has its place.
8. Prevent Mould And Mildew In Your Home.

Here is a comprehensive guide to help prevent mould and mildew in your home and promote a hygienic and refreshing indoor environment. To avoid hazardous fumes, ensure you tackle the mould stains using safe and sound products.

- ✓ Control Humidity Levels in Your Home
- ✓ Promote Air Circulation and Cross Ventilation
- ✓ Consider Potential Leaks and Fix Them
- ✓ Dry Wet Areas Proactively
- ✓ Pay Attention to Proper Drainage
- ✓ Make the Most of Mould Resistant Products
- ✓ Banish Mould Spores Naturally

Follow these preventive tips to keep mould and mildew at bay.

9. Never leave dishes overnight.
10. Do a biannual purge of each room.

If cleaning and decluttering helps ease your stress, reduces your anxiety, and lifts your mood, then by all means grab your cleaning tools and get started. After all, a messy or cluttered home can be distracting. Just be sure your cleaning habits aren't a crutch. You don't want to rely solely on cleaning to give your life order and predictability.

There are times when things won't go as planned and you won't be able to clean. So, you need to have other tools in your arsenal that you can go to to destress and unwind.

Conversely, if you are struggling with depression or another mental health issue and long for a clean and organized home, but just don't have the energy to do it, try starting small. Even if that means just picking up all the clothes off the floor on one day and loading the dishwasher on the next day, taking little steps to clean up your environment will feel more manageable and less overwhelming.

And, more importantly, it may even lift your mood to have taken a small step toward organizing and cleaning your environment.

The Final Words

By adopting these simple habits, you can transform your daily life. Maintaining a clean environment, practicing mindfulness, eating well, and staying active will boost your energy, reduce stress, and promote a positive mindset. Small, consistent actions lead to lasting improvements, creating a healthier and happier lifestyle.

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