

# Getting Your Inner Glow

by Muriel Cuddy

Do you ever feel like you're chasing a moving target when it comes to your health goals? With a fast-paced work and home life we can sometimes feel like we're on a continuous hamster wheel.

Before we know it, we're feeling frazzled, exhausted and mentally burnt out. We're constantly striving for 'balance' but find the scale is often out of sync as the portion of 'Self Care' is neglected. We prioritize work and family, and often leave no time for focusing on our own wants or needs. Our bright eyes and energy levels to match can seem a thing of the past, and we realize it's been a long time since we've truly felt like 'ourselves'.

The amazing thing about our body is that it will send us signs when there's something out of balance. These signs are in the form of symptoms, which are often masked by medication. But are we ever really addressing the root cause?

Take stress for instance, some of the symptoms of stress are poor digestion, headaches, weight fluctuations, irritability, and poor sleep. But we're all too quick to sooth stress with Solpadine or a bottle of wine. That's ok as a temporary fix, but over time it will lead to impaired liver function, poor detoxification and reduced immunity.

Do you ever ask yourself what used to work so well for you when you were at your healthiest? Getting back to your 'Happy place' can feel like chasing the magical fountain of youth. I've some good news for you...it's not too late to start glowing again. Starting today you have the ability to make lasting change in your health.

There are between 50 and 75 trillion cells in our body, each type of cell has its own life span, red blood cells live for about 4 months, white blood cells about a year and skin cells two to three weeks. Colon cells get the raw end of the deal and die off after about four days.

In a nutshell, our body is continuously regenerating itself, the quality of food we consume, exercise we take and lifestyle we choose will directly impact the quality of the new cells we're creating. If we choose to 'Eat beige' we'll feel beige, and if we 'eat colourful' we'll feel colourful!



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## How Do I Get My Glow On?

### 1. Focus on your gut health

Our gut is like our internal power plant, breaking down food, absorbing and transporting nutrients and excreting waste. It also has a direct link with our brain function and immunity. Think of your gut like fertile soil, in order for flowers to blossom, the soil content needs to be nutrient rich. For our body to flourish, our gut environment needs to be nourished and hydrated daily.

#### *Things to include:*

- Probiotics
- Fermented foods (Yoghurt, Kimchi, Kefir, Kombucha, Tempeh)
- Eating a diverse range of foods - There are hundreds of species of bacteria in your intestines, each playing a different role in your health, and these require different nutrients for growth.
- Eat lots of vegetables, legumes, beans & fruit. These are high in fibre and enhance gut health.

### 2. Sleep

Going without adequate sleep every night carries with it both short and long-term consequences. The optimum number of hours sleep is 8, but research by the sleep council has shown that 33 % of people only manage 5-6 hours, while 7 % less than 5 hours.

The regenerative power of sleep allows the brain to process information, muscles and joints to recover and for hormones to rebalance. Short-term effects of not getting enough sleep include fluctuations in mood, concentration, blood sugar level fluctuation and hunger.

#### *Things to avoid:*

- Bright lights
- Mobile phone usage
- Eating late at night
- Caffeine and alcohol
- Spicy food and sugar

#### *Things to include:*

- Meditation
- Warm baths
- Reading
- Dim lighting

- Tryptophan rich foods (nuts, bananas, turkey, oats) vitamin B6, magnesium and calcium.

### 3. Get moving

Exercise is literally the most under-utilized anti-depressant! The key to developing a regular routine lies in finding an activity that you enjoy. Be it cycling, walking or dancing. If you enjoy what you do, it makes you far more likely to keep going. Exercising on a regular basis helps us to maintain a healthy weight, improve heart health, increases body confidence and improves the mood.

So often we hear people say they don't have time for exercise. Where in reality, paring back time for exercise will make us more time efficient for the day ahead. During physical activity we release a hormone called serotonin which is the 'feel good' chemical. It creates feelings of wellbeing and happiness. When we're operating from this place, we make better choices and are more productive.

### 4. Reduce stress

A certain amount of stress is unavoidable in life. In fact, the human body is designed to experience stress and react to it. When you experience changes or challenges (stressors) our bodies trigger a physical and mental response. We can find ourselves reacting instead of responding and in a constant mode of firefighting. It's the accumulative effect that can be the silent killer.

It's our ability to manage stress that makes all the difference. Too often we can find ourselves feeling 'in a fog' and manage it with unhealthy behaviours such as: drinking, gambling or overeating. Before long we're on the road to burn out, low mood, ill health and deteriorating relationships. Although we can't avoid stress, daily self-care maintenance strategies are beneficial.

#### *Strategies to include:*

- Exercise daily, even a short walk helps. Preferably early morning with (sun creamed!) forearms exposed to absorb Vitamin D.
- Acknowledge what you've accomplished on a daily basis, focusing on the positives reduces

anxious feelings.

- Include meditation/deep breathing exercises.
- Eat a wholefoods diet and avoid sugary and processed foods.

### 5. Sense of purpose

Having a clear sense of purpose and focusing on where we want to go in life is often the driving force behind turning our dreams into reality. Holding a vision, and taking small steps forward help us to feel accomplished and satisfied. Being crystal clear on our 'Why' is important. Why are we working so hard, and what is our goal? Without clarity we can feel the years slipping by, and the pile of 'I would have loved to' building up. Putting pen to paper and writing a personal five-year plan can help, being sure to add in activities you've always wanted to experience along the way or things that make your heart smile!

### Conclusion

We're here once, we've got one life to live! The only moment we have control over is the present one, don't waste it. Investing time into your health is one of the wisest and most profitable investments you'll ever make. The food we choose and the lifestyle we live can be the catalyst for thriving health or the road to disease. The power lies within the choices we make on a daily basis.



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