

Time for an Energy Tune-Up?



Energy Enhancers

Many people say they wake up feeling exhausted before they've even gotten out of bed. Just thinking about the day ahead wears them out. And with the holidays upon us, schedules are likely to become even more demanding. Find out some tips on tuning up your energy level.
More...

Head Games: Brain Push-Ups Prevent Dementia

Older people may be able to maintain mental sharpness by exercising their brains. Researcher Dr. Joe Verghese studied about 500 people for 21 years and interviewed them about their hobbies.

More...



Worklife Balance

Mingling 101

Social skills are often tested at holiday time. You may receive invitations to office parties, family gatherings, and get-togethers with neighbors and friends. And you're usually expected to arrive with plenty of holiday spirit.

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Slaving over a Hot... Dishwasher?!

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A New Take on Turkey

Mind Matters



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NEED MORE ZZZ'S? MAYBE NOT...

After a full night's rest, waking up feeling tired is not usually about needing more sleep. It's more likely about needing more energy.

Today's lifestyles are wearing. Working, caring for family members, parenting and making time for friends and for yourself are all taxing. Many people say they feel physically worn out much of the time. They're mentally and emotionally beat too – and that's the real energy drain.

READY, SET, ENERGIZE!

Imagine waking up feeling refreshed, renewed and ready to go. It is possible! Here are three steps that may help.

- 1. Give yourself your due.** Do you feel guilty about what you can't get done or worry about letting people down? Working parents often struggle with guilt because of the time and attention they think they should be giving their children. Similarly, adult children may feel guilty about not doing more for their older parents.

Guilt is nonproductive and depletes a great deal of energy. Instead of getting stuck on what you can't get done, begin to refocus on what you are accomplishing and who you are pleasing (including yourself). Look for and acknowledge the small, everyday achievements and successes in your life.



- 2. Focus on what's really important to you.**

What matters most to you on a basic human level? Do you love nature, care deeply about educating children, or helping clothe and feed the less fortunate? Your genuine concerns have the potential to energize and fulfill you.

- 3. Have some fun.** Do you know that many grown-ups are fun-deprived? We have so much on our minds, it's easy to lose sight of the importance of fun. You can have fun just thinking about something you love or visualizing something that makes you laugh. Think of small ways to inject some fun into your days and you will enjoy more energy.

GETTING HELP

For help with personal or workplace issues, contact your Employee Assistance Program (EAP). These confidential services are available to employees and their eligible household members 24/7.



Head Games: Brain Push-Ups Prevent Dementia

Older people may be able to maintain mental sharpness by exercising their brains. Researcher Dr. Joe Verghese studied about 500 people for 21 years¹. The subjects were 75 to 85 years old at the start. Researchers interviewed them about their hobbies. These included mental activities like board games or reading, and physical activities like walking, swimming and dancing.

THE RESULTS

Researchers found that people who participated in mental activities had a reduced risk of dementia.

Below, Dr. Verghese answers questions about the study.

Why did you decide to study leisure activity and dementia in the elderly? There's been a great deal of interest about the "use it or lose it" theory of mental aging. It's been theorized that activity using brainpower may help prevent dementia. That's one of the things that drew me to the study.

How would you define dementia? Dementia includes problems with memory, planning, judgment, problem-solving, language and other mental tasks.

What did your study find? We analyzed the results after 21 years. We found that people reduced their risk of dementia when they took part in more mentally-stimulating activities.

Why do you think dancing was a benefit? Dancing is not just physical. It requires a lot of mental effort. You must work with your partner, follow the music, and remember the dance steps.



Likewise, those who did gardening had a reduced risk. Again, it might be because gardening combines physical and mental effort.

Is social interaction important? There was a different study a few years ago. It found that people who were engaged in social activities had a reduced risk of dementia.

What would your advice be to older people about leisure activities? I see a lot of older people with memory complaints. I always try to find out how much they engage in leisure activities. Then I encourage them to participate even more and keep using their brainpower.

¹New England Journal of Medicine 2003;348:2508-16.

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Mingling 101

Social skills are often tested at holiday time. You may receive invitations to office parties, family gatherings, and get-togethers with neighbors and friends. And you're usually expected to arrive with plenty of holiday spirit.

- 1. Mingling.** It's not unusual to feel awkward when first entering a party – especially when you don't know anyone. Your best friend in this situation? A smile. People are attracted to others who project comfort and happiness (even if you don't feel that way!). You can bet there are other nervous guests who are hoping to talk with someone. So smile and approach a small group or another person who is alone. Suddenly, you're the one who is friendly and confident!
- 2. Starting a conversation.** The best conversation starters are often questions like "How do you know [host's name]?" You can also ask a question about something you're likely to have in common with others. Examples might be a current heat wave, ice storm, traffic jam, or news story.
- 3. Keeping up a conversation.** When you ask a question, listen to the answer. Don't be too quick to jump in with your own opinion. Good listening can prompt additional questions, reveal common interests, and lead to an easy and interesting exchange.
- 4. Observing techno-courtesies.** Most would agree that cell phones and smart phones should be turned off or switched to silent mode. If you must take or make a call, excuse yourself and step into another room while you talk.



- 5. Taking time out.** Feel free to take a breather from a social situation. You don't have to interact every moment. You may feel recharged after just a few quiet minutes on the terrace or even in the restroom.
- 6. Leaving.** Thank your hosts and congratulate yourself privately for your success!

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Slaving over a Hot...Dishwasher?!

DISHWASHER TURKEY

You may be a pro when it comes to roasting your Thanksgiving turkey in the oven. But are you ready to try your culinary skills on something new and different? Then here it is: Turkey à la Dishwasher!

It's true: you can cook your turkey in your dishwasher. Here are the instructions:

1. Buy your turkey, along with several large (turkey-sized) oven bags.
2. Wash, season and seal up your turkey inside several bags.
3. Insert multi-bagged turkey into your dishwasher.
4. Run the washer (no soap please!) through one 50-minute cycle for every 2 pounds of turkey weight.
5. Voila! You should have a moist, cooked turkey.
6. Have a meat thermometer available so you can check to be sure the turkey is cooked through. (Consult your favorite cookbook for details on what temperature means "done!")
7. If you wish to brown your turkey, you can unwrap it and place it in the oven for a bit.



Just when you thought that the holidays were the same year after year after year – *a new take on turkey!*