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SPIRIT
LIFE



HEALTH FUELS WHAT'S NEXT

More energy. A stronger you. A brighter tomorrow.

SLEEP

The Most Overlooked Performance Enhancer in Your Life

by Clint Fuqua

RED-LIGHT THERAPY

A Natural Way to Support Healing, Recovery and Overall Well-Being

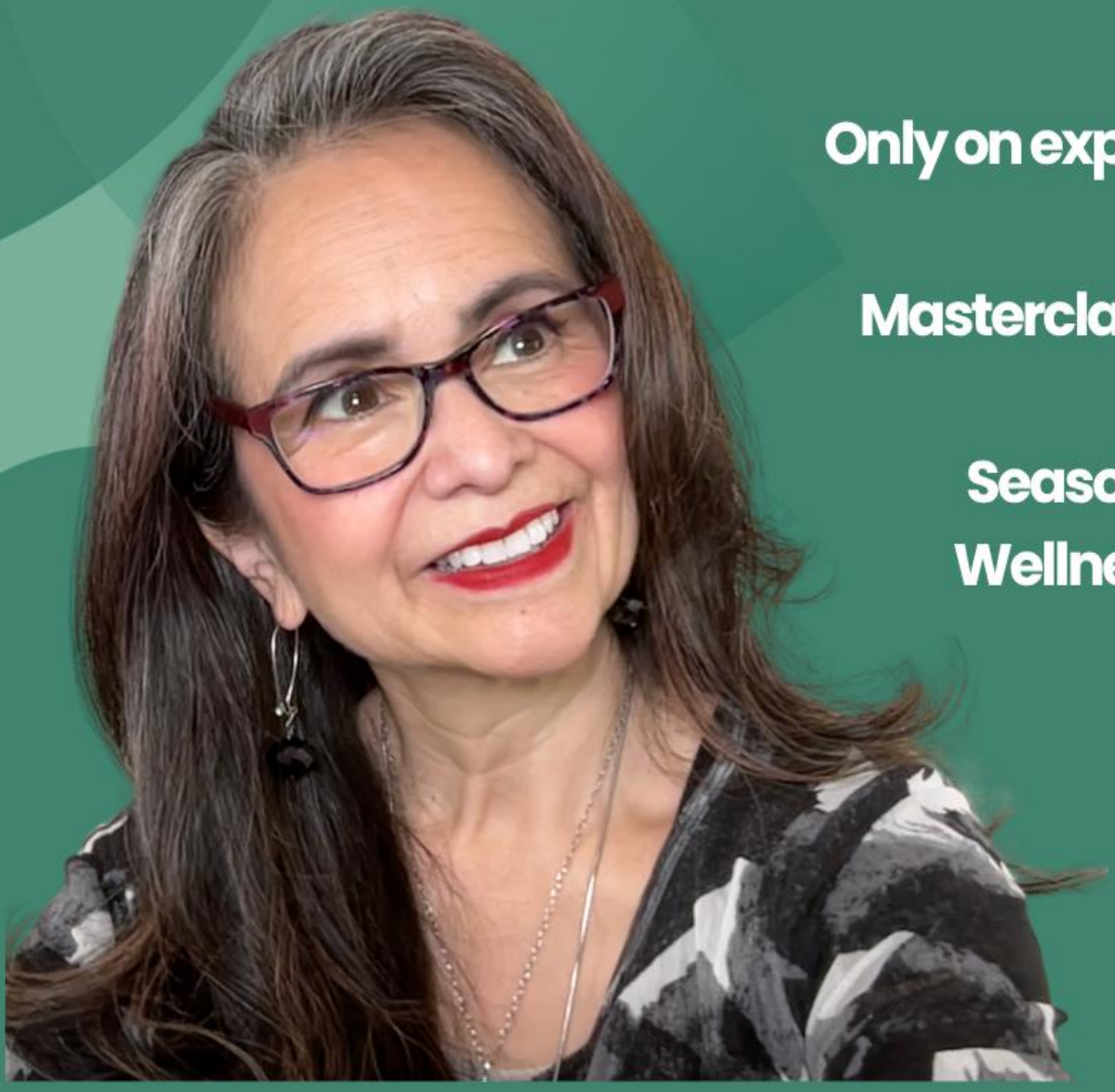
by Brenda Briscoe

REAL PEOPLE | EXPERT INSIGHTS | A HEALTHIER TOMORROW

OCTOBER | NOVEMBER 2026

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Robin Roberson

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
Joseph E. Savard

CREATIVE
The LeverageUp Creative Studio

CREATIVE DIRECTION
RobersonSquared

FEATURE COLUMNISTS

Brenda Briscoe
Bowen Therapy

Clint Fuqua
The Health Engineer

Carmen Milagro
Director of Engagement & Resources

Robin Roberson

CONTRIBUTORS

IMH Editorial Team
Gregory Gomez
DeeDee Lowder
Carla Mc Mahan
Celia Naples

PHOTOGRAPHY & VISUAL RESOURCES

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Our mission is to provide trusted health information, practical wellness strategies, inspiring stories, and expert insights that empower you to live healthier, happier lives.

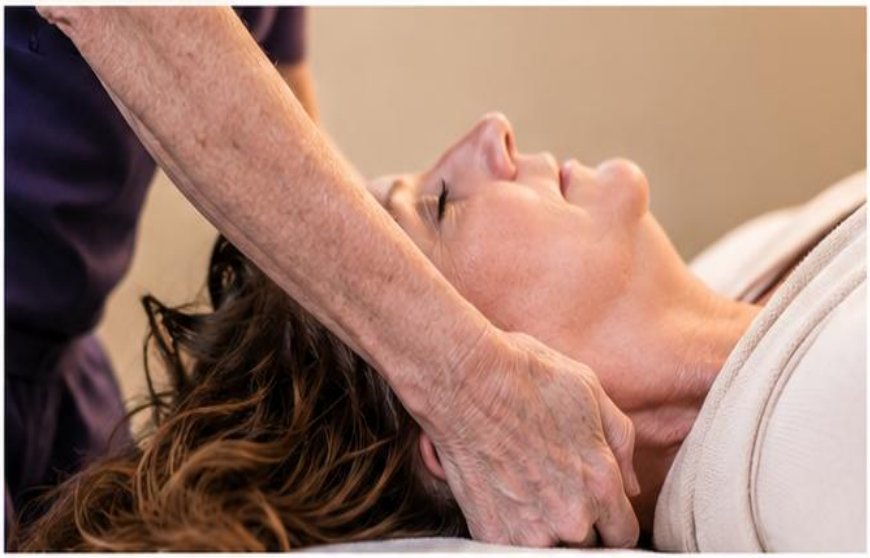
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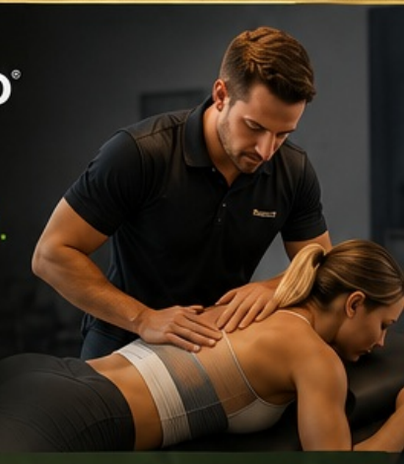
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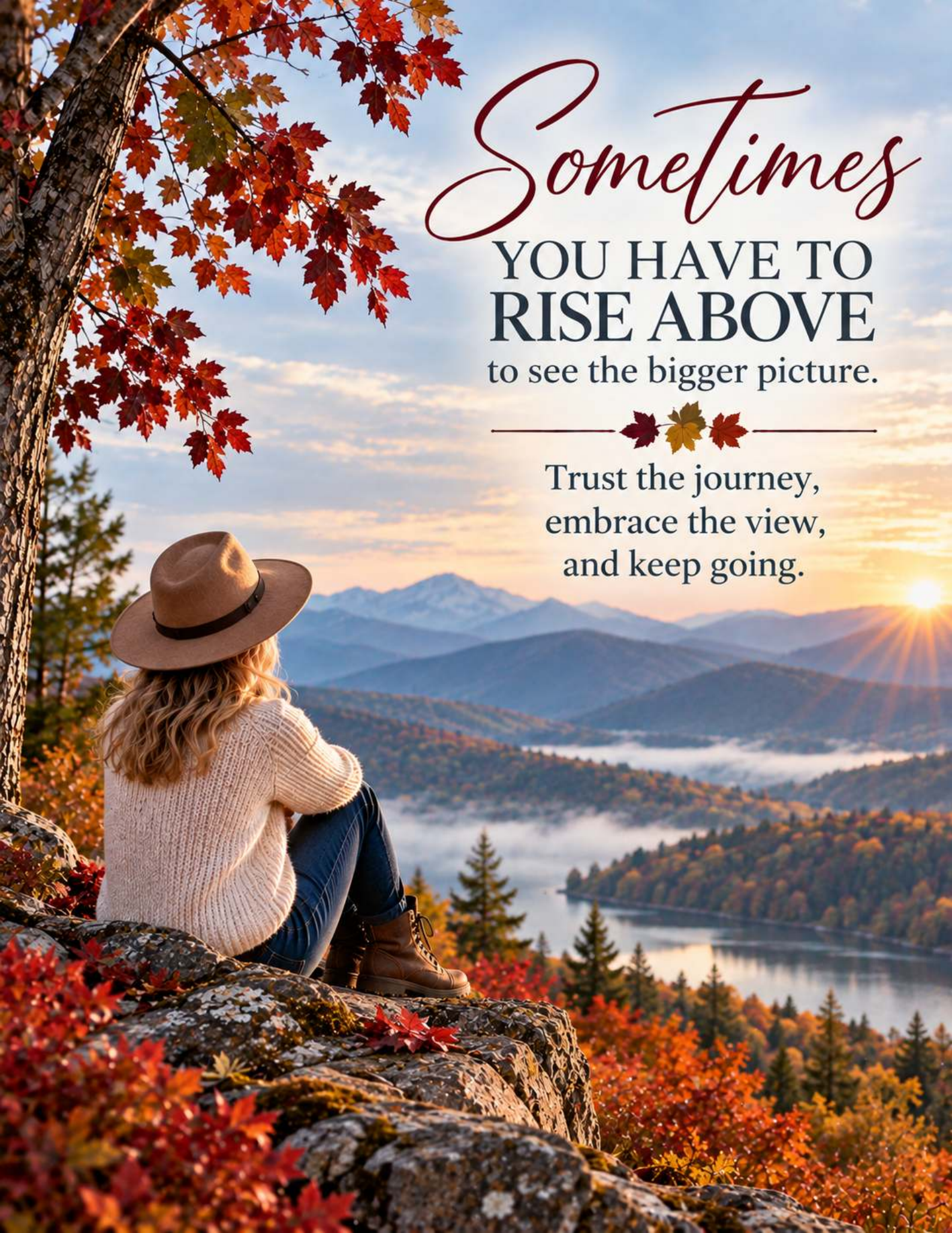
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Judson S. Millhon, MD
Cardiovascular Disease & Interventional Cardiology Specialist



"We've seen incredible patient turnarounds."

Jonathan Lazar, D.C.
Upper Cervical Chiropractor



"A critical tool in my recovery protocol."

Lesley Paterson
Five-Time World Champion Triathlete

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WELLNESS • RECOVERY • PERFORMANCE • LIFE

Sleep:

The Most Overlooked Performance Enhancer in Your Life

By Clint Fuqua, THE Health Engineer®

Most people believe performance is built while they are working, exercising, competing, or pushing through another demanding day.

It is not.

> *"Performance is challenged during the day, but much of it is rebuilt at night."*

Sleep is when your muscles recover, your brain processes information, and your nervous system prepares for tomorrow. It also helps regulate metabolism, appetite, mood, concentration, and many of the hormones involved in physical recovery.

You can follow a great workout program and eat a nutritious diet, but if your sleep consistently falls apart, your performance eventually follows.

That is why sleep should never be treated as whatever time remains after everything else gets done.

Sleep is part of your training program.





Sleep Is More Than Time in Bed

There is a major difference between spending eight hours in bed and receiving eight hours of restorative sleep.

Throughout the night, the body repeatedly cycles through non-REM and REM sleep. Deep sleep, also known as slow-wave sleep, occurs primarily during the earlier part of the night and supports physical restoration. REM periods become longer later in the night and are associated with memory, learning, emotional processing, and brain function.

This means that repeatedly cutting your night short may eliminate valuable later sleep cycles.

The goal is not simply to become unconscious. The goal is to give your body enough time and the right environment to complete its natural recovery process.

A full night's sleep helps you show up stronger today and tomorrow.



2 YOUR SLEEP CYCLE

Your body cycles through these stages 4–6 times each night.

STAGE 1 LIGHT SLEEP
You drift off to sleep.
5–10 MINUTES

STAGE 2 LIGHT SLEEP
Body temperature drops, heart rate slows.
10–25 MINUTES

90–110 MINUTES PER CYCLE

REM SLEEP
Dreaming, memory, learning, emotional processing.
10–60 MINUTES

STAGE 3 DEEP SLEEP
Physical recovery, tissue repair, growth hormone released.
20–40 MINUTES

DEEP SLEEP happens more in the first half of the night.
REM SLEEP increases in the second half.
Cutting sleep short means missing critical recovery.

BETTER SLEEP = A HEALTHIER, STRONGER YOU.

Reset Your Internal Clock

Your circadian rhythm is the internal timing system that helps determine when you feel awake and when you become sleepy.

Light is one of its strongest signals.

Getting outdoor light during the first part of your day helps tell your brain that it is time to be awake. As evening approaches, lowering the brightness of your environment helps signal that the active part of the day is ending.

Morning sunlight does not need to become another complicated wellness ritual. Step outside after waking, drink your coffee outdoors, or take a short walk.

At night, dim unnecessary lights and reduce screen exposure. Blue-enriched light can affect circadian timing, but the problem is not only the color of the light. Brightness, duration, content, and mental stimulation also matter.

Your phone may keep you awake because of its light—but also because you are answering emails, watching videos, or scrolling through emotionally stimulating content.

Put the work away. Put the entertainment away. Give your mind permission to shut down.

Consistency Creates Better Recovery

Your body responds well to patterns.

Research increasingly recognizes that sleep regularity matters in addition to total sleep time. Consistent sleep and wake times help reinforce the rhythms that influence alertness, recovery, and performance.

You do not need to follow an exact bedtime every night. Life happens. However, constantly changing your schedule makes it harder for your body to know when it should become alert and when it should prepare for sleep.

Aim to maintain a reasonably consistent wake time, even on weekends. When your schedule gets disrupted, morning light and a return to your normal routine can help reset it.





Engineer Your Sleep Environment

A Better Space for a Better You

Your sleep environment plays a bigger role in your recovery, performance, and overall health than most people realize.

Your bedroom should be a place that signals safety, rest, and relaxation. Small changes can make a big difference in how quickly you fall asleep, how deeply you sleep, and how refreshed you feel when you wake up.

Think of your sleep environment as part of your training program. Just as you create the right conditions for your workouts, you should create the right conditions for your sleep.

> *"A calmer space creates a calmer mind."*



4 YOUR SLEEP ENVIRONMENT

SET THE STAGE FOR BETTER SLEEP.

KEEP IT DARK

Use blackout curtains or an eye mask. Even small amounts of light can interfere with melatonin production.

KEEP IT COOL

A cooler room (60–67°F) helps your body temperature drop, signaling it's time to sleep.

KEEP IT QUIET

Reduce noise with earplugs, a white noise machine, or a fan. A quieter environment supports deeper, more restorative sleep.

MAKE IT COMFORTABLE

Invest in a supportive mattress and pillows that fit your needs. Comfort reduces tossing and turning.

KEEP IT CLEAN

A clutter-free, well-ventilated room promotes relaxation and better air quality.

KEEP IT DEVICE-FREE

Remove or silence screens at least 1–2 hours before bed. Blue light and notifications can keep your brain alert.

THE BOTTOM LINE

A sleep-friendly environment helps you fall asleep faster, stay asleep longer, and wake up ready to perform at your best.

The Sleep–Pain Connection

Better Sleep Can Break the Cycle

By Clint Fuqua, THE Health Engineer®

Chronic pain and poor sleep often go hand in hand. Pain can make it hard to fall or stay asleep, and lack of quality sleep can increase your sensitivity to pain. This creates a cycle that can leave you feeling exhausted, frustrated, and stuck.

The good news is that the cycle can be broken. With the right strategies—including proper sleep habits, movement, chiropractic care, and whole-body support—you can reduce pain, improve your sleep, and get back to doing the things you love.

THE CYCLE

HOW PAIN AND POOR SLEEP FEED EACH OTHER



WAYS TO BREAK THE CYCLE

PRIORITIZE SLEEP
Aim for 7–9 hours of quality sleep each night.

MOVE REGULARLY
Gentle, consistent movement helps reduce tension and supports better sleep.

GET PROPER CARE
Chiropractic care can improve alignment, reduce pain, and help your body function better.

FUEL YOUR BODY
Choose nutrient-rich foods and stay hydrated to support recovery.

MANAGE STRESS
Breathing, meditation, or time in nature can calm your mind and body before bed.

> *"Better sleep can mean a brighter, less painful tomorrow."*



Less Pain
Better Sleep
Brighter Days

THE GOCHYRO DIFFERENCE

At GoChyro, we take a whole-body approach to help you feel and function better. Our personalized care plans combine chiropractic adjustments, movement guidance, and wellness support to reduce pain, improve sleep, and help you get back to living your life.

GoChyro

MOVE BETTER • FEEL BETTER • LIVE FULLER

REST. RECOVER. RECLAIM.

When you break the sleep–pain cycle, you give yourself the chance to live stronger, healthier, and more fully.

The Olympic Fit Recovery Strategy

Stronger Sleep. Stronger Days.

Great performance is built in the recovery phase. Whether you are a competitive athlete, a weekend warrior, or simply want to stay active as you age, quality sleep is one of the most powerful tools you have.

The Olympic Fit Recovery Strategy combines sleep, movement, nutrition, and care to help your body repair, recharge, and perform at its best.

This is not about doing more. It is about giving your body the right support so you can do what you love, longer.

When your body recovers well, you have more energy, greater strength, better focus, and a lower risk of injury. Recovery is not a luxury. It is a strategy for a healthier, stronger, and more active life.

> *"You can't out-train poor recovery."*
>
> REST. RECOVER. PERFORM.

6 THE OLYMPIC FIT RECOVERY PLAN

SIX KEYS TO A STRONGER, HEALTHIER YOU.

PRIORITIZE QUALITY SLEEP

Aim for 7–9 hours each night. Your body does its deepest repair during sleep.

MOVE YOUR BODY

Regular movement improves circulation, reduces stiffness, and supports better sleep.

FUEL WITH PURPOSE

Choose nutrient-rich foods, stay hydrated, and include protein to support muscle repair and recovery.

SUPPORT YOUR SPINE

Keep your spine aligned and your body functioning well with regular chiropractic care and good posture.

MANAGE STRESS

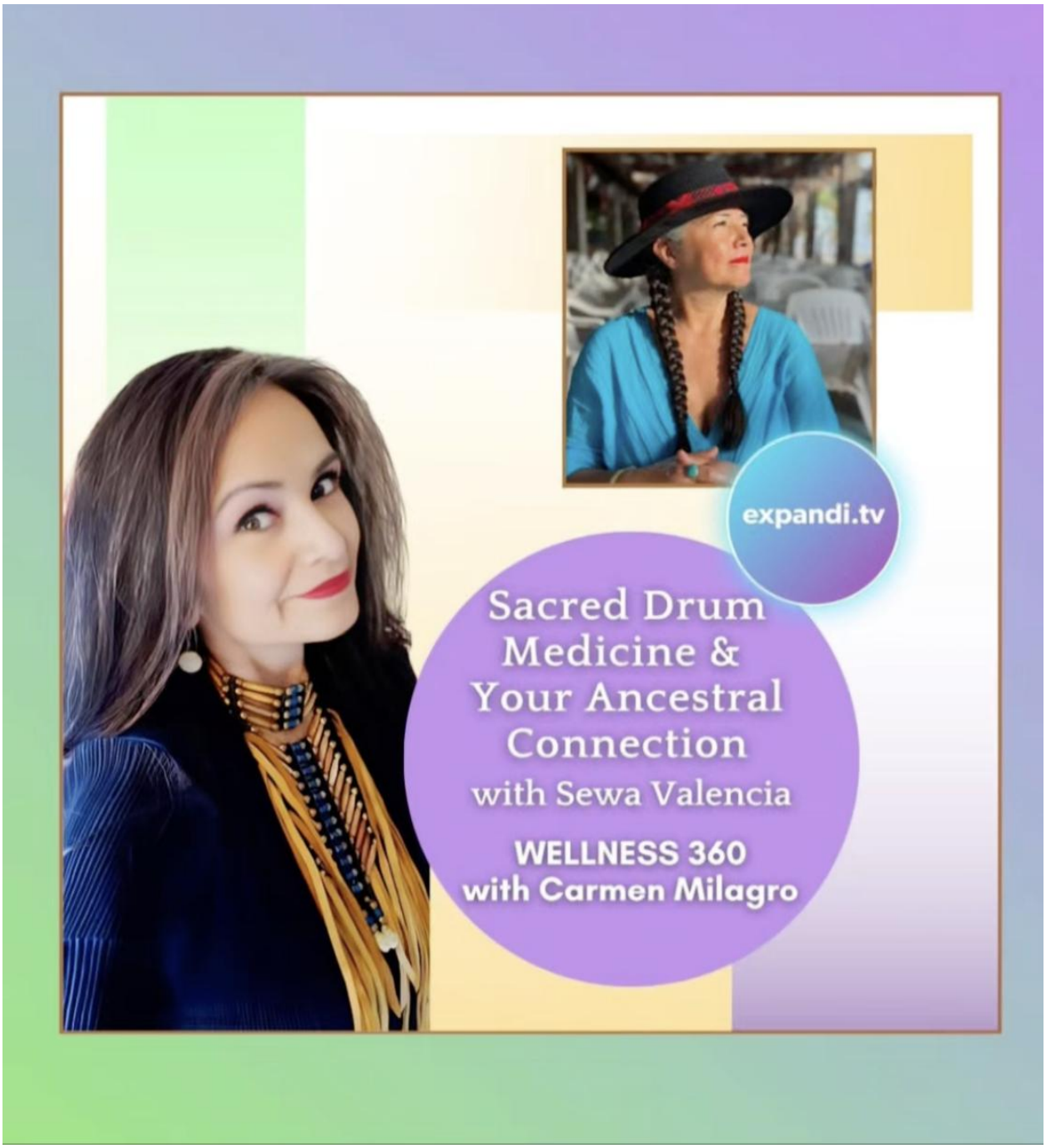
Chronic stress can disrupt sleep and slow recovery. Practice breathing, mindfulness, or time in nature.

BE CONSISTENT

Small, daily choices add up. Make recovery a habit, not an afterthought.

RECOVER WELL TODAY SO YOU CAN DO MORE TOMORROW.





The Blessing: Drumbeats, Tears & Healing

By Carmen Milagro

Not too long ago, I was blessed to receive the Honor Song from the Sisters of the One Drum. These women have come together as a group of Mexican, Indigenous, Chicana and

Native American wisdom keepers, drummers and healers. They come from all walks of life and they are not traditionalists.

They welcome all. They are modern. They are open. The truth is, in reality, they are not always welcome by other women drum groups who are not able to set aside the old traditions or the all-male drum groups who exclude women altogether. Each group has merit. Each group has its history and its rules that should be respected. I was brought into their group by Source, into their ways. They welcomed me and gave me a gift I never expected.

On a beautiful late summer day in the spiritual enclave that is the Crestone, Colorado mountain range, at a summit held in a Buddhist Temple, I met Sewa Valencia. Little did I know, she was the Founder of The Sisters of The One Drum. Then came the moment I could never have prepared for. As the drumbeat moved throughout my entire body and the Sisters' voices rose around me, Sewa asked if I would be willing to stand in their center to receive a blessing. There is no scenario where I would not accept. There are moments that shift your entire being. This was one of them.

Sewa, along with five new “Aunties”, surrounded me. The drum beat was already there rising up underneath their voices before a single note was sung. They prayed over that ceremonial pulse. Then they began to sing over it. They cradled me in it completely as I broke open. I wept. Time sped up and stopped at the same time. Time was no longer measurable but dimensional.

For what felt like several hours, as they slowly moved around me, as I turned to face each one, each Auntie became my Mami in her twenties, thirties, forties, fifties and sixties, the age I had just turned myself. I am my mother's daughter.

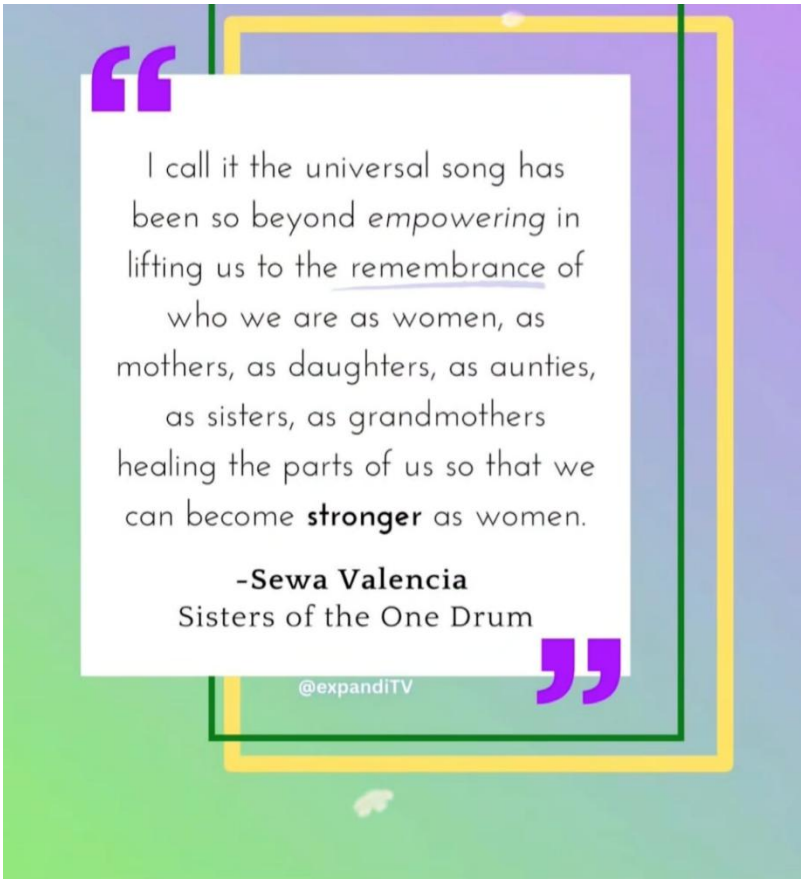
On the one hand, I could not comprehend what was happening. On the other, I stood in the full knowledge of the powerful spiritual exchange that was taking place between the realms. As I witnessed each of their faces transform into my momma’s face, her essence, her spirit, at every adult age she had lived, she reached out for me with each strike of the drum. This was not a quiet recognition. My tears were not sad. They were flowing. They were cleansing. They came pouring out of me as if my own spirit, my own soul, was streaming forward in recognition, in exhilaration, in a knowing I still cannot fully put into words. The magic inside me joined forces with the magic of every Auntie who was in turn my Mami in that moment, in that circle. The Aunties saw me. My Mother came to me.

They blessed me. She embraced me.

Before we started I asked for permission to record it on my phone as many ceremonies do not allow video documentation. I was granted that permission but then came the question

of who would actually video it for me. The woman who recorded this moment for me, I did not know, had never met nor had I seen her there at the week-long summit before. I never saw her again after she handed me my phone back either.

During the blessing, I do remember thinking my phone must have died because I was transfixed inside that circle for hours. When I finally watched it back, I realized the entire experience had actually only lasted six minutes. I had crossed into another place in time entirely, another world, carried across a bridge to my Mami's love on the voices of the Aunties and the sound of that drum. It confirmed for me that I was going to be all right on this path I have chosen. There is no need for fear. There is no need for doubt. This is the healing that comes from one's connection with Source, the ancestors and the beat of the drum. This I know for sure. This is the way.



This was such a profound, intense and personal moment that until now I had only ever shared it with my closest sister and a couple of beloved friends. The drum has strength and power to transform, to connect, to transport you to another time, to revive memory and spirit. I am so grateful and so honored to have received this blessing. I wanted to share this soul awakening with you as a reminder of what the drum can do to connect us. It can help build community across time and space. As you read this, dear reader, I hope it serves as a reminder to stay open to these moments. That healing comes from many supernatural experiences and connections. You never know when one might find you.

Can a drum heal a heart? I already know my answer and that blessing continues to guide the work of DIVINA WORLD Foundation and the vision for my Indigenous and World Music Hall of Fame, Museum & Library.

Shortly after the Sisters of the One Drum held me, I had the honor of welcoming its founder, Sewa Valencia, onto the Wellness 360 stage for what she told me was the very first interview of her life. She said yes to me the same way I said yes to that blessing, open, uncertain and certain all at once.

What she shared in our conversation is the missing link of my own story. Sewa talked about the drum as a living teacher rather than an instrument, one that carries the heartbeat of Mother Earth, the echoes of the ancestors and the prayers of future generations still to come. She talked about her own name, given to her by an elder who looked through her and said only three words, “Your name is Sewa.” Sewa is the Yaqui word for flower and beauty. It took her ten years to fully step into her name.

In our recorded conversation she also said something else I have not stopped thinking about since: "Our first ancestor is our mother. From there, everything else follows."

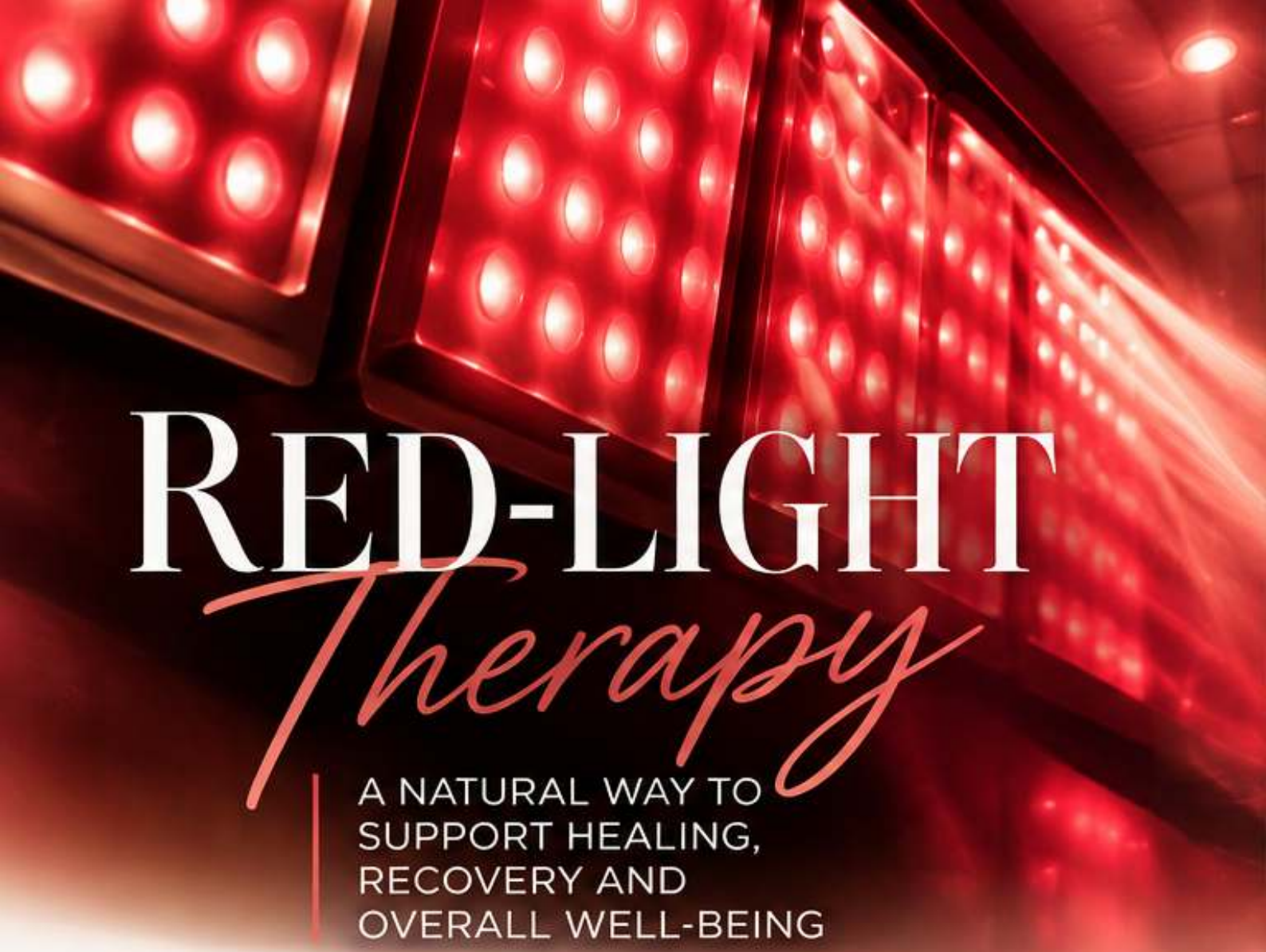
“Sacred Drum Medicine & Ancestral Connection” is the title of our full Wellness 360 episode. Along with the thousands of other curious viewers, you are now able to watch the entire conversation here on my personal W360 playlist:
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLWOp-T3-YKEs

In our next issue, I'll share with you our conversation with Endre Nagy, founder of Dogtor Rx in Hungary as we discuss the hidden ways stress and gut health shape our pets' lives and the rescue dog named Ace whose story might change how you see your beloved Fido. It's called: Is Your Dog Secretly Stressed?

Until next time, stay tuned and thank you.
I'm so glad you found us so you can read the behind-the-scenes stories about my guests and also watch and share the episodes!

Carmen Milagro, Master Certified Wellness Coach

Wellness 360 with Carmen Milagro Host ,
https://expandi.tv/authors/author-carmen-milagro



RED-LIGHT *Therapy*

A NATURAL WAY TO SUPPORT HEALING, RECOVERY AND OVERALL WELL-BEING

By Brenda Briscoe

Red-light therapy (RLT) is a non-invasive, drug-free treatment that uses specific wavelengths of light to support the body's natural healing processes. In my practice, I've seen it make a meaningful difference for many clients — from reducing pain and inflammation to improving skin health, energy and overall wellness.

This article will give you an overview of how red-light therapy works, its potential benefits and what to expect if you're considering it as part of your wellness journey.

HOW IT WORKS

Red and near-infrared light penetrate the skin and are absorbed by the mitochondria — the "powerhouses" of your cells. This can help boost cellular energy (ATP), improve circulation, reduce inflammation and support tissue repair.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS

PAIN RELIEF
May help reduce joint and muscle discomfort.

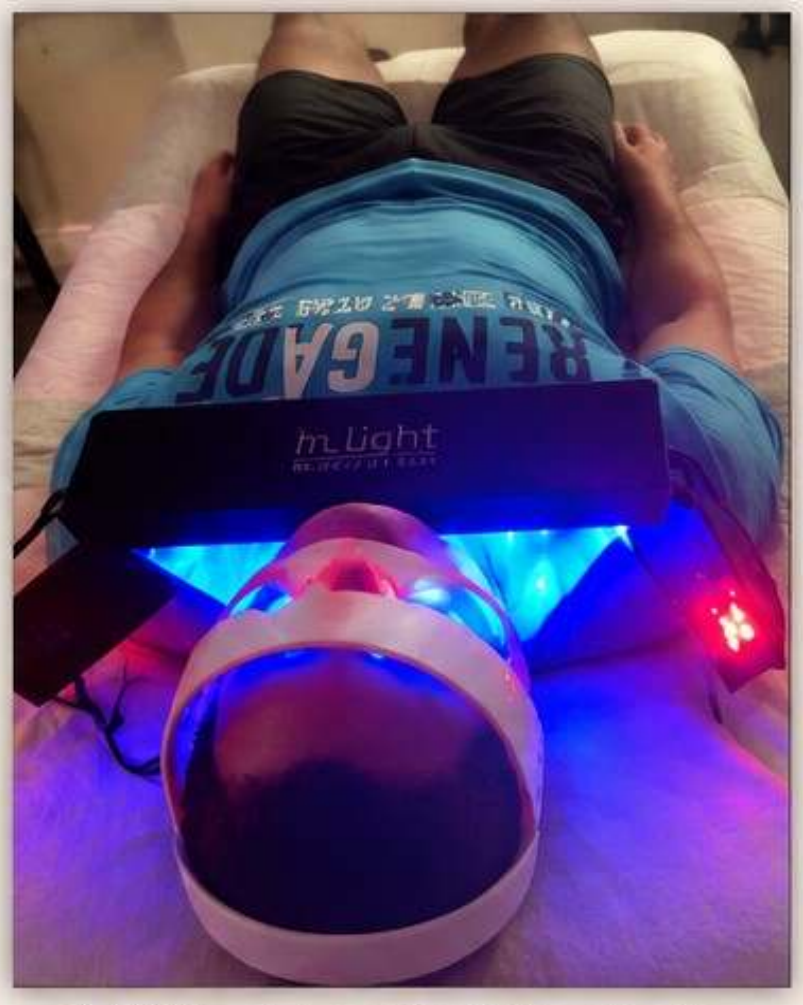
REDUCES INFLAMMATION
Supports the body's natural recovery process.

FASTER RECOVERY
Popular with athletes and active individuals.

HEALTHIER SKIN
Can improve tone, texture and overall skin appearance.

INCREASED ENERGY
Supports cellular function and vitality.

OVERALL WELLNESS
A natural, non-invasive option to complement a healthy lifestyle.



Red-light therapy in use at Brenda Briscoe's practice.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Sessions are relaxing, painless and take about 10–30 minutes depending on your specific needs. Most people simply lie back and enjoy the warm, soothing light. Many report feeling more relaxed, with less pain and improved well-being over a series it sessions.

IS IT SAFE?

When used correctly, red-light therapy is considered safe and non-invasive. Protective eyewear is used, and there are minimal side effects. As with any wellness treatment, it's always best to discuss it with your healthcare provider if you have specific medical conditions.

My goal is to help you feel better, move better and live better — naturally.



THE HEALTH ENGINEER®

Build a Better Body. Live a Better Life.

**Health doesn't happen by accident—
it is engineered through the choices we make every day.**

For more than 25 years, Clint Fuqua has helped individuals improve their health through movement, nutrition, recovery, education, and practical wellness strategies. As THE HEALTH ENGINEER®, he believes lasting wellness is built through consistency—not quick fixes.

As founder of Olympic Fit and GoChyro, Clint's mission is to help people build stronger bodies, healthier lifestyles, and longer, more active lives.

> *"Your body is the only place you'll ever truly live. Engineer it well."*

HEALTH ENGINEER TIP™

Small improvements practiced consistently create extraordinary results.

Don't try to change everything.

Change one habit.

Master it.

Then build the next.

OLYMPIC FIT INSIGHT™

Fitness isn't about looking younger.

It's about having the strength, mobility, energy, and confidence to fully enjoy the life you've been given.

GOCHYRO CONNECTION™

GoChyro connects individuals with licensed mobile chiropractic and wellness professionals who bring expert care directly to homes, offices, hotels, and workplaces.

ABOUT CLINT

Clint Fuqua is the founder of Olympic Fit and GoChyro and creator of **THE HEALTH ENGINEER®.**

Through science-based education, movement, nutrition, recovery, and practical wellness strategies, he helps people engineer healthier lives built on strength, longevity, and purpose.

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Coming Next...

BUILDING A HEALTHIER FUTURE WITH THE HEALTH ENGINEER®



NATURAL PATHWAYS

with Brenda Briscoe,
Certified Bowen Therapist

Bowen Therapy
in Dallas

Supporting Your Body's Natural Ability to Heal

Our bodies are constantly working to restore balance, but stress, injury, repetitive movement, and everyday life can interfere with that process. Gentle approaches such as Bowen Therapy are designed to encourage relaxation and support the body's own healing response.

> *Sometimes the smallest adjustments create the biggest changes.*

MEET BRENDA BRISCOE

Brenda Briscoe is a Certified Bowen Therapist dedicated to helping people restore balance, reduce pain, and improve overall well-being through gentle, non-invasive Bowen Therapy.

Through her Natural Pathways column, she will share practical wellness insights, answer readers' questions, and explore simple ways to support the body's natural ability to heal.

Ask Brenda

What is Bowen Therapy?

Bowen Therapy is a gentle, hands-on technique that uses precise movements over muscles and connective tissue.
These specialized moves encourage the body to reset muscle tension, improve mobility, and promote relaxation.
Because the technique is so gentle, people of many ages can often benefit from it.

Wellness Check

- [ ] Have I taken time to stretch today?
- [ ] Am I noticing tension in my neck or shoulders?
- [ ] Have I been sitting too long without moving?
- [ ] Have I taken a few slow, deep breaths today?
- [ ] Have I listened to what my body is trying to tell me?

Brenda's Gentle Reminder

Pain is information. Instead of ignoring it, take time to understand what your body may be communicating. Small changes today can help prevent bigger problems tomorrow.

Next Issue: *Everyday Habits That May Be Contributing to Pain*



The “Brown Powder” in Your Coffee?

Before you take the bait, take a closer look at the claim.

By Carla McMahan

It sounds irresistible.

Add a spoonful of a mysterious “brown powder” to your morning coffee. Turn on your body’s “fat-melting mode” for 24 hours. Burn stubborn belly fat. Boost metabolism by 300 percent. Lose weight without dieting or exercise.

And, according to one advertisement making the rounds, it works “3X better than Ozempic.”

There’s just one problem: extraordinary health claims require extraordinary evidence.

The Harvard Name Gets Your Attention

One of the first things that makes an advertisement like this sound convincing is the reference to “Harvard researchers.” Attaching the name of a respected university, hospital or physician to a product can immediately make a claim feel legitimate.

But don't stop at the name.

Ask: **What researchers? What study? Where was it published? What exactly was tested?**

If an advertisement makes an impressive scientific claim but doesn't make it easy for you to verify the actual research behind it, that is a reason to slow down.

Can Coffee Affect Metabolism?

There is real science behind the idea that caffeine can temporarily affect energy expenditure and metabolism. But that is very different from claiming that adding a mystery ingredient to coffee switches the body into a 24-hour “fat-melting mode.”

Metabolism is complicated. Genetics, age, body composition, food intake, physical activity, sleep and other factors can all play a role. There isn't a simple switch that suddenly tells the body to melt away pounds of stored fat.

Watch for These Red Flags

Be especially skeptical when a weight-loss advertisement promises:

Huge results with almost no effort.
“No dieting or exercise needed” should make you question the claim, not reach for your credit card.

Precise, spectacular numbers.
Claims such as “boosts metabolism 300%” sound scientific because they're specific. A number isn't evidence unless reliable research supports it.

Comparison with a prescription medication.
Saying a supplement works several times better than a prescription drug is an enormous medical claim and deserves serious scrutiny.

A secret ingredient or discovery.
Words such as *secret, breakthrough, hidden,* and *doctors don't want you to know* are marketing language—not scientific proof.

Rapid or guaranteed weight loss.
Bodies don't all respond identically. A product promising dramatic results for virtually everyone deserves skepticism.

The Better Question

Instead of asking, **"Could this work?"** ask:

"Where is the evidence that it does?"

That's an important distinction.

Health misinformation doesn't always look ridiculous. Sometimes it looks polished, quotes impressive institutions, uses scientific terminology and includes convincing testimonials.

Before putting any powder, pill or supplement into your body, find out exactly what it contains and whether its claims are supported by credible research. And if you're taking medications or managing a health condition, talk with your physician or pharmacist before trying it.



Your morning coffee may help wake you up. Your critical thinking should wake up with it.

IMH Health Watch: When a health claim sounds too good to be true, don't just read the promise. Read the evidence.

WHY IN MINT HEALTH MATTERS

Health information has never been easier to find.

Reliable health information may never have been harder to recognize.

Every day we're presented with miracle foods, supplements, devices, exercises, frequencies, treatments and “breakthroughs” supposedly discovered by scientists somewhere.

Some are nonsense.

Some contain a fragment of legitimate science wrapped in exaggerated marketing.

And occasionally, buried underneath the hype, there really is an emerging discovery worth watching.

Our job isn't to tell you what to believe.

Our job is to help you know what questions to ask.

We'll continue exploring promising research.

We'll also tell you when the evidence hasn't caught up with the headline.

Because hope matters.

Innovation matters.

But when we're talking about your health, **the truth matters more.**

Carla McMahon — Freelance Writer | Women, Family & Everyday Life



CAN SOUND REALLY HELP THE BRAIN?

The Science Behind the Headlines

By In Mint Health Editorial Team

“Listen to this three-minute song and improve your memory.”

It's the kind of headline that's almost impossible not to click.

The advertisement promises sharper focus, faster thinking and a brain that feels “decades younger.” It says neuroscientists discovered a particular combination of sound frequencies that switches on a powerful protein in the brain. It even invokes Harvard researchers and claims the sound activates memory proteins 31 times more effectively than ordinary music.

For anyone who occasionally walks into a room and wonders why they went there, that's an appealing promise.

For someone worried about Alzheimer's disease or cognitive decline, it can be much more than appealing.

It can offer hope.

And that's precisely why we need to look more closely.

Because behind some of the extraordinary marketing claims is a genuinely fascinating area of neuroscience.

The science is real.

The miracle claims are another matter.

Yes, Sound Affects the Brain

We already know from everyday life that sound can have powerful effects.

A few notes from a song you haven't heard in 30 years can suddenly transport you to another time and place.

Music can affect mood, attention and arousal. Researchers have studied music therapy in connection with stress, anxiety, cognition and quality of life.

But scientists are also investigating something more specific: whether particular patterns of sensory stimulation can influence the brain's electrical rhythms.

But scientists are also investigating something more specific: whether particular patterns of sensory stimulation can influence the brain's electrical rhythms.

One area receiving significant attention involves **gamma oscillations**—patterns of brain activity occurring at relatively high frequencies.

And one frequency keeps appearing in the research:

40 hertz, or 40 Hz.

What Is 40-Hz Stimulation?

Researchers at MIT and other institutions have investigated whether exposing the brain to rhythmic light and sound pulsing approximately 40 times per second can influence gamma activity.

This isn't simply playing someone's favorite song.

The research involves carefully controlled sensory stimulation designed to produce particular neurological responses. Early laboratory studies produced intriguing results, including findings involving Alzheimer's-related pathology in animal models. That eventually led researchers to begin studying the approach in humans.

And some early human studies have reported encouraging signals involving brain activity, sleep, cognition and other measures. That's exciting.

But there's an enormous difference between saying:

“Researchers are investigating whether 40-Hz sensory stimulation could someday have therapeutic value.”

and saying:

“Listen to this song for three minutes and instantly improve your memory.”

Those aren't equivalent claims.

What About the “Memory Protein”?

The advertisement also refers to a powerful protein being activated in the brain.

There really are proteins involved in learning, memory and the health of neurons.

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One of the best known is **brain-derived neurotrophic factor, or BDNF.** BDNF plays important roles in the growth, survival and adaptability of neurons and is involved in processes related to learning and memory. Researchers have studied how exercise, sleep, neurological disease and other factors may relate to BDNF.

But the existence of a real protein doesn't automatically validate a product claiming that its particular audio recording activates a “memory protein” 31 times more effectively than ordinary music.

That's where consumers need to ask another question:

Where is the study?

Not the advertisement.

Not a testimonial.

Not a website saying “Harvard researchers were stunned.”

The actual research.

The Harvard Test

Health advertising frequently borrows credibility from prestigious institutions.

Harvard, Johns Hopkins, Mayo Clinic, MIT, Stanford.

Sometimes the connection is completely legitimate.

Sometimes a researcher associated with an institution participated in relevant research.

And sometimes the institution's name is used much more loosely.

So, when an advertisement says **“Harvard researchers discovered…”**, don't stop there.

Look for the researchers' names. Look for the university department. Look for the published study. Look for the scientific journal. Look for exactly what was tested.

And most importantly, determine whether researchers actually tested **the product being sold.**

A study showing that a particular type of sound affects the brain does not prove that every commercial recording using a similar frequency improves memory.

A Number Isn't Automatically Evidence

Another common advertising technique is extraordinary numerical precision.

“31 times more effective.”

“16,366 people are already using it.”

Those numbers sound scientific because they're specific.

But specificity isn't proof.

Ask:

31 times greater than what?

How was it measured? How many participants were studied? Was there a control group?

Was the research independently replicated? Was it peer reviewed?

And does the study actually support the conclusion being advertised?

If those answers aren't readily available, the impressive number should make you more curious—not more convinced.

Hope Makes Us Vulnerable

This is where health journalism carries a particular responsibility.

Someone concerned about memory loss isn't simply shopping for another gadget.

They may be frightened.

Someone caring for a spouse or parent with Alzheimer's disease may be desperate for something—anything—that could help.

And when people are frightened, hopeful or desperate, extraordinary promises become extraordinarily powerful.

That doesn't mean every unconventional treatment is worthless.

It means **the evidence matters even more.**

Promising research deserves attention.

But promising research and proven treatment are not the same thing.

Don't Throw Out the Science Because of the Sales Pitch

There's another mistake we shouldn't make.

When exaggerated advertising attaches itself to legitimate scientific research, it's tempting to dismiss the entire subject.

That would be unfortunate here.

The study of gamma-frequency stimulation is genuinely interesting.

Scientists are investigating whether precisely delivered sensory stimulation might affect brain activity in ways that could eventually contribute to our understanding or treatment of neurological disease.

We don't yet know where that research will lead.

Maybe it becomes clinically important.

Maybe further studies reveal limitations.

Maybe researchers discover benefits nobody anticipated.

That's how science works.

It doesn't begin with certainty.

It begins with a question.

Before You Click "Buy"

When you encounter the next extraordinary health claim online, don't automatically believe it.

But don't automatically dismiss it either.

Instead, become an investigator.

Ask who conducted the research.

Find the original study.

Determine whether humans or animals were studied.

Look at how many people participated.

See whether other researchers replicated the findings.

Find out whether the actual product being advertised was tested.

And be particularly cautious when an advertisement promises an immediate or dramatic improvement from something remarkably simple.

A legitimate scientific discovery doesn't need its evidence hidden behind a sales button.

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Because hope matters.

Innovation matters.

But when we're talking about your health, **the truth matters more.**

SOURCE CHECK

MIT — 40-Hz Gamma Stimulation Research

MIT researchers have conducted extensive research into 40-Hz sensory stimulation and its potential effects on brain health, including laboratory research and early human studies involving Alzheimer's disease.

Peer-Reviewed Alzheimer's and Gamma-Rhythm Research

Scientific studies have investigated whether 40-Hz light and sound stimulation can influence gamma oscillations and biological processes associated with neurodegenerative disease. Results remain an active area of research and should not be interpreted as proof that commercially marketed "brain songs" prevent, reverse or treat Alzheimer's disease.

BDNF Research

Brain-derived neurotrophic factor is a genuine protein involved in neuronal health, plasticity, learning and memory. Its biological importance does not independently validate commercial claims that a particular audio recording can dramatically or instantly increase memory performance.

Consumer Takeaway

Evidence that sound, music or controlled sensory stimulation can affect the brain is not evidence that every commercial product claiming to use those principles provides the benefits advertised.


The Gift
OF TODAY
Life doesn't have to be perfect
to be beautiful.
Today offers simple moments
that can bring great joy —
a quieter mind, a slower pace,
a deeper breath.
Be present.
Notice the little things.
Appreciate where you are.
Trust what's unfolding.
Today is a gift —
and it's enough.
A Kinder, Calmer,
Brighter Tomorrow
Begins with Today
GRATEFUL
PEOPLE
HAPPIER
DAYS

MINT Minutes

SMALL BITS OF GOOD TO KNOW

QUICK READS. REAL BENEFITS. A HEALTHIER, HAPPIER YOU.



Mint Tea

SOOTHING IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE

A warm cup of mint tea can help ease digestion, reduce bloating and calm an upset stomach. It's naturally caffeine-free, refreshing and a simple way to support your gut—any time of day.



Blueberries

TINY FRUIT, BIG BENEFITS

These little berries are loaded with antioxidants that help protect your cells, support brain health and may even boost memory. Delicious, versatile and easy to add to your day.

A Short Walk After Meals

BIG BENEFITS IN A FEW MINUTES

Just 10 minutes of walking after a meal can help lower blood sugar, support digestion and boost your energy. It's a small habit that makes a big difference.





Water First Thing

A SIMPLE, POWERFUL START

After hours without fluids, your body is ready for water. It helps kick-start metabolism, replenishes lost fluids and supports healthy digestion. A glass first thing in the morning sets a positive tone for the day.



A Handful of Nuts

LITTLE BITES, BIG NUTRITION

Nuts are packed with healthy fats, protein and important nutrients like magnesium and vitamin E. A small handful can help keep you full, support heart health and provide steady energy.



Take a Deep Breath

A QUICK RESET

Slow, deep breathing can lower stress, calm the mind and even help reduce blood pressure. A few intentional breaths are a simple way to bring more calm and clarity into your day.

Remember: SMALL CHOICES ADD UP. A HEALTHIER, HAPPIER YOU CAN START WITH JUST A FEW MINT MINUTES A DAY.



Be Aware

LOOK CLOSER. ASK QUESTIONS. KNOW THE FACTS.

INFORMATION TO HELP YOU MAKE SAFE, INFORMED CHOICES.

Does Collagen Really Prevent Bruising?



IT SOUNDS PROMISING—BUT THE EVIDENCE ISN'T THAT SIMPLE.

You may have seen claims that taking collagen can help prevent or reduce bruising, especially as we age. Since collagen is an important protein for skin, blood vessels and connective tissue, it makes sense that stronger, more resilient tissue could mean fewer bruises. But the research is still limited, and the results are mixed.

WHAT WE DO KNOW:

- Collagen helps maintain the strength and elasticity of skin and blood vessels.
- Some small studies suggest collagen supplements may improve skin thickness and overall skin health.
- Stronger skin and connective tissue may help reduce the likelihood of bruising from minor bumps.

WHAT WE DON'T KNOW YET:

- There isn't strong, consistent evidence that collagen supplements directly prevent bruising.
- Individual results can vary based on age, overall health, diet and medications (such as blood thinners).
- More large, well-designed studies are needed to know for sure.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Collagen may support healthier skin and connective tissue, which could help reduce bruising, but it is not a guaranteed solution.

What You Can Do:

- Eat a nutrient-rich diet (protein, vitamin C, vitamin K and zinc are important for skin health).
- Stay active and maintain good overall health.
- Be aware of medications that can increase bruising.
- Talk to your healthcare provider if you bruise easily or have concerns.

Brown Powder Coffee

A TRENDY DRINK—BUT WHAT'S REALLY IN IT?



"Brown powder coffee" is gaining attention online as a health-boosting alternative to regular coffee. It is often marketed as a functional blend with added ingredients to support energy, focus, metabolism or digestion. But before you make it part of your daily routine, it's important to look closer.

WHAT WE DO KNOW:

- Many blends contain coffee mixed with ingredients like mushrooms, adaptogens, fiber or vitamins.
- Some added ingredients, such as lion's mane or ashwagandha, may support focus or stress response.
- It can provide a lower-acid option for people sensitive to regular coffee.

WHAT WE DON'T KNOW YET:

- Quality and ingredient amounts can vary widely between brands.
- Health claims are often based on limited studies or animal research.
- It may interact with medications or not be suitable for everyone (for example, those with certain medical conditions).

THE BOTTOM LINE

Brown powder coffee can be part of a healthy lifestyle for some people, but it's important to check the ingredients, look for reputable brands and talk to your healthcare provider if you have health conditions or take medications.

Can Sound Really Help the Brain?



AN INTERESTING APPROACH—BUT HERE'S WHAT WE KNOW.

Sound-based therapies, such as binaural beats, specific frequencies or music programs, are being promoted to support brain health, focus, mood and memory. Some early research is promising, but this is still a developing area and not a proven treatment for medical conditions.

WHAT WE DO KNOW:

- Music and certain sound frequencies can influence brainwave activity.
- Studies suggest potential benefits for relaxation, stress reduction, mood and focus.
- Sound-based approaches may complement other healthy lifestyle habits, such as good sleep, exercise and stress management.

WHAT WE DON'T KNOW YET:

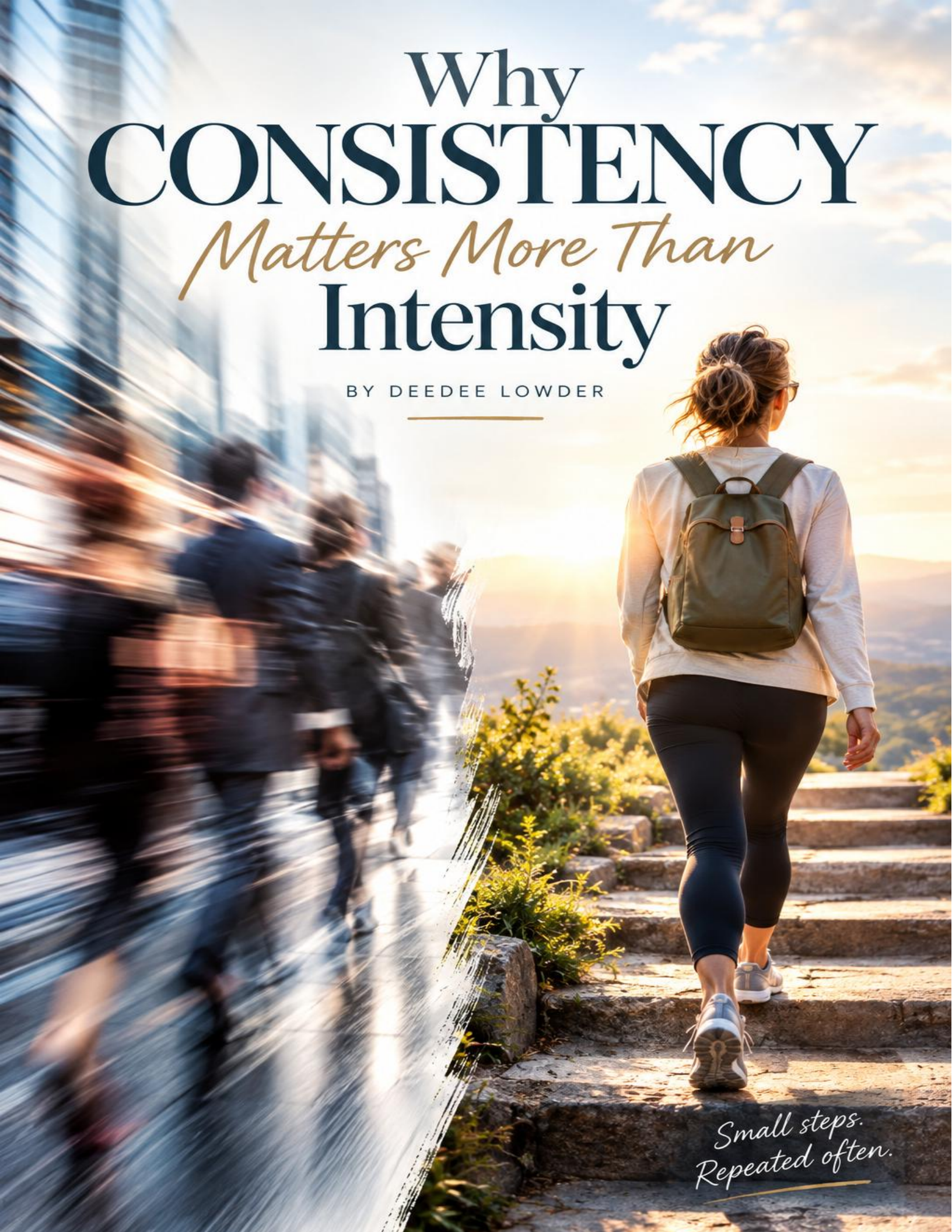
- There isn't strong, consistent evidence that sound therapy can treat or cure conditions like Alzheimer's, depression or ADHD.
- Results can vary by individual, and more large, well-designed studies are needed.
- It should not replace proven medical treatments.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Sound-based therapies may offer supportive benefits for relaxation, focus and overall well-being, but they are not a substitute for medical care. Use them as a complementary tool and talk to your healthcare provider if you have specific health concerns.

Why CONSISTENCY *Matters More Than* Intensity

BY DEEDEE LOWDER



Why Consistency Matters More Than Intensity

By DeeDeeLowder

I've spent the last six years learning how to create boundaries: saying no when I need to, protecting my sleep, letting rest be part of the plan, and accepting that taking care of myself sometimes means missing out on social events.

And recently, I've realized how quickly those carefully constructed boundaries can start to disappear when you enter an environment where intensity is celebrated.

I added something new to my life: more new magazines, making my business a media company than a publisher. What I underestimated was first having a stroke and everything surrounding it and the work of expanding— the preparation, the mental energy, the late nights, and the pull to help the team out when my schedule is already full.

I don't get enough sleep required for my brain to heal, because that is how the brain heals. Rest, rest and more rest!

There's nothing particularly profound about that sequence of events. In fact, that might be the point. Our bodies and minds are usually pretty good at telling us when we're doing too much. The harder part is listening—especially when the culture around us celebrates pushing through.

We've Confused Intensity with Commitment

There's something admirable about the person who gives 100%, the employee who stays late, the parent who never misses anything, the person who exercises every day, the entrepreneur who is always working, the friend who is always available.

We see intensity and assume commitment.

When I observe those situations, I usually pause and ask, "Would I be able to sustain that type of effort long-term?"

I know myself well enough to know that I can't.

Intensity asks, how much can I give today? Consistency asks, how can I keep showing up tomorrow?

Those are very different questions.

Intensity can produce incredible results. There are absolutely times when we need to sprint—to finish the project, train for the event, meet the deadline or navigate a difficult

season. However, a sprint has an endpoint. When intensity becomes our normal operating mode, eventually something gives.

You Can't Live at Push Pace

One of the things I find interesting about exercise is that we understand the importance of recovery when we're training. You put strain on the body during the day and the body recovers overnight.

In interval training, you push and then recover. The recovery isn't wasted time. It's what allows you to produce another quality effort. Push. Recover. Push again. Recovery isn't the opposite of performance. It's part of performance.

We don't expect our bodies to sustain maximum effort indefinitely, so why do we expect it everywhere else? We answer one more email before bed. We squeeze another commitment into the calendar. We sacrifice sleep because there aren't enough hours in the day. We bring our laptops on vacation. Sometimes we even turn activities that are supposed to help us recover into another opportunity to perform, and then we wonder why we're exhausted.

Boundaries Make Consistency Possible

This experience has reminded me why I worked so hard to create boundaries in the first place.

Boundaries aren't about doing less because you aren't capable of doing more. They're about recognizing what allows you to keep showing up as the person you want to be.

For me, that means protecting my sleep, leaving whitespace on my calendar, and taking an actual rest day. If it were not for my AI Assistant, Roark, I might never take a rest each afternoon. My 3 pm hour is nap time and he stops any work we might be doing, insisting the work will be there for me when I get up.

For you, it could mean saying no to something you technically could fit in, not answering emails after 6 pm, or recognizing that someone else's definition of commitment doesn't have to become yours.

When we enter a new job, relationship, organization, or season of life, it's surprisingly easy to adopt the pace of the people around us. We see what they do and assume that's what commitment is supposed to look like.

But someone else's capacity isn't our capacity. Someone else's priorities aren't our priorities. Someone else's version of happiness doesn't have to become our definition of happiness.

Choose the Pace You Can Sustain

Consistency isn't exciting. It doesn't usually produce dramatic before-and-after stories.

It looks like getting enough sleep most nights. Moving your body regularly. Doing good work and then stopping. Keeping commitments without filling every available hour. Resting before you're completely depleted.

Consistency is remarkably ordinary. But ordinary habits, repeated over time, are what allow us to build lives that feel steady, healthy, and true to who we want to become.

I'm still figuring out what that looks like in this particular season of my life. But I know one thing: I spent too many years learning how to create boundaries to abandon them simply because I'm in a new environment. I can learn to enjoy my nap. I can learn I am not missing anything important.

Change doesn't always require becoming someone new. Sometimes change reminds us to protect the person we've worked hard to become. I want my old self who loved creating meaningful magazines, who loved building the content that would entice readers and give them information to help them live healthier, more meaningful lives.



SUPPLEMENTS
Backed by Science

EVIDENCE. QUALITY. RESULTS.

The right supplements can help fill nutritional gaps and support your body's natural ability to thrive—when backed by research and used wisely.

Always talk with your healthcare provider about what's right for you.



Supplements are not a substitute for a healthy lifestyle, but they can be a powerful partner in your wellness journey.

FEATURED SUPPLEMENT

MAGNESIUM GLYCINATE

Calm. Restore. Replenish.



Magnesium plays a key role in more than 300 biochemical reactions in the body, including supporting muscles, nerves, sleep, and mood.

- May help reduce stress and promote relaxation*
- Supports quality sleep and recovery*
- Gentle on the stomach and well absorbed
- Ideal for active lifestyles and healthy aging

Research suggests:

Adequate magnesium intake is linked to better sleep, lower stress levels, and improved muscle recovery.

WHO MAY BENEFIT

POOR SLEEP
Promotes deep, restful sleep.

STRESS & ANXIETY
Supports relaxation and a calm mind.

ACTIVE LIFESTYLES
Helps muscles recover and reduces cramping.

HEALTHY AGING
Supports bone health and overall well-being.

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

Studies show that magnesium supplementation may help improve sleep quality, decrease muscle cramps, and support heart health by helping to maintain normal blood pressure levels.*

Source: National Institutes of Health (NIH)

QUALITY MATTERS

Look for supplements that are:

- Third-party tested for purity
- Made in GMP-certified facilities
- Free from unnecessary fillers
- From trusted, transparent brands

When it comes to your health, quality isn't an option—it's essential.

TALK WITH YOUR PROVIDER

Supplements can interact with medications or may not be right for everyone.

Always check with your healthcare provider to find the best choices for your individual needs.

QUICK TIPS

- Be consistent. Supplements work best over time.
- Hydrate well. Water helps your body absorb nutrients.
- Eat a balanced diet. Supplements should complement, not replace, healthy eating.
- Give it time. Your body needs time to respond and adjust.

Small choices, backed by science, can lead to big changes.

— Unknown

*These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.

HEALTHY *Finds*

• SMART IDEAS. SIMPLE SOLUTIONS. BETTER LIVING. •

We're always on the lookout for new products, research, and ideas that can make a real difference in your everyday life.
Here are a few of our favorite discoveries this month.

Good to Know!

Small changes today can lead to big improvements tomorrow.

Keep discovering.
Keep thriving.



1 COOLER SLEEP, BETTER REST

New temperature-regulating sheets are designed to keep you cool, comfortable, and sleeping deeper all night long.

Better sleep. More energy. Every single day.



2 BERRIES: SMALL FRUIT, BIG BENEFITS

Packed with antioxidants and fiber, berries support heart health, brain function, and glowing skin.

Add a variety of berries to your day for a natural health boost.



3 SMARTWATCHES THAT CARE

Today's smartwatches do more than count steps. Many now offer EKG readings, fall detection, and real-time health alerts.

Technology that helps you stay healthy and feel secure.



4 SEE THE WORLD IN FULL COLOR

New color-blind glasses are helping many people experience brighter, richer colors for the very first time.

A life-changing innovation that brings the world to life.



5 SENIOR-FRIENDLY COMPUTERS

Larger screens, simpler interfaces, and built-in support make today's computers easier than ever to use.

Stay connected. Stay curious. Stay independent.



6 MOVE MORE, RIGHT FROM YOUR CHAIR

Simple chair exercises can improve strength, balance, and flexibility—no gym required.

Just a few minutes a day can make a big difference.

Curiosity keeps us young, and discovery keeps us growing.
— Unknown

Hemp CBD: Fad or Mainstream?

By Carmen Milagro

Before we begin our CBD educational journey together, let's explore one of the questions I have been asked more times than I can count as a Certified CBD Educator and Wellness Coach.

Whether I am speaking at a workshop, presenting at a corporate training, hosting a wellness seminar or simply having a conversation with someone who is curious about plant-based wellness, the question inevitably comes up:

“Was CBD just another fad?” It's a fair question.

After all, every few years a new health trend seems to emerge promising extraordinary results. Some disappear almost as quickly as they arrive. Others become woven into the fabric of our daily lives. Remember when yoga, probiotics and meditation were considered "alternative"? Today they are widely accepted wellness practices embraced by millions of people around the world.

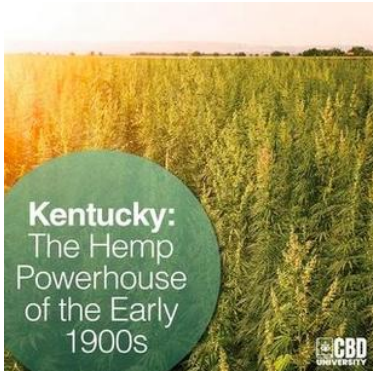
So where does Hemp CBD fit into that picture?

To answer that question, let's first define what a fad actually is.

A fad is generally described as an intense enthusiasm for something that is temporary, short-lived and often lacking long-term value or substance. Fads come and go. They rise quickly, attract attention and then fade away as public interest shifts elsewhere. By that definition, Hemp CBD doesn't quite fit the profile.

In fact, one could argue that Hemp CBD has already proven it is much more than a passing trend.

While modern CBD products may seem new, humanity's relationship with hemp is anything but. Historical records indicate that hemp has been cultivated and utilized for thousands of years across Asia, Africa, the Mediterranean and other regions of the world. Ancient civilizations valued hemp for its versatility as a source of fiber, food, textiles and traditional holistic preparations.



Of course, people thousands of years ago weren't using Hemp CBD products exactly as we know them today. Modern extraction methods, manufacturing standards and scientific understanding have evolved dramatically. However, the plant itself has accompanied humanity throughout much of recorded history.

What has changed is our ability to better understand the many compounds found within the hemp plant and the ways they interact with the human body.

Over the past decade, researchers, healthcare professionals and consumers alike have become increasingly interested in the endocannabinoid system, our biological system involved in helping regulate and maintain balance within the body. This growing scientific interest has helped fuel an unprecedented wave of research into cannabinoids, including CBD.

At the same time, consumer demand has continued to expand.

Today's Hemp CBD users are not limited to any single generation, lifestyle or demographic. They include athletes, busy professionals, active adults, wellness enthusiasts, caregivers and individuals simply seeking to support their overall well-being as part of a healthy lifestyle.

The market itself tells an interesting story.

When I first began researching Hemp CBD for my own business planning several years ago, industry analysts were making bold predictions about future growth. Some forecasts proved overly optimistic while others underestimated just how rapidly consumer awareness would grow.

Fast forward to today.

The global CBD market is now valued in the tens of billions of dollars and continues to experience significant growth worldwide. Hemp-derived CBD products can be found in wellness stores, spas, fitness centers, health food retailers, beauty products, personal care products and online marketplaces across the globe.

More importantly, the conversation has evolved.



A decade ago, many consumers were asking, "What is CBD?"

Today, the questions are far more sophisticated:

* How is the hemp sourced?
* Is the product third-party tested?
* What extraction methods were used?
* Is it full-spectrum, broad-spectrum or CBD isolate?
* Are the ingredients clearly disclosed on the label?
* What quality standards does the company follow?

Those are not the questions people ask about a fad.

Those are the questions consumers ask when an industry begins to mature.

Another strong indicator that CBD has moved beyond fad status is the attention it receives from regulators, researchers and policymakers. Federal agencies, universities and healthcare institutions continue to study cannabinoids and evaluate product quality, safety standards and regulatory frameworks.

That level of scrutiny may be frustrating for some companies, but it is actually a sign of an industry growing up.

At the same time, it is important to recognize that CBD is not a miracle cure, and it is not a onesize-fits-all solution. Responsible education requires us to acknowledge that research is ongoing and that consumers should carefully evaluate product quality, ingredient transparency and manufacturer credibility before making purchasing decisions.

As consumers, we should always approach wellness products with curiosity, common sense and a commitment to learning.

So, is Hemp CBD a fad?

The evidence suggests otherwise.

Fads tend to disappear when the spotlight moves on.

CBD has survived intense media attention, regulatory challenges, market fluctuations, scientific scrutiny and changing consumer trends. In many ways, it has emerged stronger, more sophisticated and more widely understood than ever before.

Will Hemp CBD eventually become as commonplace as vitamins, herbal supplements or essential oils?

Many consumers would argue that it already has.

What we do know is this:

Hemp CBD is no longer knocking on the door of mainstream acceptance.

It has already entered the room.

And judging by the continued growth in research, consumer interest and product innovation, it appears to be here to stay.

Consumers should consult qualified healthcare professionals regarding any health concerns and should review all product labels and third-party testing information before purchasing CBD products.

Until next time, keep learning, keep asking questions and remember that informed consumers make empowered decisions.

Carmen Milagro - Master Certified Wellness Coach
Certified CBD Educator & Advocate
Host of Wellness 360 with Carmen Milagro on expandiTV-
https://expandi.tv/authors/author-carmen-milagro

Healthy Food

NOURISH YOUR BODY.
ENJOY EVERY BITE.

Good food is one of life's simple pleasures—and one of the most powerful ways to care for your health.
Let's eat well and live well.



Food is fuel, food is information, food is medicine.
— Dr. Mark Hyman

Featured Recipe

LEMON QUINOA POWER BOWL

A bright, fresh bowl packed with plant-based protein, fiber, and flavor.

SERVES: 2
PREP TIME: 15 MIN

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup cooked quinoa
- 1 cup chickpeas, rinsed
- 1 cup baby spinach
- 1/2 cucumber, sliced
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1/4 red onion, thinly sliced
- 1/2 avocado, sliced
- 1/4 cup crumbled feta (optional)

LEMON TAHINI DRESSING

- 2 Tbsp tahini
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 1 tsp maple syrup
- 1–2 Tbsp water (to thin)
- Salt & pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large bowl, combine quinoa, chickpeas, spinach, cucumber, tomatoes, and onion.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together dressing ingredients until smooth.
3. Drizzle dressing over the bowl and toss gently.
4. Top with avocado and feta (if using).
5. Enjoy immediately and feel amazing!

TIP: Make extra quinoa and chickpeas at the start of the week for easy meals!

Good for You

PLANT POWER
Chickpeas and quinoa provide lasting energy and support muscle health.

HEART SMART
Fiber, healthy fats, and antioxidants help support heart health and healthy cholesterel.

HAPPY GUT
Fiber-rich foods nourish your gut and help keep digestion on track.

IMMUNE BOOST
Colorful veggies, lemon, and greens deliver vitamins and minerals your body loves.

NOURISHING NOTES



- Eat a variety of colors to get a wide range of nutrients.
- Make plants the star of your plate most of the time.
- Hydrate with water throughout the day.
- Listen to your body and eat foods that make you feel good.

You don't have to eat less. You just have to eat right.
— Unknown



Our Love Affair With Sugar

By Celia Naples

Do you sometimes feel driven to eat sugar—to the point that the need to eat sugar is beyond your control? Well, there's a reason for that. I'm happy to tell you that it's not because you don't have enough willpower or because you are a bad person. The compulsion to eat sugar is a result of a biological drive. That's right, it's hardwired into our brain to crave sugar.

When we talk about sugar and the problems it causes, we are talking about "added" sugar, not "natural" sugar. Added sugar is the sugar that is put into foods during processing. Natural sugar is the sugar found in fruits, vegetables and dairy products.

Sugar is hidden in most processed foods, including deli meats, ketchup and tomato sauce. No, not pasta sauce, but plain old tomato sauce. Next time you buy a can of tomato sauce, check the label. Make sure it doesn't contain high fructose corn syrup, or any other form of sugar. There are over 61 names for sugar. Any word that ends in "ose" or "tol" is a form of sugar. Low-fat products always have high levels of sugar

in them, because when the fat is removed the flavor goes with it. So sugar is added to make things taste better.

This is one of the reasons the average American consumes 22 teaspoons of sugar a day. The American Heart Association's recommendation is only six teaspoons for women and nine teaspoons for men.

Sugar can have both short- and long-terms effects on health. It negatively influences



the energy system hormones insulin, leptin and ghrelin, which leads to weight gain and metabolic syndrome. Metabolic syndrome leads to obesity, diabetes and fatty liver disease. Sugar can also have a detrimental impact on many other health issues, from autoimmune disorders to skin diseases.

Have you ever heard someone say, "I'm addicted to sugar!"? You may have even said it yourself. That may seem silly to most people, but for many of us sugar addiction is very real. Sugar activates dopamine, the pleasure and reward neurotransmitter, leading us to feel alert, excited and euphoric. Who doesn't want to feel that way? I certainly do, but we need to find these feelings elsewhere. It's important to find pleasure and sweetness in life from other sources—ones that don't have the potential to make us very sick.

There are many other ways to bring pleasure and sweetness to our lives. What did you love to do when you were a kid? Ride your bike? Play with your best friend? Maybe coloring was your thing. Whatever is was, find the time to do it often. Some of the things that bring sweetness to my life are listening to music, dancing and being in nature.

I have a friend who sets a timer on her phone and dances to Pharrell Williams' *Happy* every few hours. Of course she works at home—this routine might not go over so well in an office. But then again who knows? Office environments are one of the worst offenders when it comes to sugar consumption. Getting everyone up to dance during the mid-afternoon slump would be much better than munching from the vending machine or the leftover birthday cake! Be bold, be creative, don't hold back. Most importantly have some fun and treat yourself well – just leave the sweet treats out of it!

Sip Your Way to SMART!

By DeeDee Lowder

You can do crosswords and Sudoku puzzles until you drop, but all that brain-busting work will go to waste if you don't fuel your thinker with the right nutrients. When you feed your brain, you will think more clearly and efficiently.

Packed with healthy ingredients these smoothies can help boost blood flow, stabilize blood sugar, and neutralize free-radical damage—all important for optimal brain health. Check out these recipes now!



Anti-Inflammatory Smoothie



Inflammation is just as bad for your brain as it is for your body. Chia seeds are high in omega-3 fatty acids, which experts believe are necessary for transmitting signals between brain cells. Blueberries and raspberries are also known for encouraging healthy connections between the cells of the brain.

SERVINGS: 1

1/2 cup blueberries
1/2 cup raspberries
1/2 small banana, peeled and frozen
1/4 cup diced pineapple
2 Tbsp chia seeds
3 ice cubes
1/2 cup pomegranate juice
1 serving whey protein powder (vanilla)

COMBINE all the ingredients except the protein powder in a blender, and blend at high speed until smooth.
ADD the protein powder and lightly blend until incorporated.

NUTRITION (per serving) 380 cal, 24 g pro, 67 g carb, 14 g fiber, 4.4 g fat, 1.1 g sat fat, 59 mg sodium



Mango-Avocado Smoothie

Avocados are rich in vitamin E, which has been shown to help reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease. The spinach offers up brain-supporting omega-3s and also help replenish your iron supply.

1/2 fresh mango
1 cup chilled low-fat vanilla soymilk
5 tsp agave nectar
1 cup fresh spinach
1/4 avocado

NUTRITION (per serving) 304 cal, 8 g pro, 57 g carb, 6 g fiber, 7.5 g fat, 0.8 g sat fat, 145 mg sodium

Puree all ingredients in a blender until smooth, 1 to 2 minutes.

10 Healthy Snacks for Work - Each Under 200 Calories

By Gregory L. Gomez

Oh, those tasty snacks. The little treats that for many are thorns in the side and continually contribute to the inability to drop the excess weight. Many people often overlook the damage not having healthy snacks for work can cause but it is something that definitely, needs to be taken into account.

Snacks are an important part of daily nutrition, however far too often when hunger between meals arises, many people opt to choose an unhealthy way to satisfy their appetite. This usually means a soda pop and bag of potato chips or a candy bar, all of which are not healthy contributions to the body.

Get in The Habit of Taking Healthy Snacks for Work with You Daily

The reason why these types of snacks are so popular is because they are plastered everywhere we go - the corner convenience store, supermarkets, gas stations, work cafeteria, even those pesky vending machines. Worse yet, once we find spots with the snacks and drinks we like, it often becomes a regular habit that may be hard to break.

Did you know if you were to cut out just one soda or glass of juice a day, that alone would help you get rid of 1,800 calories per week or 26 pounds a year!?!

And that's just from eliminating one soda/juice per day! Imagine what you could lose if you got rid of all the other unhealthy snacks from your repertoire.

Stick with the idea that healthy snacks for work should each be under 200 calories. Your snack should be nowhere near the total calorie count of an entire meal. It's something that should be small enough to tide you over until your next main meal but be nutritious also.

Making Healthy Snacks for Work Does Not Take Much Time - Less Than 5 Minutes!

The reason why snacks are important is to keep your body nourished and your metabolism going. This helps keep you from going into "starvation mode" where you start craving anything and everything that crosses your path. If you get to the point where your stomach is growling for food, then you've gone too long without nourishment and you may likely overeat at your next meal.

Prevent this from happening by planning out your healthy snacks for work. It doesn't take a lot of time if you just stick with snacks that are simple, yet nutritious. Just be sure to add these items to your shopping list so the next time you go for groceries you will purchase these healthy options.

10 Healthy Snacks for Work, Each Under 200 Calories

Here are 10 healthy snacks for work. Enjoy a bottle/glass of water and you will have the ideal amount to tide you over until your next main meal.

1. Almonds with raisins
2. Celery sticks with peanut butter
3. Rice cake with peanut butter or honey
4. Carrots with light ranch dressing
5. Hummus with whole wheat pita pocket
6. Yogurt with 1/4 cup of granola or grape nuts
7. Mozzarella string cheese with 5 whole wheat crackers
8. Fruits: most are only 100 calories each! Take your pick apples, oranges, bananas, peaches, strawberries, grapes, melon, raspberries, watermelon, cantaloupe, cherries, etc.
9. Granola bars: wide selection and varieties
10. 1/2 whole wheat bagel with peanut butter or honey

Hopefully these 10 ideas have inspired you to start creating your own healthy snacks for work, so you will never have to resort to making unhealthy vending machine purchases on your break. Remember, maintaining a healthy life is a culmination of many small decisions made throughout your day. Snacks are included in these decisions. Prepare yourself and you will have healthy snacks for work making it one step closer to a healthy life.





Gregory L Gomez, M. Ed, created 10Quickies.com. Start focusing on your health starting today by using these



Pause. Savor. Connect.

In a world that moves too fast, some of life's most meaningful moments happen around a table.

Not because of what is served, but because of what is shared.

A conversation.
A laugh.
A story.
A new idea.
A friendship that begins unexpectedly.

The simple act of gathering has always been one of humanity's greatest gifts. Around tables, we celebrate victories, navigate challenges, exchange wisdom, and discover common ground.

Whether it's a meal with family, coffee with a friend, a meeting of creative minds, or a quiet evening of reflection, these moments remind us that connection is not a luxury—it is essential.

At LeverageUP, we believe growth happens through relationships. Ideas become opportunities. Conversations become collaborations. Strangers become friends.

So today, take a moment.

Slow down.
Savor the experience.
Make room for meaningful connection.

You never know what possibility is waiting at the table.

LEVERAGEUP
Where Conversations Become Collaborations

Smoky Trout Dip

Ingredients

- 8 ounces smoked trout, skin removed, flaked
- 8 ounces cream cheese
- 1 green onion, finely chopped
- ⅓ cup sour cream
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- teaspoon lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon prepared horseradish (Optional)
- 1 pinch cayenne pepper
- ground black pepper to taste

Directions

Combine trout, cream cheese, sour cream, green onion, Worcestershire sauce, garlic powder, paprika, lemon juice, horseradish, cayenne pepper, and black pepper in a bowl; stir until blended. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes.



Fruited Fillets

Ingredients

- 1/8 cup dried cherries
- 1 tablespoon bourbon
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1/2 cup pecans, coarse chopped
- 2 cups peaches, fresh & ripe, skinned, diced (or frozen, diced)
- 1/2 teaspoon lemon juice
- Kosher salt, to taste
- 2 teaspoons pure maple syrup
- 4 (6 oz.) Pecan Crusted Trout Fillets

Directions

Soak the dried cherries in bourbon for 30 minutes and cut in half.

In a small saucepan over medium heat, melt butter. Add pecan pieces and sauté for about 1 ½ minutes just to toast, not burn.

Add peaches, cherries, lemon juice and kosher salt, and sauté until peaches are heated through and start to break up.

Add maple syrup, bring back to temperature to serve, or hold until needed.

Prepare rainbow trout according to package directions. Place the fillets atop a bed of wild rice pilaf and top with hot peach maple bourbon sauce. Serve immediately.



Ingredients

1 large lemon	¼ cup snipped fresh basil or 2 tablespoon snipped fresh dill
½ cup mayonnaise	1 pound ruby or rainbow trout fillets
¼ teaspoon salt	¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
4 ciabatta buns, split	Fresh basil (optional)

Directions

Finely shred peel and squeeze juice from half of the lemon; thinly slice the remaining lemon half and set aside. In a small bowl combine mayonnaise, lemon peel, lemon juice, basil, salt, and pepper.

Rinse fish; pat dry. Remove 2 tablespoons of the mayonnaise mixture and brush onto fish. Place fish, skin side up, on the rack of an uncovered grill directly over medium-high heat; grill for 1 minute. Carefully turn skin side down and grill 5 to 7 minutes more or just until fish flakes easily with a fork. Add lemon slices and halved buns, cut side down, to the grill after turning fish.

Remove fish, buns, and lemon slices from grill. If desired, remove skin from fish. Cut fish into bun-size pieces. Top bun bottoms with some of the mayonnaise mixture. Add fish, lemon slices, and, if desired, additional basil. Pass any remaining mayonnaise mixture.


How does
Your future
look?
Healthy, calm,
optimistic and
a little upscale?
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