

Small Interventions That Have Large Impacts

In keeping with the theme of minimal interventions that can have large impacts on our lives, I have over the years found that doing these simple things can greatly reduce and sometimes resolve stressors on our system that have caused problems for a long time. Consider taking one or two that seem to relate to an area that seems most out of balance in your life and start with those. You can gradually add more as you start to recover more energy and function and resilience.... You can also watch the TedTalk I've included below called "30 Days To Make A New Habit" to help you integrate some of these changes that are most helpful into your life on a more permanent basis, as well as the video I created showing you how to make a still point inducer and how that can help benefit your life. And finally, I am including a link to my website, where I will occasionally post additional resources that may be helpful for you and your journey:

Finally, try and keep a journal that details which measures you took and how you felt each day. Some of these shifts can be subtle and aren't readily noticeable, but after a week or two when you look at where you started you can see how much progress has actually been made. It will also show you the actions that provide you with the greatest benefits, so that you can spend more time with those.

Have fun, and I wish you the best of luck!

Still Point Inducer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gRCMWZiZuuw>

30 Day Habit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UNP03fDSj1U>

My website: www.unityofthree.com

Diet:

1. Drink more water (not soda, not juice, not tea). This one is one of the simplest interventions, but it can have enormous benefits, ranging from increased energy levels, clearer thinking, help with persistent pain or discomfort while exercising, and relieving muscle cramping issues. The way I personally started with this was to have two pints of water before my first cup of coffee in the morning, and then another pint before my second if I drink one. That really helped set the tone for the rest of the day, and helped ensure I was hydrating well first thing in the morning. And many of us drink more coffee or other stimulants because we are tired, but being tired is often a sign of dehydration and drinking a diuretic can actually make the root problem worse. If you are starting to get tired in the middle of the day and are reaching for another cup of coffee or a soda, instead drink another glass of water and wait 15 minutes. This often will resolve the problem and increase your energy and mental clarity. Try this for at least 5-7 days to see how much this can help you, as when we are totally dehydrated it can take several days to fully rehydrate on a tissue level.

2. Reduce or eliminate sugar and simple carbohydrates from your diet for 7-14 days. Can improve persistent pain and inflammation issues, depression, and foggy thinking. Simple? Yes. Easy? Not always. But this can be critically important for certain types of pain and dysfunction patterns, so I highly recommend giving it a shot for at least a week to see if you notice a difference.

3. For those who want to investigate this in more depth, there is a theory that various foods are more inflammatory than others. I've included a chart to look at.... Check it to see how your ratio to alkalizing vs acidic foods is, and if you are really high on the acidic foods look to cut some of those back and replace with more alkaline foods:

<https://www.lakesidechiro.com.au/assets/users/chiro/253/uploads/images/2018/04/chart.jpg>

Sleep and Rest:

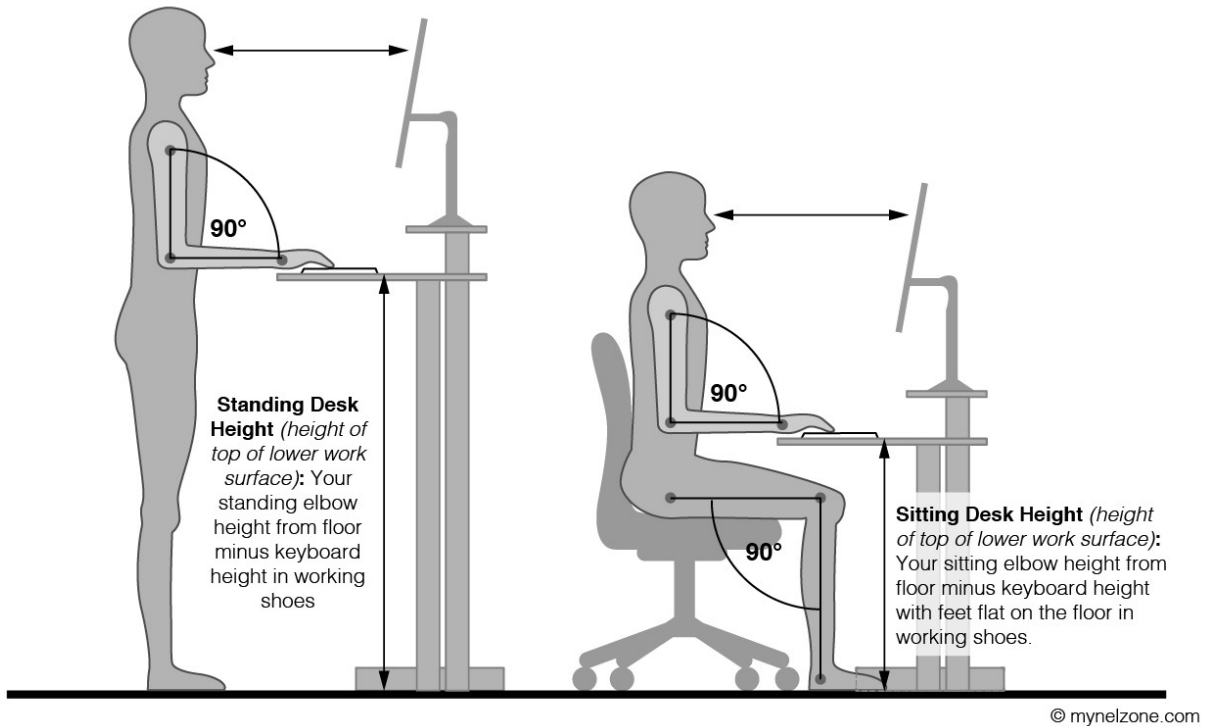
Rest is critical for our resilience, yet many of us are very deficient in our sleep and rest. Consider the following adjustments that we can all make in order to improve the quality and amount of rest we get each night:

1. Cut screen time at least an hour before going to bed. The screen brightness can trick our bodies to thinking that it's still daylight outside and therefore not time to go to bed. Also, the downtime will help you not have a lot of racing thoughts in your head before going to bed... Using the still point inducer before bed can also help calm down your thoughts and prepare you for the transition to rest.
2. Only use your bed for sleeping, not reading or looking at your phone or working on your computer. Train your body that every time you go to bed, it's for sleep only. And occasional cuddling of course!
3. Go to bed earlier, and at a consistent time: Some research suggests we get more quality of sleep when we go to bed earlier rather than later, even if we're in bed for the same amount of time. This likely has something to do with our natural biorhythms. Additionally, if we go to bed at the same time every night we start to develop a habit and pattern which makes it easier to shift from being awake to being asleep.

Movement:

Much of our lifestyles are becoming more and more sedentary, and oftentimes we are fixed in undesirable and stressful positions for long periods of time. But our bodies like movement and function much better when we move properly and often.

1. Redesign your workspace to be more ergonomically balanced: There are many things you can do for this, but the rule of 90 degrees is a pretty good one. You can check out the diagram below:



2. Walk a half hour (or more) a day: Walking is a gentle exercise that almost everyone can do, and we need no special equipment to do it. Walking, and movement in general, stimulates our lymphatic system function, circulation, and gives our minds a chance to disconnect from the busyness of the day and helps us connect more with our immediate environments (as opposed to virtual ones).

3. Spinal twists and cat/cows: These are simple exercises that we can do every day to help our general mobility and function... Keeping the spine and neck open and flexible helps every other part of our being, as the nerves that connect to all of our organs and muscles come from the neck and spine. Here's a video that shows these simple techniques, and spending a few minutes every day can help us with proper body function. It can also help us get out of sympathetic states (fight or flight) and come down to more parasympathetic states (rest and relax) as we unload mechanical stressors on the nervous system. NOTE: If you get a pinchy feeling in the neck or low back on the cow pose, avoid that position until it starts to feel better and the pinch is no longer present. Pushing through a pinch can oftentimes flare the issue further instead of helping it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9pUshvi-56g>

Mental Consumption Habits:

Constantly consuming low quality food leads to unhealthy bodies, and the same goes for those things we consume on a mental and emotional level. Pay attention to what you are putting into your awareness and where you are spending your time: Are you spending more time watching TedTalks and playing with your children or pets, or did you just spend 3 hours straight watching alarmist news videos

and doomscrolling on social media? Interrupting this cycle can alleviate a great deal of stress and anxiety, and can help us re-establish connections to the things in life that are truly important and give us energy: Friendships and family, play, creativity, and the joy of simply being.

1. Meditation: Simply disconnecting from the endless consumption for a discrete amount of time can help break constant stress feedback loops and help us re-establish balance and homeostasis. This can be simply sitting and noticing, it can be tuning into our own CSR and simply connecting with that rhythm or inviting connection with it (especially in the early stages if it's still difficult to feel), or picking an image from our demonstration exercise and sitting with it, becoming it, and seeing what it is and what it needs or has to offer. Working with imagery from your dreams can be a lot of fun as well!

One of my favorite meditations is one from the well-known Vietnamese Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh called "Letting Your Mud Settle". Visualize a glass of muddy water, and the more the water moves around or it gets stirred up the cloudier and more opaque it becomes. Let it settle with stillness (both in mind and body), become present and curious about the present moment, and imagine that as you are doing this the mud in the glass starts to settle and the water becomes clear again.

Try to sit for at least 10-15 minutes at a time, and notice how that is for you. And how it changes with practice.

2. Create something: Many of us are so tired when we get home from work that all we want to do is watch something on television when we get home. Sometimes this can be a much-needed break, but if relied on too much can simply become another example of passive consumption. One of the ways that you can break that cycle is to spend some time creating something instead of just consuming, and creating just for the sheer joy of creating rather than because we are required to from an outside source.

There is a remarkable book called "The Artists Way" by Julia Cameron that lays out a 12 week course helping people get in touch with their own creativity, and to get out of their own way regarding self-criticism, judgment, fear, and other obstacles people often face when they try and create something. It was a remarkably empowering experience for me, and after completing the program I actually published a few short stories in a local anthology. I also discovered that I could draw pretty well, something I'd always wanted to do but kept telling myself I had no talent for. Anyway, it's a great book, and it should be available through the local library system. And if you resonate with it after checking it out I believe it's relatively inexpensive to purchase.