



## **Guide To Healthy Living, Less Stress and More Success by Lisa Ware**

### **Part 3**

Yoga is a practical and enjoyable way to attain balance in your body, peace in your mind and focus for your spirit. The physical practice of yoga offers so many variations for everyone's different needs. Yoga can be very physically active, depending on the style. Following are the fundamentals to living a happy, healthy and fit lifestyle.

1. Get enough rest: 7.5 hours is ideal for most people.
2. Eat foods that are colorful; 'Eat the Rainbow' and avoid too many soft foods. Eat 4-7 small meals/ large snacks a day, avoiding heavy large meals which tend to bog down your energy level and take time to digest.
3. Eat foods that you can identify their source; where did the ingredients come from? The closer to the Earth, the better for you as a general rule. Look for and go out of your way to make sustainable choices, do it for your grandchildren's children.
4. Drink pure water, half an ounce per pound of body weight daily is recommended. If what you're drinking isn't just water, drink 100% juice, organic or non dairy milk, caffeine free and free from artificial color and fake sweeteners. Keep a travel bottle with you at all times. Americans are almost always within 25 feet of a water source and most go around dehydrated every day! Avoid soft drinks entirely, yes, even Sprite. Your body's Ph levels immediately turn acidic and stay that way until you drink about 30 glasses of pure water to counter that one soft drink. All disease develops in an acidic environment.
5. Avoid wasting time and energy running around. Prepare your week in advance. Plan major tasks for each role in your life and write them down. Be open to change, as change is the only constant in our life.
6. Set realistic goals, make lists. If you set your aim high and shoot for the moon you may sometimes miss, yet you will land among the stars!
7. Do something every day to connect to a higher source or a bigger cause,



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- however that connection relates to you most. Whether it translates to giving time or resources for charitable works, setting your intention in prayer, meditation, in nature or sitting in quiet time; make this a daily commitment to yourself.
8. Allocate time for special friends and family. Keeping those relationships nurtured and caring about others makes you feel better and is what really helps us through the hard times. When life is stripped to the basics these are the people that matter most. Demonstrate random acts of kindness.
  9. Learn something new! Set things to look forward to in one week, one month, this year etc. Read, study, travel, spend time at the barn or creating artwork... whatever lights you up!
  10. Be good to your body. Do a physical activity daily! Sweat, focus, and get your heart rate up, change it up to keep it interesting, but most importantly HAVE FUN doing it! Yoga is a great way to achieve balance, relieve stress and gain awareness and focus, all in one hour on your yoga mat a few times a week!

One popular and active yoga style is called Vinyasa. This translates to being in the flow with each pose, as it teaches the importance of breathing during practice. Most poses throughout the class are associated with an inhale and an exhale. Learning to breathe may sound automatic, but not breathing fully is a stress reaction and can be a symptom, or even a cause, of many diseases. After learning techniques on your yoga mat, in class, you will develop new skills to utilize in real life. You may quickly experience better awareness, less reaction and more pro-action; plus getting more oxygen is always a lovely benefit.

Healthy living and doing yoga go hand in hand. As we grow and practice in yoga, we develop our character and learn to take that very important time to disconnect from stimulus, technology and the constant bombardment of our senses. This is called OVERSTIMULATION; we can learn to live in peace in a chaotic world. We instead find a moment for ourselves, away from our regular routine, for just a



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simple hour on our yoga mats. As we push ourselves physically in class, we also take what we learn and translate that to pushing through any hard situation in life. We then in turn help nurture our relationships through loving kindness with others and to ourselves, as we practice yoga without forcing our bodies and learning to observe rather than always press on. Yoga ultimately helps us respond with love by using our practice as a mirror. We see our self from a new perspective, developing discipline. This yoga is about developing character, learning to find stillness, getting stronger, more balanced and, of course, more flexible, in both body and mind.

By each of us committing to have a positive outlook and by utilizing these learned skills on our mat in real life off our mat, we will be contributing our small part to making our community, and ultimately our planet, a better place to live!