

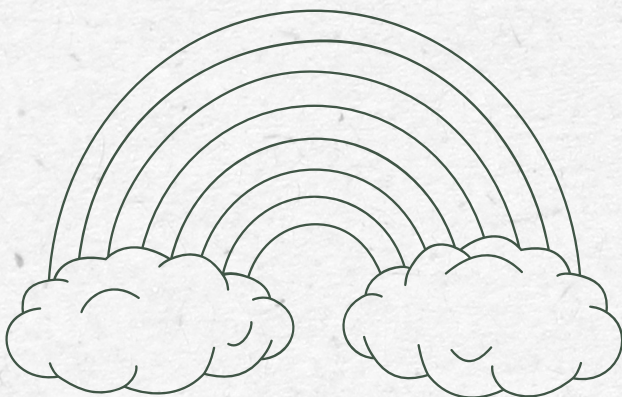
Daily Support Strategies

Build your mental calm by incorporating some of these practices into your daily life



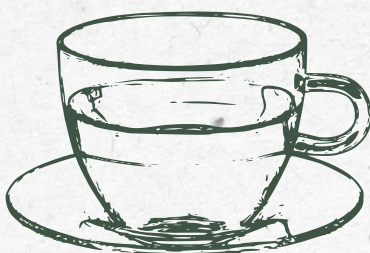
Daily meditation

Evidence shows that a regular meditation practice not only improves our emotional outlook but also our body's physiological markers of stress. Meditation can reduce cortisol, blood pressure, heart rate, triglycerides and inflammatory markers.



Mindfulness

Bring your attention and focus to where you are in the world. A quick way to bring mindfulness to a moment is to list three things you can see, hear and smell. This practice engages your practical brain and brings you into the present rather than you being lost in your thoughts and emotions. This is a handy tool when closing your eyes for meditation is not practical.



Good sleep

Good sleep is key to maintaining good health. Our sleep hormone melatonin is optimised by natural light and sunshine exposure in the mornings. Aim for 15-25-mins during low UV hours on sunny days and 25 minutes during low UV hours on cloudy days. This can help to regulate the circadian rhythm and support melatonin production to improve sleep onset and quality. Natural light and sunshine in the morning can help to start your day on the right foot by increasing our feel good neurotransmitters dopamine and serotonin.



Evening food organisation

After dinner, spend 10 or so minutes preparing lunches and snacks for the next day. Have it ready to go in the morning. Do this the night before frees up time you start work in the morning.

Calm start to the day

Start the morning with no phone or social media for the first 30mins after waking up. Use this quiet time to sip a cup of tea, meditate for 10 minutes or listen to a favourite song.



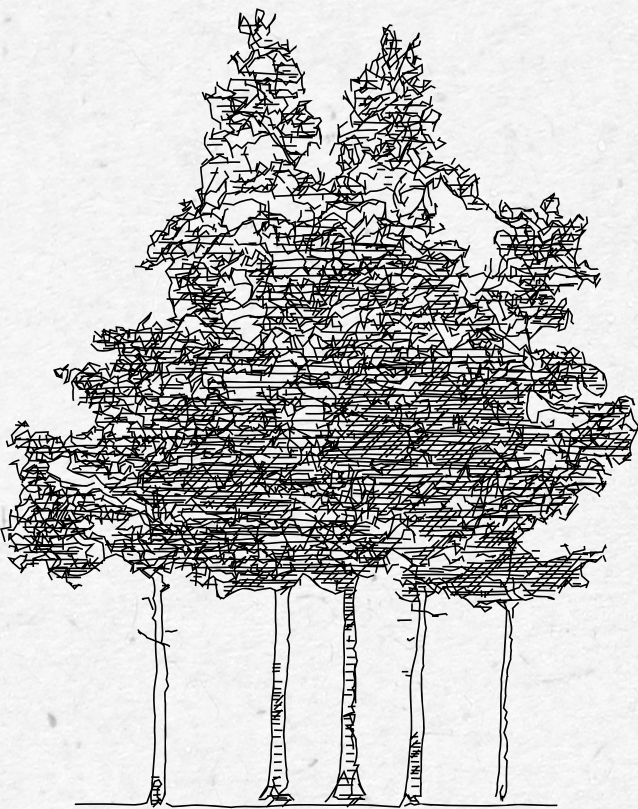
Gentle exercise

Gentle exercise is needed when our nervous system and adrenals are in survival mode, avoid high intensity. Slow body movements sends a message to the nervous system that all is well and no danger is present. Slow and strong options such as pilates, yin yoga, strength training with weights and hiking are all movements that involve focus, intention, slow deep breathing, thereby promoting a calmer headspace.



Joy

What brings you joy? Write a list of five things that bring you joy. They don't have to be big things. A simple cup of tea sipped in the sunshine, dancing in the kitchen, having a chat with your best friend, watering the garden, hugging the dog or cat, watching the sun rise or set etc.. Incorporate three things from your list into each day to create pockets of joy throughout the day.



Nature

Connect with nature by grounding or earthing with your feet or body, this can be done by hugging or touching a tree, walking barefoot on the earth, sand, dirt etc. Mother Earth can help stabilise your energy, this is why we feel so good after hiking or swimming in the ocean!



Reading

Reading is another form of mindfulness, Reading takes you out of your logic brain and engages the creative brain and your imagination. When you're reading you can't dwell in this part of the brain and be anxious at the same time. Therefore, in times of stress, read light-hearted fiction or humorous stories or stories of hope.

When you do this, your nervous system can switch off its "surveillance mechanism" and allow you to be calm.

Social connections

We are social beings and hardwired for connection and interaction with others. Not everyone has family living near by, therefore creating a community that can become a 'local family' for you and other's so that you can socially interact and be there to look out for one another is important. By doing this, you foster a sense of belonging.

