

10 Health Benefits of Giving Up Meat

For many people, meat is a major player when it comes to the central ingredients of meals. Meals like these are usually accompanied by some kind of starch like potato and vegetable because of the way the food pyramid was created, but what if you really didn't need meat to complete a diet? After over 20 years of research, doctors have discovered that meat is not only nonessential, but you can actually gain excellent benefits by giving up meat!

1. You'll Have Less Inflammation

One thing that is highly common among people who suffer from diseases and disorders of various types, is that they will often experience some form of inflammation a large portion of the time. Meats, especially those that have been processed or filled with preservatives along with the snack foods that they are served with are relatively famous in the health community for their ability to increase the amount of acidity and inflammation in the body.

Studies have linked these outbreaks of inflammation to all sorts of illnesses including heart attacks, strokes and other seriously life-threatening conditions. These experiments have even seen clear divisions along both geographic and cultural lines involving the ingredients chosen to be incorporated in food. On the other hand however, one major surprise came when they tested people who avoided meat entirely, and it became obvious that people with a primarily plant-based diet tended to avoid many of those illnesses. According to the researchers, they believe that this outcome was due to the plant-based diets, which by nature and natural composition tend to be anti-inflammatory.

2. It Lowers Cholesterol

How is your cholesterol? If you've been keeping up on current events, it's likely that you've heard about the rise in high cholesterol around the world. Much of this is probably the result of the increase in consumption of convenience foods. As people become busier, fewer of them are cooking at home, and larger numbers are consuming these processed foods, but there is bad news on the horizon for those who have adopted this habit.

Foods that are high in cholesterol are associated with many of the illnesses mentioned in the previous section, because high cholesterol plays a big part in the formation of fat deposits in the vascular system. This happened because cholesterol which is intended to act as a carrier for many fats in your body now simply attracts free floating fat cells that easily get stuck together where they can form barriers to blood flow. If these barriers keep too much blood from flowing to organs like the brain, then a stroke is likely to occur. Plants based diets encourage your body to eliminate these fats by carrying them to disposal sites like lymph glands.

3. It May Reduce Your Risk for Cataracts

According to studies carried out by multiple groups, diet can be a factor in the development of cataracts. Some of these health professionals believe that the tissues that form and help cloud the eyes are partially due to the fats, degenerated tissues and other wastes that haven't been expelled by the body under normal circumstances. Having a higher amount of the right foods in your diet can help your body to work on a more efficient level.

With a balance of diet and proper exercise that can help to mechanically agitated stagnating tissue particles, you can make it easier for your body to rid itself of the dead cells, and poisons that would later become a problem. By being added to an obstruction. Many of the plant cholesterols have also been proven to be more effective at removing LDL cholesterol from the bloodstream.

4. It Can Boost Your Skin

Do you want to have healthier skin? Experts say that one of the best ways to do that would be to cut back or stop eating meat altogether. The reason why is that the added stress from processing the chemicals contained in meat, and the strain that it puts on your system from extra fats and sodium might be too much for any healthy body to deal with. Meat needs to go through a few changes before it can be eaten by people, and the first is usually cooking.

Cooking meat liquifies fats, which are then changed on a molecular level by the heating process. These fats can become new compounds that aren't very good for you, so even when you eat meat, the amounts should be kept to a lesser amount. Fresh fruits and vegetables on the other hand can be eaten right off of the plant that they come from.

Raw fruits and vegetables retain a lot more of their nutritional value, so any time you can make it possible to have these raw foods as a part of your meals, you're doing the most you can to get the vitamins and minerals that you need. That's a major contrast to meats, which are normally very unsafe to eat raw because they can carry harmful bacteria and parasites that the cooking process helps you to avoid.

5. There is a Reduced Risk of Type 2 Diabetes

The types of food that you eat can also have a profound effect on your blood sugar that could change your life forever. There are still a large portion of the population who have not been diagnosed as having pre-diabetic symptoms, but they're out there. The habits and customs of specific groups have given a lot of insight into the drastic ways in which your health can be affected in not only the short term, but also the long term, because there are illnesses that can occur simply from going long periods without obtaining the complete nutrition that your genome was raised on.

In many of these studies, scientists were able to see that twice as many people who ate both meats and vegetables had diabetes compared to the those who had primarily vegan or vegetarian diets.

Some of these studies actually lasted longer than a decade so that researchers could get more in-depth information about how diets and food choices can influence your health, and many of them saw predictable results. Diabetes continued to be far more common among those eating meat. Each new revelation had its own sets of questions, but the doctors remained committed to their search for answers.

Eventually, they came to realize that some of the chemicals involved in meat production could actually harm cells and their ability to reproduce accurately. Many of these elements mixed with the newer chemicals used to preserve these meats were found to be directly linked in some way, but the FDA believed that these additions and their side effects were negligible.

Plant Protein Is Easier on Your Body

Early 21st century studies about the eating habits of people have revealed that most people get about 1 and a half times the amount of protein that they need in a day. When these extra proteins are discovered by your body, they can end up being treated as wastes that your system has to flush out. Animal protein have a more difficult time being utilized and broken down by the body for a variety of reasons.

When these extra proteins go unused, anything that isn't treated as waste will be stored as fats, and these fats can have some unpleasant effects once they reach your bloodstream. These types of proteins are also closely linked to outbreaks of inflammation that can lower your quality of life, and create fertile circumstances for disease and illnesses. Keeping your protein at an accessible, proper level will put you in a more efficient state of operation.

7. You'll Have a Healthy Microbiome

People can always follow dieting trends or the latest advice from the newest crop of fads, but few people listen to their body in a biological sense. It's easy to forget that your gut contains an entire system of microorganisms that it uses to carry out all sorts of functions in your body. If you don't pay close attention to what your gut is doing, you could end up very sick and develop a seemingly random assortment of illnesses. This is because the gut has a massive role in helping manage quite a few different systems that your body needs to work properly each day.

That means keeping your gut flora healthy so that they can perform their tasks. Without a proper balance of these

bacteria, harmful strains could make you sick, or you could develop weight issues, or autoimmune disease. When you eat plants, they naturally support this system

Another important issues, is that these living organisms make it possible for you to eat certain foods and digest them without having to use some kind of external system. The important thing to learn from this though, is that without this part of your body, few of the foods you enjoy today would be possible.

8. There Can Be Metabolic Advantages

As it was mentioned before, foods that are primarily vegetarian in content tend to be a lot easier for you to digest, and when your body doesn't have to work as hard, you could say that your metabolism is working on a more efficient level than it was previously. A highly functional metabolism will help you to lose and keep weight off because it's burning and utilizing the food you eat in proper ways. People who eat vegan diets are usually among those with the fastest metabolic functions.

9. You May Save Money

People tend to think of vegan or vegetarian lifestyles as being more expensive, but it turns out the exactly the opposite is true. Animal based foods have to go through more steps to make them safe compared to plant-based foods. This results in you eating a lot more preservatives than you would if you had eaten something fresh from the ground. These pre-made foods generally put a lot of money in the advertising and packaging, so that a large portion of what you pay for is the

presentation of the snack food. Animal products like milk and cheese require a lot of power and resources to make, so they're more expensive to buy than a few fresh vegetables.

10. It Can Help You Maintain Your Weight

Animal proteins have a way of hanging around in your system for quite some time. These fats can float around and stick to other fats, get stuck in places, or just gather up around our stomach, but a solid diet of the right plants can help you have a lot of energy and keep your metabolism working hard and on time. Some foods can slow you down so much that they take hours or even a day to digest. This kind of handicapping of your metabolism can have disaster effects on your body over time, so a lot of exercise could be the answer to preventing those possibilities.

Basic Overview of the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali

The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali are a compilation of 196 aphorisms. It is a comprehensive fundamental text of yoga, and an instrumental part of Hindu scriptures said to be compiled by the sage, Patanjali. Its influence on yoga philosophy cannot be over-emphasized.

Although Patanjali's exact roots and time of existence is quite unsure, and there are varying myths about his birth, he is ascribed to have been from the medieval era, and

contributed immensely to the growth and prominence of yoga sutras. The yoga sutras of Patanjali are said to have been compiled from about 250 BCE to 250 CE. It is further widely acclaimed that although Patanjali compiled the yoga sutras, he however did not create them. Archaeological sources reveal that the yoga sutras are no new practices, but ancient traditional exercises that have been in existence and in practice as far back as 3000 BCE.

Yoga is Sanskrit, translated to mean 'yoke'. *Sutra* on the other hand, also Sanskrit, is translated as 'thread'. The yoga sutras are a means to gain self-realization through deep reflection, and synergy of the mind, body and soul.

According to Patanjali, "yoga is the progressive settling of the mind into silence. When the mind is settled, we are established in our own essential state, which is unbounded consciousness. Our essential nature is usually overshadowed by the activity of the mind."

Patanjali's yoga sutra is a book that teaches how practical and deliberate yoga can lead to attainment of Moksha, following the discipline associated with practicing yoga. It is compiled in such a way that the essence of yoga, the progress and spiritual growth associated with it is succinctly embedded. In the sutras, Patanjali takes into consideration the gratification as well as the challenges that one is bound to encounter in the process of its practice, and establishes ways in which they can be triumphed.

Patanjali's compilation does not try to modify or change the traditionally practiced yoga sutras, it however makes the process and methods easily accessible, and understandable. With the practical and instructive teachings, Patanjali's yoga sutras makes it easy for yogis, both old and new to be able to direct their focus and energy to a single source or stream. The yoga sutras are highly similar to the Samkhya school of thoughts, except the former acknowledges the Divine and

ultimate reality which is God, while the latter does not acknowledge God, because it lacks evidence to back its existence.

While the book is an important part of the Hindu scriptures, the yoga sutras are not limited to just Hindus. They are for all, and can be practiced by absolutely everyone; everyone who seeks to gain spiritual growth, understanding, peace and tranquility, an evenness between mind and body. The sutras encourages people to look deep within themselves, and find who they truly are, and what their purpose truly is, in the quiet and stillness of their thoughts. The calm that transcends the distractions of our mental activities and outside stimuli.

It is a dominant stimulant of positive energy, and promotes oneness and harmony between individuals and nature. This is perhaps the reason why people springing from varying denominations, whose beliefs and practices differ a great deal, are seen indicating very apt and keen interest in the yoga sutras, and even go farther to incorporate them into their daily, weekly, or even monthly routines. The basic and inherent truth is that the practice of yoga has spanned way longer before its compilation by Patanjali, not just by Hindus, and the tradition has continued. The difference is that they are now more elaborately and succinctly summarized in the 194 sutras, and easily accessible and understandable, hence, gathering a broader audience willing to engage to gain inner peace and control over their mind.

The yoga sutras are divided in four chapters or books.

- **SAMADHI PADA:** It is the first book, consisting of 51 sutras. Its teachings are on the general nature of yoga and its techniques. It explains a stage where those who practice yoga experience an out of body encounter via meditation.
- **SADHANA PADA:** It is the second book, and consists of 55 sutras. It expatiates on the mastery of discipline. It

is of two forms: the preliminary, which is kriya yoga, and the first five of the eight limbs of yoga known as bahiranga or external.

- **VIBHUTI PADA:** It consists of 56 sutras, and is the third book. It is based on the last three limbs of the eightfold system, and is referred to as the antaranga or internal. It also explains supernatural exhibitions and influences that are orchestrated through the practice of yoga, both in positive and negative aspects.
 - **KAIVALYA PADA:** A compilation of 34 yoga sutras. It is the fourth and last book. It is focused on describing liberation from the death and rebirth cycle, the Moksha. It deals with a deeper knowledge of self and detachment.
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Using Mind Mapping to Reach Your Goals

If you have ever been in the middle of a project, task for a client, or trying to organize the household budget and you can't seem to focus then you have experienced the need for mind mapping. Mind mapping helps you take your jumbled mess of thoughts and organize them visually to help you focus on the task at hand and get to where you need to be with the task. If you have never used mind mapping, here are a few techniques and information about the process to help you get started.

Connecting the Chaos

One of the key benefits to using mind mapping techniques is to connect the chaos. Often times the chaos that seems unconnected actually is. For example, you may be thinking about the PTA meeting you have the next day, but you are also thinking about your kids soccer practice alongside grocery

shopping and dinner. Though this may not seem like a huge project to most people, to a busy parent it can be uncontrolled chaos. Mind mapping helps you start at the center goal and work your way out, the whole time connecting the different aspects of your points of focus so you have a clear goal, starting, and ending point. You can see how your kid's appointments now connect to the PTA meeting.

Starting the Path

You may already know how things connect and what your end goal is. The problem for most people is getting started. When you do mind mapping, you can see where you normally would have started and work your way back from that point until you get to a more logical starting point. For example, you may know that your end goal is to produce a website for a client that allows for appointment scheduling. You may think that your starting point would be to just start with the basic template. With mind mapping you can discover that a more logical place would be to start with asking what type of scheduling and if drop down menus or fill in the blank are the best options for your client. This saves time that would have normally been spent reworking what you started with instead of starting where the client's needs are based.

Finding a Goal

Sometimes you know what you want to do, but you don't know exactly what the end goal needs to be to call the project complete. Your mind mapping can help with this. It can also help you develop a clearer path to that goal and a goal that is healthier and produces more happiness for you than you first imagined. You can see where the path is taking you and how the path may continue beyond your original thoughts.

You can use mind mapping for any task that you have. Don't forget that mind mapping is not a set in stone method. If you need to adjust it or work on it, you can. You can adapt it to

your new goals, changes, and what you need. It is to help you work out your chaos, not add to it.

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Learn Breathing Exercises to Help With Anxiety

When you have to deal with social situations, anxiety can make the experience debilitating.

One way to relax before these types of situations is to learn breathing exercises. This is when you use deep breathing as a way to relax and de-stress before something fearful or that causes anxiety.

The Basics of Deep Breathing

What is deep breathing is and how it can help you?

It may seem simple since breathing is something you do without realizing it constantly, but deep breathing is a little different. It allows you to focus on each breath as you exaggerate inhaling and exhaling. This can help with so many things, from helping to stop a panic attack, to relaxing you before doing something you are fearful about. It gives you something else to focus on, not to mention how much stress it can relieve. There isn't really a right or wrong way to do it,

as long as you are breathing in and out and focusing on the breaths while forgetting about the worries in your mind.

You may want to sit up on a chair, without leaning back, and count your breaths 1) inhale 2) exhale 3) inhale 4) exhale, etc. If you like to close your eyes, you can, but it is absolutely not necessary. The counting gives you something to put your attention on and you can do this throughout the day and keep track of in a journal. Practicing deep breathing in advance of a stressful situation will actually help you get through that situation with more ease. You can use the deep breathing secretly in a social setting to keep you calmer and more in control of any rising anxiety.

Simple Breathing Exercise

Here is a simple way to start deep breathing. Sit in a comfortable spot to practice deep breathing, preferably where you are alone and won't get a lot of distractions. Close your eyes and inhale a deep breath. Focus on the inhaling, from the sound it makes to how it feels in your chest and lungs. Hold the breath for 5 seconds, then release and focus on exhaling. Make it loud and exaggerated if you need to do that to relax, and focus only on the breathing. Do this back and forth for a few minutes.

After you have completed the exercise, check in with your body and mind and notice if you feel differently. Do you feel a greater sense of calm?

Incorporating Meditation

Deep breathing is used in many different practices, including yoga and meditation. Meditation is also great for social anxiety, so it is a good idea if you can start your breathing

exercises while also learning to meditate. During deep breathing, you are focusing only on your breaths, so that you are beginning to clear your headspace. This is also how you start learning how to meditate, so you can do both practices at the same time.

Try to breathe in deeply and empty your mind of all your worries and fears, and you will notice that your anxiety begins to reduce and you can handle more social situations. Don't get upset if your mind goes racing when you first start to meditate. It is perfectly natural for your mind to wander, to think about all the things you have to do today, or tomorrow, or what you "should" have done yesterday.

If you are really bothered by the thoughts that arise, tell yourself you will make a list when you open your eyes. Chances are you'll forget most of them by the time the timer goes off. But if you do remember, just make a list when you are done meditating.

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If you would like to learn more about incorporating meditation into your life, you may like to watch my video "[Making Time for Meditation](#)" on YouTube (a Live video on Facebook from an event on the closed FB Group [Transformation Society](#)). In it you'll get to experience three different meditation techniques.

Journal for Positive Thinking

As you know, if you are following along with our [Positive Thinking Challenge](#), a journal is an amazing tool to use for thinking more positively. It isn't just great for gaining more clarity and venting your frustrations, but for your journey to being a more positive person as well.

Keep reading to learn about all the reasons why you using a journal will help to increase your positive thinking.

You Can Reframe Your Negative Thoughts

First of all, you will use the journal to help reframe your thoughts into more positive ones. This is one of the biggest hurdles of thinking more positively, since you can't control negative things that happen in your life. Almost every day, unexpected events will transpire that might put you in a funk, make you feel sad or frustrated, or just really affect the day you had planned out for yourself.

While you can't control these events, you can control how you deal with them. You can use your journal to write down your negative thoughts, then look at ways to make them positive. My article [Turning Negative Into Positive When You Have a Bad Day](#) explains this in more detail. .

You Find Out Why You Have Negative Thoughts

As you begin journaling all your thoughts and feelings, you will also discover why it has been hard for you in the past to have more of a positive mindset. There are often patterns in the more negative things you talk about, whether they are all related to goals you haven't achieved, your work or school life, or even specific people in your life.

It is important to be open and honest in your journal, because that is how you will understand more about yourself and where your frame of mind comes from. By understanding WHY you have negative thoughts, you are able to make changes in your life to be a more positive person.

It Helps You Be More Grateful for the Good in Your Life

Journaling for positivity is a great tool because you can express gratitude. Being more grateful is all about understanding the good things in your life, whether it is your health, people, or where you live and work, and appreciating it. You can write down one thing to be grateful for each day in your journal, which immediately puts you in a better mood and helps you to think more positively.

3 Easy Meditation Techniques

Look all around you, distractions abound everywhere.

Never mind what's going on in our heads... let alone feelings, emotions, reactions. Or influences like competition, jealousy, and other negative thoughts. For these reasons alone, a meditation practice is practically essential.

Doing more, being more, achieving more, leads to a stress-filled lifestyle, with ever increasing stress levels which can result in heart problems, hypertension, among other ailments. Relaxation is exactly what the doctor should be ordering!

Relaxation can be achieved through meditation. What? Something so simple?

Yes! BUT! To be most effective, meditation is best performed on a regular basis and with an intentional mind.

Meditation practice has been around for thousands of years. Over time and through science, it has been shown to be an effective way to balance one's physical, emotional, and mental well being. Different forms of meditation have well-known physical, psychological, and spiritual health advantages. Among these advantages are enhanced focus, relaxation, and a more profound understanding of yourself and others.

If you aren't sure which type of meditation technique to try first, read these brief descriptions so you can find the method that most resonates with you, and begin with closing your eyes for just a few minutes.

Traditional Meditation

A study of the different types of meditation techniques has to start with traditional types of meditation. This type has been around for many decades. Traditional meditation is what a lot of people think about when they think of meditation. In this type, the meditator focuses on a mantra, an object, a scripture, image, or a bodily function such as their breathing or heartbeat or movement. When the mind wanders, the meditator brings their attention back to the focus of the meditation. This form of meditation requires a long time to master the deeper levels.

Binaural Meditation

The idea behind binaural meditation is that you listen to sounds being offered to your ears in stereo. In most cases, this technique is done with a set of headphones so that each ear can receive different signals. The two signals resolve to

a frequency that induces a meditative state in the listener. This method can trigger a meditative state that usually only comes with many years of practice using traditional meditation, even for a beginner. Binaural audio recordings can be found online.

Guided Visualization

A lot of people have heard of this form of meditation technique. With guided visualization, the focus is on the sound of a voice as it guides you through the meditation. When listening to a recorded guided visualization, this is usually paired with a soundtrack of some kind, often music, rain or waterfalls, ocean waves, or a combination. The soundtrack adds to the relaxation and the guide assists you get through to more profound levels easier than if you were meditating alone.

There are many other types of meditation techniques, and it is possible to combine different types of meditation, such as doing a guided visualization might while also concentrating on breathing. Don't overthink getting started with meditation... very basically, you can just close your eyes for a few minutes and try to think of nothing. If you mind wanders, just come back to nothing, again, and again.

Relaxation: Ultimate Relief For Your Hectic Life

Do you schedule down time for relaxation in your life? No? Then something seriously needs to change. If you view

relaxation as a waste of productivity hours, you have no idea what you're missing.

Not only should relaxation be mandatory, but regularly scheduling breaks for yourself will actually improve productivity over the long haul, as you are able to fully dedicate your time and attention to your work when you resume.

Need to be sold to why you need relaxation in your life? Then read on, reader!

Relaxation Boosts Your Immune System

When you lead a busy life, chances are you don't take good care of your health. The result may end up being the exact opposite of what you wanted – sick days that leave you unable to do anything by lie in bed. Luckily, some regularly scheduled time for rest&relaxation can offset this. We all have hectic periods of our life, but the important thing is to deprogram.

Crazy hectic lives that cause sleep deprivation and high stress is manageable up to about 3 months, but maintaining such a schedule longer than that results in a deterioration of health as your body just can't keep up. Try by starting to take one day off a week from work or other draining commitments. Or try sleeping in one day a week. Your immune system will feel the benefits of this "down time" and will be better able to defend your body.

Relaxation Improves Your Working Memory

The longer you work at a high intensity, the poorer your working memory becomes. You will find yourself making silly mistakes, or getting a little too forgetful for comfort. Even short periods of high stress affect the memory centers of the brain, which is noticeable how forgetful you become when under pressure.

Relaxation allows cortisol levels to return to baseline, as there are no pressing matters for you to deal with. Chronically high levels of stress that result in constant streams of cortisol coursing through the body may also contribute to the development of Alzheimer's disease over many years, as it is known to have a strong inflammatory component.

Relaxation Restores The Motivation Centers Of The Brain

Do you ever notice how your drive to do work decreases significantly after doing it repetitively for a period of time? In fact, under the prolonged influence of stress, the motivation center of the brain becomes desensitized to dopamine, limiting your ability to feel motivated, or experience pleasure.

This also explains why you have no desire to eat, and may resign yourself to hopelessness. Luckily, a well-timed break for relaxation will recharge your batteries. Just keep in mind that there is just so much you can handle under pressure, everyone has a breaking point-don't wait to find out what yours is.

Relaxation Keeps Your Heart Healthy

People don't appreciate the danger that running a hectic life can pose to your heart, sadly until it is too late. Not taking time off to relax increases your risk of high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke to name a few. Plus, cortisol results in greater retention of sodium and water, putting the heart and blood vessels under stress to pump and move blood.

Relaxation is well established to reduce blood pressure, decrease your risk of stroke by promoting vasodilation, and decreasing inflammatory processes in blood vessels.

Relaxation Will Keep You Young

Running a hectic life day after day is the surefire recipe to run you down fast. The greater the impact of the hormones

cortisol and adrenalin, the harder and faster your body works to regenerate cells. This faster turnover of cells causing hastened aging, and cuts down your youth. This is why it is important to live while you're young- go on vacations, and throw your feet back and just relax. Work will still be there tomorrow waiting for you, so take your time.

Relaxation Resources:

Ready to Take Action to Relax AND Love Your Life?

[Learn How](#)

Improve Your Journaling Skills

Journaling is one of those activities that comes with a long list of benefits and that is easy to get excited about, but difficult to keep up with. The most important thing to keep in mind when it comes to writing in a journal is that there are no rules – you can do it how you want, when you want, and where you want.

This article will guide you through some simple steps for journaling more often and actually finding a way to enjoy it. As you know, motivation is temporary, so you can't count on motivation alone to journal on a daily or regular basis. What you need is to find reasons why you want to journal and really fall in love with the activity.

This method is through seven basic tips and suggestions that will help you think outside the box when it comes to journaling, and find new ways to inspire yourself to write in your journal.

1. Find Your Purpose for Wanting to Journal

The first part of journaling more often and actually enjoying the practice is to re-envision what your main reason is. Keep in mind this can change over time, and most likely will. But it is good to have the purpose written down for wanting to journal, and to keep revisiting it whenever you need to.

Why is this Important?

The main reason behind you wanting to journal is going to be different from other people, so the first reason it is important is because you need to know why YOU are journaling. Some people want to vent their frustrations, other people like to use their journal to work on personal goals, to dump out all their thoughts and feelings, or to find more about themselves.

Sometimes there are more specific reasons for journaling, like keeping a gratitude journal or an art journal. It doesn't matter what your purpose is, as long as you are honest with yourself about why you want to write in a journal. This is where you are really going to feel inspired to use it more regularly.

Figuring Out Your Motivation

Motivation doesn't last forever, but it is great when you are first starting journaling, or when you take a break and want to get back to it. If you are currently struggling with that little push to get started, then you need to figure out your

motivation by thinking about your reasons for wanting to journal in the first place.

Sit down and write a list of all the reasons you want to write in a journal. They can be anything you think of, but here are a few ideas:

- To find more clarity.
- For the health benefits.
- You need a good distraction.
- You want to relieve stress from your life.
- To start a gratitude practice.
- To vent in a safe, private place.
- For your new morning routine.

These are just a few reasons out of MANY that you can come up with for wanting to write in a journal. It can also be because you were gifted a journal, or your therapist suggested it.

Make This Your First Journal Entry

Where to write this list? Right in your journal! Make it one of the first pages of your journal so that you can it whenever you open it up, and can easily add to it whenever you find a new reason for wanting to journal.

2. Experiment with Your Journaling

The next step in this method to journaling more often and improving your skills is to mix it up a little. This is when you are going to experiment with when, where, and how you write in your journal. It can make a big difference when you are writing with a different mood or different time of day than you typically would, and can actually impact how much you enjoy writing and what you get out of journaling.

Here are a few ideas:

Write While in a Different Mood

Do you find that you only write in your journal when you are in a certain type of mood? Maybe you prefer writing when you are in a happy mood, or are the opposite and like to write in your journal when you are upset and want to vent.

Think about what mood you are in when you typically write in your journal, then switch it up. If you write when you are happy, try writing when you are upset or just had a stressful or frustrating day. If you usually vent in your journal on bad days, then choose a really good day and write in your journal.

You will be amazed by how different your writing can be, and might even enjoy it a little more.

Switch Up Your Writing Conditions

Where you write can also have an impact on your writing style and what you get out of the experience. Many people choose to write in their journal at home, such as in their bedroom or home office. If you always tend to gravitate toward a certain writing condition, why not switch it up?

You can take your journal outside and write on your back patio, or even take it on a walk and when you take a break while sitting on a bench, write a few pages of your journal. You can also try heading to a local café or coffee shop and write there.

Your environment can also change your mood and what you write about. It is good to be diverse in how and where you write

until you find whatever feels more comfortable for you.

Try a Different Time of Day

You might also want to try writing during a completely different time of day. Experiment with different parts of the day, from writing in the morning, to writing in the evening. If you have an early morning or afternoon break from work, get out your journal and jot down how your day is going so far.

The great thing about this is that it helps with the other experiments, such as writing in a different mood or a different place than you typically would.

3. Use Unconventional Journaling Tools

Being more creative with your journaling is a great way to inspire you, keep you motivated, and make it fun. This is another big part of this method to journaling more often and getting more out of it. In this section, we are talking about what you actually use to write (or draw) in your journal, aside from the basics.

Changing Your Main Writing Tool

To start with, you can try writing with another tool, even if it is still a normal writing tool. For example, if you have a favorite pen you always tend to use for writing, switch it out for something else. This can be a gel ink pen instead of ballpoint, using a pen with different ink, or writing with a regular pencil instead of a pen and vice versa. Just try using something you wouldn't normally write with to have a different type of journaling experience.

Colored Pencils, Markers, and Crayons

The next step is to get something you would never have thought to write with, starting with your art supplies. If you are an avid adult coloring book user, then you probably have some colored pencils lying around. Use them to write with in your journal! This adds a little color and allows you to get into a different headspace. It can really change how you write and what you write about just by changing what you write with.

Some other ideas include using markers you have lying around, or even crayons. That can be fun, and you can turn it into a type of themed journal entry where you use crayons when writing about your childhood.

More Unconventional Writing Tools

If you want to take this one step further just for fun and to see what happens, get something else that you can write with. This might be another type of art supply, like charcoal or Indian ink, or even grabbing an eyeliner you don't use anymore and writing with it. Adding more interest and creativity to your journal writing can really help you find brand new inspiration, and give you more reasons to write regularly.

4. Don't Shy Away from Fantasy

Journaling can take many different forms, with practically an unlimited of topics to write about. While many people choose to write about their day, express their feelings, and discuss

things happening in their life, this isn't the only thing you can write in your journal.

There are also ways to incorporate more creative writing into your journal, including dreams, fantasies, and even make believe. Here are a few ways to include some fantasy in your journal entries to make it fun:

Write a short story

To start with, you can write a short story in your journal. This can be as short as you want, from a few paragraphs to briefly describe something that happens to a single character, to a few pages long in more of a typical short story.

This benefits you in a few different ways. It first allows you to step outside of whatever stressful situation is in your real life and live in a fantasy world for a while. It also helps you to channel your imagination and see what type of story you can come up with. If you are interested in creative writing, it can be a short practice to try in your journal whenever you have hit a block in your novel.

Explain your dreams

You can also incorporate some of your own reality in the journal entries. For example, if you have a vivid dream at night and want to explore what actually happened, write it in your journal! Describe it in as much detail as you remember, then add little notes about what you think it meant.

Explore your fantasies

Everyone has fantasies in their mind of what they want to

happen, what they like to dream about in the silence, or what they think about when they close their eyes. Think of one of your fantasies, whether completely unrealistic or not, and write about it.

When you do this, you can learn a lot about yourself. You understand what are the most important things to you, what your life might be missing, and what types of life aspirations you have. You just have to read between the lines.

Describe your past life

Do you ever think you lived a past life before? Have you envisioned who you might have been or what you did? Explore that a little in one of your journal entries. Maybe you have thought about it before and feel like based on who you are now, you must have gone through certain things.

This can also be a good creative writing practice to get you thinking about what you could have been and coming up with an entirely different life you could have led.

5. Stop Setting Writing Limits

Part of this method to journaling more and improving your journaling skills is to stop setting limits on yourself. These might be good when you just want to start writing in a journal and aren't sure which direction to go, but as you start writing more in your journal, you need to be a little more lenient with yourself.

It is hard to really find clarity and benefit from journaling if you don't allow yourself some breathing room. There should be room for experimentation, trying new things, and exploring what is deep in your subconscious.

Here are some common journaling limits and rules that you can feel free to ignore:

- How long you have to write each journaling session.
- Filling out a certain number of pages each day.
- Having to write every single day.
- Only writing at the same time every day.
- Writing in only one type of journal.
- Using only a pen for writing in a journal.
- Writing text only.
- Having to use prompts regularly.
- Writing about your feelings.

As you can see, you may have of limitations you didn't even think about. Do you have a goal of writing a page every day? This is a good goal, but it can keep you from longer writing because once a page is filled up, you feel like you need to stop. This is why you should be as lenient as you can when it comes to your own journal writing.

6. Write About What Scares You

For this last section of the method to journaling more, we are going to talk about writing about what scares you. This is actually a common tip given to beginner writers who want to write a novel or do other types of creative writing.

Writing about what scares you allows you to face your fears, and really understand more about what you are most fearful of. This can be a traditional scary story, a scenario you are terrified of, or even something that happened to you, that still gives you anxiety.

It is a challenging writing practice that not only requires you to admit what you are afraid of and actually face it in

detail, but to find a conclusion or resolution to it.

There are a few ways to do this in your journal, including:

- Writing a short story about something that scares you.
- Talking about the scariest thing that has ever happened to you.
- Writing a journal entry about what you are afraid might happen.

This “fool-proof” method offers you a lot of options as far as writing in your journal goes. It not only helps you journal more often, but it gives you ways to tweak your journaling practice to figure out the best journaling practice and habit for you.

How to Help Others with their Positive Thinking

Once you get used to thinking more positively and living a positive and optimistic life, you can start sharing this with others. Helping others to think more positively is a wonderful way to surround yourself with happy, content people who will

lift you up just as much as you lift them up.

Here are some helpful tips for helping others with their own positive thinking.

Become a Beacon of Hope and Positivity

There is no better way than showing by example. Without saying a thing, people will know when you have become a more positive person. Suddenly, your Facebook posts are about optimism and light, instead of blue, sad, and depressing updates. When they are around you, you always have a smile on your face, and when something negative happens to you, you always have a way to be positive about it. This is what others will see, and soon develop on their own.

Provide Encouragement to Others

Another amazing method for helping others to be more positive is giving them confidence. Encourage your friends and loved ones when they are trying something new, tell them when they do a great job, and show them that they can truly accomplish anything they put their mind to. When you are confident and feel good about yourself, you think much more positively about different situations.

Express Your Gratitude for Other People

Expressing gratitude isn't just beneficial for you, but to others in your life as well. Every time you are grateful for someone, show them and tell them! Let them know you appreciate them and are grateful for them being in your life. Tell them specifically what you appreciate and how it had a positive impact on your life. Show through action by helping them and being there for them the same way they were there for you.

Recommend Ways to Be More Positive

If someone in your life seems down or overly negative, show them ways to be more positive. Let them know how you

personally shifted your mindset, find the bright side to any situation, let them know a way it can be looked at as a good thing. In the worst situations, just being there for them and helping them move on from something is the best thing you can do to help them find the positive spin.

Keep showing others how to think and be more positive, and they can someday share this with others as well!

5 Simple Ways to Express Gratitude

If you want to be a more positive person, sometimes it just takes appreciating the good that is already in your life. This can be done through expressing gratitude. Here are some different ways you can express gratitude every day.

1. Become an Active Listener

IF you want to be more grateful of others and show your gratitude, be an active listener. This means not just hearing what someone says, but really absorbing what they are telling you. Don't use your phone when someone is talking to you. Look them in the eyes and take in what they are telling you. This is active listening, and shows the other person that you care about what they have to say.

2. Express Gratitude in Your Journal

One way many people like to show gratitude is by writing it down in their journal. This is something you can do every day, by writing down at least one thing each day you are grateful

for. Some days will repeat, which is okay! Other days, there will be a specific situation that you appreciate. It is okay to just be grateful you woke up and have your health, that you have a job, or something as simple as eating one of your favorite things.

3. Always Thank People Who Have Helped You

Remember to tell people when you are grateful for them. Whether they have done something to help you, gave you a compliment, or were just there for you, this is a good reason to show your appreciation. A simple thank you is enough, but when someone goes above and beyond, really tell them how much you appreciate them and that you are very thankful to have them in your life. This little gesture means so much to the person receiving the gratitude.

4. Create a Gratitude Jar

If you don't want to write down all the reasons you are grateful in your journal, try creating a gratitude jar. You can use small pieces of paper to write down one thing you are grateful for each day, fold it up, and put it in the jar. This is a fun activity you can do with your family as well, helping everyone to be more grateful. It is also a great gift for others, where you can personalize an empty jar for them and give them paper and pens to use for the gratitude jar.

5. Volunteer to Help Others

You can also express your gratitude through your actions. You don't always have to be vocal about how much you appreciate someone else and how they have improved your life, but instead show them through how you help them. Volunteer to help them with a big project, show up when they are going through a rough time, and invite them to spend time with you. When you go out of your way to be there for other people, they can feel your gratitude.