



Free Guide

For more Inner Peace and
Calm

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Welcome!



Thank you for downloading my free guide for more Inner Peace and Calm. I hope you find it helpful.

We are born with inner peace, calm and goodwill. We have all the time in the world to play, learn and grow.

As we develop and face the pressures of life, education, family, work, society and so much more, our body responds with feelings of stress, worry and anxiety.

If we don't make the time or effort to look after our needs, the balance of life changes from thriving to surviving.

In this guide I've offered some suggestions for re-balancing your life which I know from experience can help you find more inner peace calm and goodwill.

Introduction



When we're busy organising a family, working and looking after the needs of others, we often don't make the time to look after ourselves which is stressful and detrimental to our mental and physical health.

If we take care of ourselves we become more effective at caring for others, so everyone benefits.

When we're stressed because our own needs aren't being met we can become snappy and not so good at meeting the needs of the people around us. This in turn can make us feel useless, guilty and unhappy.

It's like trying to pour from an empty jug, we can't give to others what we don't have ourselves.

Introduction



Waiting for the right time to start taking action means it won't happen, it's like my intention to wash my car, something more important will always come along!

To be at your best you have to make time - it's an investment in yourself and the people and things you care about.

Evidence shows that even small acts of self-care in our daily life can have a big impact on our mental health.

When you wake up, do you take a few moments to be mindful or meditate?

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Studies have shown that 10-20 minutes of meditation a day lowers stress levels and significantly increases a sense of calm and wellbeing.

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To do this I suggest that you sit quietly and focus on your breathing, just noticing the feeling of the air coming in through your nose and then feeling it going out again.

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When you realise that you've been distracted by thoughts, bring your attention back to your breath.

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This isn't easy at first, it can take some practice, so don't get annoyed with yourself if your mind keeps drifting off. It's like anything important, the more you practice the better at it you'll become.

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You might also need to set an alarm in case you're so relaxed you fall back to sleep!



Do you incorporate some exercise into your daily routine?

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The benefits of exercise to mental health are huge because exercise relieves stress and releases endorphins that boost your mood.

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Set the intention to do some form of daily activity. All movement is exercise and 20-30 minutes a day is recommended.

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Brisk walking, running, cycling, swimming, aerobics, yoga, dancing to music in the kitchen, skipping with a rope, jumping on rebounder, walking up and down the stairs - any movement that you enjoy.

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Our bodies are built for movement you'll find something you like but don't waste your time trying to do something you don't enjoy because you won't stick at it.

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It can be more fun to do something with a friend and you're likely to continue because you're accountable to them.



Do you eat a healthy diet with lots of fruit, veg and high fibre grains and protein?

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Scientists have discovered that the microbes and bacteria that live in our gut have an impact on our mental health. There is an association between high levels of ultra processed food and low mood.

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Eating a healthy diet and limiting the amount of junk food we eat is associated with better mental health.

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A Mediterranean diet is associated with better mental health.



Do you regularly take time to connect with nature?

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There are many reasons why we feel so invigorated when we spend time walking in nature or spend a day at the seaside. Our unconscious mind is stimulated by the light in our eyes, the fresh air in our nose and lungs, the sun on our skin, the sound of water moving. We are part of nature and can't thrive or survive without it.

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Reconnecting with nature reduces stress makes us feel more relaxed and can bring joy.

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When you go walking, keep your head up and be mindful of the sky, trees, plants and wildlife to stimulate your unconscious mind.

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Consider growing some plants. touching soil activates neurons in our mind that release serotonin and give us a mood boost.



Do you regularly take time to connect with nature?

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When the weather is nice consider eating outside. Even if you're at work, if possible take your lunch outside and eat it.

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Mindfully being with animals or watching wildlife releases endorphins that make us feel good. Something as simple as hanging a bird feeder or bee hotel can make us feel good.

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Having houseplants in the house also keeps our unconscious mind happier and nurturing them has benefits.

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Our nose is directly connected to our brain and scents from plants change our brain chemistry directly affecting our mood. Stop and smell the roses is great advice!



Are you socially connected to family and friends in stable and supportive relationships?

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Research shows that strong positive relationships boost our confidence and wellbeing.

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Giving and receiving support to/from loved ones creates a bond. If you're not feeling connected reach out to someone and ask for help as this is good for their mental well-being too.

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Shared activities with others create a sense of connection and boosts happiness.

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Do some research to find something you'd like to do and invite someone along to share the experience with you.

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Facing a challenge with others unites us and creates bonds. If you feel strongly about a cause, join a group who are working on a cause that interests you.



Are you doing something that mentally stretches you and feels meaningful?

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A sense of achievement boosts self-confidence and self-esteem. Setting a goal and working towards it stretches us mentally and gives us a sense of meaning and purpose.

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Identify something you care about and identify your talents, skills and abilities and how they can help you to work for your cause.

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Joining a class or group connects you with other people with similar interests that are different from the monotony of daily life.

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Hobbies and interests give a sense of meaning and purpose which is key to bringing sparkle back into your life.

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Doing something creative overcomes boredom and a sense of monotony. Creative projects build confidence making you happier and more interesting as you have more things to discuss with others.



Is Social Media affecting your mood?

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Social media can be positive if used to build friendships with other people who share similar interests and goals.

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To build connections on social media you need to comment and interact rather than just lurk and scroll.

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Social media platforms are designed to be addictive and are associated with self-doubt, anxiety and low mood.

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Consider changing how you use it. Maybe set a time limit on using the apps or even delete those that make you feel unhappy.

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Put boundaries in place around electronic devices. Don't use at or near bedtime as they disrupt sleep and increase anxiety.



Are you aware that kindness is deeply connected to our mental health?

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Kindness towards ourselves and others can reduce your stress levels, improve relationships, combat low mood and improve optimism.

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Treat yourself as you'd treat a friend. Undertake to be kinder to yourself.

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Reframe and recognise the things you do for others as generous acts of kindness rather than obligatory chores.

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Compliment yourself and praise yourself for things that you've done well. Talk nicely to yourself - many talk to themselves in ways we wouldn't dream of talking to others.

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Create winding down time which could include a bath, some gentle yoga stretches, reading, gratitude exercise, and meditation.



Practice Gratitude

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Doing a gratitude exercise is simple and yet incredibly powerful.

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Gratitude improves stress levels, sleep, resilience, optimism, energy and much more.

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Keep a notebook by your bed and every evening as you go to sleep reflect on your day. Write down 3 things that you enjoyed, that went well for you or that you're grateful for.

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They don't have to be big things, they can be small, simple things like something you saw in nature, a smile from someone or something funny.

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Focus on the things you've done well and what skills and qualities you used that enabled you to do them.



Thank you!



I hope you've found this guide helpful.

Please contact me via my website at www.laurieharvey.co.uk if you'd like to book a free discovery call to learn a little more about my work and how I may be able to help you.

Love and Kindness
Laurie Harvey.