



A Life in Balance

10 Tips for Wellness & Well-Being

by Jeannette Rainbow, RN

The thoughts, opinions and ideas in this book are my own and are not meant to diagnose or treat any health condition. I recommend you consult with your personal physician or mental health care professional for any health concerns or conditions.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Tip #1: Move Your Body.....	2
Tip #2: Connect With Nature.....	3
Tip #3: Nourish Your Body.....	4
Tip #4: Sleep and Rest.....	5
Tip #5: Manage Stress.....	6
Tip #6: Take a Social Media or Information Break.....	7
Tip #7: Journal.....	8
Tip #8: Do Something Nice for Yourself.....	9
Tip #9: Do Something Nice for Someone Else.....	10
Tip #10: Practice Gratitude.....	11
Thank You.....	12



Introduction

As I recently looked back on my 25-plus years as a nurse, and my half a century here on this Earth, I wondered if I had made a difference in people's lives. After much reflection, I realized I had helped, however subtly, people have moments of comfort, encouragement, nurturing, and empowerment. I had shared my knowledge, listened actively, and learned from my own life experiences, which I then could share with others. In effect, I have been encouraging others on their path to wellness and well-being.

I've come to realize that mind, body and spirit are equally important to our overall health and vitality, and that's why the concepts of wellness and well-being are so important to me. To me, wellness is more about practicing habits and behaviors that lead to an overall state of good health, while well-being is more of a quality of life and state of contentment. There are many dimensions of wellness and well-being, including physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, financial, and social.

In this book, I offer 10 tips that I've learned over the years that will hopefully help you to nourish your mind, body and spirit, and bring you more joy and connectedness to yourself and others.



Tip #1: Move Your Body

I encourage you to find ways of moving your body that you enjoy and to make it a priority in your life. It can take many forms, like walking, cycling, jogging, dancing, strength training, tai chi, skiing, snow shoeing, yoga, swimming, tennis, fitness classes, martial arts, at home workouts - whatever makes you feel good. If you enjoy an activity, you're more likely to stick with it. Daily movement helps us to manage stress and anxiety, boost mood, and keep the body conditioned.

I live in a seasonal climate with extremes of temperatures and weather, but no matter what climate you live in, you can find ways to move your body. For example, in nicer weather, and even in rain or light snow, I enjoy my daily walks. When the snow really flies and roads are slippery, I head to the gym, do a workout at home, or go for a snowshoe hike. I have dumbbells, a balance ball, yoga mat, and resistance bands at home, and use my phone to do free online yoga or exercise programs. I like to have options depending on what Mother Nature throws at me.

I personally enjoy my daily walks, and I've been doing this activity for years. It's a nice, gentle activity that requires very little equipment (just a good pair of footwear and proper clothing), yet leaves me feeling both relaxed and refreshed at the same time, while conditioning my body. Walking is a great activity to consider.

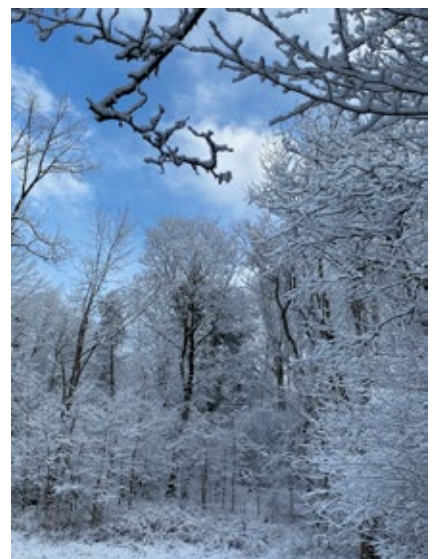
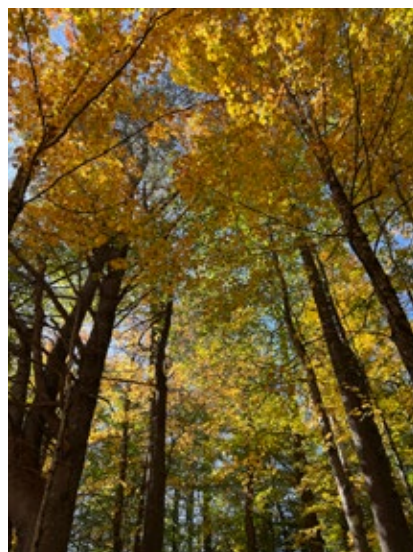


Tip #2: Connect With Nature

Being in nature just makes us feel good. It isn't difficult to spend time indoors, with our modern conveniences, and home and work environments, so I encourage you to spend some time outdoors or bring elements of nature indoors if you can.

Everyone's environment is different, so make the best of your surroundings. Connecting with the natural world can happen with something as simple as a walk around the block, a visit to your local park, tending your garden, or sitting on your front step listening to the birds, observing trees and smelling the air. Or, you can bring nature indoors with houseplants and fresh flowers.

Trees are especially therapeutic. I find something healing about trees and experience a sense of peace when I walk among them. I like smelling the air, listening to birds singing, listening to the wind blowing through leaves, seeing fluffy snow on branches, seeing the glimmer of sunlight dancing through leaves, seeing vibrant autumn colors, and feeling the warmth of sunlight, the gentleness of a breeze, or softness of snowflakes on my skin. It's a total positive sensory experience.





Tip #3: Nourish Your Body

Food affects how we feel and function. What we eat can impact mood, energy, weight management, physical and mental performance, development or management of some health conditions, and the ability of the body to heal.

Food is nourishment, and being aware of how we feel when eating certain foods may help us make the best choices we can for ourselves. I'm a big fan of whole, natural foods as much as possible, and minimizing fried or heavily processed foods.

Try cooking and preparing your meals if you don't already. You don't have to be a gourmet cook. Cooking allows us to connect with each other, choose what goes into our meals, and put love and care into what we eat. If you can't or don't want to cook, try to choose the healthiest prepared options you can.

While it is at its most basic a source of nourishment, food is also comforting, a great source of pleasure, and brings us together in a sense of community. All of these elements can make our meals more enjoyable.





Tip #4: Sleep & Rest

Proper sleep and rest help to rejuvenate the body and mind and manage stress. It isn't just sleep that matters, but periods of rest as well.

Try to develop habits that help you get better sleep and rest. Here are some ideas to consider:

- Meditation or relaxation breathing
- Non-caffeinated herbal teas
- A warm bath or shower
- Limit screen time on devices
- Reading a book
- Avoiding caffeine and alcohol before bed
- Relaxing skin care like a facial or soaking your feet
- Gentle stretching like yoga tailored for bedtime
- Relaxing music
- Lowering the lighting in your home about an hour before bed
- A short 10-20 minute nap in the afternoons (if you can, and if you feel rested afterwards - some people do not feel better after a nap)
- Make your sleep and rest environment work for you - like a comfortable mattress and bedding, room darkening blinds or curtains, comfortable temperature, or background noise if that helps you (like a fan)
- A clock with a simulated sunrise and sunset, and/or soothing sounds



Tip #5: Manage Stress

Stress is part of life. Stress can be a positive thing and motivate us to accomplish things or solve problems, or just be a happy event. Or stress can be negative and cause us distress. How we manage it can impact our physical and mental health.

Decompress. Get into your hobbies or activities you enjoy, or maybe discover new ones. Let your mind wander. Get creative. Lose yourself in something you enjoy. Unleash your inner child, let go of the need to be perfect, and allow yourself some play time. Connect with people and animals. Here are some ideas:

- Play your favorite video game
- Watch funny videos or your favorite TV show or movie
- Practice yoga or gentle stretching
- Go for a walk
- Cook a recipe
- Build something
- Listen to music
- Dance
- Spend time with your pet
- Talk to a friend
- Make crafts

Breathe. Breathing is a basic function of life but being aware of the breath can help manage stress and anxiety. Simply sitting and doing some slow breathing, focusing on the breath itself, can take our minds off something that is causing us stress, and allow us to regroup.





Tip #6: Take a Social Media or Information Break

Social media online platforms, as well as other media outlets (such as television, internet, radio, movies, and print such as magazines and newspapers) have their benefits, such as connecting us with people, promoting business, helping us learn about new things, offering support and a sense of community, providing entertainment, and keeping us in the loop about current events.

They can, however, also lead to not so positive feelings, or information overload. Content may be displayed through a filter, curated to show the “best” part of people’s lives (and we’ve heard the saying “comparison is the thief of joy”), or even contain disturbing images or messages. At the very least, a lot of information is available out there, and our brains can easily be flooded with it. I once cleared my browser history on my computer, and was shocked to find I had viewed nearly 2000 pieces of information in just a couple of hours. I knew then why I experienced mental fatigue when spending time on the computer.

Be aware of your emotions, your thoughts, and your time spent when it comes to social media and other outlets for media. If media is making us feel broken down rather than built up, it may be time for a break from it. Likewise, taking a news or information break may be helpful, especially if we are feeling information overloaded.

Tip #7: Journal

Journaling can be quite therapeutic and enjoyable. Grab a notebook or journal, and a pen, pencil, marker, or even crayon you really like. Journaling is a great opportunity to write down our thoughts, feelings, plans, fears, triumphs, and reflections, and even express our creativity through drawing or coloring.

This can be a healing practice for the mind and spirit. Sometimes we may not be comfortable voicing our deepest thoughts and feelings to others, but may need to express them in a safe place. Journaling can help us to do so. It can also help us to solve problems, process information, establish new habits, keep track of our progress toward goals, and see our growth as we age (I find it amazing to go back and read entries I made years before). I also find, in our current culture of typing words on keyboards, the art of handwriting to be quite comforting and grounding.





Tip #8: Do Something Nice for Yourself

How often do we really do something nice for ourselves, without overthinking it, feeling shame about it, or beating ourselves up for not being “productive?” It doesn’t have to be fancy, or take all day, or even cost money. Here are some ideas:

- Do an at-home spa treatment like a pedicure or facial care
- Curl up on the couch with a cozy blanket, a beverage and a book
- Go out for ice cream
- Make yourself a delicious meal
- Go for a scenic drive
- Watch a sunrise
- Watch a sunset
- Wake up naturally with no alarm clock
- Take a nap
- Go to bed early
- Listen to music
- Organize and clean a space you use often
- Buy some fresh flowers and put them where you can enjoy them
- Look in the mirror and thank your body for all it has done for you
- Really savor a cup of good coffee or tea
- Light a scented candle you enjoy
- Visit with family
- Visit with friends
- Express gratitude for your life and the people in it
- Play a video game you enjoy
- Re-watch one of your favorite movies or TV shows
- Fix or repair something that’s been bugging you
- Declutter a space you’ve been meaning to for years



Tip #9: Do Something Nice for Someone Else

Doing something nice for someone else can brighten their day and yours, and it doesn't have to be complicated or extravagant. It seems to me that people have lost touch with true human connection over the years. Body language, small verbal expressions, and acts of kindness can go a long way to making someone feel valued. Here are some ideas:

- Open a door for someone
- Smile at someone or say hello
- Leave a nice tip for a server
- Say "thank you"
- Offer to help someone with a task
- Assist a neighbor
- Reach out to someone you haven't talked to in a while
- Buy coffee for the person in line behind you
- Make a meal for someone
- Listen - really listen to someone
- Let someone else go first in line
- Invite a friend to coffee
- Remember that you may not know what someone else is going through



Tip #10: Practice Gratitude

Practicing gratitude is something that takes only a moment but can impact our physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health in a positive way. Gratitude helps us enjoy the moment we are in and have appreciation for everything in our lives. We hear about the pursuit of happiness, but I think happiness is right where we make it, and one of its foundations is a sense of gratitude. I say practice because it can take practice to do this. Life is full of positive and negative experiences, and the practice of gratitude can help pull us through some of the tough times.

Practice gratitude in whatever way feels good for you. Some people keep a gratitude journal, or have moments during the day where they pause and feel it. Appreciate both the small and big moments, for they all give value to your life.



Thank you for supporting my website and YouTube channel. I hope you enjoyed this little ebook and it gave you some ideas to create more balance in your life.

I invite you to visit my website at www.jeannettesessence.com and my YouTube channel at Jeannette's Essence: Healthy Over 50.

With gratitude,

Jeannette