International Wellbeing Insights
People, Culture & Wellbeing

Stress Management Society
from distress to de-stress

'The 5 Daily Essentials' L&Q

For further information, please contact

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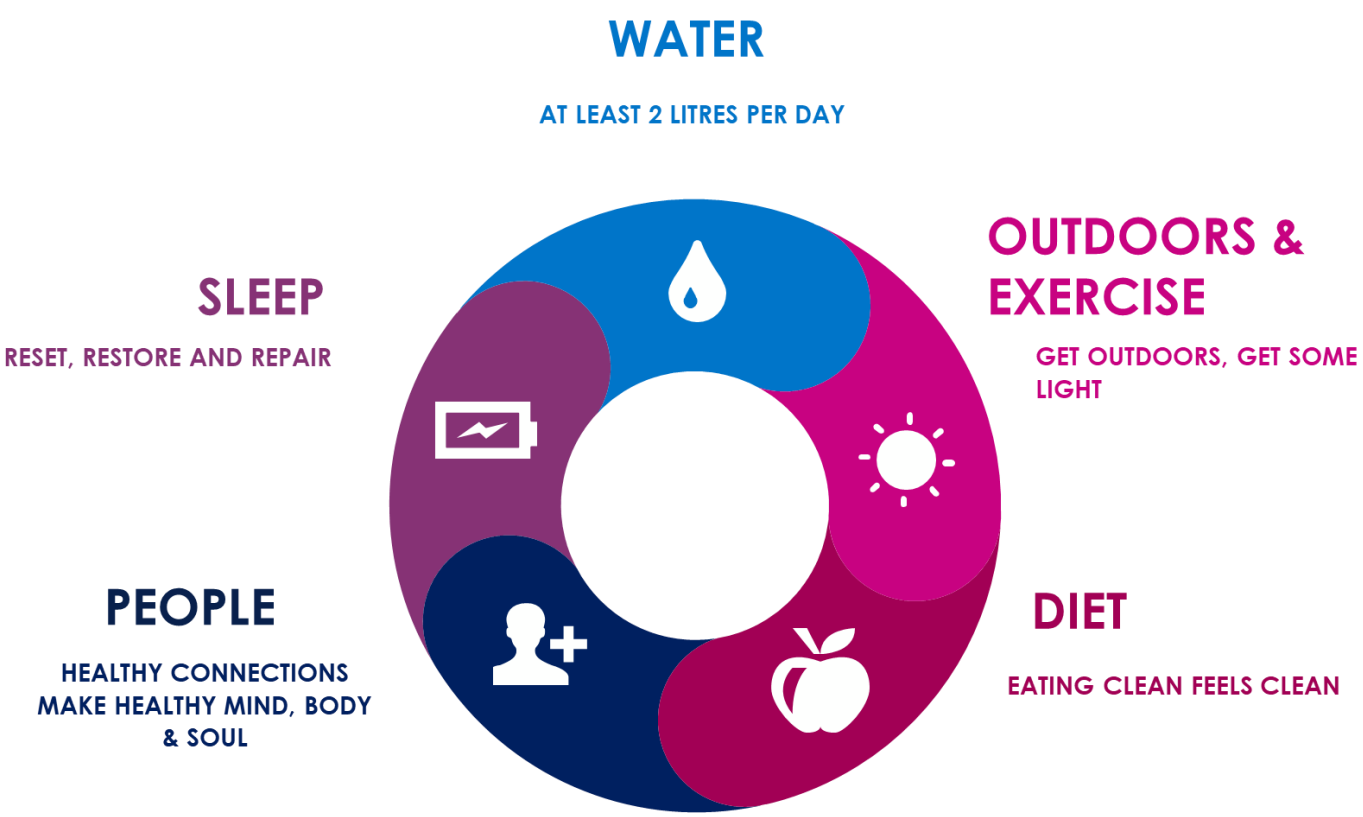
L&Q

THE FIVE DAILY ESSENTIALS



WATER

WATER INTAKE AFFECTS OUR BODY, MOOD AND COGNITIVE FUNCTION. YOU SHOULD BE DRINKING ENOUGH WHERE YOU DON'T EVER FEEL THIRSTY.

OUTDOORS AND EXERCISE

SUNLIGHT IN YOUR EYES AS SOON AS YOU CAN AFTER WAKING UP LEADS TO ELEVATED MOOD, IMMUNE FUNCTION AND FOCUS ALL DAY AND BETTER SLEEP AT NIGHT.

DIET

A DIET THAT IS PACKED WITH NATURAL FRESH PRODUCE HELPS TO LOWER THE RISK OF MANY CHRONIC DISORDERS LIKE CANCER, OBESITY, CARDIOVASCULAR PROBLEMS AND DIABETES. EATING CLEAN FEELS CLEAN.

PEOPLE

WE ARE A HERD SPECIES. SOME OF LIKE TO BE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE HERD, SOME ON THE OUTSKIRTS, WHILST SOME OF US PREFER TO KNOW IT'S THERE IF WE NEED IT!

SLEEP

SLEEP HAS MASSIVE BENEFITS ON OUR PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH. WE RESTORE, REPAIR, AND PROCESS DURING SLEEP.

Source; Andrew Huberman PhD

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LIFESTYLE BALANCE EXERCISE

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Knowledge is power…only if you apply it or take action

This is about lifestyle balance; as a starting point, think about the different areas of your life and give them a score.

Rate on a scale: Zero being poor, 10 being Excellent

HOW DO YOU RATE YOURSELF OUT OF 10 ON THE FOLLOWING SKILLS/ STATEMENTS?

WATER

I drink enough to keep my mind and body sharp

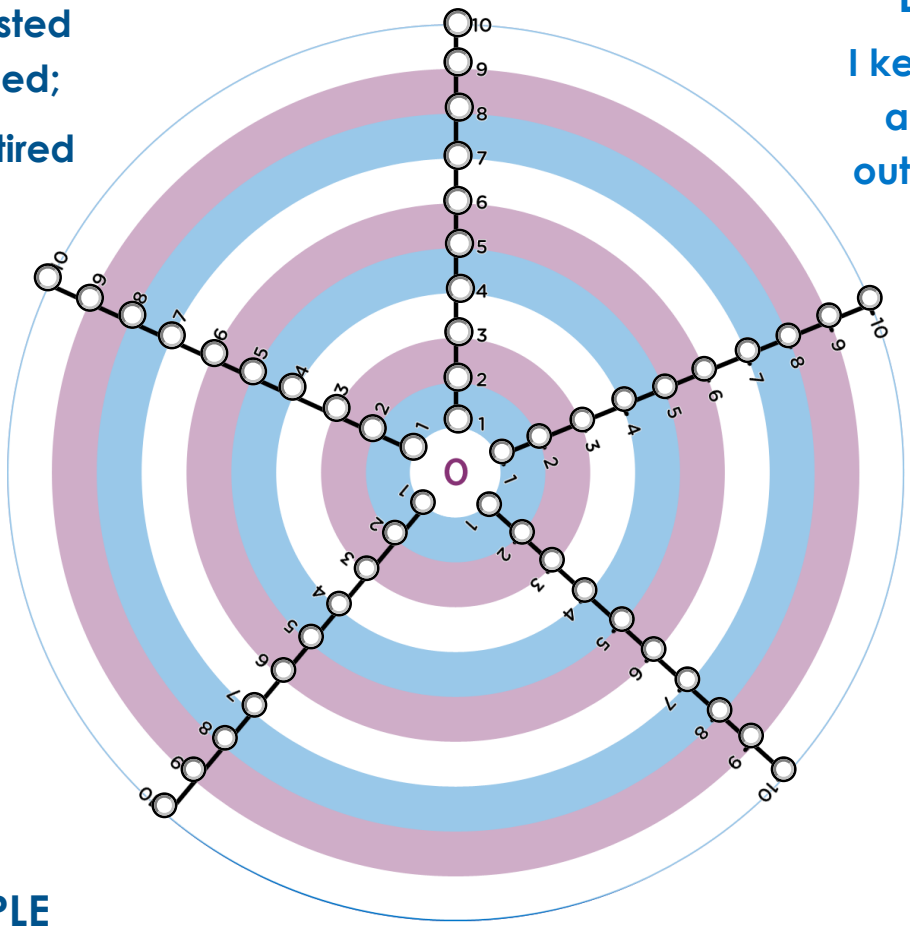
SLEEP

I am fully rested and refreshed;

I rarely feel tired

OUTDOORS & EXERCISE

I keep my body active: I am outside for long periods



PEOPLE

I keep connected to a variety of friends and family that I can rely on and who can rely on me

DIET

I keep my body fed well with lots of fresh food

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WHAT COULD YOU DO INSTEAD?

WATER

Water is essential for maintaining optimal brain and cognitive function. From a neuroscience perspective, the brain is highly dependent on water to regulate a range of physiological processes, including blood flow, oxygenation, and waste removal. Even mild dehydration can impair cognitive performance, attention, and memory. Adequate hydration is crucial for promoting optimal brain health, preventing cognitive decline, and reducing the risk of age-related brain diseases. Prioritising regular water intake throughout the day is crucial for maintaining overall health and optimal brain functioning.

1. **Drink a glass of water every time you brush your teeth, eat a meal, or use the bathroom.**
2. **Add fruit to your water for flavor. Lemons, limes, oranges, cucumber, watermelon, strawberries, and herbs are delicious options.**
3. **Eat water-rich fruits and vegetables like melon, cucumbers, lettuce, and celery.**
4. **Invest in a high-tech bottle that connects to your smartphone and records how much you drink.**
5. **Set an alarm as a reminder to drink water and track your intake in your calendar.**
6. **Challenge a friend to a water-drinking contest to make hydration more fun.**
7. **Drink a glass of water before and after a workout to stay hydrated.**
8. **Drink a glass of water before going to bed and after waking up to maintain hydration.**
9. **Replace sugary drinks with water during meals.**
10. **Drink a glass of water before a meal to help control portion sizes.**
11. **Use a water filter to improve the taste of tap water.**
12. **Drink herbal tea or make homemade fruit-infused water for a change.**
13. **Keep a water bottle at your workplace and refill it regularly.**
14. **Drink more water in hot weather or when exercising to compensate for the extra fluid loss.**
15. **Use a marked water bottle to track your daily water intake.**
16. **Drink water when you're feeling hungry as it can sometimes be confused with thirst.**
17. **Drink a glass of water after every bathroom break.**
18. **Drink a glass of water before coffee or tea to prevent dehydration.**
19. **Use an app to remind you to drink water and track your daily intake.**
20. **Drink a glass of water if you're feeling tired during the day as dehydration can cause fatigue.**

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WHAT COULD YOU DO INSTEAD?

OUTDOORS & EXERCISE

Outdoor light and exercise are crucial for maintaining optimal brain and cognitive function. From a neuroscience perspective, exposure to natural light helps regulate the body's internal clock and circadian rhythm, promoting healthy sleep-wake cycles and regulating hormone levels. Exercise is essential for promoting neuroplasticity, increasing blood flow to the brain, and promoting the growth of new neurons and neural connections. Regular outdoor exercise also helps reduce stress and improve mood, which can positively impact brain function. Prioritising regular outdoor exercise and exposure to natural light is crucial for maintaining overall health and optimal brain functioning.

1. Map your route ahead of time when planning outdoor workouts.
2. Bring your cell phone for safety and to track your workout.
3. Wear reflective gear if you're exercising outdoors in low light conditions.
4. Try different forms of exercise to keep your workouts interesting.
5. Incorporate strength training exercises into your routine.
6. Take frequent breaks from sitting or standing in the same position.
7. Walk or bike instead of driving when possible.
8. Practice good posture throughout the day.
9. Stretch regularly to improve your flexibility and prevent injury.
10. Use resistance bands or weights to add resistance to your workouts.
11. Get outside and enjoy nature through hiking, biking, or gardening.
12. Take a dance class to improve your coordination, balance, and agility.
13. Use a stability ball instead of a chair at your desk.
14. Practice deep breathing exercises to reduce stress and increase relaxation.
15. Take a walk outside during your lunch break.
16. Use a foam roller to massage and stretch your muscles before and after exercise.
17. Try aquatic exercise, such as swimming or water aerobics.
18. Join a sports league to improve your coordination, teamwork, and competitiveness.
19. Practice balance exercises to improve your stability and reduce your risk of falls.
20. Use a pedometer or fitness tracker to monitor your daily steps.

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WHAT COULD YOU DO INSTEAD?

DIET

Diet plays a crucial role in our health and wellbeing, with our food choices directly impacting our brain and cognitive function. From a neuroscience perspective, the nutrients we consume are essential for maintaining healthy brain cells and neural connections, supporting memory, attention, and mood. A healthy diet that is rich in vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and omega-3 fatty acids has been linked to a reduced risk of cognitive decline and age-related diseases, such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. On the other hand, an unhealthy diet that is high in sugar, saturated fats, and processed foods has been associated with impaired cognitive function, depression, and anxiety. Prioritising a healthy diet is crucial for promoting optimal brain health and cognitive function.

1. Start your day with a healthy breakfast that includes lean protein, whole grains, fruits, and vegetables.
2. Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
3. Watch portion sizes and use measuring cups to compare your portions to recommended serving sizes.
4. Fix healthy snacks that include a combination of foods from different food groups.
5. Prepare foods at home to control the ingredients and portion sizes.
6. When eating out, choose healthier options that are grilled, baked, broiled, or steamed.
7. Include a source of lean protein with each meal and snack.
8. Choose whole grains over refined grains.
9. Limit added sugars and sodium in your diet.
10. Include a variety of foods from all food groups to ensure you get a range of nutrients.
11. Drink green tea or herbal tea instead of sugary drinks.
12. Include sources of healthy fats in your diet, such as avocados, nuts, seeds, and olive oil.
13. Eat fish at least twice a week for a good source of omega-3 fatty acids.
14. Include legumes and beans in your diet for a good source of fibre and protein.
15. Choose lean meats and poultry, and trim or drain fat from meat to keep your heart healthy.
16. Limit processed foods and fast foods, which are often high in sodium, unhealthy fats, and sugars.
17. Eat at least five portions of fruits and vegetables each day.
18. Choose low-fat or non-fat dairy products to reduce fat intake.
19. Drink alcohol in moderation, and try to have at least two alcohol-free days each week.
20. Stay hydrated by drinking water instead of sugary drinks.

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WHAT COULD YOU DO INSTEAD?

PEOPLE

Staying connected to people is critical for maintaining optimal brain and cognitive function. From a neuroscience perspective, social interaction and connection are essential for promoting neuroplasticity, reducing cognitive decline, and improving mental health. The brain is highly responsive to social cues, and social interaction has been shown to stimulate the growth of new neurons and neural connections. Conversely, social isolation and loneliness have been linked to increased risk of cognitive decline, depression, and anxiety. Prioritising social interaction and staying connected to people is crucial for maintaining overall health and optimal brain functioning.

1. **Stay connected with friends and family through regular phone calls or video chats.**
2. **Join clubs or groups based on your interests to meet new people.**
3. **Volunteer in your community to meet people and give back.**
4. **Be open to making new friends, regardless of age or background.**
5. **Show appreciation for the people in your life through small acts of kindness.**
6. **Be a good listener when people talk to you about their feelings or problems.**
7. **Be respectful of others' opinions, even if they differ from your own.**
8. **Be supportive of your friends and family during difficult times.**
9. **Encourage open and honest communication in your relationships.**
10. **Spend quality time with your loved ones, doing activities you all enjoy.**
11. **Be patient with others and try to understand their perspectives.**
12. **Learn to forgive and let go of grudges or past conflicts.**
13. **Celebrate others' achievements and successes.**
14. **Be reliable and follow through on your commitments to others.**
15. **Be positive and try to uplift the people around you.**
16. **Respect others' boundaries and personal space.**
17. **Be empathetic and try to understand others' feelings and experiences.**
18. **Be honest and trustworthy in your relationships.**
19. **Encourage others to express themselves and their ideas.**
20. **Be open to feedback and constructive criticism.**

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WHAT COULD YOU DO INSTEAD?

SLEEP

Sleep is a vital aspect of our health, affecting both our mental and physical wellbeing. From a neuroscience perspective, sleep is critical for a brain functions such as memory, learning, and cognitive performance. During sleep, the brain consolidates and organises newly acquired information, leading to improved learning and retention. Furthermore, sleep is essential for the restoration and repair of neurons and other brain cells, promoting optimal brain health and functioning. Lack of sleep has been linked to a range of negative health outcomes, including increased risk of obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and mood disorders.

1. Establish a regular sleep schedule by going to bed and waking up at the same time every day.
2. Create a relaxing bedtime routine to signal to your body that it's time to sleep.
3. Keep your bedroom dark, quiet, and cool for optimal sleep conditions.
4. Limit exposure to screens before bedtime as the light can interfere with your body's sleep-wake cycle.
5. Avoid large meals, caffeine, and alcohol close to bedtime.
6. Regular physical activity can help you fall asleep faster and enjoy deeper sleep.
7. Manage stress through relaxation techniques like meditation, deep breathing, or yoga.
8. Use your bed only for sleep and sex to strengthen the association between bed and sleep.
9. If you can't sleep, go into another room and do something relaxing until you feel tired.
10. If you have persistent sleep problems, consult a healthcare provider.
11. Avoid long daytime naps as they can interfere with nighttime sleep.
12. Make sure your mattress and pillows are comfortable and supportive.
13. If you work night shifts or have jet lag, consider taking a melatonin supplement.
14. Keep pets out of the bed if they disturb your sleep.
15. Avoid drinking lots of fluids before bed to prevent middle-of-the-night bathroom trips.
16. If you snore or have interrupted breathing during sleep, seek medical advice as you may have sleep apnoea.
17. Try a sleep aid app or white noise machine if you have trouble falling asleep.
18. Write in a journal or do a calming activity before bed to help clear your mind.
19. Expose yourself to natural light during the day to help maintain a healthy sleep-wake cycle.
20. Avoid smoking as nicotine is a stimulant and can interfere with sleep.

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MY 30 DAY ACTION PLAN

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KNOWLEDGE IS POWER…ONLY IF YOU APPLY IT OR TAKE ACTION.

THIS IS ABOUT LIFESTYLE BALANCE;

HOW DID YOU DO? WHAT ARE YOU DOING WELL? WHAT COULD NEED IMPROVEMENT?
BUILD YOUR PERSONAL RESILIENCE.

Finding meaningful ways to engage your brain and occupy your time can help alleviate the distress and irritability that poor wellbeing brings.
The coping mechanisms that will work best for you will have a lot to do with your personal situation

FOR EXAMPLE:
"IF I AM NOT FEELING OKAY, I WILL REACH OUT TO SOMEONE IN MY SUPPORT NETWORK".
"I WILL GET OUT EVERYDAY IN THE FRESH AIR, WHATEVER THE WEATHER"
"I WILL GO TO BED 30 MINUTES EARLIER

ACTION POINT 1: (WATER): I WILL…

ACTION POINT 2 : (OUTDOORS & EXERCISE) I WILL…

ACTION POINT 3 : (DIET) I WILL…

ACTION POINT 4: (PEOPLE): I WILL…

ACTION POINT 5: (SLEEP) I WILL…

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We provide a range of services across the UK and internationally. We are always happy to dis cuss how we can support you.

We look forward to supporting your wellbeing journey.

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