

Healthy Habits

By
Jennifer
Wimmer



Daily Wellness Tips

Many of us face challenges such as stress, anxiety and sleeplessness. Fortunately, simple and effective techniques can promote restful sleep, ease tension and improve mindset. Choose several self-soothing methods that work best for you and practice them daily. Taking charge of your own wellness empowers you to stay grounded—so even when life's circumstances shift, your steady goodness keeps you resilient.

Deep Breathing

One method is deep breathing exercises. There are many different ones to choose from, so pick the ones that work the best for you and practice them daily. Deep breathing helps activate the body's natural relaxation response. A simple breathing exercise is to inhale slowly for four seconds, hold for two seconds, then exhale gently for six seconds. This can ease tension and soothe anxiety, and it can be done anywhere and anytime to reduce stress symptoms.

Creative Visualization

Creative visualization is another helpful tool. By picturing peaceful scenes or personal goals, the brain can be trained to lower stress hormones and improve emotional balance. This practice simulates actual calming experiences and only takes a few minutes each day.

For those living with post-traumatic stress disorder, visualization can be especially beneficial. When a past negative image arises, reimagine it in a comical or lighthearted way. For example, a friend of mine visualizes an explosion of glitter covering the scene. Creating new mental imagery for past distressing moments helps make future recollections far less stressful.

Nervines and Adaptogens

Herbal remedies have long been used to support stress relief and sleep. Adaptogens and nervines such as ashwagandha, valerian root, passionflower, skullcap, lemon balm, chamomile and CBD are just several of the many to choose from. Valerian root is known for its calming effects and ability to promote sleep, while ashwagandha helps modulate the stress response on a cellular level. Lemon balm and chamomile can soothe the nervous system, making them good options for evenings.

These herbal allies can be taken in tea form, capsules, powders (added to juice, shakes or smoothies) or liquid tinctures. Several calming herbs can also be combined in a compound tincture. These herbs are non-habit forming and don't carry the negative side effects that many of the pharmaceutical alternatives do. Research first and talk with your doctor before trying new natural remedies, especially if you're already taking medications.

Physical Exercise

Exercise remains one of the most powerful ways to improve mental well-being. Regular physical activity stimulates the release of endorphins, which boost mood and reduce anxiety. Even moderate activities such as walking, stretching or strength training several times a week can help manage stress and improve sleep quality. Rebounding on a small trampoline indoors or outdoors is a great exercise option that provides cushioning and less stress on joints.

For those with limited mobility, chair yoga and similar low-impact exercises can be beneficial. Interestingly, certain video games can also help by providing the sensation of movement through customizable avatars that run, jump and explore—offering an engaging way

to build motivation and confidence in the healing process.

Natural Therapies

Red light therapy is an emerging, noninvasive treatment that I've discussed in previous columns. It enhances sleep and reduces anxiety by promoting cellular repair and reducing inflammation. Massage therapy and aromatherapy with relaxing essential oils such as lavender can be easily incorporated into a calming nightly routine to help unwind, release stress and prepare the body for rest. Organic arnica salve is an excellent natural topical pain reliever that can ease sore muscles and promote a better night's sleep.

Sleep Quality and Timing

Finding ways to minimize stress and improve sleep quality—and incorporating those habits into each day's routine—also strengthens the immune system and speeds up healing. Timing and continuity of sleep cycles are important, meaning it helps to fall asleep at about the same time each night. This consistency increases the release of growth hormone-releasing hormone (GHRH) and promotes human growth hormone (HGH) release.

The largest pulse of HGH is typically released shortly after you fall asleep, during the first significant episode of slow-wave sleep (SWS). Later, rapid eye movement (REM) sleep becomes more prevalent and hormone regulation shifts. The strict "11 p.m. to 2 a.m." sleep rule is not strongly supported by scientific evidence; consistency and achieving early SWS matter more, I've learned recently.

Sound Therapy

Additionally, listening to binaural beats and music tuned to 432 Hz or 528 Hz, often found on platforms like YouTube, can be an effective tool for stress relief, mindset improvement, healing and better sleep. These frequencies resonate naturally with the body, helping to calm the nervous system, reduce anxiety and lower stress hormone levels like cortisol. When combined with positive affirmations embedded in recordings, they support more positive mental states and relaxation.

Some recordings incorporate Bible scripture readings, which many—including myself—find helpful in avoiding sleeplessness and nightmares.

Encouragement and Routine

With these accessible, natural strategies, along with others you might find helpful like yoga or martial arts, you can take charge of your wellness. Small, consistent steps toward self-care build resilience, promote better sleep and enhance peace of mind throughout daily life.

Encourage loved ones, friends and family members to practice these wellness tips along with you—for instance, by taking a 30-minute walk together daily. You can motivate each other to stay on track with daily wellness routines and reinforce healthy habits together.

It is wise to equip yourself with as many supportive strategies as possible and stay mentally, physically and spiritually strong. Prioritizing self-care is not only restorative, it puts you back in the driver's seat of your own happiness.

And remember Philipians 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ Jesus who strengthens me." The true foundation of wellness, in my view, is grounded in maintaining a close, ongoing relationship with Him—the Good Shepherd who holds your hand and makes you strong and whole.

~Be Well and God Bless You.

THE BOOK MARK



Debra Gaynor

Worst Case Scenario

T.J. Newman

The International Nuclear and Radiological Event Scale (INES) is a tool for communicating the safety significance of nuclear and radiological events to the public. It is used to enable prompt communication of safety significant information in case of nuclear accidents. Each increasing level represents an accident approximately ten times as severe as the previous level. The scale has 7 Levels. Chernobyl and Fukushima were Level 7.

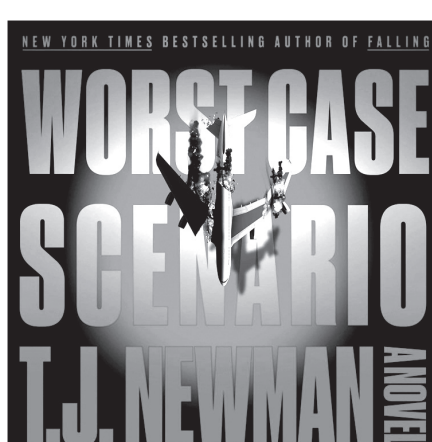
This is a Level 8.

A commercial airliner, a 757 with 295 souls on board, was flying at 35000 feet. The pilot suffers a widow maker heat attack. The First Officer is in the bathroom when the plane plummets. There is no time to warn the passengers. The flight attendant cannot get to the radio. The plane nose dives, headed toward the Clover Hill Nuclear Power Plant.

Could it get any worse?

It Does.

When we face a Worst-



HANCOCK COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

HAPPENING THIS SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH!

Touch-a-Truck Birthday Party - Meet the new Library mascot, Booker Reed McDoodle! Help Booker celebrate his birthday with handshakes, hugs and photos, AND get up close to all kinds of trucks. Plan to Join the fun. No registration required. This free event should be a great time for the entire family. Hope to see you there.

Hancock County Fairgrounds 11:00 AM-1:00 PM. NOTE: Low-key, sensory friendly (no lights, sirens, or horns) hour from 10 am - 11 am.

PROGRAMS FOR TEENS/TWEENS

Teen D&D Night for ages 13-18, or High School Senior - Friday, November 7th in Lewisport from 5:00-8:00. Gaming materials, snacks and drinks provided. No experience needed. Registration is not required, but if you are planning to attend, please send Molly an email molly.ramsey@hcplky.org, so she has enough supplies.

Twelve Dungeons and Dragons for ages 9-12. Registration is required, and is now open. The session will take place on Wednesday, November 12th at the Hawesville Library from 5:00-8:00. Please call either location to sign up, or email Molly at molly.ramsey@hcplky.org to register today!

PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS

Recipe Contest - What is your specialty? What does everyone ask for? Share your treasured Thanksgiving recipe with the community! Submit your favorite recipe (typed, or printed) at either library location Monday, November 10th - Saturday, November 15th. Enter your recipe by the deadline for a chance to win a gift basket. The winner and runners-up will be featured with their recipes on our social media.

PROGRAMS FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS - Mark your calendars!

Homeschool Families with Middle and High Schoolers - It is not too early to learn about the college admission process! Join retired College Advisor, Katie Ballard for a free information night. Ask questions and get answers from someone with 30+ years of experience. Hawesville library at 6:00 PM on Thursday, November 13th.

PROGRAMS FOR EVERYONE

Family Cupcake Wars - Hawesville, Friday November 7th, 5:30 PM. Spread the love, and the frosting! All supplies provided. Registration is open! Call or stop by either location to sign up for this family fun night!

Case Scenario the best of us shines through.

Steve Tostig, Joss Vance, Dani Allen, Ethan Ross and President Dawson and others forced to make impossible decisions. Innocent victims.

This is the tale of ordinary people, firefighters, teachers, power plant employees, families, neighbors, and friends facing an extraordinary situation. This was a life and death situation. Ordinary people demonstrate extraordinary courage, ingenuity, and determination to save the people they love, their community, the country and the world. Ordinary people, HEROES!

I could not turn this book off. I had to listen to the very last word. Joe Morton is a superb narrator. The tension is this book keep building in this tale. The characters came to life on the pages of this tale, and I wanted them all to live. If I could give this book 10 Stars I would. Publish Date is August 13, 2024.



WORDS TO LIVE BY

James Todd Gaddis

Avoid the Traps

Even if you don't suffer from depression, chances are you know someone who does, since experts estimate that as many as 40 million Americans battle this ailment. Next to pain, depression is one of the major ailments that sends patients to their primary care physician.

Allow me this disclaimer. I am well aware that depression is often a physiological condition. Not being a physician, I can't speak from that standpoint. However, as a pastor and believer with a background in theology, I can approach depression from a biblical/spiritual perspective.

That said, let's examine an incident for the life of Elijah, taken from 1 Kings 19. This Old Testament prophet served during the ninth century B.C. in Israel's northern kingdom, during the reigns of Ahab and his son, Ahaziah.

At first, life was good for Elijah. God provided him with food during a severe drought. Later, spiritual awakening came to a people entangled in idol worship - miracles abounded! And yet, in the wake of this mighty victory on Mount Carmel over the prophets of Baal, Elijah soon fled for his life, into the desert.

Why such a reversal? Physically, spiritually and emotionally drained, Elijah succumbed to depression's spell. If you ever find yourself in a similar situation, avoid these traps that ensnare those in such a state.

The Fear Trap- Faith gave way to fear when Elijah discovered Jezebel wanted him dead. According to Edmund Burke, "No passion so effectively robs the mind of its powers of acting and reasoning as fear." "Fear, if allowed to reign," said John M. Wilson, "would reduce us all to trembling shadows of men, for whom death could bring release."

On the other hand, "God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7 KJV). As has been said "when fear knocks on the door, send fatih to answer and you're not likely to find anyone there."

The Enemy Trap- Elijah enjoyed victory over false prophets on Mount Carmel by keeping his focus on God. However, when threats from Jezebel ensued, his

thoughts shifted to her.

Early in my ministry, I received an anonymous letter, severely criticizing my work at the church. Even though this incident was isolated and unwarranted, it threw me for a loop. Though obsessed at first with the letter, I never found out who sent it. I eventually put it behind me, having learned a valuable lesson -don't let periodic detractors determine your outlook.

The Comparison Trap- We gain further insight into Elijah's plight through his statement, "I am not better than my fathers" (1 Kings 19:4 NASB). Rather than center his attention on God and the present, he fretfully measured himself against people from his past, thus aggravating and deteriorating his state of mind.

Comparing ourselves to others triggers trouble every time. There's always going to be someone out there richer, younger, smarter, thinner, prettier, and more successful than you. Social media has made the situation much worse. Do you, stay in your lane, and watch God do marvelous things.

The Blame Trap- Elijah increased his misery by condemning himself for the failures of his people. Many often point the blame at others. This goes all the way back to the Garden, where Adam blamed Eve for eating forbidden fruit (Genesis 3:12).

As a pastor, I would sometimes blame myself when people left the church, when in fact, it was due to an entirely different reason. Take ownership but don't take the blame unless there's a good reason for it. And by all means, don't get caught up in blaming others.

The Pity Trap- Elijah threw a pity party, at which he was the guest of honor. The problem was, no one else showed up. Justifying himself before the Lord, he said, "I have been very zealous for the Lord... and I alone am left" (1 Kings 19:10).

Elijah was, in fact, among 7,000 prophets who remained, but who's counting when you're soaking in a warm tub of self pity?

I'll have more to say next time by answering "Avoiding the Traps" with "Applying the Remedies." For now, if you've fallen into one of these traps, know that God provides release. He loves you and has a place for you in His plan!

Rabbit 4-H Club Meeting Minutes

October 30, 2025

Recorded by Jane Kolonich

The meeting of the Rabbit 4-H Club was called to order at 5:05 pm on October 30, 2025 by Club President J.D. Powers. The pledges were led by J.D. Powers, and nine members were present.

The Following Business was Discussed: The new Rabbit Project book was given to members to review. The books will be turned in at next summer's Rabbit Club showing.

The Following Decisions were Made: Club funds will be used to buy Halloween Candy to pass out at Vastwood Park's Trail of Treats. J.D. Powers approved the motion to vote. The motion was approved by Hagen Miller, and seconded by McKenzie Carter.

The business part of the meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Lori Miller introduced the Club Activity. The activity was a Rabbit Halloween Costume Contest. McKenzie Carter and her rabbit won first prize. J.D. Powers finished second, tying Wylie and Josie Gaynor.

world geography, U.S. history, physical science, life science, Earth science, and scientific inquiry. Link to this free service from our website hcplky.org under "Resources". If you would like to know more, or have questions, please give us a call 270-927-6760 Hawesville or 270-295-3765 Lewisport.

BOOK REVIEW

Open Season by C.J. Box

The first in a series of 25 books, Open Season follows Game Warden, Joe Pickett as he unravels the story behind three murders in his Wyoming territory. It is personal for Warden Pickett, especially since one of the victims died in Joe's front yard! If you enjoy mystery and suspense and are looking for a good, long series, Open Season is a great place to start!