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**9 Ways to Nurture Your Emotional Health**

**By Brian B. Carter, MS, LAc**

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I think we need to break Chinese medicine's wisdom down into bite-sized, practical pieces. Though I think they are rather cliché and simplistic, the popular magazine style, "5 Tips to Make Your Life Perfect in 5 Minutes Without Lifting a Finger!" piques the curiosity, and gets in our heads. If we can pick up one useful thing, we've learned and can live better. On the other hand, it does no good to overwhelm people with something they can't digest or use.

**Nine Ways to Nurture Your Emotional Well Being**

This list is based on Chinese medicine advice for the emotions through the centuries. The how-to's and benefits are mostly my ideas. The daily blueprint comes from the book, "The Power of Focus". You can find other self-examination and spiritual tools in a wide range of books.

1. **Be Grateful:** Recognize what you've achieved, and enjoy it. Once you've reached a goal, celebrate. Otherwise you get stuck in the 'never enough' trap.

**How:** Make a weekly list of the things in your life for which you are grateful. Review both new and perpetual reasons for gratitude.

**Benefit:** You can't be grateful and hateful at the same time, so the more grateful you are, the happier you'll be.

2. **Choose Achievable Goals:** Avoid overly ambitious goals, because foiled plans lead to frustration, with-drawal, and depression.

**How:** Review your plans and dreams, and then break them down into subtasks you can definitely finish (this is called a critical path). Set realistic dates for each task. If you run into an impasse, then reassess your path, or your goal.

**Benefit:** You'll achieve more, and feel more capable and successful.

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3. Live Moderately: Work and live moderately. Balance means not overworking and not being lazy.

How: Make a blueprint for each day that allocates specific times for action, learning, exercise, review, relaxation, and family. See the book, *The Power of Focus*.

Benefit: Stay well and avoid the diseases that come from overwork. Feel fulfilled and avoid guilt, which drains your energy. Sharpen your saw. Improve your effectiveness and understanding. Feel satisfied you're available to loved ones.

4. Be Regular: Keep a consistent routine in work, meals, exercise, and rest. Regularity is easier on your nervous system, so your body will know what to expect.

How: Use the daily blueprint tool from #3.

Benefit: You experience less stress and have more vitality.

5. Eat and Sleep Sensibly: Quality sleep and a normal appetite are the best signs of health, and everything else depends on them. If you want to get or stay well, take care of these two aspects of your health.

How: See the healthful eating tips in chapter 33 and the sleep tips in chapter 56.

Benefit: Natural, deep sleep renews and refreshes your mind and heals your body. Proper eating and digestion optimize your immune system and prevent sickness.

6. Avoid Worry and Overthinking. It taxes your mind and your digestion. It's usually not productive anyway. You may know that but be unable to stop.

How: Some people tend to worry. They need simpler, unprocessed foods, and to avoid simple sugars, alcohol and coffee. Physical digestion affects your mind's ability to digest worries and possibilities. Get some moderate exercise daily to move your qi.

Benefit: Worry-free living! More energy, positivity, and peace of mind.

7. Strive to Be Openhearted, Open-Minded, and Content. When we're closed down or discontent, we become inflexible, intolerant, and insufferable. We experience more stress. Stress takes its toll, and we get sick.

How: List people, institutions, and ideas you resent or fear. Admit your selfishness, dishonesty, and fear, at least to yourself! Find Someone bigger than yourself to trust in. Pray and meditate. Read spiritual books and write about how they relate to your life. Think outside of the box. "You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face." Do the thing you are afraid of. Reach out to people no one wants. Be grateful and accept life as it is.

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Benefit: Openheartedness is freedom and real love. Open-mindedness is freedom and the quickest way to truth. Contentedness is what everyone truly seeks.

8. Form Social Bonds to Sustain You in Times of Trouble. If you give a baby physical nourishment but not physical affection, it can die! Human beings are meant to live in communities. We need one another. Don't spend all your time absorbed in your problems and plans.

How: Meet people in networking groups, support groups, adult education classes, Toastmasters, Rotary clubs, church, etc.

Benefit: Other people strengthen and support us, listen to our problems, make helpful suggestions, point us in the right direction, and help us get where we need to go. The right people are your best allies and advocates for a positive and stable future, and thus are an essential part of getting and staying well. Plus, a good social life provides opportunities for the next suggestion...

9. Help Other People! Invest yourself in the lives of others.

How: List specific people you can help in your plans and goals, and in your daily blueprint. Think about what these people need, and how you can help them get it. It may seem counterintuitive and perhaps impossible when faced with real worries and problems, but if you help someone else, you'll find it's worth it. Remember, sometimes helping means saying no. Agape (perfect love) gives people what they need regardless of what they want.

Benefit: You'll end up feeling better, and more positive. In that better frame of mind, you'll plan and live your life more effectively.

Acupuncturist, herbalist, and medical professor Brian B. Carter founded the alternative health megasite The Pulse of Oriental Medicine (<http://www.PulseMed.org/>). He is the author of the book "Powerful Body, Peaceful Mind: How to Heal Yourself with Foods, Herbs, and Acupressure" (November, 2004). Brian speaks on radio across the country, and has been quoted and interviewed by Real Simple, Glamour, and ESPN magazines.

### **3 Quick Tips To Stop Emotional Eating**

**By Kathryn O'Neill**

#### **3 Quick Tips To Stop Emotional Eating by Kathryn O'Neill**

It's been called the number one saboteur of weight loss plans everywhere, whether low carb or low fat, diet or natural weight loss. It's the dreaded E. E.

Emotional Eating.

If you've ever binged on brownies out of boredom, shoveled French fries out of frustration, inhaled

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apple pie out of anger, you know the damage emotional eating can do to even the best weight loss efforts.

In fact, it's been estimated that 75% of overeating is caused by emotions. (Translation: BIG problem for weight loss)

Although Emotional Eating is a serious problem and often has deep roots, it can be overcome. You don't have to live your life as a slave to emotional eating.

With that in mind, I've listed the 3 quick tips to help you stop emotional eating (and start losing weight!)

### #1 Be Happy!

I know, it sounds simple but it works! How tempted are you to eat emotionally when you are happy, challenged, living and enjoying life to the fullest? When you're excited about life, you don't NEED food for that quick pick-me-up!

Take some time every day to reflect on what gives you joy in your life. Are you moving in that direction?

Find things to be happy about. Be thankful for special people in your life. Do something outrageously fun—whatever it takes! Happiness will ward off the worst case of emotional eating blues!

### #2 Have a Nurture List

Make a list of all the ways you can nurture yourself **BESIDES** eating. It might be taking a bubble bath or going shopping at your favorite boutique. Anything that you really enjoy.

I call this my "backup list". All the things I can do **BESIDES** eating that involve **MAJOR** self-care. If money is tight, make a list of **FREE** things you can do instead of eating. Put it up where you can see it. It's amazing what happens when you give yourself options!

### #3 Practice Prevention

Stop emotional eating before it starts! How many times do we start to feel a little blue or bored, and then continue on without addressing it? Before we know it, we're in a full-scale emotional storm and it's **REALLY** hard to fight off that call of the brownies or the potato chips.

Be vigilant. If something bothers you, address it right away (even if it's only within your head!) and deal with it. You **CAN** prevent a lot of emotional eating temptations if you practice prevention this way!

By practicing these quick tips, you'll save yourself from a lot of unwanted calories and emotional eating frustration. Try them and enjoy the results of a smaller waistline!

Want To Learn How To Overcome Emotional Eating FOR GOOD? Kathryn O'Neill is a Certified Nutrition and Wellness Specialist & holds a degree in Behavioral Psychology. She has authored several e-books that teach people how to lose weight naturally & overcome emotional eating for good. For More Details Click Here => <http://www.weightmasterycoach.com>



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