

— THE BIG BOOK OF —  
**SELF-CARE**



Simple Techniques to Nourish the  
Mind-Body-Spirit Connection

Be Your Best Self & Thrive Counseling

# — Introduction —

Thank you so much for inviting us to be a part of your journey towards a happy, healthier life.

At BYBS we believe in:

A holistic, mind-body-spirit approach to mental health.

Simple, easy strategies for maintaining wellness.

The importance of self-awareness.

Which is why this book was developed, with the aim of providing you plenty of simple and effective ways to infuse self-care into your every day routine -no matter how busy you may be.

Self care is symbolic of our commitment to ourselves. By dedicating time each day towards practices that nurture your physical, emotional, and spiritual health, you are declaring your worth to the universe!

There is something here for everyone. Whether you want basic ideas for changing your food habits, little ways to improve your day, or some suggestions on how to sleep better at night, it is all in here, condensed into one handy-dandy workbook that you can hold on to forever and reference when you need.

We are certain that you will learn some new ways to nourish your body, calm your mind, and soothe your soul.

Happy Reading!

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# Section 1: Nourish Your Body



Tips for Nutrition and Mindful Eating

# Food and Nutrition

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*How do you nourish your body?*

We believe that nutrition is a HUGE part of stress management.

Everything that you eat influences how you feel.

Don't get nervous just yet... we are total foodies too! We love to eat, we love to try new restaurants, and we love a good cocktail (or mocktail).

So we are not going to tell you to go on some influencer diet that is super restrictive and reliant on restraint / reward. We believe that this approach to nutrition can be detrimental both emotionally and physically.

Instead, we believe in Mindful Eating. We want you to learn how to listen to your body, and through trial and error, discover which foods provide fuel and nourishment, and which foods make you feel unwell. We believe that being mindful with your food intake and developing an awareness of how different foods affect you is a far more sustainable, healthy, and effective method. This is an ongoing process throughout life; as your body changes, so does your reaction to certain foods, and that is totally natural.

Remember, each person has a unique biological make-up; therefore, different foods will affect people differently. Some people can't eat meat, and some can't go without it. Some people can tolerate small amounts of quality dairy, while some get sick.

It is simply all about tuning into YOUR body and determining what works for YOU.

# Tip #1: Pay Attention

Again, we firmly believe that what you eat can greatly impact your overall emotional well-being. If you eat crappy foods, you will feel like crap and have less tolerance for any kind of stress in your life. If you eat well and focus on fueling your body for optimal health, you will feel well, and your body will be ready to face any challenges that come your way.

So, what is the first step to making changes?

It's very simple: Pay attention to what you eat.

You can write it down, or you can track it online...whatever system works for you. It does not need to be anything fancy. Keep it simple. You are simply developing an awareness of your food habits and how different foods make you feel physically and emotionally.

This is not about counting calories, judging yourself for what you eat, worrying about fat, or breaking down nutrition. This is a simple, baseline activity; you are paying attention to what you eat so that you can become more in tune with your body. Notice which foods make you feel good, which foods don't, and just track both!

Remember:

The first step is to develop awareness.

The second step is to take action.

## NOTES / REFLECTION

If you haven't already, how do you plan to track how different foods make you feel?

Which foods do you know already make you feel healthy and happy?

Which foods make you feel bloated, heavy, or tired?

# Tip #2: Consider Your Food

You may be thinking: why does she suggest I track my food?

One word: Awareness.

Just the act of writing down the food that you are eating makes you feel more aware of your habits and therefore leads to better choices. By increasing your awareness, you become more intentional with the foods you are eating.

Keep in mind that this is simply tracking what you are eating - meaning, it is a neutral activity. NO Judgement or worry should be associated with mindful tracking. Instead approach it from a loving place, a place where you and your body are communicating with each other.

As you are tracking your food, think about these 2 key components:

- Quality:

Is this a whole food or is it highly processed? Is this food an optimal way to fuel my body? For example, whole grain pasta with fresh vegetables is very different in quality than Panera's broccoli cheddar mac and cheese.

- Nutrition

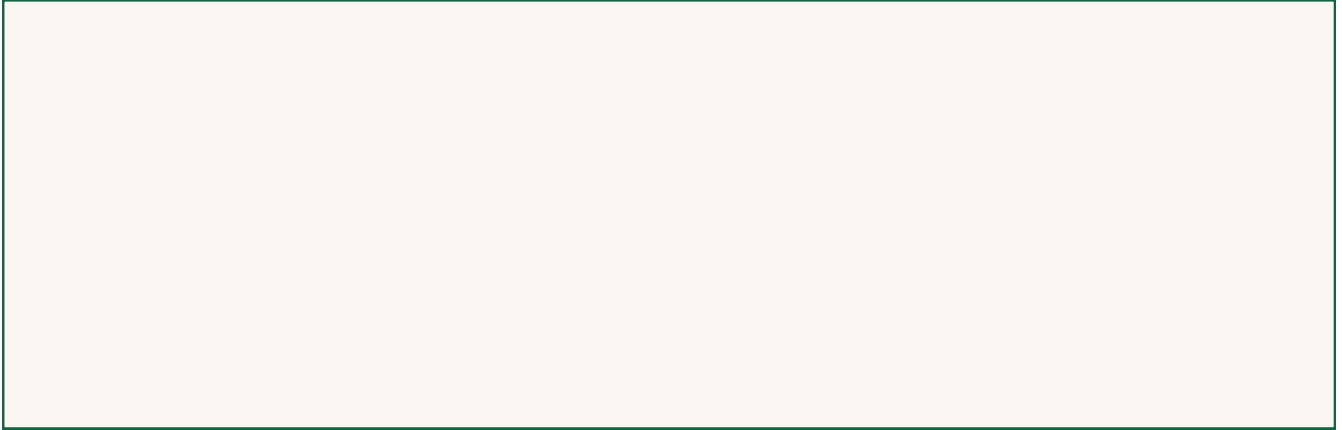
Does this food provide nourishment in any way? For example, there is a big difference between an apple and a candy bar. Yes, both are sweet and have sugar, but the apple is a whole food that provides you with nutrients like fiber, while the candy bar is just pure, processed sugar.

Remember that the end goal is to shift to a healthy, nutritious diet that helps your body function optimally.

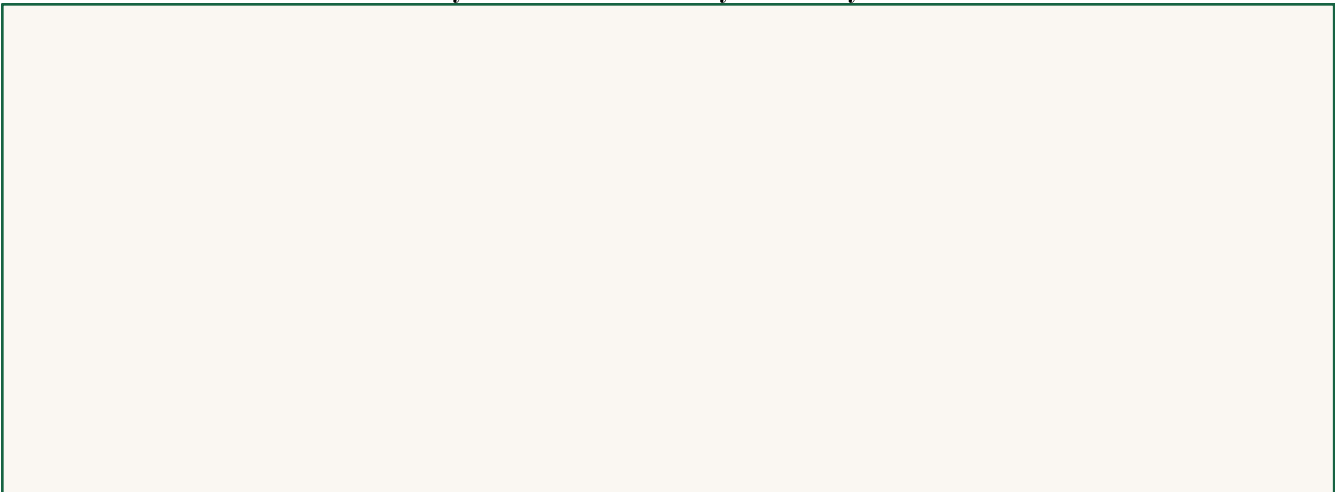


## NOTES / REFLECTION

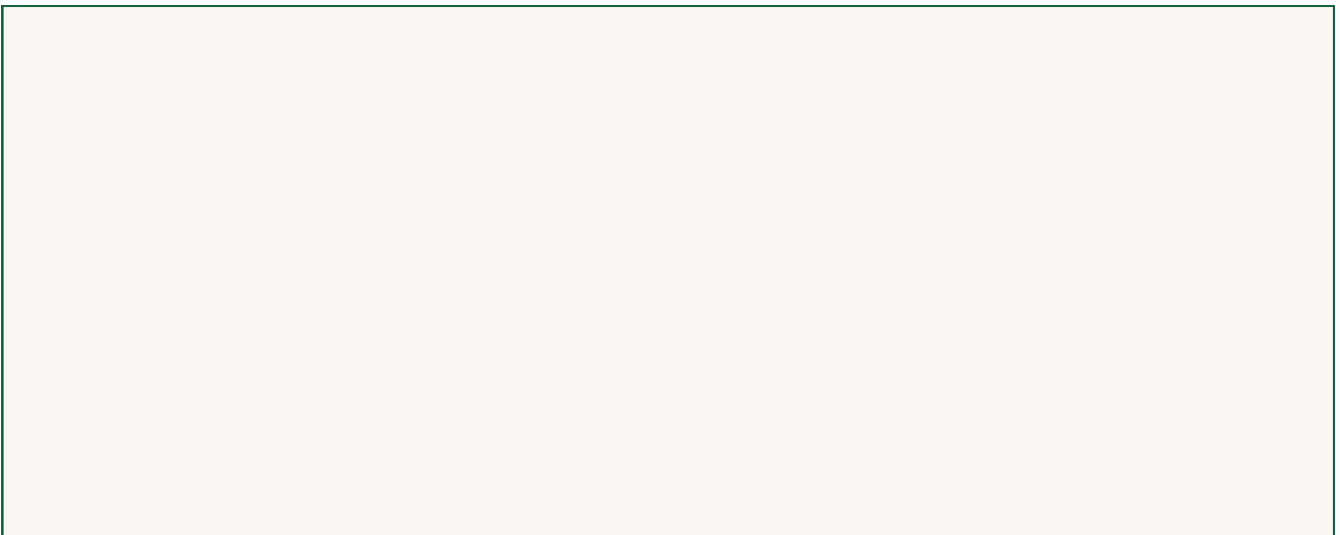
Write down foods that you are currently eating that are unhealthy and hard for your body to digest (i.e. heavily processed foods, fast food, fried foods, etc.):



Now write down the foods that you know nourish your body:



Now, what changes can you make right now to help your body?



# Tip #3: Out with the bad, In with the Good

Once you begin paying attention to the food you eat, take note of how much sugar and caffeine you are consuming. It's easy to forget that sugar is in EVERYTHING, so start paying attention to the labels on your food.

For those stuck in that anxious and stressed out state, it is extremely important to be mindful of sugar and caffeine intake, as they both have stimulant effects on the body.

Think about it...when you are all hopped up on sugar and caffeine, you are over-stimulated and buzzing. If you do this all day every day, you are keeping your body in perpetual hyper-stress mode and you will have a really hard time calming yourself.

If there is just no way that you can even think about cutting out your sugar and caffeine fix completely, that's OK. Instead, focus on trying to reduce the amount that you are consuming over time. If anything, I would suggest to at least eliminate caffeine and sugar before bed time, as that will really help your sleep. And if you do decide to cut it out completely, it is recommended that you reduce quantity slowly rather than all at once to avoid negative side effects.

As you focus on reducing stress, try soothing your body and mind with plenty of veggies, whole grains, and LOTS of water.

In addition, we have listed a few foods in this guide that have been scientifically proven to help manage stress in the body. In the interest of time we won't bore you with the official scientific data and research, but we will provide a brief summary of the chemical benefits so you get the basics of what you need to know. The next time you go shopping, try adding one of these foods to your grocery list and integrate it into your weekly diet.

## NOTES / REFLECTION

How much caffeine do you currently consume daily ( i.e. sodas, ice teas, coffee, etc.?)

How much sugar do you consume daily?

Do you need to make any changes? If so, how can you start right now?

# Tip #4: Bananas

Did you know that bananas contains dopamine?

Yep, that's right... bananas have the happy chemicals you need to boost your mood! Bananas also have B vitamins, which help with energy and calming your nervous system, AND magnesium, which among other things, women need to maintain bone health.

Plus, bananas are just delish!

For an extra kick, slice up your banana, add some almond or peanut butter for some protein, and enjoy!



# Tip #5: Turmeric

A super simple spice that packs a lot of punch - you can easily add Turmeric into your diet to improve your health and help manage the negative effects of your stress.

You have probably heard of this spice many times before, or have seen it appear in health shots and juices at your local grocer, but did you know how powerful it is?

Turmeric is a bright yellow spice that comes from the Ginger family and is native to Southeast India. It is a super food, full of antioxidants that can help your body heal.

Here are just a few benefits of Turmeric:

- Known as the “skin food” because it cleanses your skin and helps maintain elasticity
- Reduces inflammation in the body
- Helps reduce the risk of heart disease
- Can help patients with arthritis
- Can help fight depression
- Can help improve brain function

A simple way to add turmeric into your diet: stir fry veggies in coconut oil and throw a heap of turmeric in the mix – it helps make the veggies taste really good while knowing that you are getting a powerful health boost in the process.



# Tip #6: Chocolate

That's right – chocolate can actually help you fight stress. Pretty great news, right?

Now keep in mind that we are not talking about the cheap candy chocolate that you can buy at the closest gas station or a giant chocolate cake that you can get at Publix.

What we are talking about is small quantities of high-quality dark chocolate (look for bars that contain 70% or higher cacao).

Chocolate contains flavonoids, which have relaxing properties (which you can also find in chamomile tea).

Chocolate also stimulates the production of anandamide, which is a chemical in your brain that blocks feelings of pain and sadness. This is why we always get a little mood boost after we eat some chocolate.

Good quality chocolate is also full of antioxidants, which help reduce the effects of aging in the body.

So, all in all, it seems like having a sweet tooth isn't so bad after all! Especially while aiding your stress management tool box.



# Tip #7: Smoothies

Want to get a bunch of good nutrients all at once? Try a smoothie!

Smoothies are jam-packed with super foods and nutrients. And the bonus? They are super easy to make.

Here is a great smoothie recipe that BYBS owner, Jamie, uses regularly:

- 1 handful greens (i.e. spinach or kale)
- 1 cup coconut milk (or almond milk)
- 1/2 frozen banana
- Dash of cinnamon
- Ice cubes
- 1 tablespoon chia seeds
- 1 scoop protein powder (any kind of powder that you like or are currently using)

Put all of these ingredients in a blender and enjoy!



# Tip #8: Drink that Water

## (Part 1)

If you are trying to develop healthier food habits, it is very important to also pay attention to how much water you are drinking, because dehydration is often at the root of many basic health concerns.

Here are just a few:

- headaches
- dry skin
- fatigue
- hunger\*\*
- dizziness
- cognitive issues
- mood issues

\*\*Dehydration can often be mistaken for hunger, so before you eat, drink a glass of water a few minutes before and then pay attention to how your body feels. Are you still hungry, or was your body just telling you to hydrate?

### How much water should you drink?

There is a lot of information out there about the exact numbers, and it does indeed vary per individual based on how much they exercise, the environment they live in, and their overall health. Additionally, there are some health conditions where too much water could be detrimental. So it is important to consider your individual health story and consult with your doctor if you are unsure.

But according to The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, the average, healthy woman living in a temperate climate should drink roughly 9 cups / 72 oz and the average, healthy man should drink 13 cups/104 oz of water per day.

So as you are tracking your food, include your beverages (coffee, tea, soda, etc.) and pure water. Notice how much water you are or are not drinking... how close are you to the recommended number?

And as you continue to pay attention to how you are nourishing your body, just think about how dehydration might be impacting how you feel!



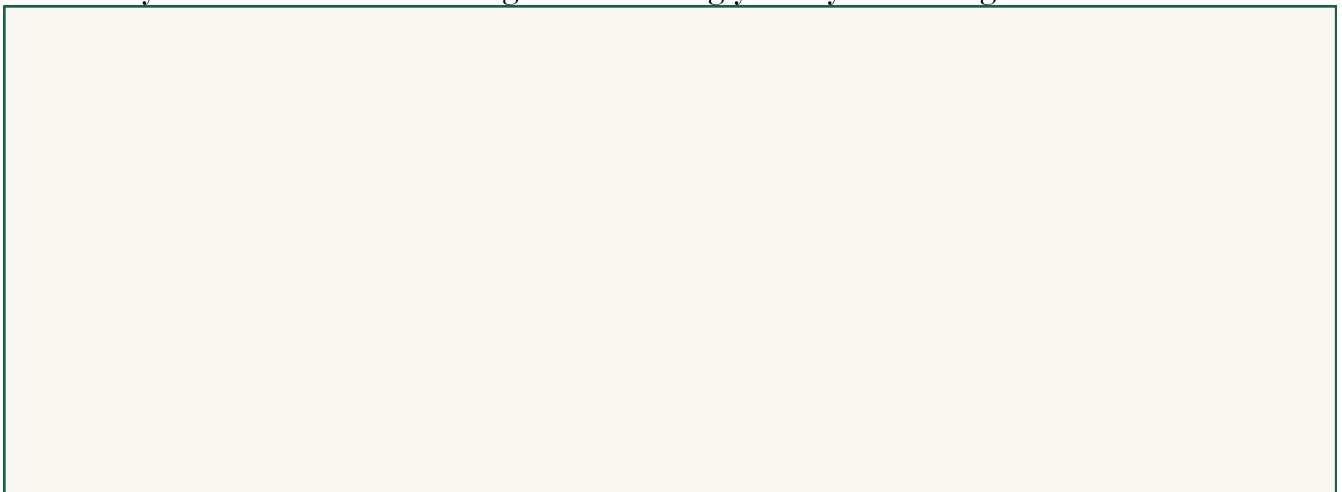
# Tip #8: Drink that Water

## (Part 2)

Here is a list of common causes of dehydration, which will help develop an awareness of how much water you need to drink on a daily basis:

- Medications – some medications can act as a diuretic, which increases your urine output and therefore dehydrates you (for example blood pressure medication)
- Menstrual cycle – estrogen and progesterone influence your body's hydration levels, so if it is that time of the month, increase your water intake
- Low-carb diets – whole carbs (oatmeal, brown rice) absorb water while being cooked, so eating them helps increase your fluid levels – if you are low-carb, be super aware of your water intake
- Stress! – too much stress exhausts your adrenals, which then affects hormones that directly regulate your hydration levels (adrenals take a long time to heal, so if you are chronically stressed and are dealing with exhaustion, be sure to increase your daily water intake to help support your body in the healing process)
- Exercise – be sure to hydrate when you sweat

How many of these items above might be affecting your hydration right now?



# Tip #9: Mindful Eating

*When you eat, how often would you say that you are actually paying attention to the experience of what you are eating?*

From Jamie, BYBS owner: "This is a big challenge for me – I grew up in a household of fast eaters and big appetites. We were always on the go and we all ate fast. To this day, if I am not paying attention, this is how I eat my food... even if I am not in a rush!"

When you eat fast, you not only lose the positive experience of enjoying your food, but you also limit your digestive system from doing its job – it won't know when you are full and it won't be able to break down food as easily.

Mindful eating is the solution!

It's simple really – SLOW DOWN and pay attention.

Pay attention to what and how you are eating. Instead of putting on a YouTube video, scrolling through social media, or checking emails, practice eating without distractions. Notice how the food tastes in your mouth – any flavors or spices that you like or dislike. Take time to really chew your food, noticing the texture changes as you do so.

Enjoy the experience and listen to your stomach – stop eating when you are full.

Practice this every time you eat.

Mindful eating will help you slow down, enjoy the experience of eating, and aid your digestive system in doing its job.

## NOTES / REFLECTION

How often do you eat at your desk or in the car and feel rushed?

How often do you eat a meal without technology or entertainment?

How might that influence how you feel?

How can you incorporate mindful eating into your daily routine?

# Tip #10: Watch for Emotional Eating

*Are you a stress eater? If so, which is your go-to... sweets or salty?*

From BYBS owner, Jamie: "When I am emotional or stressed, I go straight for the sweets, no questions asked. The sugary, the better. I almost immediately regret that decision every time, but it's like my craving took over my mind and I lost all control.

And the truth is - my mind DID take over. The thing is, more often than not, we are actually eating to cope with our emotions, not to ease hunger. Especially in a Western culture of tight deadlines, lack of sleep, sitting all day, and never-ending news cycles (the list goes on and on). We are overly stressed, with our emotions ruling our bodies, especially our stomachs. We crave certain foods due to stress signals and deficiencies in certain vitamins, not because we actually NEED a giant chocolate donut."

What are the most common emotional triggers?

1. Boredom
2. Stress / Anxiety
3. Depression

So the next time you notice that you are craving your guilty pleasure - take a moment to check in with yourself:

- What is going on exactly right now? Is there a situation to which I am reacting?
- What is the emotion that I am feeling right now?
- Am I actually hungry, or is this drive to eat coming from somewhere else?

It can be really helpful to write it down and keep a diary of your experiences. After a few weeks you will definitely notice a pattern. And then you can implement strategies to control your cravings!

## NOTES / REFLECTION

How often do you find yourself stress eating? What about eating out of boredom?

What types of foods do you typically crave?

How can you replace these habits and become more mindful of them in the future?

# Section 2: Calm Your Mind



Tips for Releasing Your Stress

# Tip #11: Journal it Out

*When you are feeling emotional, how do you typically deal?*

Do you stuff your emotions down deep, pretend they aren't there, and keep going? Do you put on a brave smile during the day and then go home and cry? Or, are you the type to rage at the guy that cut you off in traffic or the car that is driving too slowly?

When we let stress build up for too long and ignore the emotions that we are feeling, it often comes out at the wrong time and directed at the wrong people.

**Quick tip: Write it out!**

Have you ever considered journaling? It is a great way to get the stress out of your body quickly, and you can reflect on the entry later on when you want to learn more about yourself. It can be art work, song lyrics, or a few sentences about a situation... whatever you want! As long as you are getting the stress out of your mind onto the paper, that is all that matters. You can even burn it or shred it after you are done if you don't want to keep it.

These days there are lots of beautiful journals in all different colors, shapes, and sizes. You can even have multiple journals for multiple aspects of your life. Even the process of picking out journals can be soothing.

The next time you are feeling stressed – take a moment, sit down, and write about whatever is bothering you – get that stress OUT!

# Tip #12: Release Your Stress With Some Animal Love

There is a reason why Pet Therapy (also known as Animal-Assisted Therapy) is so successful – animals provide a comfort and love like no other. They are very sensitive to how we are feeling and respond based on that intuition; they bring us a sense of healing, security, and unconditional love.

Think about it, after a long day at work, you come home in a bad mood...and your beloved pet is there to greet you at the door – they are super happy to see you and it instantly makes you feel better. Just knowing that your furry friend will be there when you get home, or just seeing their happy face looking out the window is enough to make you smile and forget about your stress.

Pet therapy is actually growing at a rapid rate in the American healthcare system, and is used to treat a variety of diseases and mental health issues with the soothing presence of animals. Dogs, cats, horses, and rabbits, are just a few of the furry friends offering support to those in need.

So the next time you are feeling stressed or down, go cuddle your pet!

Don't have a pet? Head down to your local animal shelter and volunteer to cuddle the kitties or walk the dogs. These animals really need some human love and you instantly, plus you feel better when you help out – everybody wins!

Cat Cafés are growing in popularity, where you can cuddle with a friendly cat while drinking coffee or tea. See if there is one near you, bring a book, and soak up the love!



# Tip #13: Just Breathe!

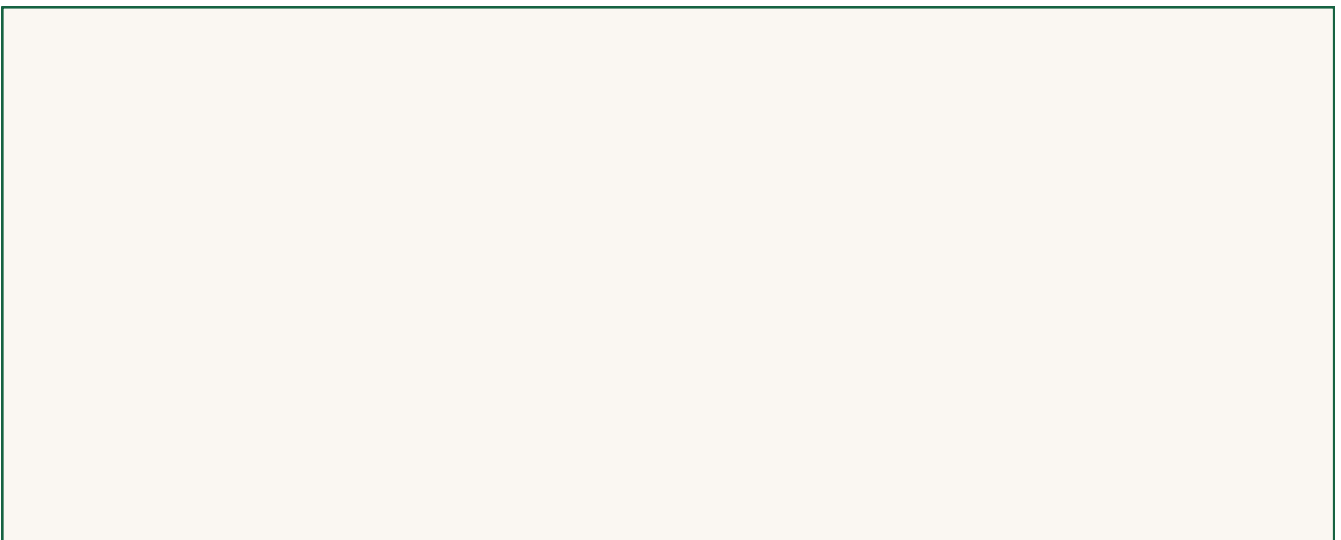
Sometimes the BEST way to release your stress is to simply take some deep breaths.

Here is a super easy breathing technique:

Find a quiet space and take a seat. Sit nice and tall, straighten your spine. Close your eyes and close your mouth. Bring your awareness to your breath. Take a nice, deep inhale through your nose, and then a nice deep exhale through your nose. Do this 20 times, try to make the lengths of each inhale and exhale an equal count (so for example, 3 counts on the inhale, 3 counts on the exhale).

Guided meditations are a great tool if you have trouble focusing on your breathing alone. Search Guided Breathing Meditation on YouTube, Spotify, or even TikTok! Put in your AirPods, and breathe.

How can you incorporate a breathing practice into your daily routine?



# Tip #14: Move Your Body

Exercise is the one of the best ways to release any stress chemicals pumping through your body.

It also helps you clear your head and get rid of any anger or frustration that you are feeling.

Keep in mind that this does not have to be anything too strenuous or intimidating. You do not have to be in the gym for 2 hours per day, or begin training for marathons. All you need to do is simply start moving your body.

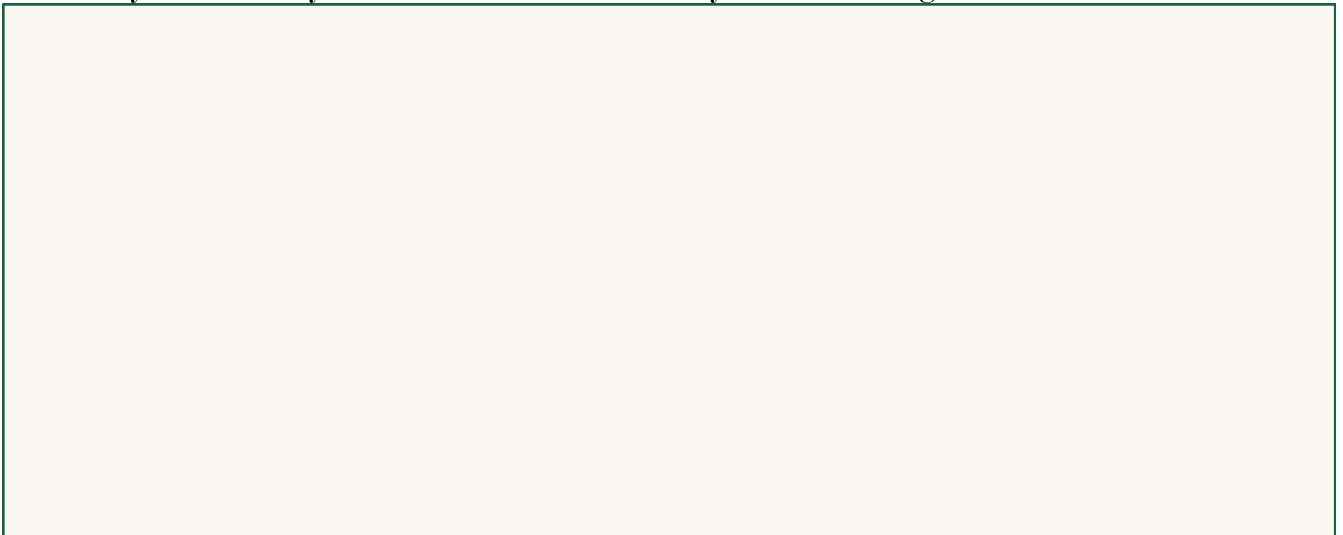
You can keep it simple and still be effective.

So what's our #1 recommendation for moving your body?

Walking!

Walking is SO SO good for you. And you can do it anywhere – in your neighborhood, at the beach, downtown, on trails, or at a dog park. Grab your walking shoes, your friends or partner, and just go for a nice long walk. If you are not much of an exercise person, this is a great way to get moving. And if you are already working out, switching it up and getting outside for a more low-key, relaxed activity gives your body a much-deserved break.

What do you currently do for exercise? What can you add / change?



# Tip #16: Show some Gratitude

*What are you thankful for?*

Often when we are feeling super stressed, we tend to focus more on the negative things going on in our lives and totally ignore the positive.

Think about it. You are having a crazy busy day and are feeling overwhelmed by your schedule. You have other people demanding things of you, stuff is going wrong, and you are on your 2435245th cup of coffee. You know you need to get some exercise in at some point, but it just feels like another chore on your never-ending to-do list.

At this point it is very easy to get negative. To get angry and frustrated.

The next time you are having one of those days, when you start feeling the negativity, just stop and take a nice, deep breath. Think of 3 things you are grateful for at that exact moment. It can be anything. Your dog, the new shoes you just got, the sun in the sky, or the health that you do have.

Then take a few more deep breaths while thinking about those 3 things.

Smile, relax, and remind yourself that despite all the chaos going on, you still have those 3 things to be grateful for right now.

Expressing gratitude is a great way to let go of the stress and overwhelming feelings. Try it today and see how it changes your perspective!

## NOTES / REFLECTION

Write down 5 things to be grateful for today.

How might your day have been different without these things or people?

How can you express gratitude towards those around you?

# Section 3: Soothe Your Soul



Tips for How to Rest, Relax, and Have Fun!

# Tip #17: Get Your Sleep

Some quick facts about sleep:

- Sleep is a time for your body to regenerate – it is the time when muscle tissue is rebuilt and restored. Your brain is very active, but scientists believe that this activity (dreaming) is a kind of clearing out and organizing process for your mind.
- According to Ayurveda (a 5,000-year-old system of natural healing that has its origins in the Vedic culture of India and is very closely aligned with yoga), your body is detoxifying both mentally and physically between the hours of 10pm and 2am, so it is very important to be asleep during this time. Between 2am and 6am, deep sleep occurs as the body transitions from detoxifying and rebuilding to preparing for the waking state.

Here are our top 10 tips for better sleep:

1. Avoid alcohol – it may help you fall asleep, but it is likely to wake you up later on at night during the key time that your body is trying to detoxify and rebuild.
2. Avoid caffeine late in the afternoon – instead, try calming teas like chamomile before bed time to help your body relax and settle down.
3. Keep the room cool – Research has shown that keeping the temperature between 60-67 degrees is ideal, but experiment and find the right temp for you (and your electricity bill!).
4. Keep the room dark - Shut off digital devices at least 60 minutes before bedtime – this is hard, I know. Most people struggle with this rule... however; it will make a big difference when you start following this rule. Bright light is a triggers for our brains, signaling that it is time to be awake and alert. Keeping the room dark and not staring at bright devices is an excellent way to remind your brain it's time to power down. Try replacing your phone with a book!
5. Exercise!! Physical exertion is a great way to release stress from your body and help it restore to natural sleep cycles.

6. Do not eat a heavy meal before bed – this slows your digestion down...your body is working towards detoxifying and rebuilding, not trying to digest heavy foods. Eat light dinners (no heavy carbs, light on protein) several hours before bed time.

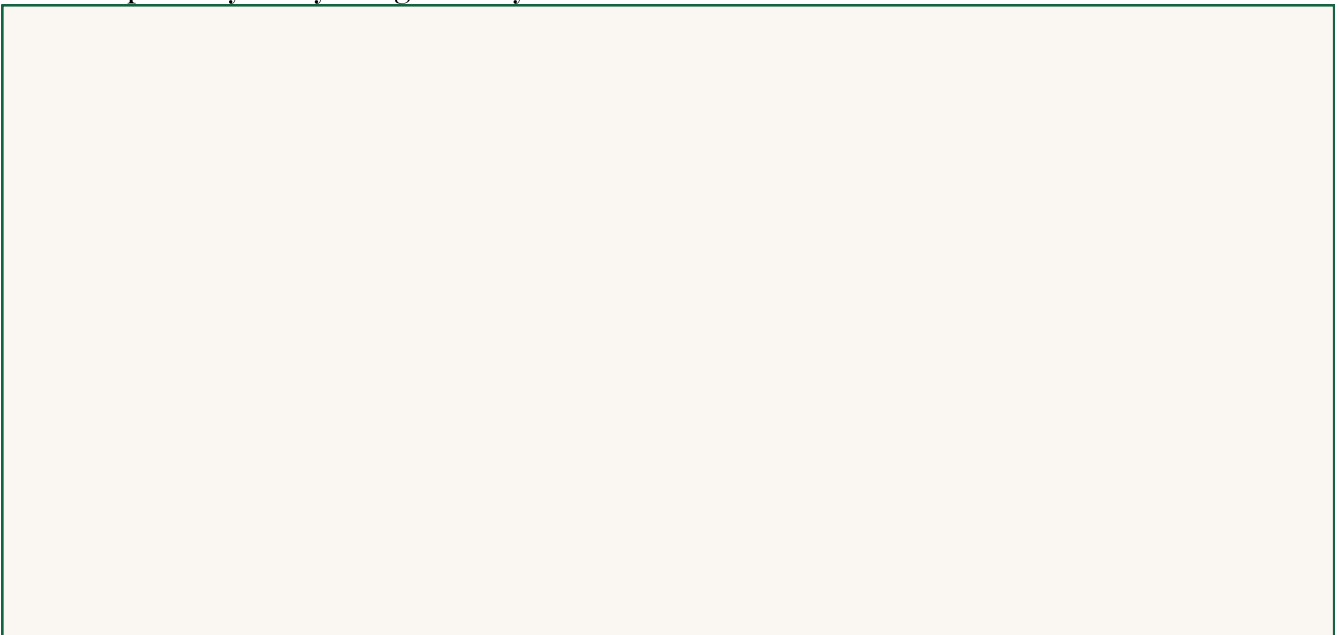
7. Make your bedroom tranquil and serene. Your bedroom is meant for sleeping and sex – nothing else. Get rid of clutter, TVs, mess, clothes on the floor - anything that distracts you from those two activities. You can find lots of inspiration for calming bedrooms on Pinterest!

8. Keep a consistent sleep schedule throughout the week – the habit of sleeping in late on the weekends does more harm than good. Your body needs consistency to keep the natural sleep cycle intact.

9. Clear your mind - Too much on your mind? Thoughts racing? Keep a journal by your bed and write down every thought that you have. Consider it a purge before bed time. That way you won't forget anything important, and you can put aside your worries for the night.

10. Try aromatherapy - For example, if you feel stressed or are having trouble sleeping, try diffusing some lavender oil in the room or and rub a touch of it on your temples. Lavender is great for calming. Some people will even spray their pillow.

Which tips will you try tonight? Why?



# Tip #18: Learn How to Relax

We can't emphasize enough how important it is to have a day of relaxation to rest and recharge. Not only does rest help you release the stress that you are holding from the previous week, but it also helps you get your mind, body and spirit ready for the new week to come.

We know it can be hard when you work a lot, have commitments, and things to do. But trust us, in the long run, you will be much better off when you can learn to take even just a small breaks consistently.

Like many people, you may be so used to overworking, constantly running around, or always having something on your mind, that you may not even be sure of what you can do to relax anymore. Totally understandable, and very common!

So here are just a few quick suggestions to get you started:

1. Take a hot bath with Epsom salts (the salts soothe achy muscles and help you release tension).
2. Set aside just 20 minutes to read a juicy novel with a hot cup of tea.
3. Take a 10-15 minute nap.
4. Close the shades, make some popcorn, and have a Netflix marathon – pick 5 of your all time faves and veg out.
5. Schedule a mani/pedi for yourself, and when you are there, close your eyes and enjoy the experience (this means no cell phone, no magazines).

Try just one of these today to help yourself relax and rejuvenate for the week!



## NOTES / REFLECTION

What does relaxation mean to you?

What relaxation techniques do you currently use? How do they help you relax?

What other techniques will you try next? Why?

# Tip #19: Do Nothing

Sometimes, we have to learn the hard way that rest is SO important. That lazing around and recharging your battery is essential, and that you don't have to be productive every minute of every day.

For many folks, especially women, they get stuck in "busy" mode and feel like they always have to keep going ("I will just get this one last thing done!") ... and many work until they drop. This is not good. It leads to burn-out, anxiety disorders, and general unhappiness.

When have you been stuck in this mode of operation for awhile, it takes effort to pull back and give your body the rest that it needs.

So we challenge you to DO NOTHING.

Allow yourself ONE DAY to be a total sloth.

Eat cake for breakfast, watch one of Netflix's many ridiculous reality shows, and stay in your PJs until noon.

For the overachievers, this is really hard to do because we usually don't like sitting around in idle. But keep in mind that sometimes the self-care rituals that we dislike the most are also the ones that we need the most.

Remember that everyone needs rest. You are not an Energizer Bunny. You cannot just keep going forever. Eventually it will catch up with you - trust me, I know. It is very important to give yourself at the very minimum one half-day a week to log off and disappear.

Start today and schedule one upcoming day on your calendar to do nothing.  
Your body, your mind, and your spirit will thank you.

## NOTES / REFLECTION

How often do you allow yourself time to truly rest and recharge?

How will allow yourself a rest day this week / month?

# Tip #20: Take a Step Back

Sometimes we can feel overwhelmed by a specific issue (a project, bills, a difficult friend / partner / client / coworker) and unsure of the next step. We start getting anxious, agitated, and super stressed - it feels like there is no answer or way out.

What is the best way to manage your reaction and to calm down?

Give yourself permission to remove the stressor.

In other words, take a step back. Go for a walk and take some deep breaths for 5 minutes. Go grab a cup of tea and sit for a minute. Or complete a simpler, easier task that you know you can accomplish fast.

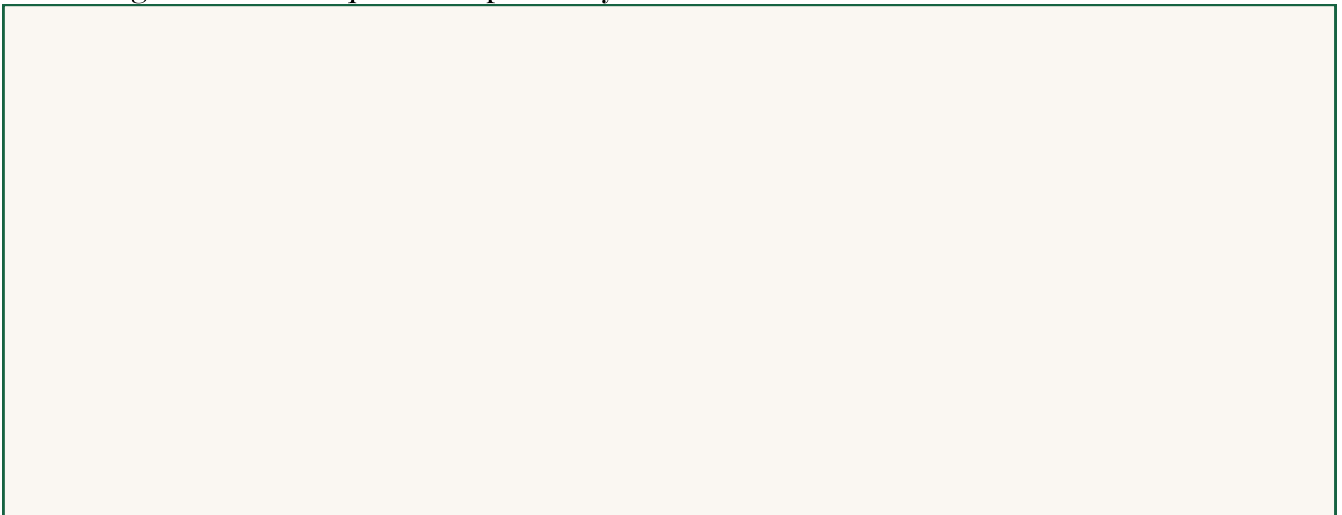
Then, once you have calmed down, you can confront that stressor again, head on.

Remember, it is a lot harder to handle a stressful situation when you are emotional.

It is much more effective to step away, calm down, and then re-approach the problem with a clearer, level head. By doing this you eliminate the chances of saying or doing something hurtful, making a rash decision that you will regret later, or making mistakes on an important project.

Next time you start feeling overwhelmed by a specific issue, remember to step away, take a breath, and calm down.

When might this technique be helpful for you?



# Tip #21: Prepare For Your Day (Part 1)

*Does this sound familiar?*

Every morning, you wake up to the screeching alarm clock, stumble to the kitchen to turn on the coffee pot (or if you are really efficient, you have an automated coffee pot set to a timer! Technology, right?), and then begin your 50-step morning routine. You are usually really tired and it is quite a process for you to wake up. Without your coffee, you can't start your day, and it is often the first thing you drink.

Here is a quick and healthy trick that will help wake up your body.

Look, we know you love your coffee – so don't worry, we are not going to tell you to quit. But we DO have one super effective way to help your system ease into your first dose of caffeine.

While your coffee is brewing, squeeze some fresh lemon into one cup of warm water and drink that first. This will help your body and your mind ease into the day with this soothing drink rather than jolting them with caffeine.

Give yourself a minute to nurture your body and mind.

Added bonus: this lemon water is actually very powerful and healing.

Here are just a few of the benefits:

- Wakes up your digestive system
- Flushes out toxins
- Boosts immunity
- Freshens your breath!

# Tip #21: Prepare For Your Day (Part 2)

Let's add a bit more to Tip #21 (Warm Lemon + Water).

If you are like most people, you probably have a tendency to wake up and GO. We all have a million things going on it seems, and many of us have a tendency to take on too much.

From BYBS founder, Jamie: "One of my biggest lessons learned over the years is that if I don't practice some basic self-care in the morning, my day is totally shot. I am cranky, anxious, and unable to manage any type of stress that comes my way."

We recommend trying this instead:

Wake up a little earlier (even if it is just 10-15 minutes) than everyone else (partner, kids, and animals). Have your water with lemon while your coffee is brewing. Then find a quiet space, sit down with your cup, and take a few moments to plan your day.

Check your calendar, make a to-do list, and look at meetings and how many hours you have for the tasks at hand. Get organized in your planner or online calendar. Write it all down so you have a guide for the day.

You may only have 5 minutes, but those 5 minutes will make a huge difference in how you are able to approach your day.

# Tip #21: Prepare For Your Day (Part 3)

Add some yoga to your morning routine.

One of the best ways to start your day is with some meditation or yoga (or both).

After your cup of water and lemon and your 5 minutes of quiet time, follow up with a few yoga poses or some breathing (like the breath practice from Tip #13).

Yoga philosophy says that morning time is the best time to practice, because even though the body is stiff, the mind is much calmer. Think about it – later in the day, once you have been moving around, would you find it hard to either do some stretches or sit still and calm your mind?

But everyone's schedule is different, so if the morning doesn't work for you, no worries. Maybe it's a lunch-time activity for you. Or maybe you prefer the evening. The time of day isn't as important as just doing the practice. Try going to a local class, check out videos online, or purchase a book and try a home practice. You don't need anything fancy, just a yoga mat and some stretchy pants.

Stretch, breathe, and embrace a moment to focus on the mind-body connection.

## NOTES / REFLECTION

How can you improve your morning routine?

How can you add yoga into your daily routine?

How would yoga help you manage your stress?



# Tip #23: Host a Cooking Party

Weekends can be great for trying new activities, but they can also be great for hanging out at home.

Why not combine the two?

Have some fun in the kitchen with some friends!

- Try out that new recipe that you have been eyeing but haven't had a chance to cook.
- Check out some new cooking tools and see if you can give them a whirl.
- Try out a meal prep service that ships straight to your front door!
- Invite your friends over to invent your own cocktails while enjoying appetizers.

Not only is cooking homemade food so much healthier, but cooking with friends makes it even more fun.

You can even keep a recipe book with some of your favorites (or keep them in your notes app on your phone- you can even share it with your guests for a collaborative list) and make it a regular event.

Invite your friends over, blast your favorite music,  
and whip up something delish in the kitchen!

## NOTES / REFLECTION

Menu for cooking party:

Guest List for cooking party:

What are some other ways you can add new recipes to your weekly routine?

# Tip #24: Friends + Reading = Happiness!

If you are looking for weekend activities but don't have the energy for something physical, consider joining or starting a book club.

Local book clubs can be such great experience - such good way to stay connected socially while also stimulating your mind. It gives you the opportunity to be introduced to a variety of genres and read things you may never have considered on your own.

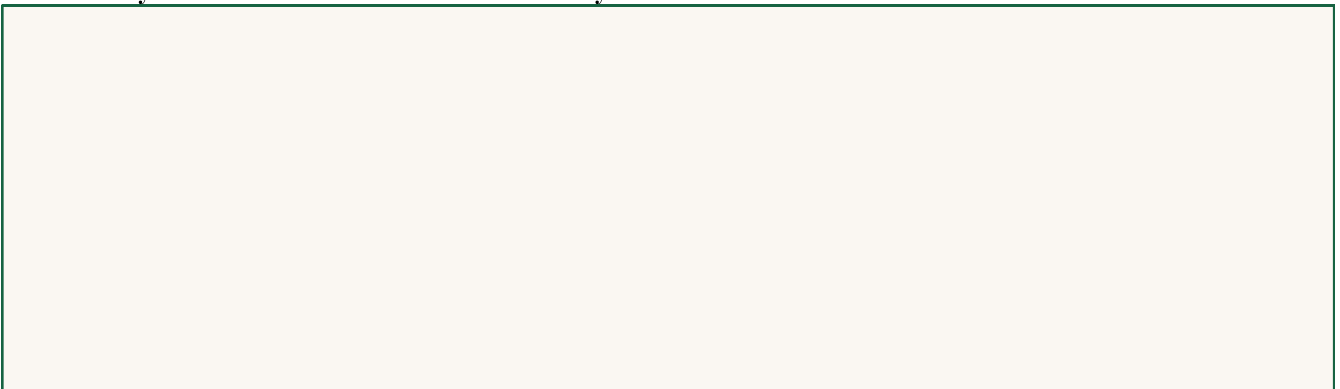
If you create your own, you can establish your own rules - for example, how often you meet, who brings what dishes and wines, and how you want to structure the book discussions. It can be as low-key as you want it to be and just a lot of fun.

Even if you don't finish the book, you still have a chance to hang out and talk about literature. Being a part of a book club can also be a strategy for making yourself sit down, relax, and read, which for most busy people, can be very easy to ignore or put off.

There is just something so calming about curling up on the couch with a glass of wine or a cup of tea and letting your imagination take over. Reading stimulates your brain while giving your body a chance to relax.

And it is a free and easy activity - you can check your neighborhood Facebook page or join a Facebook group for book clubs in your area...or you can start your own book club with a group of girlfriends. Most books are available at the public library, or get it shipped straight to your door on Amazon.

How can you find or start a book club in your area?



# Tip #25: Be Social

Life can be really hard sometimes. We are all under a lot of pressure, and excessive stress seems to have become the norm. We live in a fast-paced society that doesn't show any sign of letting up, and it is easy to get lost in the shuffle.

And what is one of the best ways to deal with stresses of the modern world?

Stop, smile, and have some FUN.

Sometimes the best stress relief is to just put it aside for a day and go have fun with your friends. This could mean a day at the beach, a brunch date with the girls, a couple's dinner date with your besties, or anything fun and social that strikes your fancy.

The point is we tend to isolate when we get anxious, stressed, or depressed. This is not healthy when it is a consistent pattern and will actually make you feel worse. Even though it may seem hard to get out and about, it is often the best thing you can do for yourself when you feel like you are in an ongoing funk.

If you haven't made any weekend plans yet, give your best friend a call and grab some lunch. Have some fun, smile, and enjoy your friends!

## NOTES / REFLECTION

How often do you currently see your friends? Why?

Do you feel like this is frequent enough? Why? If not, how can you change this?

# Tip #26: Give Yourself a Break

Throughout this workbook we have talked about a lot of different ways that you can reduce overwhelm, manage stress, and infuse balance into your life. Whether it is changing your diet, learning how to relax, getting better sleep, or just having fun with friends, we have covered it all.

But it is also important to give yourself a break. Don't be so hard on yourself. Don't worry if things aren't perfect, you missed a day at the gym, or you forgot your breathing practice.

So please:

BE KIND TO YOURSELF

LOVE YOURSELF

AND LOVE EVERYONE AROUND YOU

# — Final Thoughts —

Congratulations! You have completed this manual!

First, we just want to say that at BYBS, we acknowledge the effort, commitment, and discipline it takes to make changes to your habits and routines, and that this can be difficult at times. But please stick with it...we promise you it is totally worth it in the long-run.

Once you get through the rough spots you will feel more balanced, more alive, and more at peace than you ever did before.

To avoid overwhelm, we recommend taking small steps when developing your self-care plan: try just one thing for 30 days, and once that becomes part of your daily routine, then add another. This makes it much more manageable and more likely to result in a positive experience.

We also recommend enlisting friends, family, and community for support. It is helpful to have these resources when times get hard or you feel like you are struggling.

And above all: remember to be kind to yourself; remember to be patient with yourself. You are loved and deserve everything the world has to offer.

Our mission at BYBS is to create a community of people who believe they deserve to feel good, and are empowered with the tools to do so. By focusing on health and wellness for everyone we are also creating a movement of love, support and global change for all.

If the content of this book really resonates, and you are ready to take your wellness journey a step further, check out our team of holistic counselors [HERE](#) and schedule your free consultation today!

Want to learn more about all of our offerings? Check out our website [HERE](#)!

Chat soon!

*The BYBS & Thrive Team*

