

Moving on from a friendship

Not all friendships can withstand the test of time. We grow older, we change, we move on. And through this process we can gain or lose friends along the way.

You may drift apart from some friends naturally or realize suddenly that you're in an unhealthy relationship. WebMD gives us some signs that it may be time to move on:

You're not a priority. You may notice that your friend doesn't make the effort to be with you. Maybe they're hard to reach or don't seem interested. Sometimes this could be temporary if a sudden crisis has appeared in their lives, but if you rarely feel like a priority or if you sense that your friend doesn't think you're worth their time, it's best to move on.

You give more than you take. At times, one person may need more than the other. But if a friend is constantly a taker and rarely a giver, it's not a balanced friendship. If you're always there for them but they don't do the same for you, it may be a sign to say goodbye.

Your friend is disrespectful or mean. Healthy friendships offer support and affirmation. If your friend doesn't respect your feelings, it's an unhealthy relationship. Feeling anxious or negative in your friendship is a sign that it may be best to end it.



If you've peacefully grown apart, no need to have a whole conversation to end your relationship. You can just continue drifting away. But if you feel the need to address things and close the chapter, these steps can help you do it with grace:

Set a time to talk when you're both in a calm and clear headspace. Talking in person or over the phone depends on your comfort level and what kind of terms you've been on.

Start with positive things, such as what you've enjoyed about your friendship or learned from them. Then explain why you've come to this decision using "I" statements and sharing how you feel. This can reduce the chance of them arguing or getting defensive.

Listen, empathize, apologize, and take accountability where it's due.

Set boundaries, if necessary, and wish them well.

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Rage journaling: A creative emotional outlet for anger

Many of us have heard about gratitude journaling and how it helps you recognise and appreciate all of the things you are grateful for, but what about the other thoughts racing through your brain that cause anxiety and stress. What if you are just plain angry?

Enter Rage Journaling.



Research suggests rage journaling can help you reduce stress, process emotions, and boost your well-being. It can help you honour and release pent up emotions, which could be a cathartic experience, according to experts at yourdaily.com. It can also help you avoid reacting out of emotion or starting unnecessary arguments.

Let's face it, life does not always bring sunshine and rainbows. While it's important to not lose sight of the positive aspects in your life, minimizing the 'negative' emotions that keep surfacing may have real consequences. Avoiding your feelings -- consciously or not -- can ultimately lead them to show up in negative ways such as high blood pressure, anxiety, strained relationships, and unhealthy coping strategies.

Rage journaling can be done in the heat of the moment when you're trying to divert anger or as a daily practice to help you process emotions. Whenever you're ready, you can start by following these steps:

Be honest, open, and uncensored about whatever's bothering you. (Freewrite or answer questions such as, "Who was the last person to annoy you? And what did they do?" "Did anything frustrating happen at work today?" Let it all out without a filter!)

Read and reflect once you're done. Did you notice or learn anything about yourself or the situations you wrote about?

Don't share it with anyone! Store the journal entry in a private place.

Repeat every day or as needed.

Remember that rage writing can't take the place of therapy or medication. If you have anger issues or a hard time managing your emotions, consider speaking with a therapist.

Exercise, but make it more enjoyable

Although social media outlets like TikTok might promote trends that are not considered healthy or even safe, sometimes they hit the nail on the head with a simple but productive idea that can help you to start an exercise regimen. A recent phenomenon is known as "cozy cardio". Cozy cardio began in late 2022 by TikToker Hope Zuckerbrow. She's since built a collection of nearly 30 videos on the subject, where she walks other TikTok users through her cozy cardio process. Since she started posting, her cozy cardio content has gotten upwards of 2 million views and has inspired others to post their videos trying the trend. The concept behind this TikTok trend is pretty simple: Complete a gentle cardio workout in comfy clothes and a cozy home environment. It's meant to replace that "no pain, no gain" mentality with more focus on joy and comfort. The hope is that when exercise feels less like a gruelling chore, you might want to do it more often.

According to health.com, while cozy cardio doesn't replace weight training

or a high intensity workout, it can be a great way to build a sustainable, enjoyable exercise practice. The main appeal of cozy cardio is that it takes very little effort to get started. As soon as something requires a lot of effort, it becomes much easier to put it off. To start a cozy cardio routine, you should set the mood and space with the goal of comfort in mind. Turn down the lights, play soothing music or watch your favourite movie, and wear comfy sweats. Then, start with some low impact exercises like using a walking pad or resistance bands. Try stretching on a yoga mat or follow an exercise video. But here's the trick. Once you get your routine up and running and you start to feel better, up the intensity a little bit. Doing a moderate-intensity cozy cardio workout for at least 150 minutes per week can support a healthy lifestyle. But health.com reminds us if we want to grow strength and increase health benefits, we need to challenge ourselves.



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Potential benefits of Vitamin D

Though called vitamin D, it is actually a hormone that plays an important role in the body. After exposure to sunlight, our bodies produce active vitamin D. We can also get it through certain foods as well as supplements.

Vitamin D is fat-soluble and plays a role in the absorption of calcium, regulation of adrenaline, and stimulating smooth muscle cell proliferation. Here are some benefits to vitamin D that you should be aware of:

Improved sleep quality

Vitamin D deficiency has been linked to sleep disorders and poor sleep quality. Vitamin D is related to melatonin, which is the sleep hormone. It's thought that vitamin D may suppress melatonin levels, which is why it is recommended that if supplementing, vitamin D be taken early in the day, preferably in the morning. If you prefer to get vitamin D from the sun, 10 - 25 minutes for lighter skin should do the trick. If you have darker skin, you'll need more time under the rays. Research into the sleep and vitamin D connection is in early stages and yet to be fully understood, but it is believed that the vitamin may positively interact with the part of the brain that helps to regulate sleep.

Helps fight inflammation

Low levels of vitamin D have been linked to inflammation which is linked to lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, and

inflammatory bowel disease. Foods that contain vitamin D include egg yolks, milk, fatty fish, beef, and liver. If you suffer from psoriasis, eczema, acne, rashes, or other skin conditions thought to be related to low vitamin D, you may benefit from consuming these foods on a regular basis, getting more sun, or supplementing. As with any vitamin and supplementation, it is strongly recommended that you ask your doctor and have your levels tested before deciding to supplement.

May help with depression

There is a strong connection between vitamin D deficiency and depression. Sufficient research exists showing that vitamin D is vital for mental health, which includes mood. Research has found that many people who have low levels of circulating vitamin D in their blood also suffer from depression. Studies conducted have mixed results in understanding whether supplementing this hormone can have a positive impact on depression. For this reason, more research is needed, but if you are dealing with depression and have tested low for vitamin D, supplementing may help.

The benefits of vitamin D are indisputable. Depending on where you live, you may be able to get adequate sun exposure for vitamin D production. If you choose to supplement, talk to your doctor first.

Exercises for your lungs

There are countless health benefits of physical activity and exercise. But for those who live with a chronic lung disease working out can be difficult, or, if not done with guidance from your healthcare provider, even unsafe.

Luckily, for people living with a chronic lung disease there are safer exercise options. Gentle, breathing-based exercises, such as tai chi or yoga, can not only improve lung health and capacity, but can also help you cope with the stress, anxiety and depression that unfortunately sometimes accompanies lung disease.

Below are some suggestions of gentle exercises from lung.ca that you may find helpful for physical and emotional health. Remember - always consult your doctor before beginning an exercise routine.

Meditation in motion

Tai chi is an easy, low-intensity exercise that focuses on breathing along with slow motions and poses. This series of movements flow together in a constant motion that is light on the joints and causes minimal muscle stress. It can even be done seated. Many refer to the practice as "meditation in motion". It can be performed individually but is more effective when an instructor is by your side, observing your moves. If you use oxygen or inhalers, keep them nearby during your practice and use them as indicated by your healthcare provider.

Mindful breathing

Yoga is another excellent option for low-impact exercise. The practice of yoga is made up of two essential parts: performing physical poses, called asana, while being mindful of breathing techniques, called pranayama. Both parts are beneficial for maintaining physical and mental fitness.

Holding basic yoga poses can help raise energy levels and strengthen muscles, but it is important not to push yourself if you are uncomfortable. Beginners — especially those living with lung disease — are encouraged to take their time and avoid any poses that may restrict breathing. It is best to get clearance from your healthcare provider before attempting any kind of exercise, including yoga. If you do participate in a yoga class, make sure the teacher is fully qualified and they understand your needs. Many classes are offered specifically for people diagnosed with health conditions.



Colouring books can spark creativity at any age

If you think colouring books are just for kids, you need to think again. These days men and women of all ages are picking up their own colouring books and rediscovering the creativity they thought they had lost so many years ago.

Encouraging adults to pick up their colouring books is big business, and the benefits are anything but kids' stuff. These unique literary creations do more than relieve stress - they can also spark creativity and may even help your career. Here are ways colouring books can foster new ways of thinking and seeing the world.

Stress relief sparks creativity

Everyone knows that stress is a creativity killer. When you are feeling overwhelmed at work, you will not be at the peak of your creativity.

By reducing stress and anxiety, adult colouring books can revive that creative spark. If you have been feeling stressed and watching your creativity slip away, it may be time to pick up your colouring pencils and crayons.

Enhanced focus

The ability to focus is a vital part of success in any workplace, but staying focused can be a huge challenge. Colouring can restore that lost focus in workers of all ages to maintain the attention they need until the job is done.

Some employers have been incredibly impressed with the impact colouring books have had on their staff. A number of major companies have even incorporated colouring classes into their daily activities, encouraging their employees to express their creativity and proudly displaying the results in their offices and lobbies.

May help you sleep

There is nothing like eight hours of uninterrupted sleep but getting that deep sleep can be a real problem. If you are not sleeping well, every part of your life, from your performance on the job to your relationships with your family members, is sure to suffer.

By reducing stress and anxiety, colouring can help you get the sleep you need, so you will awake refreshed and ready to take on the day. The restorative impact of colouring is one of its biggest health benefits.

Take a break from social media

While there may be upsides to connecting online, finding balance with the constant flurry of input from friends, family, celebrities, and brands constantly vying for our attention can get out of hand. Remember, your mental health is more important than your likes or if your cute post is trending. So, what do you do instead?

When you step away from the screen, there's an endless array of options depending on your needs. Here are some suggestions from healthline.com:

If you find you reach for your phone when you have a little down time, consider swapping for these options instead:

- Take a walk around the block.
- Put on some music.
- Bake something delicious.
- Play with a pet.
- Look at old photos and reminisce.

If you find yourself longing for some human connection and the desire to check your feed arises, try these activities instead:

- Call a friend or family member.
- Invite someone over for dinner or coffee.
- Bake something and offer it to your neighbours, lingering to chat when you deliver it.
- Volunteer at a local food bank or other organization.

- Join a community group, like a church, nonprofit, or club.

Instead of memes and 30-second videos, try these suggestions for entertainment:

- Go see some live music.
- Learn an instrument.
- Take a dance or martial arts class.
- Take a trip to a local museum.
- Try your hand at gardening.
- Listen to a podcast.
- Gather some friends or family and play a board game.

While taking breaks from social media is great, it's important to be realistic about your use. If social media is a part of your life, that's OK. There are ways to lessen the negative effects and enhance the positive effects of social media, even while you're using it. For example, you can:

- Unfollow accounts that have a negative effect on your mood or self-image.
- Remove photos from your own profile that trigger self-judgment.
- Delete any negative DMs, trolling, or spam.
- Unsave posts that encourage you to compare yourself to others.



Calm those restless legs

You're tired enough to hit the sack. But as you wait for sleep, your legs don't seem ready to call it a day. You have this urge to move them about to tire them. You might experience a crawling sensation, cramps, itchiness, numbness--or even pain--and you wonder what's ailing your lower limbs.

What you're suffering from is called Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS). Although it's not known for sure what causes it, doctors believe it is brought on by stress, vitamin deficiency, an imbalance in the brain chemical dopamine, or genetic factors. However, RLS is neither life-threatening nor a symptom of a neurological condition, and there are steps you can take to deal with it.

Give your legs a workout

Choose an exercise regimen that you can stick with. If you're not into jogging, high-intensity training, or weight-lifting, you'd do fine with a brisk 30-minute walk every day. You'll burn fat, sweat out all those toxins and excess salts, and come through feeling good about yourself. What's more, walking would give your legs a good workout, leaving them relaxed and less RLS-prone.

Get that vitamin charge

Various studies have established a correlation between iron deficiency and RLS. Research has also shown that those with genetically acquired RLS seem to have a higher-than-normal requirement for folic acid. On its website, PeaceHealth lists L-tryptophan, magnesium, and vitamins D and E as being beneficial in reducing the symptoms of RLS and improving the quality of sleep.

Cut down on sugar

Avoid foods with added sugar, including candy, cookies, cakes, baked items, chocolate, ice-cream, sweetened cereals, and all sweetened beverages. Focus on nutrient- and fibre-rich foods such as fruits, vegetables, fish, and whole grains, as these will help prevent RLS.

Say no to tea and coffee

You don't have to give up these beverages for good. Just be sure you don't pick up a pick-me-up late in the day, and definitely not close to bedtime. Tea and coffee contain the stimulant caffeine, which will keep you charged up when it's time to sleep and further exacerbate your RLS problem.

The pathology of RLS differs from person to person, so cures or treatments that work for some may not work for others. If you suffer from RLS, try to make lifestyle changes and see if they alleviate RLS symptoms, or put an end to RLS for good. Talk with your health care provider about what could be best for you.

Understanding cardiac arrest, heart failure, heart attack and myocarditis

When young sports stars like Bronny James, Damar Hamlin, and Christian Eriksen collapse on the court or field people start talking about cardiac arrest, myocardial infarction, heart attack, heart failure, and myocarditis. But what does it all mean?

The difference between a heart attack and sudden cardiac arrest

The terms heart attack and cardiac arrest are often used interchangeably, but they are not the same. A heart attack or myocardial infarction is the result of a blockage in the blood flow to the heart muscle. This is commonly caused by atherosclerosis, a buildup of plaque in the arteries that supply blood to the heart. If the plaque ruptures it forms a blood clot that inhibits blood flow and results in a heart attack.

The symptoms of a heart attack include chest pains, shortness of breath, cold sweats, discomfort or pain in one or both arms, back, neck, jaw, or stomach pains, dizziness, and nausea.

Cardiac arrest is the sudden loss of heart function and usually happens without warning. It is a medical emergency that can cause brain damage or death within minutes, but with immediate treatment, including CPR or defibrillation, it is possible to survive sudden cardiac arrest.

Bronny James (basketball player and older son of basketball legend LeBron James), Damar Hamlin, (NFL Player), and Christian

Eriksen (Danish soccer player), all suffered sudden cardiac arrest while playing sport. They survived because they received swift medical attention on the field or court.

What is heart failure?

Heart failure means the heart muscle doesn't function as well as it should and it can't pump enough oxygen- and nutrient-rich blood to the cells of the body. It is usually caused by coronary artery disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, or myocarditis.

Heart failure is a long-term condition. Over time blood builds up in other parts of the body, most commonly the lungs and legs. People with heart failure suffer from fatigue and shortness of breath, making everyday activities such as walking and climbing stairs difficult. While there is no cure for heart failure, it can be managed with medication and a healthy lifestyle.

What is myocarditis?

Myocarditis is the inflammation of the heart muscle and it reduces the heart's ability to pump and supply blood to the body effectively. The most common cause of myocarditis is an infection, but it can also be caused by a reaction to drugs or medication. Symptoms include chest pains, fatigue, and a rapid or irregular heartbeat and in some cases, blood clots form, leading to a stroke or heart attack.

Heart health needs to be taken seriously and if a person experiences any signs of heart disease or distress, they need to seek medical attention immediately.

Does your height affect your health?

Research is showing there may be an upside to being short. A study in a cardiovascular journal links your risk of blood clots to your height, with taller people having a greater risk.

Blood clotting, also known by the medical term thrombosis, is a relatively unknown but common condition. Worldwide, one in four people die of conditions caused by blood clots. Thrombosis involves blood clots forming most often in the deep vein of the leg (known as deep vein thrombosis), which can travel in the circulation and lodge in the lungs, causing potentially serious breathing problems.

While being tall is one predictor of the condition, other factors could also contribute to increased risk. Obesity, cancer and immobility all add to your chances of developing a blood clot. It's important to know

the risks, because many people, especially if hospitalized, may have little or no symptoms of a blood clot until a life-threatening situation occurs.

Another risk factor for thrombosis is having an irregular heart beat (atrial fibrillation). You're at a greater risk of this condition if you drink alcohol, are obese, or have heart disease, or if you have high blood pressure or other chronic conditions like sleep apnea.

Fortunately, if you are on the taller side or have any of these risk factors, there are steps you can take to reduce your odds. Ask your health professional if you are at risk and get evaluated.

Find more information at www.thrombosiscanada.ca.

Take an effective approach to stress relief

(NC) Dealing with stress is practically a modern hobby. We invest fortunes in the latest fads for stress relief: spas, relaxation techniques, books, phone apps, gadgets and gizmos designed to ease our minds. But are we really taking the most effective approach?

If stress-relief techniques are not cutting it, go to the source. Take some serious time to evaluate the causes of stress in your life so you can reduce and eliminate them. Here are some common stressors and ideas for how to address them.

Money. Consumer culture tells us to spend, spend, spend, and it's easy to get caught up in the hype. But not feeling in control of your financial situation can be a major stress point. Make sure your purchases are things that really bring you joy and are not just for keeping up with the neighbours. Having a monthly budget will keep you on track and bring back your sense of control. If you're feeling overwhelmed, seek help from a financial planner. Having a good handle on your finances can lift a huge weight from your shoulders.

Your home. Shelter is a basic human need; we all need a safe haven where we can rest and relax. If your living situation brings you more stress than comfort, imagine (realistically) what kind of home would bring you peace. That mansion in the hills is a fun fantasy, but keep your goals achievable. If too much maintenance is wearing you out, look at ways you can change that such as low maintenance landscaping. If clutter is making you claustrophobic, purge. Enlist the help of friends or an organizing expert if you have trouble things letting go.

Your environment. The people we interact with, our homes, workspaces and larger environment all have a huge effect on our well-being. Think about your previous week and where you were during times of stress. Perhaps talking with a negative acquaintance, sitting in traffic or working in a noisy office were triggers. Once you identify your stress points, you can do something about them. Changes can be big, but don't have to be. Simply cutting out a toxic relationship, finding a more scenic route to work or investing in some noise-cancelling headphones may be a great first step in reducing your environmental stressors. Tackle one issue at a time and work your way from small on up.

energy zone

Your favourite cozy spice is a healthy one, too! Cinnamon is high in antioxidants, which may help protect against disease, inflammation and ageing. What's more, it may improve gut health, dental hygiene, reduce cholesterol levels and lower blood pressure.

This doesn't mean you should add a ton of cinnamon to everything you eat says WebMD, but 2-4 grams per day is probably a good place to start.

Cinnamon!

One teaspoon (3g) of cinnamon (ground) provides:

7kcal / 31kJ

0.1g protein

2g carbohydrate

1.6g fibre

Put cinnamon in whatever you fancy including oatmeal, coffee or on your toast in the morning.

