

# 5 HABITS FOR *Lifelong Happiness*

## *1. Be Present*

Family, work, and digital screens all compete for our attention. Learn to be present to enjoy a more peaceful inner and spiritual life. Meditation, mindfulness, and centering prayer make us feel calm and balanced. Try it! Find a quiet spot to sit, close your eyes, and focus on your breathing for 1-2 minutes. It gets easier with regular practice!

## *2. Stay Active*

Do increased muscle tone, bone strength, faster reflexes, and sharper cognitive function sound good? You have to start--and--keep, moving! Go for a short walk, then see if you can increase your walk by 10 more steps the next day. Make exercise a non-negotiable part of your self-care, even if you start with just 5 minutes a day.

## *3. Mix It Up!*

We used to think of brain capacity as fixed and destined to decline with age. We now know that our brains generate new neurons for life. Seeking novel and learning-rich opportunities helps keep these neurons alive for longer. Watch a TedTalk on YouTube, see stand-up comedy; make a new friend; travel, and say "yes" more often.

## *4. Prioritize Healthy Eating*

Heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, bone loss, certain cancers, and anemia aren't inevitable. They can largely be avoided with a healthy diet. Aim for 6 servings of fruits and vegetables daily. Stock up on fresh, whole foods and spices. Use boxed and processed foods only sparingly. Store cut up fruits and veggies for quick, easy snacks.

## *5. Pray Regularly.*

We pray to communicate with God. But prayer also activates deeper parts of the brain that foster self-reflection and self-soothing. Instead of reacting to stress in negative ways, we begin to reflect and respond with clear hearts and minds while growing closer to God.



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