



## TOP WELLNESS TRENDS 2019



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*There are many ways to stay healthy, from broad categories like managing diet and exercise to niche strategies like “forest-bathing” and brain-boosting.*

*Here are a few of the most popular pathways to well-being for the year ahead.*

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### **GIVE YOURSELF A BREAK.**

It’s easy to become obsessed about self care. There are many sources of information telling us what we should be doing to enhance our well-being: yoga, cycling, meditation, making herbal smoothies, keeping in touch with friends and family, learning new things, volunteering ... the list goes on. You can’t do everything, yet not doing them can trigger guilt and panic attacks, which can have the reverse effect on your well-being.

### **NO OVERTRAINING.**

This is related to the above, but refers specifically to working out. Over-exercising can lead to hormonal imbalance including too much testosterone and cortisol (our stress hormone). It can cause you to overeat or cause the body to burn muscle instead of fat. Over-training and injuries have ushered in a new let’s-slow-down mentality, with people focusing on good habits and recovery classes instead. Try low-impact exercises or yoga instead of, or in between, high-intensive workouts.

### **EATING PLANT BASED FOODS**

There are so many warnings out there about what not to eat: meat, carbs, sugar, alcohol, pasta ... and the list goes on. But no one ever says: “don’t eat vegetables.” Vegetables are super foods, with the bulk of the vitamins and nutrients you need for your body. They are packed with nutrition and body and brain enhancing goodness, and should be eaten every day. Vegetables are good and they’re good for you.

## **TRY MEDITATION**

It has been around for a long time, but meditation is gaining ground as a powerful mainstream wellness trend. Along with a healthy diet and exercise, it is considered one of the three pillars of well-being. More people are learning about the specific types of meditation and what they can do for your body and your mind. Meditation studios, brands and apps are now available, and Apple even named mental wellness/mindfulness apps the #1 app trend of 2018.

## **ENHANCE YOUR FINANCIAL WELLNESS**

Building wealth and being financially healthy can significantly enhance your well-being. More people, particularly women and millennials, are learning to be the drivers of their own financial futures, using self-driven financial wellness strategies and learning financial literacy. Being stressed about money can impact day-to-day engagement at work and spill over into negative health effects. Find a course or app that provides information on credit and debt management and creating an investment portfolio.

## **BOOST YOUR BRAIN.**

Nootropics are supplements that may improve cognitive function, particularly executive functions, memory, creativity, or motivation. Some of them contain amino acids such as stress-reducing L-theanine, found in tea leaves and some mushrooms. Another is the stimulant phenylethylamine, a natural chemical found in the body that is said to enhance athletic performance, mood and attention.

## **UNPLUG.**

Sometimes consuming social media is related to work, and therefore unavoidable, but often it is just a time-waster. Many people now take regular breaks from social media and the internet to participate in other hobbies offline, to travel or spend more time with family. Some simply decide they don't need it at all, and find it is an unnecessary distraction. There are now a variety of apps and tools that help us monitor our use of social media.

## **GO ALOCHOL FREE**

When consumed regularly, alcohol can lead to disease, cancer, obesity and addiction. Health-wise, it is counter to all of the other work you put in to stay healthy, canceling out the benefits of exercise, healthy eating, meditation and yoga. It can deplete your body of vitamin B, and lead to drunk driving. Booze-free social gatherings are on the rise, and people are increasingly avoiding the bar at holiday parties. Mocktails are all the rage. Here's the first step: Learn to say no.

## **TAKE PART IN GREEN EXERCISE**

Exercising in a natural environment improves mood, and attention span, relieves stress, and lowers heart rate and blood pressure, as well as the risk of diabetes, osteoporosis and some cancers. The Japanese call it forest bathing – being enveloped by the outdoor atmosphere, including the sounds, colors and smells, produces a healthy state of mindfulness. According to a study by the European Society of Cardiology, those who take a brisk walk daily for at least 25 minutes could be adding at least three years to their lives.

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