



a Foodie Stays Fit

Healthy Not Hectic

PHASE I: DE-STRESS

A 21-day Blueprint to Build a Healthy
Lifestyle that Lasts

HEALTHY NOT HECTIC

PHASE I: DE-STRESS

"Willpower isn't just a skill. It's a muscle, like the muscles in your arms or legs, and it gets tired as it work harder, so there's less power left over for other things." - Charles Duhigg

The good news is you can strengthen willpower. The more you resist a cookie, the easier it becomes to resist a cookie. But, the more stressed out you are ... and the more you have on your figurative plate ... and the more things you HAVE to get done ... and the more you have on your mind that just stresses you the heck out, the harder it will be to use willpower when you need it.

And a lack of willpower will make healthy habits hard to keep, even if you focus on the Cue, Routine, Reward cycle.

To help combat this, the first phase of healthy habits is getting you to de-stress to set you up for success.

Each daily task is small, but manageable and intended to build on the previous day's task.

DAY 1 | GO TO BED 15 MINUTES EARLIER

Don't play with your phone in bed—plug it in across the room or in a different room. If you use your phone for an alarm, put it on airplane mode so you aren't distracted by notifications or tempted to scroll on Instagram. Also, the light on your phone can make it harder for you to fall asleep, which will make it less likely you will get a deep sleep. We want deep sleep so we wake up refreshed and less stressed. Put your phone away ideally 45 minutes before bedtime. Pick up a book instead.

DAY 2 | DO A BRAIN-DUMP OF TO-DO'S AT THE END OF THE DAY

Keep a notepad next to your bed and write down everything that's on your mind. If applicable, note what time you plan to do each item. This clears your head and will help you relax, knowing you have a game plan to attack everything that's on your plate. That in turn will help you sleep better.

DAY 3 | CULTIVATE GRATITUDE

Send a text (or better yet, mail a card!) to a friend or loved one to just to let them know how much you appreciate them. Be specific or be generic in your note - it doesn't matter; just get in the habit of recognizing how much you have to be grateful for and pass on that gratitude to the ones who support you the most. Research shows people who regularly cultivate gratitude are happier and less stressed.

DAY 4 | ALLOW AN EXTRA 10 MINUTES FOR ANY GIVEN TASK

Leave 10 minutes earlier than you think you need to for an appointment or if you think dinner will take 30 minutes to make, plan on it taking 40 minutes. Being rushed increases stress levels. Give yourself extra time and if you don't need it, you'll enjoy the extra relief of being early and decrease stress even less.

DAY 5 | OUTLINE YOUR IDEAL DAY

Write down your (realistic) perfect day. Don't think about schedules or time constraints. Think about when you're on vacation and rolling solo and what you savor the most during that time. Maybe it's an extra long workout, maybe it's a long leisurely breakfast, maybe it's taking a nap. Then, look at your ideal day and identify something in there that is sustainable and realistic that you could actually include in your everyday life. I love reading on vacation without distractions or the pressure of daily life. The way I incorporate this into my day-to-day life is turning my phone off and reading for 15 minutes, every day.

DAY 6 | PLAN A RECOVERY ACTIVITY EACH WEEK, AND NOTE IT ON YOUR CALENDAR

Self care is so important, and we often (especially women!) focus on taking care of others and don't leave any time for ourselves. A little self care each day goes a long way. Find a way each day to incorporate self-care; sometimes it will be small and simple and other days, it will be an indulgent splurge. Just make it a habit that you give yourself some love. Some of my favorite recovery activities are taking an epsom salt bath (bonus: this also helps with sleep!), getting a massage, meditating, going on walk with a friend, or reading (see Day 5!).

DAY 7 | PICK A SPOT YOU USE DAILY & STREAMLINE IT

Making a daily task easier frees up energy and willpower in your brain so you can use it on more high-value activities, like cooking a healthy dinner or getting yourself to the gym after a long day. I make coffee every morning, but I realized my coffee corner was a mess. It was hard for me to reach. The shelf was scattered with ground coffee. It was overcrowded with mugs and coffee filters. I swapped which cabinet all my coffee supplies are in so I could have a more organized and easily accessible space, and I moved my coffee maker to be directly under it. That small tweak made my mornings so much nicer because I didn't have to fiddle or get frustrated by all the clutter. Maybe your pantry is full of stale cereals that need to be tossed, or your sock drawer is a complete disaster and you have to dig for matches every morning, or your make-up bag is full of crumbly eye shadow. Find something you deal with daily and make it an easier, less stressful experience.