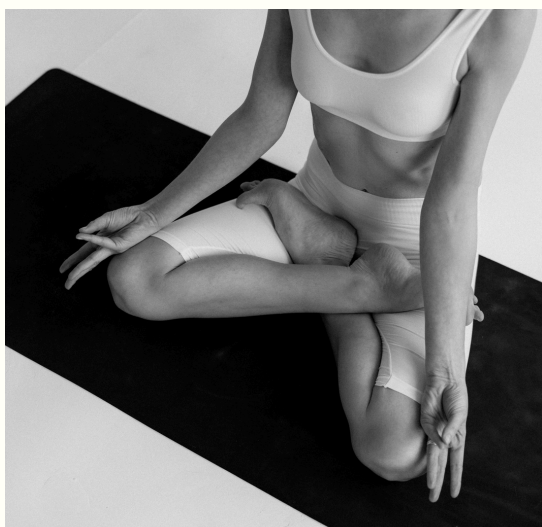


2025

INS & OUTS

Integrating Wellness Into Your Everyday Routine

As the calendar flips to a new year, many of us are eager to create fresh, healthy habits that can elevate our physical, mental, and emotional well-being. The start of the year gives us a chance to reflect on what works in our lives, what no longer serves us, and the excuses we may have been giving ourselves. Here are our Wellness Ins & Outs for 2025 and beyond. Use them as inspiration to identify the habits and practices you'd like to embrace, as well as those you may want to release, in order to create a healthier, more balanced year ahead.



January 6, 2025

In's

Reading is a powerful tool for mental growth and emotional health. Whether you're diving into fiction for excitement or reading non-fiction to learn new perspectives, books can enhance your knowledge, reduce stress, and improve focus. Reading can even boost empathy, helping you connect with others more deeply. If you're looking to cultivate a mindful year, make space for books that encourage personal growth and mindfulness.

Non-Toxic Everything. The products we use—on our skin, in our homes, and on our bodies—affect not just our health but the environment around us. From skincare to cleaning products, many conventional items are filled with harmful chemicals linked to hormone disruption, allergies, and long-term health issues. Non-toxic alternatives (like natural skincare, eco-friendly cleaning products, and toxin-free candles) are better for your body, the planet, and even your mood. A shift toward non-toxic living reduces exposure to harmful substances, supporting your overall health and wellness.

Movement to Feel Good. Exercise doesn't have to be a punishing routine—movement should make you feel better, not worse. Research shows that regular movement boosts endorphins, which improve mood and reduce stress. Whether it's lifting, yoga, walking, or even a fun workout class, when you move with joy, your body and mind thrive. Even 30 minutes of moderate exercise a few times a week can reduce stress and boost relaxation. So, maybe this year, focus on activities that you truly enjoy rather than a strict regimen.

Kind Words. They have immense power, both externally and internally. Studies on positive self-talk suggest that speaking kindly to yourself can boost self-esteem, reduce stress, and improve mental health. Similarly, when you speak kindly to others, you create an environment of compassion, strengthening relationships and reducing conflict. Practicing kindness, whether through affirmations, praise, or even just a simple compliment, contributes to a more positive and supported life.

Sleep Prioritization. Good sleep is essential for overall well-being. Sleep affects everything from brain function to emotional regulation to immune system performance. Studies consistently show that poor sleep is linked to a higher risk of chronic diseases, including heart disease, diabetes, and mental health disorders like anxiety and depression. Prioritizing sleep means setting healthy boundaries (avoid late-night screen time!) and creating a restful environment, helping you feel more energized, clear-headed, and emotionally balanced for the days to come.

Baths. Soaking in a warm bath does more than just relax your muscles—it can help with mental clarity, stress relief, and even skin health. Romanticize it by adding clean and safe Epsom salts which can boost magnesium levels, which is shown to help reduce inflammation and muscle tension. Aromatherapy oils like lavender or eucalyptus have been shown to reduce anxiety and promote relaxation. A warm bath can be an act of self-care that nurtures both body and mind, leaving you feeling fresher than ever.

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Whole Foods. Eating a diet rich in whole, minimally processed foods supports your body's natural functions. Foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats provide essential nutrients, help maintain energy levels, and promote better digestion. A 2020 study published in the *Journal of Nutritional Biochemistry* linked whole-food diets with reduced inflammation, which plays a significant role in preventing chronic disease. This year and maybe even the next thousand, aim to fill your plate with vibrant, nutrient-dense foods for a healthier body and mind.

Oil Pulling. An ancient Ayurvedic practice that involves swishing oil (like coconut or sesame) in your mouth for 10-15 minutes. It's believed to improve oral hygiene by reducing plaque buildup, freshening breath, and promoting gum health. A 2016 study published in the *Journal of Contemporary Dental Practice* found that oil pulling with coconut oil reduced plaque and gum inflammation. It's a simple, natural way to boost oral health while detoxifying your body. If you ask some individuals about their personal experience they might even say it naturally whitened their teeth...

Responding, Not Reacting. In today's fast-paced world, it's easy to fall into the trap of reacting impulsively to stressful situations. Practicing mindfulness—pausing before reacting—helps to reduce emotional reactivity and promote more thoughtful, balanced and unproblematic responses. Learning to respond thoughtfully, rather than react automatically, helps preserve your energy and relationships.

Limit Alcohol. While a glass of wine can be a nice way to unwind, overconsumption of alcohol is linked to a range of health problems, including liver disease, disrupted sleep, and an increased risk of mental health issues like depression and anxiety. Cutting back on alcohol can lead to better sleep quality, more stable moods, and improved physical health. Plus, it's easier to stick to your wellness goals when you're not relying on alcohol to “relax” or unwind.

Dancing is not only fun but also a powerful form of exercise that can elevate your mood and improve cardiovascular health. Studies show that dancing helps reduce stress and anxiety while boosting self-esteem. It's a full-body workout that releases endorphins and is a great way to keep your body moving without feeling like it's a traditional workout. Whether you're doing a solo dance party at home or joining a class, dancing is a joyful way to add movement into your life.

Meditation is one of the most effective ways to cultivate mental clarity, reduce stress, and improve emotional health. Even just a few minutes of meditation each day can lower cortisol levels, improve concentration, and promote feelings of calm. Research from Harvard University shows that regular meditation actually increases gray matter in the brain, which is associated with improved memory and emotional regulation. Whether you practice mindfulness, box breathing, or guided meditation, making this a part of your routine will foster deeper peace and focus for you and hopefully those around you!

Out's

Going to Bed Late. Staying up late—especially scrolling through your phone or watching TV—throws off your body's natural circadian rhythm and reduces the quality of your sleep. Inadequate sleep is linked to increased risk of obesity, depression, and even heart disease. Aim for 7-9 hours of quality sleep each night to allow your body to rest, repair, and recharge.

Messy Spaces. Cluttered spaces can lead to cluttered minds. When your environment is disorganized, it can increase stress, reduce focus, and even affect your productivity. Research has shown that living in a tidy environment can reduce anxiety and create a more peaceful, clear-headed atmosphere. Just start somewhere, maybe its just one space at a time or clearing out some old photos on your phone, decluttering will lift weight off your shoulders you didn't even know you had!

Negative Self-Talk. Self-criticism erodes confidence and can contribute to mental health challenges like anxiety and depression. Negative self-talk creates a toxic cycle of self-doubt and undermines your ability to thrive. It's not you, my dear... it's the cycle your mind has been trained to follow, and we all know how hard it is to break a vicious cycle. Yet, you have the power to shift the narrative. Try by practicing positive affirmations and encouraging thoughts. Treat yourself the way you would treat a dear friend—with true kindness and compassion.

Binge-Watching Shows. While a Netflix binge can be a fun form of entertainment, excessive screen time has been linked to poor sleep quality, sedentary behavior, and even mental health issues. Instead of mindlessly watching TV, aim to balance your screen time with other activities that nourish your body and mind, like reading, cooking, or getting outdoors.

The "I'll Just Start Tomorrow" Procrastination delays progress, keeping you trapped in the cycle of 'tomorrow.' We all know it... that painful cycle we love to repeat! The excuses we create only fuel our negative behaviors. The truth is, today—right now—is the best time to take small or large actions toward your goals. Start now and build momentum for success. The sooner you begin, the sooner you'll see the results. You might stumble, caught in your old habits, but don't forget: you have the power to jump back into the new and improved cycle you are creating!

The New Year brings with it a unique opportunity to reflect, reset, and realign with what matters most. By embracing the **In's**—habits that nourish

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