

Turn Holiday Stress into Self-Care Success



Dear *{{First Name}}* ,

The holiday season is upon us and with each December day that passes our to-do lists seem to get longer, with more anxiety and urgency attached to them. As a result, we find ourselves going through the motions and checking off events as obligations, rather than times to be savored and enjoyed. In addition, these increasingly pressure-filled occasions can cause us to overindulge in food, drink and late nights; leaving us depleted, exhausted and unfulfilled. Sound familiar? It's OK - we have some suggestions to bring back the joy of the holiday season. A little self-care goes a long way and doesn't have to involve fancy, expensive spa getaways (although that sounds pretty fantastic too)!

First, take a big, deep breath to regain your focus and connection to your family, friends and world. Not just one breath, take as many as you need, as often as you need. Your breath is your greatest tool for centering yourself, lowering anxiety and realigning your universe. Plus, it's always with you and its free! Let moments unfold as they will; savor how they are, just as they are - we really don't need to control everything. And a personal favorite, consider avoiding obligations that start with "I should" – it's OK to say, "Thank you, but I can't."

Lastly, if all the holiday events and feasts are getting the best of you, this may be an opportunity to practice some intermittent fasting, a type of scheduled eating plan where you adjust your normal daily eating period to an hours-long window of time, without worrying about cutting calories. Gift yourself and your loved ones with nourishing meals, time in nature, and supportive supplements to turn holiday stress into holiday bliss. Set your intention to enjoy the holidays by practicing gratitude and generosity. When in doubt just smile - it's another free medicine that rocks!

Sending love & health this holiday season,
The Marion Institute Team

The Gift of Health, from Our Family to Yours: Winter Wellness Tonic

The Marion Institute's Executive Director, Liz Wiley, shares the gift of healing via a soothing tonic to cure all (OK, maybe not all) your winter woes!

"We use this tonic at our house when we are feeling run down or a cold coming on. I make a large batch and drink it throughout the day."

INGREDIENTS*

- Large Mason jar (64 oz) or other large heat-resistant container
- 1 large lemon
- 2-3 gloves of garlic, roughly chopped
- 1-inch piece of ginger, peeled and roughly chopped (turmeric works great too.)
- Approx. 5 sprigs of Thyme
- Healthy dollop of honey – 1 large Tbls or more to taste
- 1-2 Tbs of Apple Cider Vinegar (ACV)

*Organic or locally-sourced ingredients are preferable.

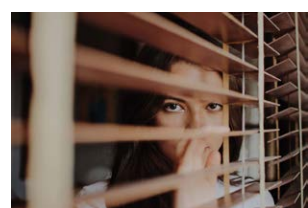
DIRECTIONS

- Squeeze all the juice out of the lemon —seeds and all—then drop the lemon in the container with the juice; you will strain everything at the end.
- Add remaining ingredients (prepared as directed) into the Mason jar and fill with hot water.
- Let sit, covered with a tea towel, for about 10 minutes.
- Strain the tonic into a cup and leave the rest to keep brewing. The longer it sits the more potent it becomes.
- Add more hot water to your cup as you continue to finish off the tonic.



BioBlog: When it's More Than the "Holiday Blues"...

The statistics on mental health in America are sobering; depression, anxiety, and other more serious mental health problems are depriving the happiness, and peace of so many. And although the holidays are joyous, they present another layer of stress through additional financial, mental, and physical demands.



BMN sponsor, The Biologix Center, discusses the tenants of a bioregulatory approach to mental health by addressing traumas, temperaments, underlying genetic/epigenetic predispositions, or other biochemical interference. Pharmaceutical chemicals merely mask these underlying causes. [READ MORE >>](#)



FaLaLaLocal: 3 Reasons to Buy Local this Holiday

Tis' the Season to SHOP! What does socially-minded holiday shopping look like? We believe it means keeping our money local by supporting artisans and social entrepreneurs that also shop locally and give back to the community in which they live. Here are a few more reasons to shop local this holiday:



1. Buying local is an investment in your local economy. Keeping our money close to home strengthens the economic base of our communities, restores the regional infrastructure, and preserves local culture. In fact, when you shop local, you [return three times more of your money](#) to your community than if you had made a purchase at a big box store or national chain store.
2. Buying local reduces our environmental impact! Less transportation of goods means less pollution, less sprawl, and improved land conservation. Give a gift to the environment and to future generations by supporting the sustainable business model that small businesses advocate.

Last – and perhaps the most easily overlooked – buying local promotes the purchasing of gifts that are more personal, unique and thoughtful. An original handmade gift ensures a level of high craftsmanship and originality that is unmatched by national chains or corporations. You can also think outside the box and give memberships, experiences, or other unique items that will provide benefit long after the holidays have passed. For example, give the gift of health with a pre-paid CSA distribution or purchase a gift card from a local artisan for a class or maker event. Buying local is a gift to the whole community!



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#1 holiday hack:

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