BRIGHTER TOGETHER

Your health & wellness matters!

Q2-2025

SPRING CLEANING FOR MIND & SPACE: *A Fresh Start!*

As we welcome longer days and warmer weather, spring offers the perfect opportunity to hit "reset" — not just in our homes, but in our minds. Spring cleaning isn't only about dusting shelves and decluttering closets. It's also a proven strategy to improve mental well-being, reduce stress, and foster a sense of clarity.

DECLUTTER TO DE-STRESS

Visual clutter can contribute to mental clutter. Studies have shown that disorganized environments can increase stress hormones like cortisol, especially in women. By clearing out your physical space, you create room to breathe — both literally and emotionally. Tackling just one drawer, surface, or room at a time can bring an immediate sense of accomplishment and relief.

CREATE SPACE FOR WHAT MATTERS

Whether it's letting go of outdated paperwork, old clothes, or unused tech, spring cleaning invites us to re-evaluate what we need and why we're holding on. This process helps sharpen decision-making and encourages more intentional living. Ask yourself: *Does this item support the life I'm trying to build?* If not, it may be time to let it go.

USE CLEANING AS A MINDFUL PRACTICE

Rather than rushing through chores, use them as an opportunity to slow down and be present. Feel the texture of what you're sorting, notice your breathing as you fold laundry, and focus on one task at a time. This simple shift in awareness can turn routine tidying into a grounding, meditative experience.

MENTAL CLARITY THROUGH PHYSICAL ORDER

An organized space supports better focus, fewer distractions, and clearer thinking. If you work from home, consider reorganizing your desk or setting up a calming corner that invites creativity and calm. Even small changes — like adding natural light or reducing paper piles — can have a big impact on your productivity and peace of mind.

SPRING FORWARD WITH INTENTION

Just like nature begins to bloom in spring, this season can be your chance to renew habits, realign goals, and feel lighter. Whether you clean out a closet, refresh your digital files, or simply open the windows for fresh air, every step counts.

TIPS FOR A CLEARER MIND

Start Small: Begin with one drawer, shelf, or surface. Quick wins build momentum and help avoid overwhelm.

Use the "Joy Test": Ask yourself: *Does this item serve a purpose or bring me joy?* If not, consider letting it go.

Clear Digital Clutter: Unsubscribe from email lists, delete unused apps, and organize your desktop to reduce mental noise.

Set a Timer: Dedicate 15–20 minutes per day. Short bursts of focused effort can add up without burning you out.

Donate with Intention: Give gently used items to local shelters or charities. It adds purpose to the process and helps others.

Refresh Your Space: Open the windows, add greenery, or swap out décor to bring fresh energy into your environment.

Check in With Yourself: Notice how your mood shifts as you declutter. Less mess often brings more calm.

This content is for informational purposes only and does not constitute professional advice. Readers should contact a professional for appropriate advice.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

Build Resilience, One Step at a Time

May is Mental Health Awareness Month — a timely opportunity to pause, reflect, and check in with yourself. In today's busy world, building emotional resilience and preventing burnout isn't just helpful — it's essential.

Why It Matters: Mental health impacts every area of our lives, from relationships and focus to physical wellness and workplace productivity. Even small, daily actions can make a meaningful difference.

THE 5-4-3-2-1 GROUNDING TECHNIQUE:

This mindfulness exercise uses your senses to help bring you into the present moment when anxiety or overwhelm hits:

- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can touch
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste

Seeking Support: If you're feeling persistently low, disconnected, or overwhelmed, reaching out for help is a sign of strength — not weakness. Whether it's a trusted friend, therapist, or employee assistance program, support is always available. Prioritizing your mental well-being helps you show up more fully — for yourself, your work, and the people you care about.

OUTDOOR MOVEMENT & VITAMIN D

Brighten Your Mood, Strengthen Your Body

Spending time outdoors isn't just refreshing — it's essential for physical and mental well-being. Just 10–30 minutes of sunlight a few times a week can help your body produce enough vitamin D to support bone health, immunity, and mood regulation.

QUICK WAYS TO BOOST YOUR SUNSHINE TIME:

- **Walk During Breaks:** A short walk on your lunch break can increase energy and improve focus.
- **Stretch Outside:** Take your morning stretches or yoga routine to your balcony or backyard.
- **Outdoor Calls:** Opt for walking phone calls in the fresh air when possible.

Don't forget to protect your skin while enjoying the sunshine. Apply SPF 30+, wear protective gear, and aim for morning or late afternoon sun to avoid peak UV exposure.

Blueberry & Banana Oatmeal

Makes 6 servings

INGREDIENTS

- 2 ripe bananas, mashed (about 250 mL/1 cup)
- 250 mL (1 cup) skim milk or unsweetened fortified plant-based beverage
- 2 eggs
- 5 mL (1 tsp) vanilla
- 20 mL (1 ½ tbsp) vegetable oil
- 375 mL (1 ½ cups) rolled oats
- 5 mL (1 tsp) cinnamon
- 2 mL (½ tsp) baking powder
- 250 mL (1 cup) fresh or frozen blueberries

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 190 °C (375 °F) and lightly spray a 20x20 cm (8x8-inch) square baking dish.
2. In a medium bowl, mix together mashed banana, milk, eggs, vanilla, and vegetable oil.
3. In the same bowl, mix together oats, cinnamon, and baking powder. Fold in blueberries.
4. Add batter into lightly sprayed baking dish and bake for 30 minutes or until edges are golden brown. Let cool before serving.

"Clear your space, calm your mind, build your resilience, and nourish your body - wellness is a daily rhythm of intentional choices."

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