

This time of year it can be easy to get overwhelmed: holiday planning, shopping and traveling; hosting guests or being a guest yourself; parties and meals... the list goes on. While many of these experiences can be enjoyable, unhealthy stress may present itself.

Use this issue of *Balanced Living* to help moderate that stress and promote a calm and optimistic outlook. We cover some simple suggestions that



can help you find balance amidst the chaos (a bonus: you can practice these most anywhere), supplements and herbs that have shown promise in boosting your emotional well-being, and more.

Yours in health,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Weil'.

Andrew Weil, M.D.



Supplements And Herbs For An Optimal Outlook

If you want to boost your emotional outlook and help manage unhealthy stress, start by identifying what makes you feel balanced and content, as well as what tends to prompt unhealthy stress. Then learn to manage the situations that are stress-inducing by practicing general techniques of stress protection such as [breathing exercises](#) or [guided imagery](#). Supplements may also be beneficial – the following have been shown to help promote a healthier outlook or help protect against unhealthy stress:

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3 Tips For Finding Balance In Your Life

A balanced life includes quality rest and sleep, a [healthful diet](#), stress management, and regular exercise. But as the holiday season involves planning and prepping for parties, dinners and other events - added to increased job demands at this time in many businesses - finding balance can seem impossible. To help you stay centered and relaxed, consider these four tips:

- 1 **Try breathing exercises** - a natural and effective way to reduce stress, maintain focus and feel energized. The key part is the out-breath. Exhaling completely is a useful practice that is especially easy to learn – it can promote deeper breathing and better sleep. Give it a try:

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Quick Tip



Giving Thanks & Practicing Gratitude

Being grateful – and expressing that gratitude – for what you have has been associated with both physical and emotional health. Studies show that social connections – through family, friends or with companion animals – seem to pay off in terms of good health and longevity. Take time today to think of whom or what you are grateful for, and if possible, let them know!

3 Tips For Finding Balance In Your Life

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simply take a deep breath, let it out effortlessly then squeeze out a little more.

2 Practice food mindfulness - to fully appreciate the food before you eat, from its appearance to the aroma. When you first taste the food, try to give it your full attention. Savor the flavors and textures, and enjoy your meal. The assumption is that when you act with full awareness, your eating habits are more likely to achieve what you intended.

3 Go for a walk - whether it's to help digest a large meal, reconnect with nature, or taking a break for yourself, [walking](#) has many benefits for your health. Walking strengthens almost every major organ in the body, promotes bone density, and boosts the immune system.

Supplements and Herbs

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■ **B-complex.** [B vitamins](#) can help balance mood, calm the nervous system, and increase the efficacy of certain prescription antidepressants.



■ **Omega-3 (fish oil) supplement** from molecularly distilled fish oil. A deficiency in omega-3 fatty acids has been associated with increased [anxiety](#) and [depression](#).

■ **Valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*).** An extract from the root of this flowering perennial contains essential oils that have been shown to help some people more effectively deal with stress.

■ **Calcium and magnesium.** Both are involved in many key physiologic processes and may help support healthy sleep, as well as muscle relaxation.

■ **St. John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*).** Extracts of this flowering herb, indigenous to Europe, may help boost mood and maintain a healthy emotional outlook. Note that you may need to take this for four to six weeks before judging its effectiveness. Be cautious of drug-herb interactions if you are taking prescription medications metabolized by the CYP P450 enzyme.

■ **L-Theanine.** This extract of green tea can help promote a sense of calm and relaxation without sedation.

■ **Rhodiola (*Rhodiola rosea*).** This powerhouse adaptogen, also known as arctic root, is an adaptogenic herb that has been used for centuries in the traditional medicine of Russia, Scandinavia and other countries. Numerous studies of rhodiola have shown that it helps prevent fatigue and wards off the effects of stress.

You may also want to consider [saffron](#) and lemon balm: both are healing spices that may help to boost your emotional outlook.

Organic Produce Primer

While it is recommended to eat organic whenever possible, it can be quite expensive for those on a tight budget or in areas with limited availability. The Environmental Working Group's (EWG) Shopper's Guide to Pesticides lists fruits and vegetables that are the most and least likely to contain pesticide residue. It is designed to help you know when to choose organically grown produce, and when conventionally grown produce is an acceptable alternative.

The following foods can be enjoyed in organic or conventionally grown form:

- **Avocados**
- **Sweet Corn**
- **Pineapples**
- **Cabbage** (try the recipe on page 4)
- **Sweet Peas** (frozen)

Read the rest of the "[Clean 15](#)" organic food list.

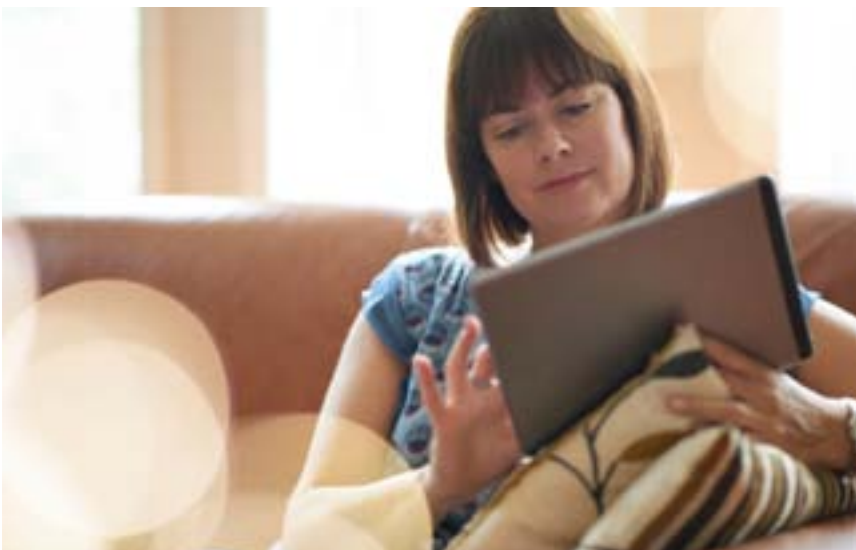
Meanwhile, the following foods have the highest pesticide load, making them the most important to buy organic:

- **Strawberries**
- **Apples**
- **Nectarines**
- **Peaches**

Read the rest of the "[Dirty Dozen Plus](#)" organic food list.



Dr. Weil's Anti-Inflammatory Food Pyramid is a practical eating guide that consumers of all ages can use. This simple tool promotes optimum health and healthy aging by providing dietary advice that addresses inflammation. Learn more - join Dr. Weil on Healthy Aging: Your Online Guide to the Anti-Inflammatory Diet.



Weil Vitamin Advisor Tip

Retake Your Evaluation

As our lifestyles change, our health needs change as well. Modifications to diet, new health concerns, or a new environment can warrant a reevaluation of your daily supplements. Consider retaking the [Weil Vitamin Advisor](#) evaluations to ensure your current supplement needs are being met – or if you have never taken it, visit today for your personalized recommendation.

Japanese Pancake

A *Fast Food, Good Food* exclusive! This savory Japanese pancake, or okonomiyaki (okonomi means “what you like” and yaki means “grilled” or “cooked”), is made with cabbage and other vegetables and a variety of seafood and meats.



INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 To make the Miso Mayo, combine all the ingredients into a small bowl, mix well and set aside.
- 2 In a medium bowl, combine the cabbage, sweet potato, scallions, shrimp and salt.
- 3 In separate large bowl, whisk together the flour, eggs, water or Dashi, soy sauce, rice vinegar, Sriracha sauce, and toasted sesame oil. Add the cabbage mixture to the batter and stir to combine.
- 4 Heat 1 tablespoon of the grapeseed oil in an 8-inch skillet over medium-low heat. Scoop half the batter into the center of the pan and flatten evenly out to the edges so that the pancake is about 1/2-inch thick. Give the entire surface a few presses with a wide spatula, cover, and cook undisturbed for 5 to 6 minutes. Carefully turn over the pancake when it has a nice gold color and slides easily. Cook it for another 5 minutes, then remove the pancake to a plate. Add the remaining oil to the skillet and repeat with the remaining batter.
- 5 Cut the pancakes into wedges with a sharp knife or pizza cutter and serve with a drizzle of Miso Mayo. Garnish generously with scallion tops.

This recipe is courtesy of Dr. Weil's cookbook: [FAST FOOD, GOOD FOOD](#).

INGREDIENTS

Miso Mayo

- 1 tablespoon mayonnaise
- 1 1/2 teaspoons white (shiro) miso
- 1 1/2 teaspoons unseasoned rice vinegar

Pancakes

- 1 medium Napa cabbage, thinly sliced (about 4 cups)
- 1/2 medium sweet potato, peeled and grated
- 5 scallions, white and light green parts only, thinly sliced (reserve tops for garnish)
- 2 oz. raw shrimp, peeled, deveined, & coarsely chopped
- 1/4 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 large eggs
- 1/4 cup water or Dashi
- 2 teaspoons low-sodium soy sauce
- 2 teaspoons unseasoned rice vinegar
- 2 teaspoons Sriracha sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
- 2 teaspoons grapeseed oil

NUTRIENTS PER SERVING

- Calories 558
- Protein 19g
- Saturated Fat 1.5g
- Monounsaturated Fat 3g
- Polyunsaturated Fat 5.69g
- Fiber 10g
- Cholesterol 38.5mg