

CAPLAN HEALTH INSTITUTE

Personalized Care for Achieving Remission

SIMPLE SELF CARE FOR AUTOIMMUNITY



Dr. Tiffany Caplan & Dr. Brent Caplan

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INTRODUCTION

With all the responsibilities and "to-do's" of life, self care can seem selfish or just down right impossible to fit in. But, considering this and more is why self care is so important, and an essential component of conquering autoimmune disease.

Stress is a normal part of modern day life. We can't completely avoid it, but we can prevent it from building up and negatively impacting our health. Stress is one common trigger of autoimmune flare ups, therefore integrating consistent self care practices and techniques into every day life that work for you is essential to achieving and maintaining remission!

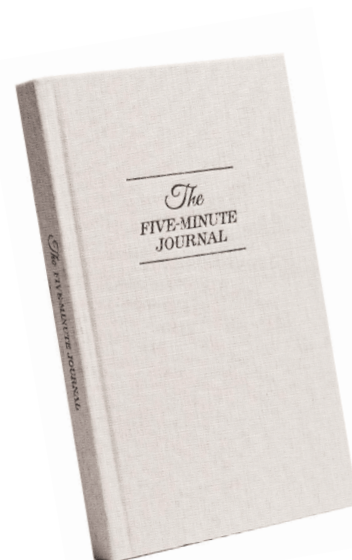
This guide provides 8 simple and effective ways to practice self care you can start today!



GRATITUDE JOURNAL

Gratitude makes us happy! No matter where you are or what your situation is, shifting your focus on something positive will improve your mood. You can't be mad or sad or afraid when thinking positive thoughts. Gratitude is the experience of counting one's blessings.

Our favorite tool to use is the [*The Five-Minute Journal*](#). The Five-Minute Journal is the perfect way to start and end your day with gratitude. It is a daily practice that we have found to be extremely helpful with our patients and ourselves. Each morning starts with an inspirational quote. Then you write down 3 things you are grateful for, 3 things that would make the day great and your daily affirmation or "I am" statement. Then at night you write down 3 amazing things that happened that day and what you could have done to make the day even better. This simple exercise, when done consistently, is the easiest thing you can do every day to be happier.



You can get your Five-Minute Journal [HERE](#).



MEDITATION

When our bodies are exposed to a stressor, they go into “fight or flight” mode as a survival mechanism. Now, that’s good if the stress is coming from being chased by a tiger, but if that stress is something a little less life threatening, such as watching a tiger on TV as you are eating your dinner, you want your body to deal with that stress differently so that you can switch from “fight or flight” to “rest and digest”.

Meditation can help retrain your body to be able to switch into “rest and digest” when you don’t need to be in “fight or flight”. Meditation is a great way to for your body to learn the relaxation response. We recommend you start with guided meditations through apps like [Headspace](#) or [Calm](#).





EXERCISE

Regular exercise can be one of the most effective ways to manage your autoimmune condition. If implemented correctly, it produces feel-good, anti-inflammatory compounds (eg endorphins), improves circulation and produces chemicals that enhance brain function.

Here are some tips to help integrate the appropriate routine into your life:

- ✓ Find an exercise that is fun and enjoyable. Positivity is anti-inflammatory while dread and negativity are pro-inflammatory. Making it fun will be part of the health benefits. A group class or social setting may be healthy for the same reason.
- ✓ Challenge yourself enough to get your heart rate up!
- ✓ Don't challenge yourself so much you trigger a flare. The key is to be able to do it again the next day. A consistent exercise schedule will deliver the most health benefits.
- ✓ Pay attention to your body. If you are feeling so run down you can hardly get out of bed, that is probably not a good day to go work out. If you are feeling a little run down but can function, dial back the intensity of your exercise but see if you can still perform. Sometimes a light workout helps you recover faster than not working out.
- ✓ Capitalize on the days you feel good to challenge yourself a little more than normal, being cautious not to overdo it.
- ✓ Remember, this is a lifelong condition that requires lifelong attention. Make each day of exercise about the long-range journey as much as that day's session!

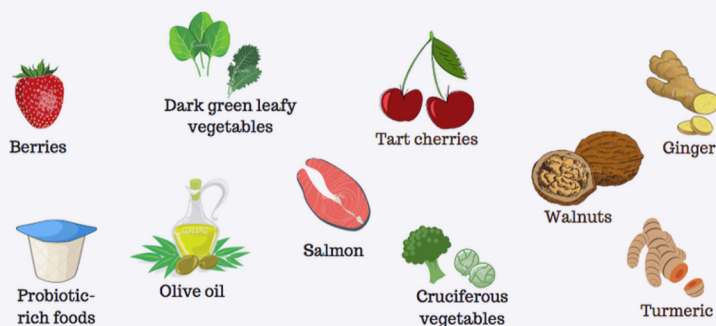


NOURISHING FOOD

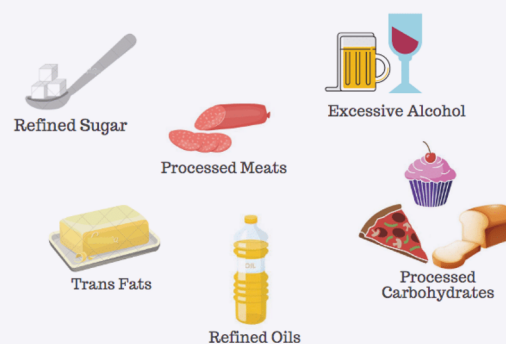
The food we eat has a profound effect on our health and wellbeing. Think of consuming nourishing food as one of the greatest acts of self care!

Processed, toxic foods within the standard American diet (SAD) are one of our biggest sources of inflammation. Since autoimmunity is rooted in inflammation, it is critical to consume an appropriate anti inflammatory diet that supports the achievement and maintenance of remission.

- ✓ Focus on whole foods that combat inflammation including those rich in antioxidants and omega-3's. Some of the top anti inflammatory foods include:



- ✓ Avoid highly processed foods that promote inflammation, including:



Note: Diet individualization is important for optimal nourishment and long term success.



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HYDRATION

The composition of an adult human consists of approximately 60% water. Staying hydrated is essential to a properly functioning body and supports everything from cognition, to body temperature regulation; digestion and assimilation of nutrients of food, to oxygen delivery throughout the body. It is safe to say that hydration is a foundational essential of self care.

How much water should you drink?

A good starting point goal for water intake is to consume at least:



1/2 your body weight (lbs) in ounces of water per day

FOR EXAMPLE:

Someone who weighs 150lbs would have a starting goal of 75oz of water per day.

What about water quality?

Properly purifying water helps remove the majority of environmental toxins from the water while keeping in the beneficial minerals. A lot of the fridge and pitcher filters are just that, filters. No purifiers. They are designed to make your water taste better but are not necessarily safer. Here is the water system we use and trust to make sure the water you are drinking is actually clean:

- The [AquaTru](#) countertop purification system is simple to use and creates water that is noticeably cleaner and better for you. It turns your regular tap water into safe bottled- quality water with no plumbing or installation. You can find out more about AquaTru [HERE](#).

In addition, we always recommend opting for refillable glass or stainless steel bottles instead of plastic to reduce the consumption of harmful plastic containing chemicals.



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QUALITY SLEEP

Sleep is crucial for health and wellbeing. Creating the right environment can make the difference in getting a good night's sleep. If you are struggling with fatigue or having some problems getting your Zzz's, here are a few of our favorite tips for a good night's sleep:

- ✓ Make sure your bedroom is comfortable. Choose soothing colors and keep uncluttered. A slightly cooler room (60-67 degrees F) is typically optimal for sleep-find where you are most comfortable.
- ✓ Start limiting exposure to lights about an hour before bed to help your natural melatonin production.
- ✓ If you use your cell phone as an alarm or want to have it by your bed, make sure to turn it on to Airplane mode to limit EMF exposure.

In addition, here are our favorite tools for creating a good sleep environment:



Himalayan Salt Lamp.

The perfect nightstand accessory! These lamps glow a soft orange color and limit your exposure to blue light which is known to have a negative impact on your body's ability to produce melatonin for sleep. Himalayan Salt Lamps also release negative ions which help clean the air and negate the effects of EMFs which are emitted by electronic devices. You can get your own Himalayan Salt Lamp [HERE](#).



F.lux App.

This is an application for your computer that changes the color of your display depending on location and time of day to automatically adjust to emit less harmful blue light at night. You can download the F.lux app [HERE](#).



Sunrise Simulation Alarm Clock.

We want to limit exposure to light before bed, but sun light naturally helps signal our spike of cortisol in the morning to help us wake up. Wake up before the sun? We recommend a Sunrise Simulation Alarm Clock such as this one [HERE](#) or [HERE](#). It slowly lights up simulating the sunrise before your alarm goes off to help wake you up naturally and refreshed.

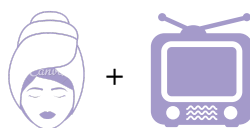
HEALTHY REWARDS

It is important to congratulate yourself for working hard and achieving goals by treating yourself to a reward. Often, these rewards consist of unhealthy treats, which can actually make you feel worse, instead of better. That doesn't make sense now, do it?

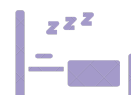
Instead, why not choose a reward that makes you feel great, and further feeds your healthy lifestyle. Here are some of our favorites:



Get a massage!



Pamper and chill! Skin care night with a good movie.



Take a nap!



Plan a fun get together with friends!



Take a walk, hike or just sit and relax in the sun. Bring a book or your favorite music!



Take a nice relaxing bath. Don't forget a bath bomb or epsom salts!

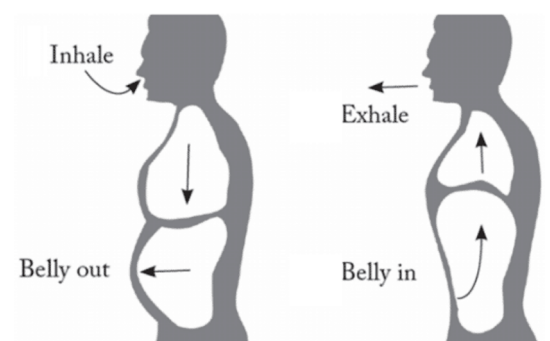


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4-7-8 BREATHING

Focused breathing is also shown to be beneficial in combating stress by switching the body into “rest and digest” out of “fight or flight”. One key aspect of this breathing is making sure you are using your diaphragm or “belly breathing”. To practice this, place one hand on your chest and one hand on your stomach while taking a deep breath in and out. You should feel your hand on your stomach rise and fall with the breath more than your chest to avoid shallow chest breathing.

- 1** Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose to a mental count of four
- 2** Hold your breath for a count of seven
- 3** Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound to a count of eight



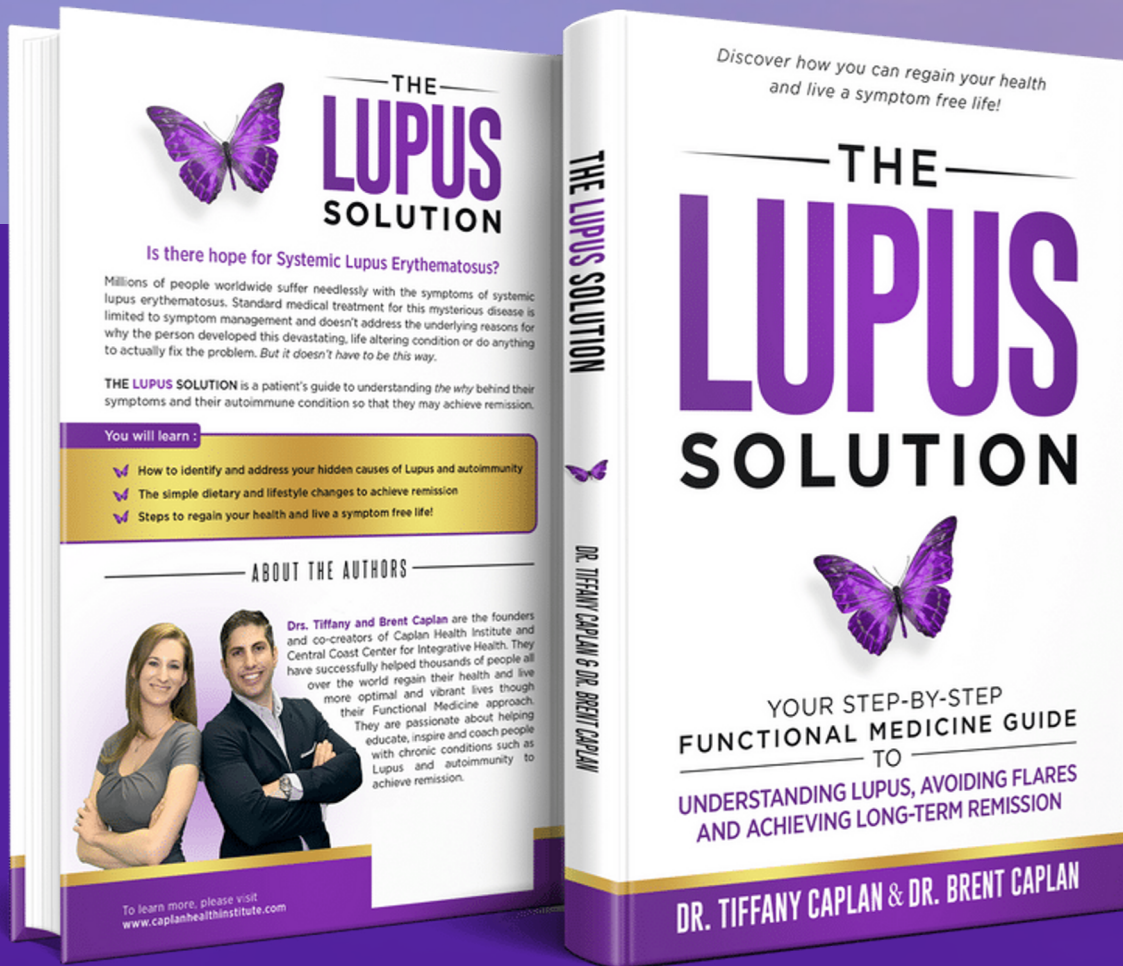
This is one breath. Now, inhale again and repeat the cycle three more times for a total of four breaths.



Drs. Tiffany and Brent Caplan are the founders and co-creators of Caplan Health Institute and Central Coast Center for Integrative Health. They have successfully helped thousands of people all over the world regain their health and live more optimal and vibrant lives through their Functional Medicine approach, based on the concept of root cause resolution and a personalized, holistic care approach. They are the co-authors of *The Lupus Solution*. They are passionate about helping educate, inspire and coach people with chronic conditions such as Lupus and autoimmunity to achieve remission.

Visit our website www.caplanhealthinstitute.com to find out more.

DISCOVER MORE



THE LUPUS SOLUTION

YOUR STEP-BY-STEP FUNCTIONAL
MEDICINE GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING
LUPUS, AVOIDING FLARES AND ACHIEVING
LONG-TERM REMISSION

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