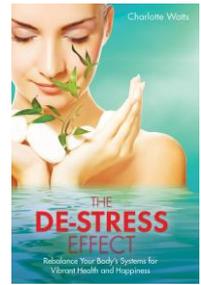


Your De-Stress Journal – Reflective Practice

This is a period when you can take stock and record what works best for you and what doesn't. Use the reflective practice below to help you start a personal De-Stress journal. Ask yourself these questions at least once a week, ideally more often, and jot down the answers in your journal. You can keep coming back to the questions to help you reflect on how your De-Stress lifestyle is making you feel, function and look, and to identify any tweaks or changes you need to make.



1. Are you feeling more connected to your body and intuition around food, stress and your day-to-day needs? Have you identified where you might tend to 'push on through' despite your body's obvious cries for rest, care and support?
2. Are sweet foods tasting too sweet? Are you enjoying the more subtle tastes of good-quality produce and flavourings?
3. Note how different days require different approaches. Are you now learning to be adaptable and respect your body's altering needs, rather than expecting one strategy to work every single day? Have you noticed any particular eating/energy patterns over 3- or 4-day cycles?
4. Do you feel you have started on a journey and may need to do further tests with a nutritional therapist for things such as food intolerance, thyroid function or adrenal stress profile? Go back to the Stress Suits chapter and see if your symptoms have improved. If they still feel entrenched you may need to seek out more specific attention.
5. Variety is key, so don't settle into new fixed regimens – our ancestors ate hundreds more foods than we do and these changed with the seasons, limiting the likelihood of food intolerance and providing the right nutrient balance for the climate. Have you found ways to vary your food content to ensure your shopping and cooking are rewarding and done mindfully rather than on auto-pilot?
6. Assessing your relationship with grains and beans – will it work best for you to include some occasionally or are you feeling so good that you want to continue to mainly avoid them?
7. Too much of anything – partying, working, parenting – without the requisite balance of recharging and self-care will always wear you down. Are there any areas of your life where you still see yourself creating unnecessary stress? What kind of limits could you place on yourself to fee yourself up for other pursuits that calm or energize you?
8. Has the way you cope with stress changed? Think about any habitual reactions such as overeating, sugar cravings or flying off the handle that you might have experienced when stress hit before you began 3 weeks ago. When was the last time this happened and how did you cope? In terms of De-Stress Diet lifestyle measures, which work best for you? Are you managing to bring breathing techniques, mindfulness and meditation in simple ways into your life to help relieve stress on a daily basis? A few minutes is all it takes.