

## Energize your life! -Doreen Spackman MH, MG



This time of year is a great time to make a plan to develop better habits and put into practice the things that will enrich your life. In our home we think of goals we want to achieve in the New Year, some call them New Year's Resolutions. But we often change the question and instead of asking "What goals do you want to set?" or "What did you write down for your New Year's Resolutions?" we ask "What **A.R.E.** you going to do to ENERGIZE your life?" ENERGIZE means to activate and give more life, just saying the word gives me energy! Here are 3 steps to energize your life today!

**(A)ctivity-** Physical activity helps our health in all areas; physical, mental, spiritual, and social. The benefits are extensive and include; longer life, improved memory, new brain cell development, lowers blood pressure, helps in prevention and control of diabetes, strengthens your heart, antidepressant, strengthens bones and muscles, reduces anxiety, increases self-esteem, reduces risk of developing and /or dying from heart disease, and helps you to sleep better at night. So what activity are you doing today? Starting is easier than you think because there is a beginning level for everyone. Just 5 minutes a day can make a huge difference. This should be enjoyable, so jump up and down or put on some fun music and dance your heart out for a few minutes, use a cellerciser, or take the dog for a walk in the fresh air. It might be a new practice you are creating but it won't take long before it is a healthy habit, so start today! Boost your energy and better your health. ENERGIZE your life! Let those happy cells come to life.

**(R)est-** Sleep is needed so our minds can process life, our bodies can repair and our organs rejuvenate. Resting helps keep your heart healthy, reduces stress and inflammation, and of course ENERGIZES your life! Need hints on sleeping better? How consistent is your "before bed" routine? Remember those things we were told to do before bed as children? They are the same things we tell our children each night. Go to the bathroom, brush and floss your teeth, say your prayers, and read a story (something relaxing). In our house we also make sure we don't talk about stressful/sensitive subjects just before going to bed. It's also helpful to talk about happy events of the day or of the past or write them in a journal. You could also write positive affirmations or a positive self-talk paper that can be read before going to bed. It could include "I am sleeping through the night from 10pm-6am" or "I will wake up refreshed and well rested". Listening to relaxing, uplifting music can be very beneficial as well. This can all be done in about 15 minutes and that's a lot less time than lying in bed just hoping to fall asleep. Write down your routine today and follow it each night until it becomes a beneficial practice in your life.

**(E)ating-** Food is so vital for energizing our bodies! The old adage is true "We are what we eat". Are we eating live food that gives us life? I hope so! Our busy lives make the variety of readily available, pre-made "fast food" very appealing. But, the drive through is the last place we should be looking if we want to ENERGIZE our bodies. The fastest and healthiest food there is, is fresh and whole from nature, food that is ready to eat with very little preparation or hassle. Fresh fruits and vegetables can be washed and/or cut quickly and ahead of time for a quick

meal or snack every day of the week. Add a handful of nuts or seeds to help satisfy hunger and add a protein packed punch. Even in this cooler weather there are many fruits and vegetables available. Apples, oranges, tangerines, bananas, berries, pineapple, kiwi and mangoes would make a delicious addition to any combination of lettuce and sprouts for a healthy salad. Mix it up for a change of taste and texture. Also, experiment with time saving meals such as a low heated pot of soup for dinner that can be put in a thermos for lunches. Think seasonally, there are all kinds of squash, onions, cabbage, carrots, and potatoes to make a different soup each time.

So what **A.R.E.** you going to do to ENERGIZE and enjoy your life today?

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