

HEALTH

PROMOTIONAL FEATURE

Rethinking wellbeing and connection

Mental health and wellbeing are certainly tested during times of stress and uncertainty. Wellbeing coach **Andi Lew** offers insight and useful tips on ways to stay positive and connected by making wellness an integral part of your lifestyle.

BELIEVE that your quality of life is in direct proportion to the quality of questions you ask, the ability to turn a negative into a positive and adapt, and staying connected to yourself, your community, and the earth itself.

Health happens by choice, not by chance and what you do today will affect your life – tomorrow, or maybe next year. In science we learn about cause and effect. This means everything you do, everything you inject or ingest will have an effect. Whether you see it immediately or not, it will impact how your body works to heal or function or even how you perceive the world and adapt to stressors.

I wrote *Connected, a Paradigm Shift in How We View Health* to highlight how a healthy body looks different on every person and just because we may be fit or lean, it doesn't mean we are necessarily well.

The allopathic model (medical model) is important for emergency care and it is reactive in its approach and mechanistic. The wellness model of care is proactive and is natural and holistic in its approach.

And guess what? We need both!

Here are my top tips to get connected and flip what you know about health on its head to create vitality, agelessness, a better mindset, and increased immunity.

1. Perception is everything

What if the problem is the solution? What if symptoms were the sign? Take for example a fever. I believe that when your body raises a temperature, it is an immune response by your body needing to get to a certain boiling point so that it can kill off a virus. While it may be uncomfortable and needs to be monitored, it's how we are designed to heal. We need to give our bodies the right environment to facilitate the healing process.

2. Nutrition is key, but assimilation of nutrition is crucial

It doesn't matter how good your food is, even if it's organic or biodynamic or the best quality supplements – if you cannot assimilate nutrition, then you may as well be peeing it out. Creating a better functioning body so that you can use the nutrition you consume is where wellness sets in.

I often say that the reason we call chicken soup “Jewish penicillin” is because the collagen that comes out of the bones in the broth has healing benefits, which can in turn help your body absorb nutrition better.

I also believe that no matter how hard you try to lose weight or feel well, if you have leaky gut syndrome or have not gotten your gut health back to balance, you just can't function optimally. There's so much research about the mind-gut connection to uncover.

3. Our spine is the window to our health

People who are unwell or stressed are often seen in a sunken or slumped posture. This posture results in less blood in the brain and it's all in the limbs and muscles, ready to run or wrestle. It's a stress response where excess adrenaline and cortisol is being released. This can set up long term health challenges if left uncorrected.

Licensed chiropractors have a double science degree and are experts in detecting and correcting nervous system interference with specific and scientific adjustments. I believe it is through our nervous system that we perceive the world, adapt to stress and coordinate all bodily functions. Changing physiology changes chemistry and in turn, changes your emotional state.

4. Connect with community

The WHO definition of health states that health isn't merely the absence of symptoms or disease but rather, it is a state of optimal function on every level, including social. It's hugely important to connect with our community and find support groups and charity organisations to be involved with or get support from, and



Wellness coach Andi Lew.



even have the courage to meet new people.

Dating apps and other social media networks are now the

normal way to connect and there's no longer stigma around how you meet your love. If you are single and feel alone during this time, it might be nice to connect with someone new because getting to know each other helps you discover new things about yourself too.

Make sure you're careful and safe but also decide to have fun when you enter swipe life. I wrote a book about it called *#instalovers: Digital Dating, DM Disasters and Love Stories*, and I think the best apps for real and meaningful connections are Hinge and Bumble, or Fitafy for those who are into their healthy lifestyles.

5. Switch off and reconnect

A digital detox is necessary more than ever before. Wander where the WiFi is weak, connect with nature and you could negate the effects of any radiation emitting from technology.

I make it a point to get “earthed” daily by walking barefoot in the soil, sand or grass. I also love being near the sea, which always recharges me.

Set time limits for tech use and be intentional when you're online so that you don't get side tracked and end up

checking out your friend's sister's partner's cat.

6. Connect with sleep

If you're a new parent struggling with sleep, you could learn about safely co-sleeping. If you're breastfeeding then you're in a great position because the hormone you release after a breastfeed called CCK can allow you and bub to fall into a deeper sleep together. Many co-sleeping enthusiasts believe that it allows for mutual regulation of breathing, body temperature and heart beats.

Sleep in general is so important and the quality of our sleep can always be improved. The blue light emitted from technology robs our brains from melatonin, which is the sleep hormone that helps us to sleep.

Wear blue light blocking glasses, turn off tech at least one hour before bedtime and remove all devices from your bedroom. Have a hot shower before bed to warm your core and don't look at your phones or screens after. Stay connected to your breathing and do some meditation or prayer. Practise gratitude and facilitate sweet dreams.

Andi Lew's eight health title, *Connected, a Paradigm Shift in How We View Health* is available in book stores across Australia, or on andilew.com

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