



SUPPORTIVE HEALING PRACTICES

Align Wellness Solutions is a holistic therapy practice. This not only means that we utilize holistic modalities in addition to traditional types of therapy, but also that we recognize that our bodies and minds are not separate entities. There are many things that you can do outside of therapy sessions that will support your healing.

- Eat whole foods as much as possible, and limit processed foods.
- Drink enough water.
- Limit your intake of sugar.
- Limit caffeine if stress/anxiety are a concern for you.
- Go easy on yourself with food guidelines, and all guidelines. Opt for grace, and do whatever you can ease-fully do without increasing your stress or feelings of shame.
- Move your body. Easy does it. More is not necessarily better. If you're here for stress/anxiety – gentle exercise is better than high intensity workouts that will increase your cortisol and stress hormones. Walking, yoga, swimming.
- Eat a variety of foods so you are getting enough of the building blocks – our bodies, including our brains, are literally made up of the foods we eat! Your brain and body is healing, and it needs all the tools to do that. Looking for more guidance here? I suggest Dr. Andrew Weil's anti-inflammatory food pyramid. And also – don't get too caught up in this! There are no "bad foods."
- Omega 3s and healthy fats – these are important! Your brain especially needs these healthy fats and oils to create new connections, which is basically exactly what we are doing in therapy as you learn new ways to react and cope. If you want to change your behavior or perceptions, we have to change your brain. And that requires healthy fats!
- Grace. Have I said yet to go easy on yourself? Curate your social media feeds. Delete accounts whose posts make you feel bad about yourself. Add supportive, non-shaming accounts. Fit-spo: NO. Body positivity: Yes. Photos of people partying when you're trying to get sober: Nope. Russell Brand and other fun, sober celebs: Yes. Hustle, hustle, hustle entrepreneur accounts when you're stressed and feeling not-enough: Hell to the no. The Nap Ministry, Octavia Raheem, and other successful ladies who promote reasonable boundaries and rest: Definitely yes.
- Limit your media consumption in general. Take in just enough news to feel adequately informed, from rational, non-inflammatory sources. The news media makes money by very intentionally increasing your level of stress and anxiety.
- Establish a routine. Predictability and repetitiveness breed a sense of safety and control. This makes brains happy, especially traumatized or overwhelmed brains.
- Look at your schedule. Are there things you can take out? The deeper the work you're doing in therapy, the more time you need to rest and reflect to integrate that work. Limit busyness. Limit rushing. Limit the hustle.
- Get enough sleep.

- Eat regularly. Don't skip meals.
- Put your bare feet and hands on the earth.
- Breathe air. In through your nose, into your belly, out through your nose.
- Get your body in some water. Add Epsom salts.
- Comfort foods can be your friends. Especially when we are stressed – warm, creamy, sweet foods are grounding. Sometimes that's what our body needs.
- Essential oils: lavender, vetiver, sandalwood are some of my favorites for grounding and calming. Eucalyptus is clearing. Peppermint is energizing. Diffuse them or mix a couple drops into your lotion or bath.
- A lot of Align Wellness clients are resistant to the idea of anti-depressants or other mental health medications. In some cases, they're necessary or recommended. The process of finding the right medications can be frustrating, and sometimes our clients are interested in trying more natural ways of supporting their mental health. We're not medical practitioners or herbalists, so don't offer prescriptions or recommendations, just suggestions for you to explore via your own research and discuss with your medical providers, especially to determine how they may impact what you already take. In general, Dr. Andrew Weil's website is a reputable resource for integrative health information and a good place to start.
- Probiotics. The majority of the feel-good chemicals in our brains are actually created in our guts! Things need to be in balance, and for most Americans, they aren't.
- Activation of the parasympathetic nervous system (rest-and-digest mode, as opposed to the fight-or-flight response of our sympathetic nervous system) is crucial to our healing. In fact, our bodies need to be in this state in order to heal. We will learn specific skills in sessions to calm and strengthen our nervous system. You can also help it along by supporting your digestion. Eating slowly and mindfully is key, and sometimes additional support can be helpful in the form of digestive bitters or enzymes.
- Regular yoga, massage, acupuncture, or energy work such as reiki can also be helpful in keeping us relaxed and out of constant fight-or-flight mode.
- Other energetic supports that some people enjoy: smudging with smoke or herbal sprays, carrying crystals, making a vision board, repeating mantras. These items and actions can serve as reminders and ritual demonstrations of our intentions to shift our energy.
- Rest. Do less. Sometimes, do nothing. Yes, you heard me. Go lay in a hammock and watch the clouds. This can be much more challenging than it sounds. Challenge the connections the world makes between your productivity and your worth.
- Above all: healing does not (will not, cannot) happen from a place of shame or feeling not-good-enough. Yes, you are probably in therapy because there are things you want to change. That can be true and at the same time, you must believe that you are already ok. You are already worthy and wonderful just the way you are, even while you have areas you'd like to improve. It is from this space of self-acceptance that healing takes place. If you only do one thing on this list, it must be this thing. You must know that you are good. You are deserving of the good gifts that therapy can bring. Already. Right now. Not once we do some work, or once you cross some items off this list. Already. Right now.

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