



## 7 Things I Do To Stay Healthy, Happy, and Productive

### Message from Milly

It seems that the older I get (-:, the more people ask me what I do to stay healthy, happy, and productive/motivated.

I find this flattering...and a little funny because, #1: I often feel I live a rather "boring" or simple existence...though I love my life! #2: I am by no means "perfect" in terms of what I eat (or drink!), how often I exercise, my weight, how often I meditate, how I balance work and home life, etc.

I have vices, habits, and blind spots like everyone else.

And even though holistic health and natural medicine are my passions, I'm also determined to *enjoy* my life...which means eating organic and avoiding processed foods, aaaannnd enjoying my daily cup of fully caffeinated black tea with milk! Exercising regularly and avoiding household toxins, *and* indulging in a glass of wine with dinner and some chocolate when I need it...you get the idea.

And there is method to my madness.

New research on longevity validates many of my regular practices for maintaining physical, mental, and emotional health. (Though I fully admit, I do what I do because I enjoy it...not just because science-says-so.)

So, here goes nothing! Read on to learn what I do to stay healthy, happy, and productive plus the research behind most of it.

Here's to treasuring every day we have on this beautiful planet.

Blessings,

-Milly



1: I spend an hour each morning reading something meaningful and uplifting, while sipping a delicious cup of tea.

I do realize the luxury of having a whole hour to spend



reading each morning (I have no kids!), but this practice really gets me into a positive mindset for the day ahead. Plus, drinking tea has been shown to [reduce stress](#) and promote longevity. I drink black tea (it's a South African thing) but green tea, oolong, and even coffee [have also been shown](#) to support longevity, cardiovascular health, and more.

2: I make the effort to spend time with friends and family: tea, brunch, lunch, and regular dinner parties...

I have always made an effort to keep an active social life, and this is extra important as we get older since [research has shown those over 45 tend to be more socially isolated, and thus have poorer health](#). Science has revealed dozens of health benefits of being social, the biggest one being [it reduces loneliness which is as bad for your health as obesity and smoking a pack of cigarettes a day!](#) I know it's hard during COVID, but do make an effort to "Pod Up", invite your friends over for a meal, drink, firepit, etc. and spend time with those you love.

3: I walk my pup every day.

This is as much for her benefit as mine! The companionship of a pet [reduces the risk of heart disease, obesity, depression](#), while the walking gives us the benefits of the outdoors (sunshine, vitamin D, fresh air) while improving physical and emotional fitness.

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4: I ride my bike and kayak on the Chattahoochee.

I am not a person who enjoys the gym, interval training, or aerobics classes...but I do love to ride my bike and kayak in the fresh air! And [research has shown](#) that exercising outdoors is great for your mood and mental health. When it comes to sticking to an exercise program, make sure to find a form of movement you really enjoy doing for best long-term results.



5: Working in the garden.

Caring for flowers and plants feeds my soul while helping keep my body strong and my mind focused. Plus, [research has shown gardening can reduce your risk of death from ANY cause \(!\) increase happiness](#), and even [boost your immunity](#) by reducing inflammation and diversifying your microbiome. Sign me up!

6: Book making.

I always loved writing stories and poetry, so book making seemed a natural next step. Creative hobbies like these have been shown to help [prevent cognitive decline and improve memory and focus](#). Plus, it's incredibly satisfying and fun.

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## 7: I honor my spiritual self.

My spiritual life has always been paramount, and throughout the years it's helped me in all areas of living. Some of the biggest ways it's uplifted and supported me is in the handling the unexpected, forgiveness, perseverance, grief, acceptance of self and others, compassion, patience, and purpose.

Despite that a belief in God or a higher power seems to be fading in new generations, [research has shown](#) that attending regular services, prayer, meditation, and/or being part of a like-minded and supportive community can help you live longer.

So no matter what that looks like for you and your family, I encourage it whole heartedly.