

THERAPEUTIC LIFESTYLE CHANGES

Kick-start a positive intervention by exercising more, paying attention to your diet and nutrition, and managing your personal relaxation and stress. Therapeutic Lifestyle Changes, or TLCs, foster individual and social well-being.

Exercise

Exercise is an accessible *and* affordable **TLC** with many mental and physical health benefits. Along with increased self-esteem, exercise has proven to reduce depression, increase academic performance in youth, and improve sleep quality. Exercise also allows for changes in the metabolism of serotonin, a hormone that is responsible for moods, as well as the release of endorphins, which produce feelings of well-being. Physically, exercise reduces the risks of multiple disorders such as cancer, cardiovascular diseases, and diabetes. Exercise also increases brain volume, vascularization, blood flow and functional measures.

- TLCs-**
- ✓ Joining a running group or exercise class
 - ✓ Taking your neighbor's dog for a walk
 - ✓ Sign up your child up for a sports team



Diet & Nutrition

When it comes to Diet and Nutrition as a **TLC**, there are two major components to think about: supplements and food selection. Used as supplements, fish and fish oils increase mental health, as omega-3 fatty acids are essential to neural function. They also are anti-inflammatory and counteract the inflammatory effects of omega-6 fatty acids. Omega-6 fatty acids are associated with such health risks as heart attacks, thrombotic stroke, arthritis, mood disorders, as well as cancer. Unfortunately, the majority of people have diets high in omega-6 fatty acids and are deficient in omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3 fatty is effective in depression, unipolar, bipolar, and perinatal depression. For food selection, the key principles for TLCs are: emphasizing a "rainbow diet"—a diet that consist mostly of multicolored fruits and vegetables; eat a substantial amount of fish (preferably cold deep-water fish like salmon); and reduce your intake of excessive calories.

- TLCs-**
- ✓ Planning out your meals for a week using the guidelines of a "rainbow diet"
 - ✓ Switching one bad food group for one good food group
 - ✓ Taking a cooking class that will help you incorporate healthy ingredients

Relationships

Having meaningful relationships can reduce health risks ranging anywhere from the common cold to strokes and multiple psychopathologies. Good relationships, whether they are romantic, work-related, or with friends or families, are associated with increased happiness, quality of life, resilience, and cognitive capacity. The need for solid relationships may be larger than ever, as social isolation is on the rise, so it's important to make an effort when it comes to this **TLC**. People are spending less time with family and friends and are less socially involved in different groups and communities. The risks of social isolation can be comparable to the risks of smoking or high blood pressure. Isolation can also lead to depression, obesity, and anxiety.

- TLCs-**
- ✓ **Joining a community group**
 - ✓ **Making an effort to plan a social event at least once a week**
 - ✓ **Calling up an old friend from the past**

Relaxation & Stress Management

Chronic stressors can have strong negative effects on your body and mind. Although stress is a universal problem, many people are unaware of how to manage it, and so they are unprepared when it comes to handling it and so they turn to self-destructive behaviors. Specific stress management skills include psychological, somatic and contemplative approaches. Yoga or meditation are the most common form of contemplative approaches, and are practiced by many as a **TLC**. The benefits of learning how to relax and manage stress include decreasing cardiovascular hypertension, insomnia, anxiety, depression, and compulsive eating.

- TLCs-**
- ✓ **Meditating after a stressful day at work**
 - ✓ **Listening to relaxing music**
 - ✓ **Signing up for a Tai-Chi or Yoga class**



IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE SOME TLCs, BUT DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START, CALL UP YOUR EFAP!

YOUR LOGO HERE

For confidential assistance
Brown Crawshaw 1.800.668.2055
www.browncrawshaw.com