



goodalternatives.

LIFT YOUR ENERGY, *naturally*

REMEDY A LACK OF VITALITY FOR
MORE SPRING IN YOUR STEP THIS
SUMMER. BY BONNIE CLEAVER

→ The standard 'energy prescription' is simple: sleep more, eat better, exercise daily. But if you've ticked all those boxes and still feel permanently zapped, it's time to try a new approach.

We've found some of the best alternative ways to lift your energy levels, from essential oils and crystals to meditation and affirmations. Introduce one a week and you'll rediscover your zest in no time.



TRY CHIWALKING

Super-charge your stroll with this technique from Danny Dreyer, co-author of *ChiWalking* (Simon & Schuster, \$24.99) – a style of walking that optimises the flow of energy through the body.

1. Before taking off on your walk, do a few minutes of belly breathing. Exhale fully, pulling your belly toward your spine. Then relax your belly and let it expand, filling your lungs from the bottom. Repeat several times before beginning your walk, and then over and over again during your walk.

2. Start walking at a relaxed pace of 60 to 70 strides per minute.

3. Walk for five minutes practising belly breathing and then begin this energetic visualisation: Imagine a stream of energy rising up the back of your spine each time you inhale. It flows from your tailbone to the top of your head. Then when you exhale, imagine the same stream of energy flowing back down the front side of your spine all the way to your pubic bone. Keep this breathing-visualisation cycle going for the duration of your walk.

REV UP WITH RED The colour of passion and physicality, red is a powerful stimulant. It combats lethargy, boosts circulation and awakens the senses. To reap its benefits, Gale Pickles of Colour Alignment suggests surrounding yourself with it in subtle ways: wear red underwear or a scarf and eat more red fruit and vegetables. "You can also sit with your feet on a piece of red cardboard in the morning while you're eating breakfast, which will imbue red energy through the soles of your feet," she says.



DRAW ON NATURE

Harnessing the energetic properties of flowers and plants, the Bach Flower essences work on a subtle level to restore emotional balance. Of the 38 remedies in the range, several excel at lifting energy levels, says natural therapist and Bach Flower practitioner Franca Zannoni.



OLIVE: Olive helps with exhaustion in the body and mind, the kind of fatigue that comes from a hectic lifestyle or a long period of strain. It's suited to those who feel weary to the point of tears.



OAK: This essence is for people who ignore their tiredness. Reliable and duty-driven they stubbornly battle on, even when rest is needed.



HORNBEAM: Hornbeam addresses the dreaded 'Monday morning' feeling, where you struggle to get out of bed and face the day. It gives you more get up and go.

HOW TO TAKE THEM:

Take two drops in a glass of water daily. If you're using several essences, add two drops of each to a 30ml bottle of natural spring water with half a teaspoon of brandy, then take four drops from that bottle, four times daily. Bach Flower essences are available in health food stores.



PEP UP WITH PEPPERMINT

If you feel your energy waning during the day, dab peppermint oil on your pulse points.

"Peppermint is a standout for lifting energy – it promotes mental stimulation and clear thinking as well as refreshing the spirit," says Zannoni, who is also a clinical aromatherapist.

Other invigorating oils include orange, grapefruit, rosemary, eucalyptus, thyme, lemon, spearmint, lemongrass, pine oil and cinnamon. Use 100 per cent pure oils for greater potency.



REPROGRAM YOUR CELLS

Recharge your energy at a cellular level with this meditation from Sue Bishop, principal of the Chiara College of Metaphysics and author of *Sixth Sense* (Allen & Unwin, \$24.99).

✦ Sitting in a comfortable position, clear your mind and spend a minute breathing deeply.

✦ Visualise a stream of white light washing down from the universe over you. Bring it through the top of your head and feel it flowing through your body, going into every cell and from every cell into your DNA. Then visualise a beautiful blue light doing the same.

✦ If you're holding on to any restrictive thoughts or feelings, allow

them to surface. For instance, are you feeling tired because you're helping so many people but no-one's helping you? Validate that feeling and let it go. Honouring the truth of how you really feel gives your body permission to release any blocks at a deep level.

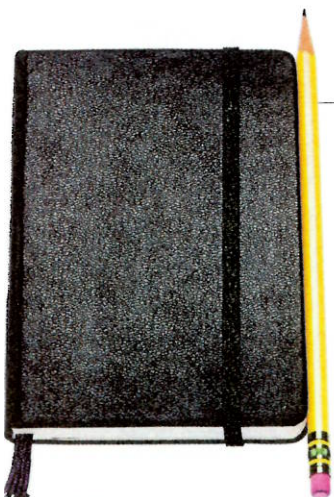
✦ Then, reprogram your cells with how you want to feel – like 'I feel replenished and revitalised' – and bring that energy into your cells.

✦ Finish by surrounding yourself in a bubble of rose gold light.

AMP UP YOUR AFFIRMATIONS

Positive affirmations such as 'I have boundless energy' are powerful tools for transformation, but only if you fully believe them.

"If you don't, you need to recognise what emotions or beliefs are holding you back," says Bishop. To do this, she suggests devoting 10 minutes morning and night to writing down your affirmation over and over, allowing any objections to arise. For example, if it's 'I have boundless energy', the objection could be 'No I don't, I'm exhausted'. Or, if you have a specific energy sapper, for example, a heavy workload, use an affirmation like 'My work is easy and effortless'. "Each time you do it you'll remove more of the resistance, and when it's gone, that affirmation will be your new reality," says Bishop.



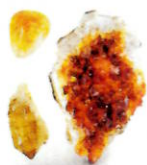
GET CRYSTAL CLEAR

"Crystals have a beautiful life force energy and having them around us boosts our life force energy, too," says Evie Michaels, crystal healing lecturer at Nature Care College. "The best way to use crystals is to wear them as jewellery, keep them in your pocket or by your bedside, tape them inside your clothes or hold them when you meditate." She suggests the following energising crystals:



CLEAR QUARTZ

Repels negativity and attracts positive energy, providing an energetic lift.



CITRINE

Has warm, uplifting, joyful energies, making it useful if you're tired or drained.



HEMATITE

Contains iron, which has an energising effect. It also reduces energy-zapping stress.

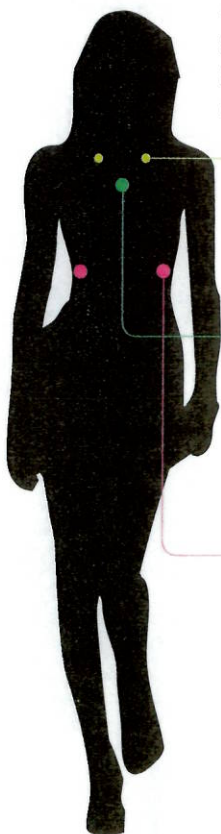


ROSE QUARTZ

Lifts energy in a calm, nurturing way and encourages self-love and care.

TAP YOUR ENERGY POINTS

For an instant pick-me-up, kinesiologist Jennifer Brakensiek of Innate Synergy suggests tapping or rubbing the following acupressure points 10 times each. "This sequence will stimulate your entire body and 'uncork' any blockages in your energy system," she explains.



K-27 POINTS

Located on both sides of your sternum, just below your collarbones.

THYMUS POINT

Go to the middle point between the K-27s in the centre of your chest, and drop down a few centimetres.

SPLEEN POINTS

Find these just under the breasts on the sides of your body.

CLEAR THE CLUTTER

"In feng shui, clutter is thought to create blockages and stagnant energy and reflect a cluttered mind," says Jane Langof, founder of Feng Shui Concepts. "Devoting time to organising your belongings helps lift your energy, and enables greater productivity and clearer thinking."

AT HOME: Prioritise which rooms to tackle first. "I recommend starting with the bedroom, because it's where you spend most of your time and you absorb its energy overnight," says Langof. Start slowly, focusing on one drawer or corner at a time, decluttering in 30-minute

daily sessions. As you go, ask yourself 'Do I need it? Do I use it? Do I love it?'

AT WORK: As well as the obvious – clearing your workspace and turfing old paperwork – combat 'e-clutter' by organising your files, streamlining your desktop and processing emails. ➔

