

Veronica Brock's Top 10 Tips for a Healthy Lifestyle

Does getting healthy feel so overwhelming to you that it doesn't seem worth bothering to start? Health and Physical Education professor Veronica Brock has good news for you. "Just because you're not eating carrots and walking a treadmill every day, that doesn't mean you're not healthy," she says. "I'd love people to erase all the guilt they have about this, and to have an awareness that health is more than being physically healthy."

Brock counsels those interested in developing healthier habits to start small. "Focus on baby steps to get to your end goal," she says, adding that it's important to clarify what that goal is. "Focus on why it's important to you. Do you want to play with your grandkids more, or keep up with your own kids? Stay focused on that."

Top 10 Tips

1. Get adequate amounts of sleep. The exact amount varies from person to person, but eight hours is the average.
2. Drink plenty of water (and no, sugary sodas are not an acceptable substitute).
3. Eat whole, unprocessed foods.
4. Eat primarily plants.
5. Eat mindfully. Be aware of when you're hungry and not hungry, and don't just eat on autopilot.
6. Be active at least 150 minutes a week.
7. Don't sit for more than 30 minutes at a time. "Get up from the keyboard and take a quick walk," Brock advises.
8. Be grateful. "Research shows gratitude helps with happiness," Brock says. "Actively look for things to be grateful for in your life."
9. Cultivate meaning and purpose in your life.

10. Cultivate healthy relationships. “Belong to something. Join something,” Brock advises. “Social connections help us stay healthy mentally, emotionally, and even physically.”