

Chris Van Hoof On How To Manage Stress Levels On The Beaches

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Home Lifestyle Chris van Hoof on how to manage stress levels on the Beaches

Living on the Northern Beaches we are lucky enough to have expansive idyllic beaches and glorious bushland to unwind and relax. Yet why are some of us so stressed out?

Many of us can't sleep, we feel more tired and anxious than ever, we are simply wired.

During his recent visit to Manly, I spoke to wellness expert and Eden's Health Retreat Manager Chris van Hoof on why we might be suffering from anxiety and sleeplessness and how to manage our stressful lives, especially during lockdown.

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Chris suggests finding time to switch off and spend time with nature away from our devices

And what happens to our stress levels when we have digital overload it's like a hamster running around in your head, which leads to adrenal fatigue and a hormonal imbalance of your brain.

Running of Australia's top health retreats Chris says that they have strict rules for their guests around digital use.

It's easy to become disconnected from our true selves and nature when we lead such busy, digitally-focused lives. Our first recommendation to our guests is to disconnect from the digital world and connect to the world around them. Whether it's just spending time away from a screen and more time in nature, you'll experience the benefits of biophilia almost immediately.

Biophilia is our body and mind's need to see and experience nature – research shows that regular time amongst greenery or beside the ocean can help you deal with stress, mental health issues, and fatigue.

Being connected to your community or support here on the Beaches is important to keep your stress levels at bay.

A life well-lived is one that is lived with clear intentions, says Chris. It's important to discover whether you are living a life of integrity, one that aligns with your belief, goals, and purpose. It's not just about achievements – big or small – but knowing what makes you happy in your work, relationships, and role within your community and friendship group.

It's also important to respect the ritual of health in our busy fragmented lives. According to Chris, it takes at least 18 days for a habit to become an everyday ritual. That's why we try to encourage our guests to follow a very similar regime each day that they're with us.

Once you get into a simple daily routine, it becomes easier to follow than it is to break the habit.

Chris says to find a good habit such as yoga and let it become part of your lifestyle. This means regular morning movement (typically Qigong), followed by a brisk walk, nourishing meals throughout the day, and finishing the day with downtime rituals of meditation, bath, steam room, and again, no screen time.

It's easy to allow the days to drift past without notice or recognition, says Chris.

A simple way to bring your focus back to the present and really be aware of what's going on within, and around you, is to journal.

Journaling can take the form of freeform writing, list-making, or just recounting your thoughts and response the day.

Writing it down brings your consciousness to the present and can help reduce anxiety and stress and can help you put yourself in charge of your daily life.

It's also important to take time for yourself. A week at a health retreat such as Eden is the best gift you can give yourself, for now, and your future health.

If it's not yet on your cards, you can still copy the daily routines of movement, nourishing recipes, and meditations to ensure you have a little bit of Eden in your own home here on the Beaches.

Support quality local news Manly Observer is an experiment in providing non-sensationalist hyperlocal news on Sydney's Northern Beaches. We cover the big news across the LGA, but with a hyper focus on the Manly electorate encompassing Balgowlah, Seaforth, Freshwater, Brookvale and Curl Curl up to Dee Why. It is run by those living in the community for the benefit of an informed community. We care about an informed and connected community. That's it. Simple. Thank you for your support in keeping quality local news alive!

Manly Observer is a hyperlocal news service covering the Northern Beaches in Sydney with a hyperfocus from Manly to Dee Why. Our number one aim is to keep the fourth estate alive and lower Northern Beaches residents informed and connected. We will endeavour to be as direct and clear as we can, with a fair and non-sensationalist approach to reporting. When not covering straight news we speak with a conversational and often first-person tone. It is run by locals for locals and we depend on your news tips and support to keep going.

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