

# *Live in a Happier Place*

*(Creating a Better You, part 7)*

Do you want to live in a happier place? Where you live is not necessarily what makes you happy there, your attitude has a greater affect on how happy you are someplace. We read articles and hear talks all the time that say to change your attitude and you'll change your life. This is something to look at and work towards, but some people have a more difficult time than others adjusting their attitudes. Turn on the news (which I don't recommend you do on a regular basis, as it is depressing and hard on the positive attitude you're working to cultivate) and you will see a variety of news stories about people who are depressed, addicted, or violent. Are we, as a people, experiencing more of these negative moods or is it just the media? There are many scientists who theorize that these mood swings into the negative are caused by diet, in fact by a diet that can easily be changed by subtracting omega-6 oils and putting more omega-3 oils into our diet instead.

How can an omega oil affect your mood? If you were to look at a human brain you would discover that it is made up mostly of fat. Omega-3 fats help keep the membranes that surround our brain cells supple and moveable. Just like it's good to have a flexible body, it's good to have flexibility in these membranes. Their job is to help brain cells communicate. In order to do that they allow certain proteins to stick to them and then those proteins twist, if your membranes are good and flexible they move and allow those proteins easy access to the brain cells and the brain cells can then communicate. Omega-3s also help adjust the concentrations of the neurotransmitters (brain chemicals that allow the neurons dopamine and serotonin to do their job of turning on and off genes that regulate other chemicals). Dopamine is the reward chemical that is released in your brain in response to pleasurable experiences. Research shows that people low in serotonin experience depression, aggression, and suicidal tendencies. Additionally, omega-3s reduce inflammation, whereas omega-6s increase inflammation. Inflammation causes pain, heart disease, joint problems, and dementia (if there's not enough room for the brain to be flexible due to inflammation then the cells can't communicate) and more.

Our bodies cannot produce omega-3 oils from scratch, we have to eat them. The modern American diet is rich in omega-6s and low in omega-3s. Our ancestors consumed these oils in roughly equal quantities, but in this day of processed foods that are rich in omega-6s we tend to get 10-25 times more omega-6s than omega-3s in our diet. By simply increasing our intake of omega-3s and decreasing our omega-6s we can improve our mood, help ourselves avoid aggressive tendencies, suicidal thoughts, addictive behaviors, and, scientists theorize that we may even be helping to build nutritional armor that helps protect our brains!

How do we decrease our intake of omega-6s and increase our intake of omega-3s? First step, start cooking your own foods and avoid processed foods. This is something you'll see in pretty much any health article, so you know that it does more than help with your omega intake. Once you've done that, start to adjust your diet so that it reflects more omega-3s and fewer omega-6s (remember, you don't have to eliminate omega-6s, just try to get half of each). Here are some tips:

- Drink Masaji daily. Among its many other benefits, Masaji is a good source of omega-3s, that's one of the benefits of the marine phytoplankton.
- Eat fish, preferably wild caught not farm raised. If you don't like fish, take a good supplement. Research suggests that the DHA+EPA supplements are best for your overall health. You want to aim for 900-2,000 mg/day if you eat about 2,000 calories a day.
- Avoid alcohol; it breaks down the omega-3s you are getting.

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- Swap out your oils. Olive oil is your best bet; it is naturally low in omega-6s. Next best are Canola, peanut, and sesame oils. Oils highest in omega-6s include soy, corn, cottonseed, safflower, and sunflower oils.
- Read those ingredient labels (you should be doing this anyway). It's amazing where they hide these things that aren't good for us. Sure, you would suspect salad dressings or mayonnaise to have oil in them, but did you think about crackers, pasta sauces, and granola bars as hidden sources?
- Grass-fed animals produce meats that are lower in omega-6s and higher in omega-3s. This is probably because many of the animals raised on industrial farms are fed corn and soy, which you'll remember from when we talked about swapping out your oils are high in omega-6s.
- Be Young's meal replacement shakes have omega-3s in them.
- Flax, especially fresh ground flax, is a source of omega-3 that the body can use. This is easy to incorporate into your diet, sprinkle some on your cereal, yogurt, salad, etc.
- Vegetables, fruits, legumes (beans) and olive oil are essentially neutral omega foods. They don't contain significant amounts of omega-6 or 3s so they are just what you want, an evenly balanced food.
- Seafood is higher in omega-3s because seaweed is a great source of omega-3s, so add some seaweed to your diet, it's a fun food that can be used to wrap up other foods, mixed into casseroles, ground up and hidden in foods for those picky eaters, or you can even find some in supplement form.
- When you use your essential oils use Gergelim and Baru as your carrier oil, it has omega-3s in it.

There you have it, without a lot of work you can quickly and easily make some of these changes to your diet and improve your health, your mental health, and maybe even protect your mind while you're at it! Start living in a happier place today!

**To order, for class information, or if you have questions contact:**

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