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E. EXCEL'S WORLD



July – September 2024

Strive for Excellence and Live a Colorful Life

Diamond Master Choong Mei May, Jacklyn



Choong Mei May, Jacklyn

From: Malaysia

Strengths and Hobbies: Logical thinking, reading

Dream: To help more people rewrite their lives, and to travel the world with family

Traveled with E. Excel to:

Paris, London, Prague, Vienna, Tokyo, Xi'an, Shanghai, Hokkaido, the Netherlands, Belgium, Seoul, Macau, Italy, USA, Royal Caribbean Cruise, Sanya, Portugal, Jeju Island, Yunnan

"The courage to resign decisively back then stemmed from the fear of a bleak future. Courage overcame fear and rewrote my life story." This is the heartfelt confession of the newly promoted Diamond Master Choong Mei May, Jacklyn.

When in a crowd, Jacklyn is not outgoing or chatty; instead, she is quiet and observant. Formerly a computer network engineer, she felt more comfortable spending long hours facing computers than crowds. Courageous and eager for change, she joined a short-term public speaking training course, determined to boost her confidence in speaking to crowds. In the end, not only did she successfully complete the training, but she was also the top female student.

At the same time, she was astonished to learn that many classmates, despite having average qualifications, were earning higher incomes than her even though she held an enviable job as an engineer. She began to examine herself to see if something was wrong with her. She then looked at her senior colleagues' treatment in the workplace and their mediocre quality of life. The thought that this could be her future sent shivers down her spine, making her realize even more that the path she was currently on was not what she wanted.

Jacklyn learned about E. Excel through her college classmate. E. Excel Nutritional Immunology piqued Jacklyn's curiosity as she had a strong passion for learning new things, and she loved the products. As she evaluated the possibility of changing her career path, a sudden family emergency arose, requiring urgent financial assistance. Amidst this situation, she stumbled upon the E. Excel bonus account that she had always ignored in the past. This account turned out to be the key to resolving this urgent crisis!

"To grow, you must do things differently from what you're doing now! Your current abilities can only earn you your current income. If you want a higher income and a better quality of life, you must first acquire new skills.

"As long as you start taking action, things will move in the direction of your efforts!" Jacklyn said. She believes firmly in the positive nature of every occurrence. "View a crisis as an opportunity. Reflecting after so many years, I'm truly grateful for the choice I made back then. Gone are the days when I felt 'busy, lost, and blind.' And I no longer fear being eliminated or forgotten. Instead, I celebrate new achievements year after year."

Jacklyn emphasizes the importance of self-discipline and action when sharing about the essential requirements for running the E. Excel business, "Self-discipline precedes freedom. This is a career that makes us better, and we enjoy the freedom of being our own bosses. Therefore, self-discipline becomes even more important. It's not about whether you like or want to do something. It's about first doing what you should do, and then doing what you like.



Handle tasks in order of priority and strive to complete them as quickly as possible. Sometimes, it's necessary to push yourself a little. Life has taught me that if I only do what I enjoy, I'll stagnate and never succeed!" She used studying as an example, stating that when faced with subjects she was not good at, she doubled her efforts instead of avoiding them. By confronting rather than evading her weakest subjects, she improved them, thus raising her overall academic average.

Next is action. "Persistence. Limitless action. Just do it. Success rate = learning rate + action rate + adaptability rate," she explained. "The adaptability rate is synonymous with survival of the fittest. The faster you adapt, the quicker your mastery and results." Determined Jacklyn jokes that once she sets her mind to something, she will go to great lengths to accomplish it. "Even if I could only crawl, I'll keep moving forward. Even if I'm crying, I'll keep running forward, willingly and wholeheartedly!"

When faced with setbacks or difficulties, she thinks of Dr. Jau-Fei Chen, whom she admires greatly. "Dr. Jau-Fei Chen definitely faces more problems and more complex ones than I do! I encourage myself by thinking, 'It's okay! Spend some time finding solutions. The problem can always be solved.'" Jacklyn further encourages fellow E. Excellers, "Until you reach the finish line, please keep smiling and moving forward!"

So, how hard should one strive? "Just win by a nose," Jacklyn said with a smile. This phrase was from a senior she greatly respected. "During horse racing, as long as the horse's nose crosses the finish line before the other horse, it wins. The same applies to the E. Excel career—always do a little bit more! Since it's a career of your own choosing, take it seriously and do your best. The results will be completely different."

Jacklyn also emphasizes the importance of time management and learning. She has a daily must-do list, "My annual plan is divided into three parts: personal, business, and family. Every night before bed, I plan the next day's schedule so that I can spend that day efficiently and purposefully. In the mornings and afternoons, I follow up with at least five teammates and five consumers, respectively." To fire up her teammates' passion for learning, she led by example, holding online study sessions every morning from January till March in 2024, rain or shine. "Everyone came together and read the issues of *E. Excel's World*. Whether health-related or business articles, they help us enhance our professional knowledge, making us more persuasive when sharing with customers and friends! I'm grateful for E. Excel's dedication to equipping us in various aspects. *E. Excel's World* is even available in multiple languages; it'd be a great waste not to use them!

"Anyone willing to change can rewrite their destiny. Life and the E. Excel career are intertwined. The day I succeed will be the day my teammates earn more than me! My E. Excel career goal is to nurture at least 10 E. Excellers with a five-figure monthly income!" Jacklyn always believes this, "Taking on more responsibilities and doing more will lead to the fastest and most deep-rooted gains and growth." In the time to come, she will devote herself wholeheartedly to nurturing more E. Excellers to become outstanding, standing undefeated in the torrent of time, and helping them create more personal value and have an invincible future.

Life Motto—"Become a better version of yourself."

You Have to Change If You Want a Different Life

E. Exceller Pang Suh Jen



Pang Suh Jen

From: Malaysia

Strengths and Hobbies:

Insight into aesthetics, travel planning, travel photography, audiobook self-study, and enjoying solitude

Dream: Travel around the world, have an excellent life

Traveled with E. Excel to:

Italy, Spain, USA, Macau, Shenzhen, Osaka, Kyoto, Portugal, Taiwan, Seoul, Xi'an, Sanya, Jeju Island, Royal Caribbean Cruise, Vietnam, Phuket, Yunnan

Wearing the traditional attire of China's ethnic minorities, adorned with exquisite makeup and hairdo, E. Exceller Pang Suh Jen (Suzen) was transformed into a stunning maiden full of exotic charm. Together with fellow E. Excellers, she leisurely enjoyed the Company's complimentary hospitality, experiencing a vastly different cultural allure on the other end of the world. Such an experience was once an unimaginable luxury for Suzen. "Traveling, for me, is indispensable and meaningful. Over the years, thanks to my E. Excel career, I've had the opportunity to travel far and wide, broadening my horizons and mind, fully embracing the world and experiencing life," Suzen shared contentedly.

In the past, Suzen served as the Art Director at a well-known advertising agency. However, the long hours took a toll on her health and severely disrupted her work-life balance. She was often so busy that even on weekends, she could not find time to visit her parents. Her parents, not wanting to disrupt her work, would not let her know if they were feeling unwell, which made her, someone who valued filial piety greatly, feel guilty and saddened. Even her beloved travels were compromised by work and financial constraints, forcing her to bury her desires deep inside.

In contrast, the leaders Suzen saw in E. Excel were vastly different from her. "The leaders in E. Excel all seem very happy, appearing young and energetic and enjoying time freedom while traveling the world. This made me think: I must change if I want a different life. Only by giving myself a chance and bravely taking up the E. Excel career can my future possibly be different!"

To avoid having regrets in life, she willingly switched to a smaller company with fixed working hours, allowing her to diligently build up her E. Excel career after work. "I cherish freedom. I told myself that once the income from my E. Excel career exceeded my salary, I would first buy back my time freedom!" Suzen reminisced with a smile. Two years later, she successfully achieved her wish and has been running her E. Excel business for over 10 years since then.

Suzen humorously remarked that her introverted personality and artist temperament required her to put in more effort initially. However, she set high expectations for herself, becoming a passionate learner. She followed the Company's and her team's plans, participating in various training activities and courses and solidly acquiring the professional knowledge essential for her career. "Like a sponge, I started absorbing the experiences of predecessors. I had to relearn everything I used to avoid! This included learning how to communicate with people, read between the lines, and learn from teammates with similar personalities how to overcome challenges. Most importantly, when you accumulate much knowledge and experience, communicating with others becomes natural and effortless." She finds the most valuable aspect of this career is that it does not require her to become someone else; she can retain her original self.



"I'm still me, but when it's necessary to demonstrate professionalism, I can articulate eloquently! Everyone can do it! You don't need fancy words; genuine expression is more likely to be accepted because everyone hopes for sincerity from those approaching them." Each challenge she overcomes gives her a sense of achievement, and her confidence gradually builds up over time.

Suzen often encourages fellow E. Excellers: whether or not things go smoothly only affects the strategy and pace of action; it is not a reason to stop. Embrace all uncertainties. If the outcome is good, continue the effort. Face difficulties or setbacks positively. If expectations are not met, there is no need for disappointment; instead, continue exploring how to do better! Change your perspective with a smile, and do not dream of overnight success. Once a path is chosen, stick to it until the end, even through the darkest times. Maintain a humble attitude, keep learning, keep improving, and keep moving forward. "There's no such thing as failure; it's just that we haven't succeeded yet. It's a matter of timing; just do it! When the time comes, you'll reap the rewards. In E. Excel, the accumulation of effort is rewarded, often beyond your imagination!" Suzen shared with a smile, recalling the wise words of an E. Excel leader.

If asked about the most indispensable aspect of E. Excel, Suzen's response will surely pique your curiosity— the multiplied time. "For example, if one person can only work for six hours, but if there're 20 E. Excellers working together as a team, all striving towards the same goal, it's like harnessing the power of 120 hours! E. Excel is precisely such a venture that fully leverages teamwork." She elaborated, "Working with teammates on the same wavelength, we become the closest comrades, driven by determination to achieve each other's dreams. We advance in the same direction with unwavering resolve, enjoying the bountiful fruits of one plus one being greater than two. Such close emotional bonds are among the greatest rewards of managing this career." Suzen's E. Excel career has enabled her to regain her health, reclaim her time, and gain control over her future.

Everyone has heard of the saying, "Live in the present moment." But Suzen encourages fellow E. Excellers to "live in the future!" "You must have dreams in your heart. Paint a vivid picture in your mind of the life you want to lead and the person you want to become. Only then will you know the path you need to take now. Set goals. Break down the big goals into smaller ones. Strive wholeheartedly to achieve them until your dreams are within reach!" She urges every E. Exceler to deeply understand that the beauty of the process can only be truly felt through personal effort and dedication.

Life Motto—"All things are beautiful when you hold on to your dream and make it happen."

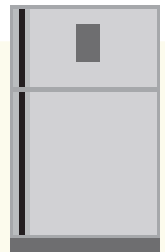
Usher Out Old Ways and Welcome In Some New Routines



Hello, we have fused the 'Lifelong Learning' article with 'Beyond' to create an article that deeply connects with various aspects of our daily lives.

Daily Life Tip

Do Not Wash Fruits and Vegetables Before Storing Them



There has been an explosion of fridge organization videos on social media, and it can be really tempting to give all the produce a bath before storing it neatly in clear containers. In fact, washing the produce before storing it might make it go bad faster. Washing it means giving it excess moisture, which will speed up the growth of any microorganisms on the produce, making it decay faster.

When we wash fruits and vegetables, our main concern is usually pesticides and dirt, not bacteria. But bacteria can actually be a bigger issue.



Before reaching the supermarket, produce goes through many hands, picking up harmful bacteria like *Salmonella*, *E. coli*, and *Listeria* from different sources. Even after washing, some bacteria might remain. Bacteria are alive and can multiply with time, even if it is slower in the fridge. Hence, washing fruits and vegetables is a good thing—just do it right before eating or cooking them. If you insist on washing the fruits and vegetables before storing them, just make sure they are really dry before putting in the fridge.

Daily Life Tip

It is Safe to Drink Cold Water



There is a questionable claim circulating that all cold drinks are unhealthy for the body. However, before resigning yourself to a life of consuming lukewarm water, let us scrutinize the scientific credibility of this claim. Those vehemently opposing the consumption of ice water with meals argue that it solidifies the oil we ingest, creating a “sludge” detrimental to digestion and contributing to gastrointestinal cancers.



Firstly, when consuming cold or hot beverages, their temperatures do not remain cold or hot for long. Once ingested, liquids quickly adjust to the body’s temperature.

Secondly, stomach juice is acidic, breaking down almost everything consumed into a thick, liquid consistency before reaching the small intestine. Finally, oils are fats, and stomach acid or ice cannot alter their composition or convert them into anything different.

With all that said, while drinking cold water can sometimes trigger migraines in some people, colder water can help lower core temperature after exercise. Experts suggest that cold water is absorbed faster from the gut, aiding quicker rehydration after exercise.

Another widely accepted belief is that cold water, ice cream or anything cold should be avoided during menstruation, as it is thought to impede the complete flow of menses and worsen pain. In reality, ice-cold water has no impact on the menstrual cycle. Menstruation is simply blood expelled from the uterus, and menstrual cramps result from uterine contractions. Foods have no direct impact on the uterus because once consumed, they pass through the stomach and intestines, not the uterus. However, soaking in a hot bath or using a heating pad on the lower abdomen may alleviate menstrual symptoms. Heat therapy relaxes uterine muscles and eases pain.



Drinking enough water, whether warm or cold, is essential during menstruation. Dehydration can lead to painful cramps. Hormonal fluctuations during periods may cause constipation, gas, and bloating, making it crucial to maintain adequate water intake during this time.

In conclusion, ensure you consume enough water daily, regardless of its temperature. Adequate daily water intake is crucial for digestion, metabolism, eliminating toxins, maintaining normal body temperature, and keeping organs and tissues healthy.

Daily Life Tip

Adopt a Pet to Prevent Allergies



Contrary to popular belief, having a pet might actually contribute to preventing allergies in your children. It is not uncommon for families to contemplate giving up their pets during pregnancy due to concerns about pet dander triggering allergies or transmitting illnesses to newborns.



Surprisingly, research suggests that having a pet in the household can significantly reduce a child's likelihood of developing various allergies. Some studies even propose that having a dog or cat at home during the first year of life can decrease the risk of childhood asthma and allergies by up to 40%. The more cats or dogs your infant is exposed to, the lower their chances of developing asthma, hay fever, or eczema. Naturally, this is dependent on no other household members being allergic to pets in the first place.

Moreover, studies published in *The Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology* have demonstrated that early exposure to pets can help bolster a child's immune system. Exposure to germs and allergens from pets can effectively teach children's immune systems early in life to develop robustly without causing illness.

Daily Life Tip

Do Not Apply Ice on Burns



When engaged in cooking, especially with high heat in Asian-style cuisine, minor burns on our hands are a common risk. Our instinct may lead us to reach for ice from the refrigerator, but research indicates that applying ice cubes to minor scalds can potentially cause more harm than good. Extremely cold temperatures can have a frostbite-like effect, damaging the skin's surface.

It is crucial to avoid greasy home remedies such as butter or mayonnaise as they can trap heat and prolong the burn. Additionally, applying toothpaste to treat burns is not recommended. While toothpaste with menthol imparts a cooling sensation in the mouth, it does not lower the skin's temperature. The perception of cold in our body is triggered by the activation of a protein called TRPM8 in nerve cells, which then signals the brain to interpret it as a cold sensation. Menthol can activate TRPM8, creating a false perception of cold. Applying toothpaste to a burn can intensify the pain and elevate the risk of infection and scarring.



For minor burns, the recommended approach is to use running cold water, such as holding the affected area under a running tap for several minutes. Subsequently, applying antibiotic ointment and loosely wrapping the burn with gauze can help protect against germs and promote healing.

Daily Life Tip

Do Not Use Rubbing Alcohol to Cool Down a Fever



Alcohol's cooling effects on the skin have led many parents to use it as a quick home remedy for fevers in small children. Some view it as more effective than using water since alcohol volatilizes faster. As rubbing alcohol evaporates from the skin, it provides a soothing sensation, potentially reducing body temperature. Many parents comfort their feverish children by rubbing it on the skin or adding a little to a sponge bath.



However, using alcohol in this way can cause serious harm. Rubbing alcohol is rapidly absorbed through the skin, and applying large amounts topically can lead to inhalation, resulting in alcohol poisoning and other issues. Several case reports in medical literature describe instances where small children slipped into comas after caregivers attempted to lower their fevers with alcohol. Other reports detail cases in which adults experienced cardiac and neurological problems after using alcohol-soaked towels to cool down or alleviate pain.

Fever is simply the body's immune response to fighting an infection. A common cold or flu with a fever usually resolves without treatment. Rest and increased fluid intake are important. Although having a fever may induce feelings of coldness or shivering, taking a hot bath or shower is not advisable as it can exacerbate the fever. Opt for a lukewarm water bath for better fever management. When experiencing fever chills, it may seem natural to wear layers or wrap up in heavy blankets, but this can elevate body temperature and cause overheating. Stick to a single layer of lightweight clothing and avoid heavy blankets. If symptoms persist after rest and hydration, over-the-counter medications, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen, can be considered according to the instructions on the label.

While most fevers can be managed at home, some require medical attention. For adults, seek medical advice if the temperature remains consistently above 39.4°C (103°F), or if you have a fever along with symptoms such as neck stiffness, confusion, skin rash, rapid heart rate, severe headache, chest pain, pain when passing urine, or difficulty breathing. Please also seek medical advice if you have chronic conditions such as diabetes or cancer, and if you are immunocompromised. Regarding children with fevers, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends consulting a doctor if the fever is high (over 39.4°C /103°F), if a seizure occurs, if the child is younger than two years of age and has been feverish for more than 24 hours, if the child is two years of age or older and has been feverish for more than 72 hours, or if the fever is accompanied by other symptoms like severe ear pain, stiff neck, abdominal pain, or persistent vomiting or diarrhea.



Daily Life Tip

Sleeping With Wet Hair Might Cause Acne



Have you ever been scolded by your mom for not drying your hair after washing it or sleeping with wet hair, warning that you would catch a cold? Contrary to popular belief, being cold or damp with wet hair is not sufficient to catch a cold. Actual contact with a virus is necessary for transmission, and wet hair does not attract these viruses. However, experiencing a runny nose when cold with wet hair is common, but it does not necessarily indicate illness. Exposure to cold air triggers a runny nose—a normal reaction of our upper airway and nasal mucosal membranes but it is not the same as a viral infection. Warming up with a hairdryer should alleviate this symptom.

While you cannot catch a virus just by sleeping with wet hair, it might be advisable to avoid it if you are prone to acne as a wet pillow is more likely to harbor bacteria. Sleeping with wet hair creates a warm, damp environment ideal for bacteria and fungi, leading to scalp and skin infections. The *Malassezia* yeast, which causes dandruff, thrives in warm, moist, and dark

environments (e.g. wet hair during sleep). It causes scalp problems that result in scalp irritation, itchiness, and inflammation.

For many adults, acne persists beyond adolescence. Despite regular face washing, acne can still occur due to contact with bacteria on pillowcases while tossing and turning throughout the night. Pillows absorb sweat, bacteria, hair products, oils, makeup, and saliva, emphasizing the importance of frequently washing pillowcases to maintain hygiene.

A note from Dr. EE: On the topic of acne, it is worth mentioning that chocolates do not cause acne. Despite considerable research exploring the link between chocolate consumption and acne, there is no substantial evidence suggesting that the occasional chocolate indulgence negatively affects your skin. So, you do not need to bid farewell to that delightful chocolate just yet—although it might contribute a few extra calories to your waistline. Enjoy!



Daily Life Tip

Wear a Coat When You Go Outside in Winter



We have all heard our mom say, “Don’t go outside without a coat or you’ll catch a cold.” There is some truth to it. Wearing a coat is essential to avoid getting cold, though not necessarily to prevent catching a cold.

Colds and the flu are primarily caused by viruses. Without the presence of a virus, one cannot catch a cold or flu, even when venturing outside in winter without proper insulation. However, being exposed to cold weather can weaken the body, making

it more susceptible to catching a cold if the viruses are present. With over 200 viruses capable of causing a cold, the winter season, characterized by indoor confinement and closer human proximity, contributes to the spread of these viruses.

Viruses thrive in the cooler regions of nasal passages, multiplying faster in lower temperatures. Cold conditions also tend to compromise the body’s antiviral immune responses. Interestingly, a fever, one of the body’s immune responses, helps in warming up the body and activating immune cells to combat infections.

Beyond the risk of catching a cold, keeping warm in winter serves another crucial purpose. Blood pressure tends to be higher in winter and lower in summer due to the temporary narrowing of blood vessels caused by cold temperatures. This narrowing elevates blood pressure because greater force is required to propel blood through constricted veins and arteries. High blood pressure is a significant risk factor for strokes and heart attacks, and cold temperatures can also contribute to blood thickening, potentially leading to clot formation and an increased risk of strokes.

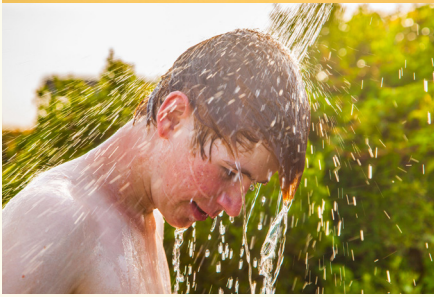
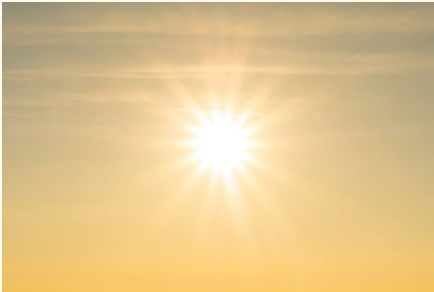
Furthermore, changes in weather patterns, such as storms, humidity shifts, atmospheric pressure, and wind, can similarly impact blood pressure, particularly in individuals aged 65 and older.

In conclusion, if you venture outside in the cold, it is advisable to bundle up and stay warm for not only preventing colds but also for maintaining overall health, especially considering the potential impact on blood pressure and related health risks.



Daily Life Tip

It is Okay to Dump Cold Water on Someone with Heatstroke



Many Asians believe that using air conditioning or immersing themselves in cold water is harmful to health. However, as climate change pushes temperatures higher and higher worldwide, more and more people are experiencing heatstroke.

Heatstroke is a medical emergency and can lead to serious complications, such as disseminated intravascular coagulation, and even multi-organ failure. Despite the severity of heatstroke, there are still many myths surrounding it.

Myth: Heatstroke only happens outside or in the summer.

Heatstroke happens in any environment where the body's temperature regulation system is overwhelmed. It can happen indoors, such as in a sauna, or in other places with insufficient ventilation or cooling.

Myth: Drinking water prevents heatstroke.

While being dehydrated increases the risk of heatstroke, drinking water is not enough to completely prevent it. Do not assume you are safe from heatstroke just because you are drinking plenty of water.

Myth: Heatstroke is obvious.

Heatstroke can be very subtle, and symptoms can vary depending on the cause. Nonexertional heatstroke victims often present hot and dry skin, while exertional heatstroke victims, such as athletes who have overexerted themselves, often present hot, moist skin. Heatstroke victims may feel nauseous and vomit, have muscle cramps or muscle weakness, headache, rapid breathing, and a rapid heart rate. They may even feel confused or have an altered mental state, meaning they may not even recognize the trouble they are in.

One of the most dangerous and prolific myths is that cold water is bad for you. On very hot days, or even cool days, there is nothing wrong with drinking cold, or even iced, water. It is not going to harm the body. It does not increase the risk of other diseases, such as stroke. It does not "shock" the body.

In fact, the gold standard for treating heatstroke victims is a cold water bath. Advice against giving heatstroke victims cold water to drink or stopping them from immersing themselves in cold water is dangerous. Death from heatstroke is 100% preventable if proper cooling is initiated within 10 minutes of collapse. Waiting increases the risk of permanent organ damage, neurological damage, or even death.



These are the warning signs of heatstroke:

- Red, hot, and dry skin without sweating (although in some cases heatstroke victims may have red, hot, and moist skin)
- Rapid, strong pulse
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Confusion or an altered mental state
- Unconsciousness



If you notice any of these signs in yourself or someone else, seek immediate medical assistance. Meanwhile, begin cooling the affected individuals promptly using any available methods, such as immersing them in a tub of cool water or wrapping them in a cool, wet sheet while vigorously fanning. Encourage sipping of cold water, but strictly avoid alcohol consumption as it worsens dehydration and can trigger other dangerous conditions like atrial fibrillation, further complicating the situation.

Daily Life Tip

Drink Lots of Water While Eating



Drinking water before, during or after meals does not adversely impact digestion. The notion originates from the idea that water may dilute digestive juices, potentially interfering with effective food breakdown. However, this belief is unfounded as water does not affect enzyme activity; enzymes bind to food particles regardless of the presence of water. The stomach's acidity is also unaffected by water; the stomach responds to food or drink by producing sufficient acid for digestion. In fact, drinking water during meals can aid digestion by facilitating

food breakdown, thereby enhancing the body's nutrient absorption.

Moreover, water plays a crucial role in diluting urine, preventing the formation of kidney stones. Individuals who have experienced kidney stones are advised to consume three liters of water daily.

Inadequate water intake can impact the gallbladder. Water assists in its emptying and prevents the buildup of bile, thus averting the formation of gallstones.

Determining the appropriate daily water intake depends on factors such as activity level, health, and climate. However, a general guideline is that if your urine is light in color, you are adequately hydrated, while darker urine indicates a need for increased water consumption.

Concerning preferences for plain water, alternatives like carbonated water or tea are acceptable. As long as a beverage is healthful, it contributes to overall hydration.

Daily Life Tip

Do Not Cut Mold Off of Food and Eat the Remaining Portion



Avoiding food wastage is a universal concern. When we encounter a moldy spot on our chili or bread, the temptation to cut or remove the mold and consume the rest is common. However, this practice is not advisable. When visible mold is present, its “roots” likely extend deeply into other parts of the food, even those that appear mold-free.



Some molds produce toxins known as mycotoxins, with aflatoxins produced by certain molds, particularly the *Aspergillus* species, considered among the most carcinogenic substances. Aflatoxins pose severe health risks, including liver damage, liver cancer, other cancers, genotoxic effects (DNA damage), immune deficiency, and developmental disorders in children. Aflatoxin exposure primarily results from consuming contaminated foods, but the most toxic aflatoxin compound, B1, can even penetrate the skin. Most mycotoxins are heat and

chemically stable, surviving food processing, meaning that cooking with heat does not eliminate all mycotoxins.

Molds that produce mycotoxins thrive in various environments, including soil, hay, and common food items like corn, wheat, rice, sorghum, chili, peanuts, sesame seeds, cereals, dried fruits, apples, and coffee beans. They can contaminate livestock feed, leading to the presence of aflatoxins in eggs, milk products, and meat.

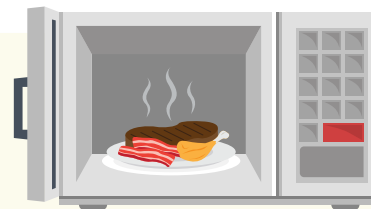
To minimize the risk of mycotoxin contamination at home, it is crucial to:

- Avoid sniffing moldy food to prevent inhaling mold and causing respiratory issues.
- Inspect grains, dried fruits, and nuts, discarding any that appear moldy, discolored or shriveled.
- Store rice, grains, and nuts in a dry area, avoiding excessive warmth that promotes mold growth. Use sealed containers, preferably vacuum-packed.
- Purchase grains and nuts as fresh as possible.
- Check nearby items that the moldy food might have touched as molds can spread rapidly.
- Be aware that molds can grow below the surface of food, making them invisible to the naked eye. While it may be possible to cut off small mold spots on hard, firm fruits and vegetables, it is advisable to discard them due to the potential presence of invisible molds and the risk of cross-contamination from the knife used.
- Exercise caution when it comes to detecting mold contamination, especially in processed foods like peanut butter, jams, and vegetable fruit juices. Mycotoxins like patulin are often found in rotting apples, fruits, and grains, and purchasing processed products from reputable sources that responsibly test for aflatoxins is recommended.



Daily Life Tip

Cook More with Your Microwave Oven



The undeniable convenience of the microwave oven is contrasted by lingering doubts in some people about its impact on the nutritional value of food.

Understanding how microwave ovens function can dispel these doubts. Microwave ovens cook food using microwaves—waves of energy akin to radio waves but with a shorter wavelength. These waves primarily affect water molecules, causing rapid vibration and the accumulation of thermal (heat) energy.

However, since the air around the food in the microwave oven remains less heated, a microwave oven cannot brown meat surfaces or crisp up pie crusts.

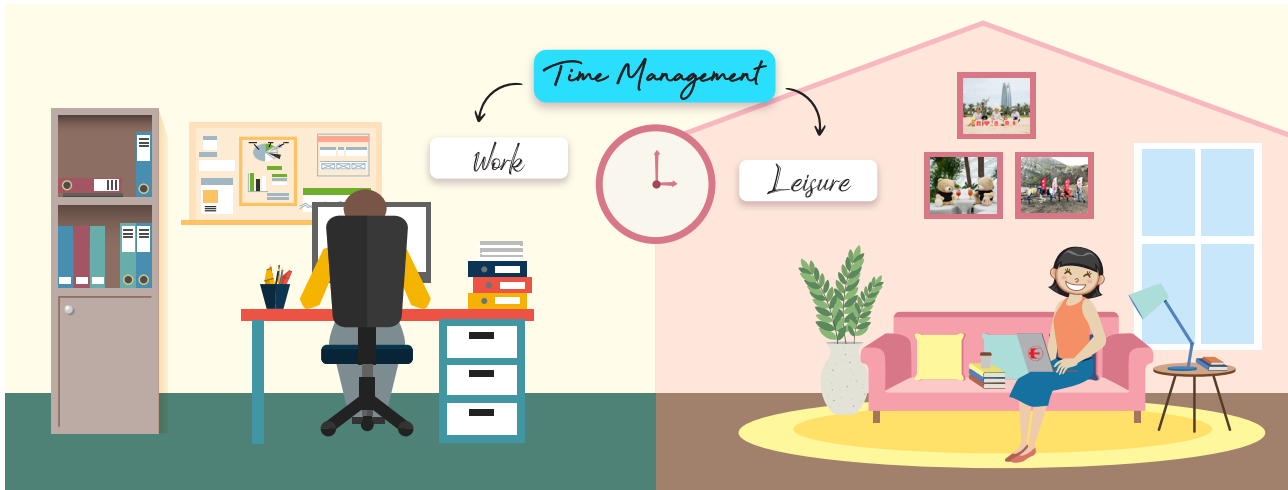
Certain heat-sensitive nutrients, such as vitamin C, can break down when exposed to heat. However, microwave cooking times are shorter, thus preserving heat-sensitive nutrients more effectively. The optimal cooking method for retaining nutrients involves cooking quickly, for the shortest duration, and using minimal liquid, all of which microwave cooking fulfills. Cooking food with a small amount of water in a microwave oven essentially steams food from the inside out, preserving more vitamins and minerals compared to many other cooking methods. While the details are significant, the bottom line remains: vegetables, prepared in various ways, are beneficial.

Concerns about microwave radiation harming individuals nearby are unfounded. Microwaves generate electromagnetic radiation, distinct from nuclear radiation. They produce non-ionizing radiation, similar to the radiation emitted by cell phones. Not all radiation is detrimental; the light used to illuminate our homes is also a form of electromagnetic radiation. Additionally, microwave ovens feature metal shields and screens over the window to prevent radiation leakage. A word of caution: refrain from using plastic containers in the microwave oven as many plastics contain hormone-disrupting compounds like bisphenol A (BPA), which can contaminate food when heated.



The Lifelong Learning article is contributed by Dr. EE Zhang, MBChB.

From Home-Based Dreamer to Successful Entrepreneur



The idea of running your own business from the comfort of your home is enticing, offering the promise of freedom and autonomy. No more nagging bosses, rigid schedules, or office politics—just you and your dreams. But for many who pull the trigger on their home-based entrepreneurial dream, the reality turns out to be a frustrating struggle to get something—anything—done. The problem? Time management—the secret ingredient to realizing your entrepreneurial dreams.

Without discipline, nothing productive gets done. It is why your parents made you go to bed and turn the lights off by a certain hour, why your teachers imposed strict deadlines for homework and projects, and why your boss required you to be in the office by 9 AM and stay until 6 PM. When it comes to time management, most of us have been trained from birth to obey rather than direct, and for the newborn home-based entrepreneur, the absence of a traditional boss can be a double-edged sword.

Much of the allure of a home-based business lies in its promise of flexibility. You are your own boss, so you should be able to work whenever you please, right? The freedom to choose when to work, without the pressure of set project times or office hours, is a great blessing. You can set your own goals and work toward them at your own pace and have your work life complement (rather than compete with) the rest of your life.



But there are two sides to every coin. The complete freedom to manage your own time can also lead to a lack of structure and focus, leading to a frustrating lack of progress and demoralizing stagnation. “I’ll work when I feel like it,” “I’m waiting for inspiration,” “I’m just not motivated today”—these are the epitaphs etched on innumerable tombstones in the graveyard of dreams.

“Being your own boss” does not mean working only when you feel like it. Your feelings are as mercurial as the weather, and if feelings are your boss, you will never get anything done. Being your own boss means *you* have the responsibility to manage and oversee your own work with discipline and accountability. Bosses who make their employees work whenever and however they feel like it would be terrible bosses in a traditional workplace. Likewise, if you are truly the boss of your own life, you cannot just work whenever you feel like it.

Home-based entrepreneurship is not the freedom *from* work, it is the freedom *to* work in a way that is smarter and better tailored to your own wants and needs. You have many advantages as a home-based entrepreneur; you save many hours each week from not having to commute or attend pointless meetings arranged by misguided management. The home-based entrepreneur’s success comes from channeling these advantages into increased productivity. The saying goes, “Work smarter, not harder.” Many home-based entrepreneurs, instead of working smarter, hardly work at all.



Time: The All-Important Resource

In the long run, time management is as important as money management. Spending your money however and whenever you feel like it is a bad idea, and it is the same with your time. The temptation to work “freely” (read: whenever you want) is a stumbling block for the home-based entrepreneur. There is always a reason not to work. The weather is so great today, I do not want to waste it on work. The weather is so terrible today, I will work tomorrow. I am feeling tired today, so I will end work early today. I have so much energy today, I will take a break from work and go to the park. Such attitudes view time as abundant when it is scarce, and as inconsequential when it is life itself.

Take time management seriously. Understanding and managing this finite resource is the key to turning your entrepreneurial journey into a success story with a happy ending. Since time is the topic of discussion, let us discuss different kinds of “time” to help us better manage it.

Part-time: Work is Still Work

Good time management does not have to mean working yourself to death, and strictly working eight hours or more a day is not necessary to achieving your dreams. It is perfectly acceptable to work part-time from home and set your own hours according to your needs. But the hours do have to be set and, most importantly, *prioritized*. Part-time work is no less important than full-time work, and working for yourself is still just as vital to your livelihood as working for a boss. It is still work—work that puts food on your table, clothes on your back, and a roof over your head.

At a traditional job, someone else sets the hours and you are committed to working those hours. As your own boss, you set your own hours—but are you committed to those hours the same way you were when you had a boss? How could it be that you work harder and more consistently for someone else than you do for yourself? You obey the hours for the sake of a paycheck, should you not obey your own hours for the sake of your dream? As your own boss, set your own hours for your own work and commit to them.



If you are not setting your own hours for work, then that is where you need to begin. When you schedule work from 1 PM to 5 PM, you make a commitment to start working at 1 PM—even if you have not had lunch or have not completed your household chores. If that means forgoing the meal entirely or having to stay up late to finish the chore, so be it. You should honor your commitment to a work schedule. As mentioned earlier, working only when you feel like it is a recipe for disaster. When you worked for a boss, you found ways to take care of your personal business while still honoring your work hours. If you want to achieve your entrepreneurial dreams, you must do the same. Working from home is still work. Part-time work is still work. Working for yourself is still... well, you get the point. But if every other responsibility comes before your work responsibility, you are never going to get to work. Work needs to be a priority in your mind, and you need to honor your part-time work hours the same as if they were full-time work hours.

Do not take work lightly. Set regular, scheduled time for work. It does not have to be eight hours, and it does not have to be 9 AM – 6 PM. But set aside some time and commit to those hours. Make arrangements so you can get your work done and honor your commitment, come rain or sunshine.



Leisure Time: Time for Yourself is Important

Next, let us talk about "leisure time." This is the time that you plan for your own enjoyment and relaxation. Just like work time, these are hours, day, or weeks you have planned out for yourself. Leisure time is reserved for you, your family, and your passions, and should not be confused with working hours. Having leisure time is beneficial as it allows you to recharge, ultimately enhancing your work performance. Rest and play are essential elements of the human existence, and when you are robbed of them, you cannot function at your best or truly be yourself.

The key idea here is that leisure time is *also* part of time management. If you only work when you feel like it, then you will probably never work enough to make any progress. Likewise, if you take time off for leisure whenever you feel like it, then you will probably spend all your time in leisure and never get any work done. Or for some, no time is ever planned for their leisure, and they burn out into an unmotivated, depressive state. Yes, there are times when you simply cannot partake in leisure activities. Bills need to be paid and sometimes things are tough. But for most of us, most of the time, leisure time is available, and we need to make use of such time to recharge and reinvigorate ourselves.

The mistake many new home-based entrepreneurs make is not about having leisure time, it is about having *unmanaged* leisure time. Often, home-based entrepreneurs make the mistake of not acknowledging the value and necessity of leisure. Unmanaged leisure time tends to be too long or too short, leading either to a sense of guilt and shame or to a reckless waste of time. Neither of these leads to the rest and rejuvenation that leisure time is meant to cultivate in your life.

Take your leisure time seriously. Just like with your work time, set some time aside for yourself for leisure. Honor those commitments, same as how you honor your work commitments. That means forgoing leisure time when you need to work, but it also means sometimes forgoing work time when you need leisure.

Here is the takeaway: time management is about managing all your time, not just your work time. Take your leisure time seriously and manage it carefully.



Spare Time: Leftover Time

Finally, let us talk about “spare time.” This is the idea that some of your time is purposeless and therefore, ultimately disposable. There is some truth to this, as we do sometimes benefit from having undirected and unscheduled time in our lives. Strictly scheduling every minute takes away from the quiet spontaneity that brings some much-needed mystery and beauty to our existence. We all have some spare time in our lives. But the problem for home-based entrepreneurs is that they often mistake “spare time” for “work time.” Many of them also consider “spare time” and “part-time” to be the same thing. This is where many home-based entrepreneurs stumble.



Spare time is “leftover” time, a scarce resource scrouged together from the scraps of time spent completing other more important and necessary activities of the day. Daily chores such as sending the kids to school, taking care of the household, and of course, time spent working and earning a living. Did you catch that? There is time spent doing *important* stuff, and then there is spare time. Spare time, by definition, is time that is *not prioritized*.

When making the transition from traditional employment to self-employment, did you start equating “part-time” with “spare time?” Too many home-based entrepreneurs think that they will do their work in their spare time. That automatically means that your work time is *deprioritized*. If you think of your work time as your spare time, then that is exactly how you will treat your work—as something leftover, scraped together from the minutes and seconds left from doing other more important things.

There is no end to the number of things you can prioritize over your “spare time.” Work time simply cannot be your spare time. The truth is, unless you are doing absolutely nothing with your life to begin with, you barely have any spare time to begin with. If the only work you do is during your spare time, you are likely doing very little work at all.

Keep your work time and spare time separate. Your work time, even part-time work, should be prioritized far above your spare time. It takes consistent time spent working to turn your home-based business into a thriving venture, and spare time is not going to cut it.



Time to Get Serious

Time management is the secret ingredient that many home-based businesses and entrepreneurs are missing. Without time management, frustration and stagnation will lead to the slow death of your dreams. There are many advantages to managing your own time as a self-employed entrepreneur. There are *no* advantages to unmanaged time.

Take your dreams, and the time you spend working on them, seriously. Work time is work time. Part-time work hours might be shorter

than full-time work hours, but they are no less important. Set a schedule and commit to it. Prioritize your work time over other chores and responsibilities if necessary to ensure that work actually gets done. Leisure time is also necessary and proper but must be managed with the same great care you use to manage your work time. Unmanaged leisure time can ruin a home business just as easily as unmanaged work time. Finally, keep spare time separate from work time. Your dreams are worth more than the leftover scraps of each day—make a serious commitment to your work and invest in your success.

In the entrepreneurial world, effective time management makes all the difference. The secret to home-based business success lies in recognizing that you must become the boss of your own time.



The Professional Development article is contributed by Elei Zhang, JD.

There are treasure troves of mysteries in nature waiting to be discovered and explored. Countless scientists have devoted themselves to unraveling them in the hopes of improving human health and wellbeing. Their work is vital to understanding and treating disease.

We bring you their research findings in our goal to enrich and expand public knowledge.

Maitake Mushroom (*Grifola frondosa*)



Maitake Mushroom Helps Fight Against Cancer

The maitake mushroom has long been recognized for its ability to enhance the immune system and combat cancer by activating immune cells such as macrophages, T cells, and natural killer cells. It contains polysaccharide complexes with significant anticancer properties. Research indicates that maitake D-fraction (a component of maitake mushrooms) induces apoptosis in breast cancer cells through alterations in gene expression. D-fraction in maitake can alter the expression of many genes, including ones involved in various processes such as apoptosis stimulation, inhibition of cell growth and proliferation, cell cycle arrest, blocking migration and metastasis of tumor cells, and inducing multidrug sensitivity.

Alonso EN, Orozco M, Eloy Nieto A, Balogh GA. Genes related to suppression of malignant phenotype induced by maitake D-fraction in breast cancer cells. *J Med Food*. 2013;16(7):602–617. doi.org/10.1089/jmf.2012.0222

Maitake Mushroom May Suppress Tumor Growth

Researchers investigated the effects of maitake D-fraction on tumor growth in mouse models. They found that D-fraction inhibited tumor growth by activating antigen-presenting cells in the intestinal mucosa, which led to systemic immune responses. D-fraction induces dendritic cell maturation via the dectin-1 pathway, promoting tumor-antigen specific T cell responses and infiltration of activated T cells into tumors while reducing immunosuppressive cells such as regulatory T cells and myeloid-derived suppressor cells. The study suggests that D-fraction could be a promising oral therapeutic agent for cancer management.

Masuda Y, Inoue H, Ohta H, Miyake A, Konishi M, Nanba H. Oral administration of soluble β -glucans extracted from *Grifola frondosa* induces systemic antitumor immune response and decreases immunosuppression in tumor-bearing mice. *Int J Cancer*. 2013;133(1):108–119. doi.org/10.1002/ijc.27999

Maitake Mushroom May Kill Cancer Cells

Research shows D-fraction may enhance the capacity of human peripheral blood mononuclear cells (PBMC), a type of immune cell, to kill tumor cells. Treatment with D-fraction increases PBMC's destructive activity against various human cancer cells, such as pancreatic cancer, peritoneal carcinomatosis, and renal cell carcinomas. D-fraction may also help amplify the effects of other immunostimulants, such as interleukin-2, possibly allowing for lower and less toxic doses in cancer therapy.

Johnson DM, Edwards E, Rosales A, Birdsall TC, Staren ED, Braun DP. Abstract 3515: Maitake D-fraction, a natural mushroom extract, synergizes with interleukin-2 for increased lytic activity of peripheral blood mononuclear cells against various human tumor cell histologies. Abstract presented at: Proceedings of the 103rd Annual Meeting of the American Association for Cancer Research. March 31 – April 4, 2012; Chicago, IL. doi.org/10.1158/1538-7445.AM2012-3515



Maitake Mushroom May Help Lower High Cholesterol Levels

Researchers looked at the impact of maitake mushroom on cholesterol levels in mice. Researchers fed groups of mice a high-cholesterol diet, a high-cholesterol diet supplemented with maitake mushroom powder, or a cholesterol-free diet for four weeks. Mice that were fed a high-cholesterol diet had elevated hepatic total cholesterol and plasma total cholesterol levels compared to the mice fed a cholesterol-free diet. However, the mice fed a high-cholesterol diet supplemented with maitake mushroom powder had decreased plasma total cholesterol levels compared to the mice fed a high-cholesterol diet with no supplements. Analysis of hepatic gene expression showed that genes associated with cholesterol transport and excretion were slightly upregulated in the mice that received maitake mushroom powder. Overall, maitake mushroom may influence lipid metabolism and lower cholesterol levels.

Sato M, Tokuji Y, Yoneyama S, et al. Effect of dietary maitake (*Grifola frondosa*) mushrooms on plasma cholesterol and hepatic gene expression in cholesterol-fed mice. *J Oleo Sci*. 2013;62(12):1049–1058. doi.org/10.5650/jos.62.1049



Enhance Immunity in Type 2 Diabetes Patients with Maitake Mushroom

Type 2 diabetes mellitus patients often have increased inflammation and immune dysfunction. Previous research has shown that maitake mushroom may improve glycemic responses in diabetic rats. Researchers have found that maitake mushroom increases macrophage numbers and phagocyte activities, enhancing innate immunity. The findings suggest that maitake mushroom has immunomodulatory effects, reducing inflammation and ameliorating diabetes-induced immune alterations in rats with diabetes.

Chen YH, Lee CH, Hsu TH, Lo HC. Submerged-culture mycelia and broth of the maitake medicinal mushroom *Grifola frondosa* (higher basidiomycetes) alleviate type 2 diabetes-induced alterations in immunocytic function. *Int J Med Mushrooms*. 2015;17(6):541–556. doi.org/10.1615/intjmedmushrooms.v17.i6.50

Maitake Mushroom Can Support the Immune System

Researchers studied the biological and immunological properties of maitake mushrooms. The maitake mushrooms used were β -glucan rich. Glucans have been known to stimulate cellular immunity, particularly phagocytosis and natural killer cell activity. The study concludes that maitake-derived glucan, particularly when combined with other glucans, such as shiitake glucan, strongly stimulates immune defense reactions, indicating its potential as an immunomodulatory agent.

Vetvicka V, Vetvickova J. Immune-enhancing effects of maitake (*Grifola frondosa*) and shiitake (*Lentinula edodes*) extracts. *Ann Transl Med*. 2014;2(2):14. doi.org/10.3978/j.issn.2305-5839.2014.01.05

Maitake Mushroom Contains Antioxidants

The study investigated the antioxidant activities of extracts from maitake mushroom. The results demonstrated that the extracts had significant antioxidant activity in vitro across various oxidant systems. The antioxidant mechanisms of these extracts included strong hydrogen-donating ability, metal-chelating ability, and effective scavenging of superoxide and free radicals.

Yeh JY, Hsieh LH, Wu KT, Tsai CF. Antioxidant properties and antioxidant compounds of various extracts from the edible basidiomycete *Grifola frondosa* (maitake). *Molecules*. 2011;16(4):3197–3211. doi.org/10.3390/molecules16043197



Maitake Mushroom May Lower Blood Pressure

The study evaluates the effects of maitake mushroom on hypertension and decreased insulin sensitivity in rat models. Results indicate that components of maitake mushroom can halt and partially reverse some elevations in systolic blood pressure. Additionally, they improve insulin sensitivity and reduce levels of the inflammatory cytokine TNF- α . The observed effects suggest that maitake mushroom extracts could contribute to a healthier lifespan.

Preuss HG, Echard B, Bagchi D, Perricone NV. Maitake mushroom extracts ameliorate progressive hypertension and other chronic metabolic perturbations in aging female rats. *Int J Med Sci*. 2010;7(4):169–180. doi.org/10.7150/ijms.7.169



Maitake Mushroom Influences Glucose-Insulin Metabolism

The study explores the effects of maitake mushroom extracts on blood pressure regulation and glucose-insulin metabolism in two rat strains—SHR (a model of hypertension) and ZFR (a model of insulin resistance). The results indicate that maitake extracts can lower blood pressure in both strains, with different mechanisms observed. Maitake extract also improves glucose-insulin metabolism in ZFR. The study suggests that different maitake fractions may have varying effects and could be valuable tools for investigating hypertension mechanisms and managing related conditions in clinical trials.

Talpur NA, Echard BW, Fan AY, Jaffari O, Bagchi D, Preuss HG. Antihypertensive and metabolic effects of whole maitake mushroom powder and its fractions in two rat strains. *Mol Cell Biochem*. 2002;237(1-2):129–136. doi.org/10.1023/a:1016503804742

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