

Fall/Winter Self Care Guide:

Your guide to making the most out of Vata season

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Overview

Fall and Winter are seasons that represent change & shedding in preparation for the new beginnings that Spring brings forth.

Plants, insects & animals go dormant. The leaves on trees transform from green into beautiful hues of yellow, amber, and red before dying off and coating the ground before becoming one with the earth.

This time of year is all about death and rebirth. This season is about restoring our balance, grounding and building stable foundations for the next season of life.

1

MIND

Activities and habits to cultivate mental harmony.

2

BODY

Tips to keep your body moving & in balance during the sluggish season.

3

SOUL

Rituals to help you align with your highest self.

Rituals to Ground You

When life gets unpredictable, having routines help keep you grounded & balanced.

Connect with Your Breath

Find your zen by practicing deep



breathing to start and end your day or whenever you feel stressed.

Tap Into Your Inner Child



Do fun lighthearted activities to keep your spirits high!

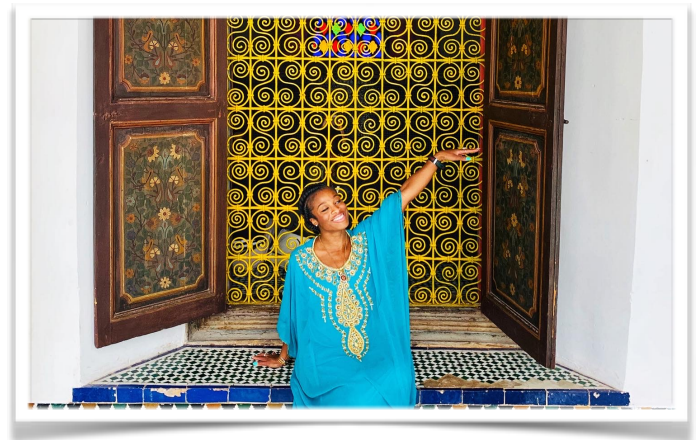
However, the shorter (darker) days can also lead to seasonal depression and general malaise. This self care guide is here to help you balance those heavier energies in productive ways in preparation for the upcoming renewal season!

1. Mind

In order to welcome new energy we must create space for it through purging.

As we are all a part of nature our personal journeys also change with the seasons. This season is a great time to take stock of your life over the past year, assess where you've excelled and where you've failed without judgment so that you can make adjustments that serve your highest good.

This is a time for us to shed those parts of ourselves and our lives that are no longer useful and are taking up unnecessary space. This is a great time to declutter your mind and your space. ***Tis' the season to purge and simplify!*** Organize your home to create order and a peaceful space for the upcoming renewal season. You cannot cultivate a peaceful mind in a chaotic home.



Since you typically spend more time indoors during this season, now is the perfect time to engage in creative pursuits and complete small home improvement projects to help you create a space that brings you peace.

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HERE ARE SOME ACTIVITIES YOU CAN DO TO CULTIVATE MENTAL HARMONY THIS SEASON:

- **Burn sage** to cleanse you & your home of any negative/heavy energies (**Tip:** Be sure to crack a window so the negative energy has somewhere to go!).
- Add a 10-minute **mindfulness meditation** to your morning routine to cultivate calming energy each day.
- **Purge your home** of clothes and other items you no longer need & **donate** them to the less fortunate. **Organize** your remaining clothes/items to ensure everything has a place.
- Hang up **inspirational quotes & artwork** that puts you in a positive mood! (**Tip:** You don't have to spend a lot of money to make updates to your space. TJ Maxx, HomeGoods, Marshalls and Amazon all have cute affordable options!)

2. Body

Get moving!

The colder months & darker days often lead to decreased activity levels for many of us. However, a complete lack of activity can worsen seasonal depression and malaise, in addition to unhealthy weight gain.

Our bodies NEED movement and the endorphins released when we exercise is a great way to guard against the depressive energy that can accompany shorter days. Use this season to commit to and prioritize a fitness routine that energizes you and marvel at your results in the spring!

TIPS TO HELP YOU GET MOVING THIS SEASON:

- Start each morning with a gentle yoga flow [like this](#) to wake up your muscles and joints. (**Tip:** You should always stretch upon waking & before bed to avoid stiffness.)
- Go for a an **evening walk** whenever the weather permits.
- If you always feel lost at the gym, find a good **group fitness class** that piques your interest!
- If you can't afford the gym, find **online workouts** on YouTube, PrimeTV, etc.
- Do **commercial break workouts** in front of the TV (jumping jacks, air squats, lunges, etc.)

Nourish.

The Fall/Winter season are all about grounding ourselves and restoring our harmony with our environment. As food is our #1 source of energy, it's important to ensure you are eating high quality whole foods that are in season and help ground our energy. **Root vegetables, dark leafy greens, soups, chilis and stews are perfect for this time of year!**

Staying hydrated is just as important in the cool fall/winter months as it is in the hot summer months. The air and environment is much dryer so we need to ensure we're hydrating *with water* and healing teas throughout the day to maintain our bodies' moisture levels. Stay away from anything high in sugar and artificial ingredients. **Water is your body's lifeline.**

Rest.

Restorative sleep is the foundation for optimal physical and mental health. Unfortunately, if you're like most Americans, you struggle to get a decent night's sleep. With the darkness coming in early during the fall & winter months, this is the perfect time to finally **get your bedtime ritual in place.** I went from being an insomniac who stayed up in bed for hours with racing thoughts to usually being knocked out within 10 minutes of hitting my pillow! I cannot tell you how much committing to a bedtime routine has improved my quality of life. I wake up each morning refreshed and full of energy. I don't need caffeine to get me through the day and I find myself better equipped to deal with the challenges that come my way without allowing them to stress me out. **If you want to THRIVE, you need to SLEEP!** Read below for the costly effects of not prioritizing your rest.

Lack of sleep can lead to:

- ❖ Weight gain
- ❖ Depression and anxiety
- ❖ Aging skin
- ❖ Fatigue & general malaise
- ❖ Impairment of attention, memory, concentration...
- ❖ Heart disease/heart attack
- ❖ Diabetes
- ❖ High blood pressure

TIPS TO CREATE YOUR OWN BEDTIME RITUAL:

- **Set a bedtime alarm & commit.** Ideally, you should be in bed by 10pm. Ensure you're leaving enough time to start your day mindfully because rushing in the morning is a great way to start your day with manic/panicked energy.
- **Make a cup of relaxing herbal tea** known to induce sleep. Chamomile, valerian root, lavender, lemon balm, passionflower & Magnolia bark are all great options!
- Automatically **set your phone to night shift/evening mode** by 5pm to reduce your exposure to blue light, which disrupts your ability to sleep. (**Pro Tip:** I keep my blue light off at all times!)
- Play a meditative or sleep sounds playlist to help your brain wind down into restful sleep. I suggest using the same playlist, or rotating a few, to create a sleep trigger in your brain!
- Use an **essential oil diffuser** in your bedroom and add some drops of relaxing scents before you shower. I like to experiment with different combinations. *Sandalwood, lavender, chamomile, eucalyptus, jasmine, and rose are personal favorites.* Avoid citrus scents as they tend to be more uplifting & could defeat the purpose lol. Citrus scents are great to diffuse while you get ready for your day in the morning!
- Take a **mindful shower** focusing only on the act and sensations of bathing yourself. Stop thinking of your to do list! Focus on your body and deep breathing to help you relax.
- After your shower, massage your muscles all over as you're moisturizing with natural oils or butters to encourage relaxation and release muscle tension. Coconut oil, shea butter, Argan oil & sesame oil are all great options. (**Pro Tip:** Massage the oil/butter on while your body is still wet in the shower to seal in moisture.)
- Make sure your **phone is on silent/do not disturb** and is **out of reach** when you're in bed. This stops you from grabbing it habitually and checking social media/e-mail. I keep my phone in the bathroom at night and this has worked wonders and also forces me to physically get up when the alarm goes off.
- Incorporate **deep restorative stretches like this** into your nightly routine to help relieve any remaining tension before bed.
- If you're prone to anxiety or find yourself ruminating over all you have to do the next day, **keep a journal at your bedside** to reflect on your day and to jot down anything you need to accomplish tomorrow. This helps you release that energy, instead of stirring over your to-do list in bed.

3. Soul

Go within & create space.

Now is the time to reflect deeply on your relationships, habits and choices. How did you progress against your goals this year? What negative habits are you still giving life to? Do your choices align with who you want to be and what you want to achieve?

Much of our discontent in life comes from us living a life that is in opposition to our soul's desires. Many of us live our lives according to how we think our choices will be perceived by other people instead of doing what makes us feel alive! You drag yourself to a dead-end job that you hate because you're scared you may fail if you take a leap of faith to try something new. You stay in a relationship with a person you can barely stand because you fear being alone or fear what people will say about your breakup. You ignore your body's calls to take care of yourself because you fear you don't have what it takes to work out consistently and eat healthy. You lie to people around you in order to please them instead of being honest about how you feel and what you want. All of these actions are rooted in fear and will hold you back from the life you desire.

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The only way to create lasting change is by being honest with yourself about where you are and the choices you've made. If we're not honest about where we are, we'll never be able to acknowledge what we need to do to make changes to get to where we actually want to be. There is nothing more damaging than the lies we tell ourselves. Now is the time to take stock of your life and **create space for a new and improved you** by releasing whoever and whatever doesn't serve your highest good!

SHEDDING RITUAL FOR THE NEXT FULL MOON:

- Meditate and focus on what negative habits you are releasing and what positive habits you'd like to embrace.
- Once you've identified areas where you need to let go, write down everything you're releasing this season on a piece of paper.
- Recite your list out loud (e.g. I release negative self talk! I release self sabotaging behaviors!)
- Fold up the paper up and burn it outside releasing it into the universe!

This is a powerful ritual. Once you burn it, let it go and open your mind, body and soul to new beginnings!

xoxo,
Gina B

the dope
bohemian