
WEATHERING WINTER WEATHER

TOP TIPS - November 2014

We are now well into the season of coughs, colds and viruses. Life around us is regularly punctuated by coughs, sneezes and nose-blowings - sometimes by me!

This is entirely normal and part of the experience of being human. For those of us who have recovered from or are recovering from ME/CFS, this can be a small challenge, and, like any illness, an opportunity for more growth. So first off, remember that a cold or virus is a normal part of human experience. If you have one...you are normal! Cold and virus symptoms are a sign your immune system is working.

There are things we can do to help our immune system.

- Staying calm enables our immune system to do what it is designed to do even more effectively. Being kind and compassionate with ourselves whilst we are recovering is also great.
- The Heart Math Institute now have hard evidence that a few minutes of gratitude can create improvements in your immune system function that can last up to 6 hours. How can you access this? Imagine a circle of gratitude on the floor in front of you. Fill it up with all the things you're grateful for; fill it with your favourite colour; add sparkle. Now step into that circle of gratitude. Imagine the circle flowing up through you. Imagine you can take all of this into your body, and store it somewhere such as your heart. Gratitude is a healing state.
- Bruce Barrett, University of Wisconsin, theorised that improving mental and physical well-being would improve susceptibility to acute respiratory infections. In his study, one group of participants were taught a mindful technique, which resulted in this group experiencing shorter duration of illness, lower severity of symptoms and absenteeism, compared with the control group.

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- How can you do this? Give yourself time to be quiet by yourself, for some time every day. Be kindly curious about yourself, observing without any judgement or story. And through the day, be mindful of what you're doing, doing it with attention. Notice how this feels different. Mindfulness trains our brains to simply focus attention on what we are doing, which is much more relaxing for our nervous systems.
 - And finally, take yourself into a memory of when you were really healthy, take yourself fully into that memory, seeing what you see, hearing what you hear, feeling what you feel, reminding your body-mind how to do a great immune system.

Remember you can book individual or package sessions with me face-to-face, phone or Skype. See my web-site www.juliamacdonald.co.uk for more details.

I wish you a happy, healthy and blessed Advent season.

With love,

Julia x