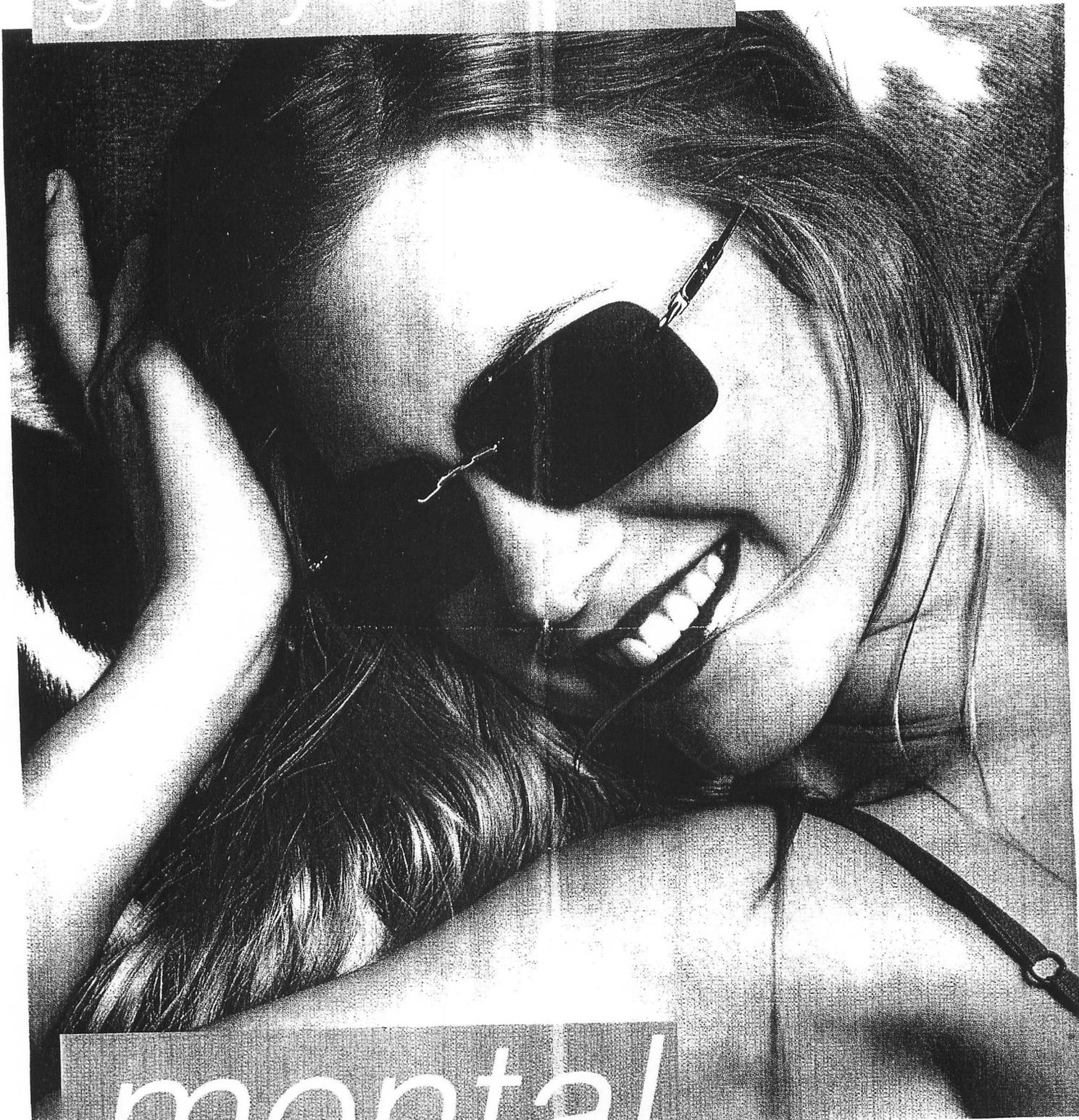


give yourself a



mental

makeover

It's 2002 And You're Still Feeling Like The Same Old, Same Old. Now's The Time To Re-Look At Your Life And Get A Few Things In Order...

The new year is here—and if you're not feeling fabulous yet, you should resolve to put a little passion in your life! Being mentally fit will enhance your life by improving your memory, giving you an optimistic outlook on life and allowing you to explore your creativity. So how do you give yourself a mental makeover? *CW* has a few ideas you can try...

Attitude Matters

Strive to fill your mind with uplifting thoughts and your days with feel-good activities. Such an approach leaves little room for negative influences, and your level of joy and quality of life will improve—guaranteed!

- **Give and receive affection with joy and gusto!** The loving energy you give to the universe will come back to you threefold. Giving affection simply means offering words of praise to people you feel deserve it, shaking hands with everyone you meet, greeting others with a friendly smile and pleasant word, lending an ear to someone who needs it or helping a needy neighbor or friend when the chips are down. Don't expect to get affection in return all the time. What you will get for your efforts, though, is a sense of well-being and an inner peace. When you spread joy, joy returns to you.

- **Keep happily busy and have many interests and hobbies.** A very busy person never has time to brood or be unhappy.
- **Make the best of all circumstances.** None of us has everything we could possibly need and want; we all share some degree of sorrow and longing. No matter what your situation, focus your thoughts and ener-

gies on the best possible things for yourself and your family.

- **Have purpose.** A strong sense of purpose in life is a must if you are to maintain a positive attitude. You are on this earth for a reason. Discover your passion and pursue it. Make your dream your work, and work your dream.

- **Strive for excel-**



Ode to Joy

In her book, *Body & Soul: Your Guide to Health, Happiness and Total Well-Being*, Gail Harris inspires us to find joy everywhere: Like many things that are worthwhile, consciously adding happiness to our lives doesn't come without effort. Sometimes a sunset is so breathtakingly glorious, we can't help but notice; other times, the sinking sun spreads the merest blush of pink across a darkening sky. Either way, appreciating the wonder of the daily celestial light show begins with remembering to open our eyes. If joy is the end result of appreciation, appreciation comes from paying attention.

The best news is that whoever we are, wherever we live, whatever the state of our bank account, making the effort to connect with something larger than ourselves

isn't so hard. You can start by going outside, taking a few deep breaths and looking up. It can be pretty dazzling, that sky. And it's there for us, all the time.

aromatherapy for the mind

Essential oils of lemon, sage, peppermint, basil, nutmeg, sweet orange, ginger and tangerine can help optimize mental performance, increase concentration and clarify the mind. Essential oils of bergamot, lavender, myrrh, petitgrain, neroli and ylang ylang can aid in balancing and centering your moods and emotions and promote happiness.



ence. When you give your best daily, you will feel good about yourself. If you compromise your standards, you will undermine your self-esteem.

- **Exercise daily.** Daily exercise has a positive effect on negative stressors. Exercise, like laughter, produces relaxing, mood-enhancing endorphins that help you to better deal with whatever comes your way.
- **Have faith.** Studies have shown that regular followers

of a religious faith and those who believe in the power of prayer tend to have a more positive outlook on life, heal faster from illness, lead longer lives and have lower blood pressure and less frequent bouts of depression. Religious folk regularly commune for worship and fellowship, forming strong bonds with like-minded people while strengthening their family bonds.

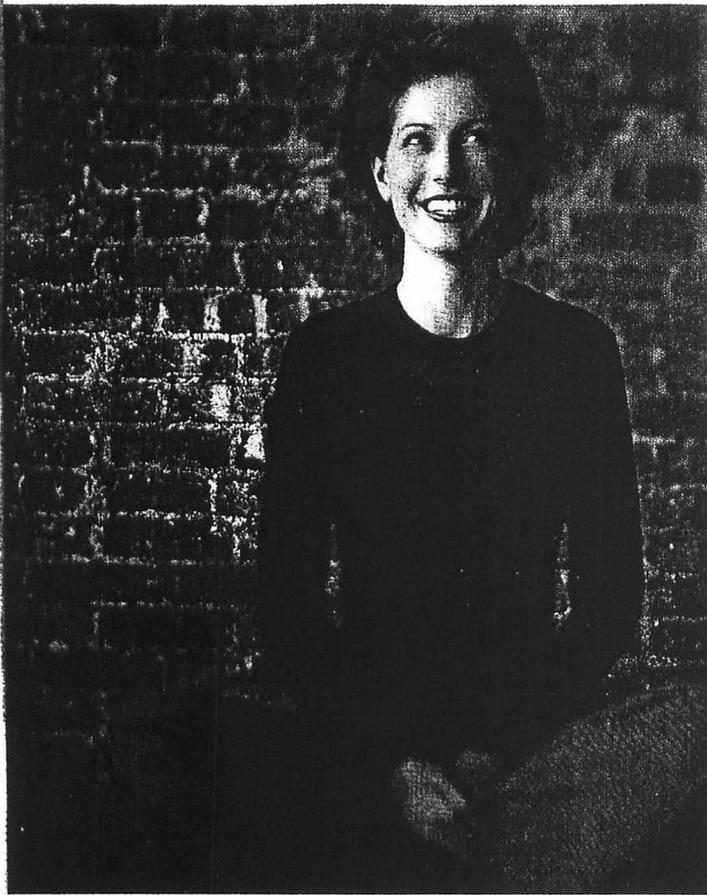
Your Environment and Your Mood

The connection between your home, work and family environments and the state of your mind is widely accepted. The ancient Chinese science and art of Feng Shui, a 3,000-year-old environmental philosophy, is a practical way to improve many aspects of your life and balance your environment.

In his book *Feng Shui Tips for a Better Life*, David Daniel Kennedy says, "Feng Shui is the art of using arrangement and placement to improve your life. It is a way of manipulating environmental factors to enhance the life energy of the environment and improve your destiny. Life energy, known as *chi* to the Chinese, is the basic force that animates all living things. Your own flow of chi will improve and strengthen as you apply Feng Shui principles to your life." Take note!

Your physical surroundings definitely have a significant impact on your moods. Next time you enter a cluttered room, whether it's in your home or office, take note of any physical sensations you experience. A room filled with too much stuff—too many objects, even if they are valuable artifacts—occupies too much "calming space" and can result in internal chaos.

The following are some suggestions for improving positive energy flow, both internally and externally,



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engage the left side of your brain.

The right side of the brain is what many consider the "artsy" side. To stimulate this more creative part of your mind, become involved with art, sports, music or other similar activities. You might want to learn more about landscape design, interior design, home building, pottery, sculpture, painting, weaving, sewing or drawing. Dance lessons, yoga, t'ai chi and cosmetology studies also fall into this category. Right-brain learning nur-

ture intuition and the ability to facilitate insight.

The best mental workouts involve stimulating the right and left sides of your brain. To accelerate your thinking, try doing things with the opposite hand. Write, dial the phone, brush your hair and teeth, apply your moisturizer or move the computer mouse with your "lazy" hand. This teaches the nondominant side of your brain to develop coordination.

Challenge your brain by taking a break from routine.

The Thinking-Woman's Tea

Spur your creativity and mental awareness with this delicious herbal tea blend. The first two ingredients contain memory-enhancing and mind-stimulating compounds traditionally used to boost thinking power. All herbs in this recipe are in dried form.



- 6 teaspoons ginkgo leaves (gingko biloba)**
- 3 teaspoons gotu kola leaves (centella asiatica)**
- 3 teaspoons chamomile flowers (matricaria recutita)**
- 2 teaspoons St.-John's-wort leaves and flowers (hypericum perforatum)**
- 2 teaspoons lemon balm (melissa officinalis)**
- 2 teaspoons peppermint (mentha piperita)**
- a pinch stevia extract powder (stevia rebaudiana)**

1. In a medium-sized bowl, combine herbs.
2. For a large mug of tea, bring 1 1/2 cups of purified water to a boil, then remove from heat. Add 2 teaspoons of the herbs, cover and steep for 10-15 minutes.
3. Strain. Pour the tea into your favorite mug, adding a squeeze of lemon or orange to enhance flavor if desired. Enjoy hot or iced. Store leftover dried blend in an airtight, labeled tin, plastic tub or plastic zipper bag. It will keep for up to 6 months in a cool, dark, dry place.

Yield: approximately nine large mugs of tea

and for instilling harmony in your daily life.

- *Use simple, functional, aesthetically pleasing furnishings.* Too much of a good thing makes your rooms appear smaller and less warm. A room that appears crowded may simply need some tidying up or furniture rearrangement to provide a sense of expansiveness.

- *Organize.* Get rid of the stacks of magazines and piles of junk mail that you've been meaning to get to but haven't. Organize and file important items and toss out the rest.

- *Don't procrastinate.* Either get the job done or just say no! Prioritize your daily schedule and keep it logged in one central place. A handy dated organizer or a computer notebook will help simplify life.

- *Tidy up.* Keep every room at home or in the office as clean as possible. Dirt will distract you.

- *Live and work in a well-lit place.* The bedroom is the exception. Light lifts your mood and makes all rooms appear larger and brighter.

- *Live with plants.* Plants are peacegivers. Place natural

plants in all your surroundings to freshen the air, relax the eyes and soothe a busy mind.

Mental Gymnastics

Most of us grew up attending schools where the educational agenda was primarily to target the left side of the brain by requiring logical and rational studies (which used structured, sequential thought). Reading, writing, mathematics, spelling and foreign language studies filled this bill. Anything that makes you use logic, rationale, reason and structured, sequential thought will

Embrace and Nurture

Elizabeth Somer, M.A., R.D., author of *Age-Proof Your Body: Your Complete Guide to Lifelong Vitality*, recognizes the importance of holistic health. She says, "The link between vitality and health is a win-win relationship. Embracing vitality boosts energy, helps maintain health and reduces the risk of disease and premature aging. In turn, a healthier body encourages positive thinking and fuels vitality. Nurturing both works in your favor for health, happiness and longevity." Strive daily to embrace vitality and to nurture your health!

Drive a different route to work, wake up an hour earlier and meditate or take a walk, or rearrange your normal weekly activities. The key to keeping the brain healthy for a lifetime is to exercise it on a daily basis. It's just like a muscle—it needs to work out in order to stay fit and functional. **CW**

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