

Deepak Chopra's Quick Tips on How to Stop Your Anxiety

By Michelle Vartan ; Updated February 08, 2018



Deepak Chopra shares a little wisdom that will go a long way.

When Deepak Chopra gives you advice on how to stop an oncoming anxiety attack, you take it.

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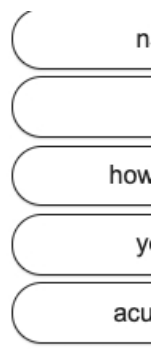
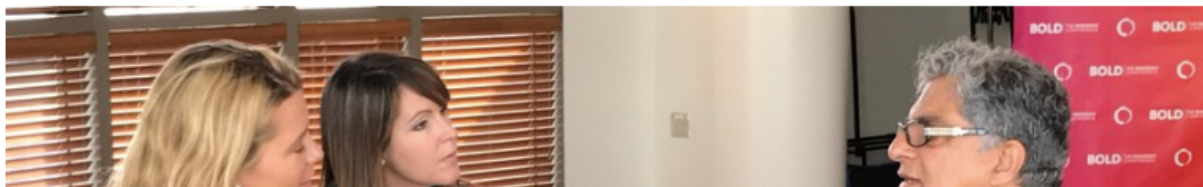
Chopra is a world renowned speaker, M.D. and spiritual icon for millions around the globe. He's authored approximately 80 books to date on everything from alternative medicine to [radical beauty](#) (his latest). It's safe to say you or someone you know has been changed by his teachings.

We were so lucky to get the opportunity to sit down with Chopra at the MindBody [BOLD Conference](#) in Hollywood in 2016. We talked to him about everything from how to "surf" through stress to his favorite healthy snack.

Here's what he had to say:

On Managing Your Anxiety

LIVESTRONG.COM: For a lot of us, living in a stress-free state of mind every day feels impossible. What are ways the hopeful can practice mindfulness — especially if they don't have time to meditate?





LIVESTRONG General Manager Jess Barron and Senior Editor Michelle Vartan interview Deepak Chopra at the 2016 BOLD MindBody Conference in Hollywood.

Deepak Chopra: You can stop once in a while and just ask yourself, “Am I present?” And bring your awareness to your breath, [and] all into your body.

In the present moment, there’s no more stress. Stress is the anticipation of something in the future so it’s in your imagination or something that you regret in the past. But in this moment there’s no stress.

LS: It’s so simple when you put it that way. If stress is building and someone is feeling themselves about to panic, do you have any tips for stopping an anxiety attack from happening?

DC: Just remember that anxiety is the worst use of your imagination. Creativity is the best use of your imagination. Anxiety is all a result of imagining what could go wrong.

The best tip is to just be in this moment. There’s no anxiety, panic attacks. No regrets, no anticipation, no resistance, just this moment as it is.

LS: But what about our obsession with being online? For someone who has just [launched a new app](#), how do we manage the amount of time we spend on our devices while still being engaged in the modern world?

DC: Set time for using devices, and then set time for not using digital devices.

You can say, “From 8 o’clock in the morning to 11, I won’t use my digital device. After seven in the evening, I won’t use my digital device. When I’m eating I won’t use my digital device. When I’m speaking to another person, I won’t.” So use your digital device by yourself, not in company, and use it for useful means.

LS: That is very helpful. What do you believe is the effective amount of time per day or week that people need to meditate?

DC: If you’re doing 20 minutes twice a day, you’re really doing the best. But if you don’t have 20 minutes, you can do five minutes or 10 minutes.

I have an app which was mentioned: [Jiyo](#). If you sign up, it’s free. You get a meditation from me every day. Guided.



LIVESTRONG General Manager Jess Barron and Senior Editor Michelle Vartan met with Deepak Chopra at the 2016 BOLD MindBody Conference in Hollywood.

LS: So let's say that you are practicing these techniques to be in the present, but you're surrounded by people who are stressed out of their minds. How do you shield yourself from their energy?

DC: That's what everybody says — they're surrounded by stress. Stress is not in your environment. Stress is actually not part of your being. It's just how you interpret what's happening to you.

It's like being a surfer on the ocean. If you're a good surfer, you enjoy a big wave, and if you're not then every wave is a disaster. I enjoy being in stressful situations, just to see how humorous it is.

LS: Yeah, when you look at it through a sort of comedic lens, it is pretty funny.

DC: Yeah, I watch the debates just to see how funny it is.

What Deepak Says You Should Eat

LS: What's your recommended diet for health and wellness?

DC: Ideally speaking, you should not eat anything that's fake. As simple as that. So what's fake? Food which is manufactured, industrialized, has chemicals, petroleum products, hormones, antibiotics, [and] in my opinion, GMO's — it's unnatural.

So you know, farm-to-table is the best food and maybe... if it doesn't cause you stress, you should move in the direction of a plant-based diet, because plants are closest to the energy of the sun. And they have what we call phytochemicals, which are chemicals that are derived from the energy of the sun. They're the healthiest because the sun is the source of life.

LS: What are some of your favorite, healthy, go-to snacks that keep you energized throughout the day?

DC: They keep changing. Dark chocolate is one. Kale chips is another. A little bit of quinoa salad is another. Kombucha drinks is another. I love kombucha. Yogurt, if it comes from a good source. Nuts.

LS: Is there a particular nut you enjoy?

DC: I actually enjoy cashews and even peanuts.

LS: For those overweight struggling trying to lose weight, do you have suggestions on how to lose weight, including a state of mind?

DC: A lot of people, by the way, who have obesity are not sleeping well. Sleep disrupts hormonal imbalance, including the hormones that regulate appetite and metabolism. So the first thing is: Are you sleeping well?

Second is: Are you putting food in your body because you're hungry? Or for something other food? People put food in their body either because they're physically hungry or they're emotionally hungry for a change and affection, love or appreciation.

So you can you put your hand on your stomach and say "Am I physically hungry? Or am I hungry for something else?" And even if you're physically hungry, you say "How hungry? [on a scale of one to 10] 1, 2, 5, 10?"

And then, if you're hungry, feed yourself.

Mind Over Matter Is Scientifically a Thing

LS: In today's keynote, you mentioned how all the cells in our body are the product of our behavior. One thing I couldn't help thinking about was people who live very healthy lives and fall ill regardless. Where does the environment stop and science begin?

DC: Five percent of disease-related gene mutations are penetrant, which means that the genetic error is such that you can't do anything about it with our current state of knowledge. In the future, there will be genetic engineering for that. And already there are techniques called [CRISPR](#) and genetic editing and so on.

But the rest of the gene mutations, they only make you susceptible to disease, they don't guarantee the disease, which means, you know, that there's a gene mutation for heart disease, but you don't get the heart disease because it's influenced by the things I mentioned: sleep, stress, nutrition, plus the relationships and social interactions, diet, food, environment.

So disease is not related to one thing, there are multiple factors and you do your best to live a good life. And when I say good life, it doesn't mean you get stressed about living a good life. Enjoy life. If you're

And when I say good me, it doesn't mean you get stressed about living a good me. Enjoy me. If you're enjoying life, you're not stressed. People who are stressed are not having a good time.

LS: Speaking of a having a good time, what top healthy habits would you recommend for people, for ultimate health and happiness?

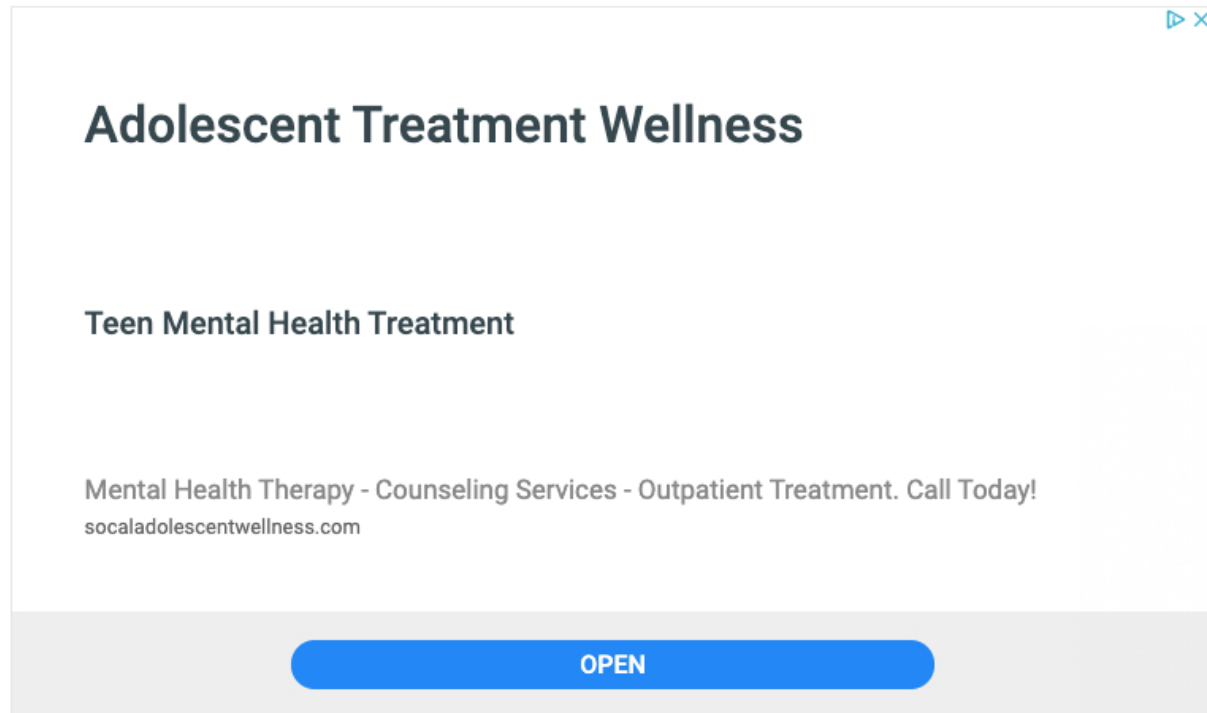
DC: Good sleep every day. Keep moving through the day. Don't have any resentments or hostility or grievances. Eat food that energizes you instead of depletes you.

MV: And is there a message today that you'd really want to get through to people?

DC: Too much drama in the world. We have to step out of this melodrama and be more caring about each other.

What Do YOU Think?

What is your favorite nugget of wisdom from this interview? How do you manage everyday stress and anxiety? Has Deepak Chopra made an impact on your life? If so, how?



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