

Find time to unwind with meditation

SIT in a comfortable position on the floor or in a straight-backed chair. Imagine a piece of fishing line running from the base of your spine up your back and out the top of your head, pulling you upright. Concentrate on the feel of your feet anchoring to the floor, your bottom sinking into the chair, your clothes against your skin.

Tune your hearing into what's going on outside the room – people chatting, a dog barking, the sound of the wind. Then acknowledge the room you're

sitting in – a ticking clock, electrical appliances buzzing. Finally bring your attention within, to the feel of your heart beating and any areas of tightness in your body. As you breathe in repeat to yourself "I am here" and as you breathe out "I am now".

Imagine your mind and body slowing down, like a ship that's been on "full steam ahead" through rough seas. See yourself entering calm, still water where it is safe to take your foot off the accelerator. If your mind is abuzz,

rather than owning your thoughts, try to observe them from a distance. Picture your thoughts as a swarm of bees that are behind a glass sliding door.

Be kind to unwind. Often people say "I tried meditation once and just couldn't do it" but that's like going for one jog and expecting to be fit instantly. It takes time to train a busy mind to be still and some days your meditations will be turbulent. Whatever happens there is still great benefit in sitting quietly.



It takes time to train a busy mind to be still.

Herbs to keep you happy and healthy



The Happy Herbs shop in Wollongong is a welcoming and friendly place.

WITH no other store like it in Wollongong and an increasing number of customers requesting one, The Happy Herb shop opened in Crown Street 18 months ago.

Owners Kirby Rogers and her mum Carol Rogers wanted to offer the Gong an alternative and natural lifestyle to pharmaceuticals.

Kirby, a qualified naturopath, has worked for the Happy Herb Company for seven years, also owning a shop in Surfers Paradise and previously working in many of the Happy Herb stores around Australia.

She said the name really said it all.

"We sell herbs that make people happy, specialising in herbs for relaxation, health, energy and aphrodisiacs to help your love life blossom."

The herbs can be put in smoothies, juices, teas and used in other interesting traditional ways.

"Our main focus here at The Happy Herb shop is addiction solutions," Kirby said.

"We specialise in concentrated herbs to help people reduce their reliance on cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana and recreational drugs, as well as addictive pharmaceutical drugs.

"Everything in our store is 100 per cent natural, not synthetic, healthy and more nurturing to the body than the alternatives."

The Happy Herb shop is a place people can feel safe, open up and have a conversation with the friendly staff.

"We try to give them healthy lifestyle ideas,

alternative herbal solutions and a smile," Kirby said.

The unique store also sells a range of super foods, yummy teas, funky clothes, fire spinning gear and quirky giftware.

"The staff are really happy and open minded. Customers always get a free cup of herbal tea when they come in," she said.

"The smell of the fresh and dried herbs in the shop is alluring, it really stimulates the senses.

"The store is probably one of the most interesting stores in Wollongong."

However its effect is undeniably positive.

"People sometimes walk in a little confused and come out knowing themselves a little bit better and feel supported," Kirby said.

Once every six weeks or so Happy Herbs hosts community talks on various topics.

"It can be about anything and it's community dependant, so it's what people want to talk about," Kirby said.

"It can be about health conditions, plants in general, laws relating to plants ... anything to bring like-minded people together.

"We did one a few weeks ago on the big synthetic crisis and drug addiction.

"The next topic we may cover is libido and aphrodisiacs, and trying to find herbs that encourage more love in your life."

See the website at happyherbcompany.com/Wollongong for more details.

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