



5 THINGS YOU CAN DO TODAY TO BE MORE INSPIRED TO CREATE

Research has shown that being **calm** but **energized** puts us in the optimal **mindset for creativity**. This state is regulated by two chemicals in the brain: dopamine and serotonin.¹

But don't let all that science complicate matters! Read on to discover *5 things you can do TODAY* to get into the optimal creative thinking mindset:

1. Eat a Hearty, Protein-packed Breakfast

Eating protein leads to the production of two chemicals, dopamine and serotonin, that lead to a calm but energized state; perfect for feeling invigorated and creative. Aim for 15 to 20 g of protein at breakfast to get the creativity flowing.

SAMPLE BREAKFASTS

- ❖ Protein Shake made with Almond Milk (20g) or
- ❖ 2 Eggs with Whole Grain Toast with an 8 oz Glass of Milk (20g) or
- ❖ 1 cup cooked Oatmeal made with 1 cup Milk (15g), Add-ins: Walnuts & Berries

In a hurry? My go-to morning meal is the nutrition packed super food meal replacement: Shakeology®. There are many other super food protein shakes on the market today and they are a perfect way to get the day off to an inspiring start.

[side note: Coffee is ok if you're already in a great frame of mind, but if you're anxious it will magnify that feeling, so skip it!]

2. Fit in a 30-minute Sweat Session

Exercise actually aids in the production of serotonin. Workout in the morning and reap the benefits all day long, but even a quick mid-day session will get the creative juices flowing again!

SOME WORKOUT IDEAS

- ❖ Use the [Sworkit](#) app to find the right workout for you, wherever you are
- ❖ Do a 15 to 30-minute Yoga Sequence to Invigorate, Revitalize & Inspire. The [Yoga Download](#) site has a number of available classes, including this great chakra yoga program and even a category of sequences created specifically to aid inspiration! (note: this is an Affiliate link)
- ❖ Find even more ideas on my Pinterest board: [Mini Workouts that Work](#)

The key here is to find a workout routine you can stick with every day. I love at-home workouts I can do first thing in the morning to start my day right.

¹ <http://www.inc.com/magazine/201402/ryan-underwood/creativity-boosters-neuroscience.html>



3. Do Some Quick Research on a New Topic

Learning about new topics **exercises your brain**, enabling it to produce even more unrelated or *creative* ideas. Make this fun! Avoid the usual business-related topics, which may lead to stress!

Type a topic you're interested in learning more about into Google or Pinterest; find an interesting podcast on Stitcher (Android) or itunes (Apple) to listen to during your morning routine or daily commute; or watch an instructional video on Youtube. Spend just 10 minutes learning something new and fun to rev up that creative muscle.

4. Reduce Stress Levels

Stress causes the production of the hormone cortisol, which counteracts the effects of calming serotonin, making it difficult to feel inspired.

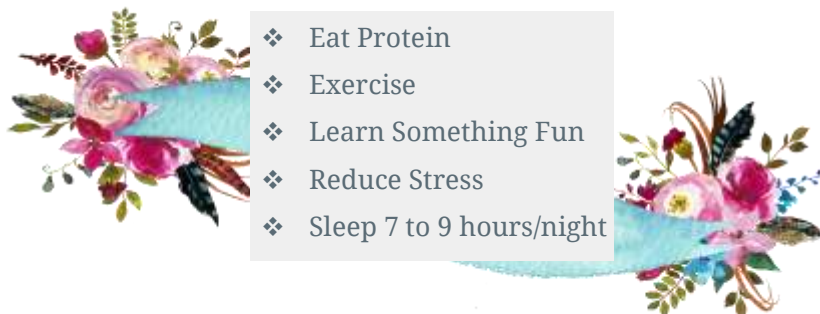
To lower your cortisol levels and feel more inclined toward creativity, chose any one of these **stress-reducing activities**:

- ❖ Listen to **music**; Any music you enjoy - it can help you relax and let your thoughts flow from one to another (my [Resources Page](#) has links to the playlist I've created on Spotify to help me feel invigorated and creative).
- ❖ Get outside – being **outdoors** has been proven to help clear your mind and restore focus
- ❖ Practice a **deep breathing** technique; The *cleansing breath* consists of inhaling deeply, holding for a slow count of five and exhaling slowly. Do this for a few minutes every day before stress hits.
- ❖ **Plan** and **complete** at least one small task today; Studies show you can prevent stress before it starts by planning out your days as much as possible – leaving room for those unexpected interruptions, of course!²

5. Get Enough Sleep

Without it you'll be short on calm inducing serotonin. Research shows that adults who get fewer than seven hours of sleep — whether for just one night or over the course of days, weeks, or months — have more difficulty concentrating and more mood problems than people who **sleep seven to nine hours**.

TRY AT LEAST ONE OF THESE TECHNIQUES TODAY TO HELP DE-STRESS, FEEL ENERGIZED, AND UNLEASH YOUR CREATIVITY.



² <http://healthland.time.com/2011/05/31/study-25-of-happiness-depends-on-stress-management/>