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Sustainable Health

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“When I let go of what I am, I become what I might be” – Lao Tzu

Hello and welcome to the autumn edition of Sustainable Health.

The natural energy of autumn is descending. Leaves fall from the trees, final harvests are gathered and stored, sunlight hours decrease and vegetation dies down. Fallen fruit and leaves break down and their nutrients descend into the earth. Contrary to this, for many of us our year's work and study commitments are building momentum. This can put undue strain on the immune system as we struggle to remain in the output or production phase while being challenged by alternating hot and cold weather. The element associated with this time of year is Metal. Like a sword, Metal energy has the qualities of precision, strength and honour as well as death. It cuts away all that is unnecessary.

Body

We can expect to see colds, sniffles, hoarse throats, skin and immune system flare ups as well as stiff shoulders as our bodies purge summer heat and adjust to the cooler weather. Attack colds early with immune boosting supplements such as oranges, garlic, lemons, ginger, honey, olive leaf and echinacea. A well timed treatment can encourage the virus to exit the body quickly rather than settling in any deeper.

Mind

Grief and sadness are a natural consequence of loss. An imbalance in the Metal element can show up as an inability to express grief or its opposite, an inability to move on. It can also lead to feelings of isolation, fear of losing what we have or a low sense of self-worth. Regular, gentle exercise, deep breathing and a willingness to release the past will nourish our Metal energy and assist us in processing our life experiences.

Spirit

The spirit of autumn is letting go of that which no longer serves us. To honour this regenerative part of the life cycle of all things, take some time to contemplate your compost! The wealth of carbon rich matter available in autumn through fallen leaves and the last of summer's vegetation will benefit your compost all year long. Composting now means you will be ready for spring gardening. We can apply this wisdom to our own lives and allow the letting go time to refine our sense of what is truly necessary for our personal wellbeing.

Wishing you health and happiness, *Elizabeth*