STORY & RAIN

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# HAPPY AND HEALTHY THROUGH COVID-19

## Practitioners And Experts From The Well Share Their Inspiring And Empowering Routines

What is THE WELL? It's a complete ecosystem for wellness that includes both Eastern healing traditions and modern wellness medical practices. It offers functional medicine doctors, fitness training, yoga and movement classes, health coaching, nutritional counseling, bodywork services, acupuncture, sports medicine, physical therapy---all under one roof, and now, digitally.

With a newly opened flagship club in New York City prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, there are a number of ways in which THE WELL has pivoted to offer products and services to existing members, new members, and the general public. Digital memberships are being offered for $149 per month, with a free first month. You'll have access to the center's complete offerings from the comfort of your own home, including movement and meditation classes, and virtual appointments with their network of practitioners, some of whom you'll get to know below. Additional classes and programming is open to all: find @thewell daily meditations on Instagram Live, and book appointments to take part in their weekly digital support circles. And I wasn't surprised to learn that THE WELL is now offering free digital memberships for healthcare workers. If you or someone you know is working on the front lines of our global pandemic, I encourage taking advantage of this opportunity for nourishment and support.

With a recently launched eCommerce platform, THE WELL is now selling an in-house line of self-care and supplement products. I myself have been taking THE WELL Gut Complex, and just ordered ten of their simple and discreet black face masks, as well as three bottles of hand sanitizer. I'll feel good knowing the sanitizer is effective yet devoid of harmful chemical ingredients. Below you'll find other WELL product recommendations from the practitioners and experts we highlight here, and a way to shop THE WELL's COVID Care Bundle that contains the masks and hand sanitizer I mention, including convenient Immunity Complex daily supplement packs. A more-than-worthwhile purchase, if you ask me. At the onset of our global pandemic and quarantine-life to follow, I knew that Story + Rain needed to tap THE WELL's core team for the things they're doing to stay both happy and healthy, sharing their inspiring and empowering routines. Yes, life has changed and things might be tougher in ways we could have never imagined, but thriving health and a great life are two things that are WELL within our control. -Tamara Rappa

## VALERIE OULA

DIRECTOR OF VIBRATIONAL ENERGY HEALING

**1. Dance Party (solo or via friends and family)**: Shaking things up, shaking things out and connecting to our bodies is so necessary when we are indoors and glued to our laptops or phones.

**2. Singing Out Loud**: Opening up and connecting to sound shifts your physical and emotional landscape. Combine with a dance party for maximum efficiency and fun!

**3. Baking Bread**: Yes, I'm on the bread making bandwagon. It's just so simple and delicious and the process is packed with life lessons. The key takeaway: as badly as you think it might be going it still manages to work out for the most part.

**4. Gua Sha and Face Yoga**: Using a luxurious oil and plenty of time, this meditative process feels like the ultimate self-care to nourish my skin, move and open up energy.

**5. Facetime and Zoom with Family:** I have a big family. Sometimes it's just nice to sit and just be with everyone on Zoom amidst everyone talking all at the same time.

**6. Sleeping without an alarm**: Allowing my body's internal clock to naturally reset and rise with the sun.

**1. Expressing my needs**: In this moment, everyone has so much going on in their internal worlds and we are all feeling overwhelmed. As a result, it can be hard to find the time and will to check in on the ones we love. By explicitly expressing my needs relevant to others, I am taking ownership of my experience and orienting the busy folks in my life in how they can support me, cutting out the guesswork and giving them a roadmap.

**2. Lying in savasana**: Being still, on the floor, in the dark has provided space for some difficult emotions to come up and out of me. Feelings need space and time to be expressed, so by letting the ground carry me and surrendering, I am letting my body know that it's okay to let go.

**3. Reading children's books**: It can be hard to focus on longform books and articles right now. I find that children's books help me tap into my imagination, bring me a sense of playfulness and engage my brain without requiring it to "work hard" for me.

**4. Dream time**: Every day I schedule 15 minutes of dream time, when I let my mind wander wherever it wants to. Last week I was a park ranger working in the Redwood Forest, this week I live in a bungalow on a beach. Imagination has the power to both help us tap into our internal wisdom/desires while also acting as an antidote to reality.

**5. Weekly dance party**: An object at rest stays at rest. I find (and research shows) that when I get my body moving and quite literally shake things up with the help of music, I have more energy, momentum and drive to take on the day's challenges.

**6. Saying no**: Our no's make way for our yes's. In times of stress, those of us who have been caregivers and helpers typically move to the frontlines and provide service, however, we must be aware that taking on too much cuts us off from what we feel and who we are. By saying no to the non-essentials, I am making more room for my soul to sing.

**1. Moving in More Mellow Ways**: Typically, my favorite kind of workout is strength-training. But right now, I don't have access to weights (or my trainer!) and to be honest, I haven't felt like doing anything intense. Instead, I set up my mini-trampoline in my apartment so I can do some rebounding, which is great exercise and a great stress reliever. I also love THE WELL's Mindful Movement classes, which are part of their Digital Membership.

**2. Curbing My Wine Consumption**: Anyone who knows me, knows I love my wine — a lot. Surprisingly, I have been drinking less in quarantine, probably because I enjoy wine most when sharing it with others. Alcohol also hampers immunity, so there's that! One of the things I am most looking forward to is popping a bottle with friends on a sunny day. The simple things in life have increased in significance.

**3. Turning to Aromatherapy**: I'm a big believer in the power of scent, which has been used for centuries by various cultures for purification and mood manipulation. Lucky for me, my friend Michelle Gagnon is a renowned bio-alchemist. She formulated THE WELL essential oil-based self-care products. Lately, I have been relying on the balancing Reset Everything Mist and the Relax Essential Oil Blend, which I put in my diffuser before. It's a combo of buddha wood and lavender and has an elegant aroma unlike anything else. I also burn sustainably harvested Peruvian Palo Santo and single sage leaves from Michelle's beautiful Bioalchemy Olfactive line.

**4. Making Batches of Ginger Juice**: Once a week, take a palm-sized piece of fresh peeled ginger, throw it in the Vitamix with ½ cup of water and blitz it. Then I strain the juice into a jar and keep it in the fridge. Ginger aids digestion and boosts immunity, so usually I use a little to make hot tea at night, but sometimes I just take a shot!

**5. Biking and Driving**: Riding a bike around NYC is kind of magical right now. (I use a Citibike and copious amounts of the Clean Hands Sanitizer). Thanks to the light traffic and noise reduction, it's possible to see neighborhoods in a whole new way. I will probably never see New York in this dormant state again, so I am trying to cherish the solitude, as weird as it is. I've also driven my car around the city a few times, which has offered me a (safe) sense of freedom after being cooped up. Being behind the wheel is so liberating, I almost feel 17 again.

## ANANTA RIPA AJMERA

DIRECTOR OF AYURVEDA

**1. Going to bed early**: Sleep is one of the three sub pillars of health in Ayurveda and sleeping by 10pm ensures the best quality of sleep, which in turn, keeps immunity strong and supports healthy digestion of food, thoughts, information and life experiences.

**2. Waking up early**: In Ayurveda and Yoga psychology, there are three qualities of the mind, and the quality of sattva (mental clarity, balance, purity and harmony) gets greatly strengthened when we wake up by 6am, as it is predominant in the universe from 4-6am.

**3. Cooking seasonal Ayurvedic foods**: Warm, cooked, seasonal foods kindle the digestive system and protect your immunity throughout the year.

**4. Oiling my body**: Applying warm oil (I use Reset Body Oil) to your skin is a powerful immunity, longevity and vitality supporting practice that keeps your skin, muscles and bones strong for a long time, just like oil applied to leather skin helps it last a long time.

**5. Honoring the sun**: The sun is considered a symbol of your soul, health, wealth, creativity, knowledge, abundance and joy in the Vedic spiritual tradition and cultivating a strong connection with the outer sun is a potent reminder of all the power we have within ourselves to live the most beneficial, productive and happiest lives possible.

**6. Chanting mantras**: The word mantra means "to protect the thinking mind" from fear, worry and anxiety, so chanting mantras has been a powerful spiritual medicine to stay mentally healthy and strong while quarantined in the heart of the COVID-19 storm here in Manhattan.

**1. Morning Walk**: Getting outside each morning has helped me create some kind of normalcy in this new way of life, plus getting some natural light in the eyes first thing in the morning can support a more balanced sleep cycle.

**2. Hydration**: There are all kinds of ways to hydrate, including filtered water, herbal teas, bone broth, raw veggies and colorful fruits!

**3. Daily Movement**: I always feel better on the days when I make time to move my body, which might be just 5 minutes of stretching, 30-minutes of Complete (one of THE WELL's signature movement classes) or a long run outdoors.

**4. Small Acts of Self-Care**: They say it's the little things that count (which I am a big believer in) so I make an effort to do at least one simple, self-care practice each day. My favorite? Using THE WELL Relax bundle to help wind down before bed.

**5. Weekly Virtual Happy Hour with THE WELL team**: It's really great to see everyone's faces and catch-up on non-work related things.

**6. Enjoy dinner at least 2 hours before bed**: This helps with sleep quality along with optimizing digestion and has ALWAYS been something I have struggled with — it is very much still a work in progress.

**1. Waking up early and playing with my children**: I try to wake up before my kids to set the pace for the day. (This is far better than being pulled out of bed.) When I get up, I look forward to placing a drop of THE WELL's Rise Essential Oil on my wrists. I enjoy some deep breaths, a meditative moment and then I am ready to play with my little ones.

**2. Going out for a run with the family at 8:30am and sneaking in 30-minute Mindful Movement classes throughout the week**: I absolutely must move my body actively everyday and the sooner the better. My kids do too. So we all file out of the house at the same time we used to leave for school and we (literally) race to the park. After, I still need to find time to sneak in my yoga in throughout the week. It's harder now that everyone is home, but I find a way.

**3. Leading a meditation every morning at 10:30am on THE WELL's IG Live (@thewell)**: This has been a real anchor for my physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing. As I mentioned, I do my own meditation practice first thing in the morning, but it feels even better to be of service right now.

**4. Doing savasana when I feel tired**: There is something deeply therapeutic and rejuvenating about lying down on the floor for 10 - 15 minutes when you are feeling depleted. As a mom who is working from home I have had to work a lot of late nights and sometimes I just need a few minutes to let go and make peace with all of the struggles.

**5. Cooking healthy dinners**: I love cooking and it feels like one of the most important ways I am taking care of my family right now. In addition to teaching my children how to read and play nicely, I suppose.

**6. Taking hikes on the weekends**: We feel quite cooped up living in NYC so we have been making a point to find quiet hikes around the city that we can escape to every weekend. This fresh air and forest bathing is a gift we treasure.

## SHOP THE WELL COVID CARE BUNDLE

The Meditation Room at THE WELL's flagship club in Manhattan.