As you know, I am huge fan of meditation – and have been for most of my life. I know the value of being able to center myself and relax when it comes to adopting new routines and maintaining lifestyle changes. I find it so important that I recently added it to all first-time appointments at The UltraWellness Center. Our patients find it incredibly helpful when processing what they have learned. It helps them create a foundation for their journey to health. In fact, many of them continue developing their practices with Heidi Spear, our relaxation specialist, after their initial appointment. And Heidi and I aren’t the only ones who believe.

Many people have found success in their lives using the principles of meditation and relaxation. It’s proven over and over to help some of our most well-known athletic and stage personalities achieve their personal best...

In 2003, the Huffington Post created a list of athletes who have credited meditation as a tool they used to improve their game. The list includes Kobe Bryant, LeBron James, Michael Jordan, and Derek Jeter.

In AARP The Magazine, Goldie Hawn talks about her MindUP program in schools, and then expresses “I’ve meditated since the 1970s, but now I really see the results. People talk about the brain weakening as it ages. Mine feels stronger. Meditation thickens the cortex, where we make decisions, analyze, feel more connected to others, and dream.”

Emma Stone, starring in movies including Birdman, Spiderman, The Help, and films by Woody Allen was quoted in 2014 in USA Today, stating, "I just started meditating in January. It's changing my life completely. I'm pretty into it. Once or twice a day, I meditate. That has been the best thing for my mind.”

Now, let’s create YOUR story.

Listening to the relaxation and stress-reduction audio program will help you find a calm, steady peace within yourself and help you focus on the journey. To help keep you focused, download and use this worksheet as a companion tool to the audio program.
This worksheet is meant to help you become clear about why you want to incorporate relaxation and stress-relief into your life. Before getting started, spend a few moments slowing down from the thoughts and pressures of the day. Take a moment to be still. Get comfortable. Then, close your eyes, and take 5 belly breaths. (For more instruction on belly breathing visit www.10daydetox.com/resources and practice with me on the Stress-Reduction Recording.

Once you have taken deep breaths, answer the following questions to establish your relationship with stress, and how you personally can work to transform it. It’s not a race, so don't rush through them – be sure to be thoughtful about your answers.

**When I have a stressful day, I relieve my stress by...**

1) 

2) 

3) 

**After handling my stress that way, I typically feel...**

**It will be challenging to incorporate relaxation or stress-relief techniques into my daily life because...**

**Take a moment to review your answers, and add anything you feel you might have forgotten...**
By answering the previous questions, you have created a picture of how you currently deal with stress, how your current efforts make you feel, and what resistance you might have to changing your routine. In order to change your relationship to stress, we find it useful to establish where you are currently so you can figure out where you want to go. To set your intentions, take your time and answer the following questions.

When I learn to relax and relieve stress in healthy ways, I will feel...

When my body and mind relax, the health benefits I can experience are...
1) 
2) 
3) 

When I become less stressed, it will help my relationship(s) with ______________ (name of person/people), because I will...

When I can flow through life with less stress, then I will have more energy to put toward these things that I now neglect...

Now that you have explored your intentions for relaxation and stress-relief, it's time to commit to your daily practice. It's important to practice regularly to notice the benefits. Begin by completing and committing to the following statements:

I will meditate each day for ____ minutes at ___:___ (start with 10 minutes until that becomes comfortable, then work up to 15 to 20 minutes).

I will take 5 belly breaths 5 times a day: when I wake up, before each meal, and before bed.

I will write in my gratitude journal about something I am grateful for at this time each day ___:___.

I have scheduled a massage or other relaxing treatment on this upcoming day: ___/___/____.

Remember - this practice is for you ... if the times you initially listed aren't working out, then switch up and try different times until you find what works for you.
Another tactic I use is a media fast. I alert my friends and family that I will be available only for emergencies. And then I take a break from all email, phone, television, social media, etc. It is amazing what happens when you eliminate the outside noise! I encourage you to try a media fast while developing your practice. Take a moment to answer the following:

During my media fast, I will take a break from the following efforts that drain my energy, distract me from being relaxed, and cause me stress...

Media - what radio, television, social media can I do without?
1) 
2) 
3) 

Electronics – what devices can I shut off?
1) 
2) 
3) 

People – who drains my energy and causes me stress?
1) 
2) 
3) 

Congratulations on setting aside the time to become more conscious of your stress patterns and establishing your plan to become an expert in relieving your stress! You will find that it’s easy to make space to start these new habits. But just in case - save these notes and refer to them whenever you notice you aren’t practicing, so you can revisit your reasons for starting your practice in the first place.

And, anytime you feel discouraged or off-track, turn to the tools for support offered to you through The Blood Sugar Solution 10-Day Detox Diet plan.