



Five lifestyle changes that support women's emotional wellbeing at every age

Stress hits differently depending on your age, but the habits that keep women grounded through it barely change over time. These five simple practices work just as well at 25 as they do at 65

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A woman in her 25 and a woman in her 60 carries different pressures. The habits that steady them are almost the same. Emotional wellbeing responds to small, repeated choices far more than to big ones. Here are five that hold up across a lifetime.

1. Protect your sleep.

Sleep is the first thing most women give up when life gets full. It is also the thing they can least afford to lose. A short night makes the next day heavier. Patience runs thin. Small problems start to feel large. You do not need a perfect routine to fix this. A steady bedtime and a darker, quieter room do most of the work. Begin there and the rest gets easier.



2. Move in a way you will come back to. This is not about weight or how you look. Movement changes how you feel, and it works fast. A walk after dinner. Ten minutes of stretching in the morning. A swim on the weekend. What you choose matters less than whether you return to it. So pick the thing you will actually keep doing, and let it be enough.

3. Keep your close relationships warm. Loneliness arrives

quietly. A new city at 25. A house full of small children with no time to think. A quiet home at 60 after they have gone. One honest conversation with someone who truly knows you can do more than a week of holding it together alone. Send the message first. Make the call you keep putting off.

4. Learn to say no. So much of a woman's stress comes from carrying more than she ever agreed to. Saying no is not selfish. It is how you



stay steady enough for the things that actually matter to you. Turn down one extra obligation and you protect your time, your energy, and your peace. It feels hard at first. It gets easier every time you do it.

5. Notice when you are not okay, and reach out early. Pretending you are fine is not strength. The braver thing is to catch the low sooner and do something while it is still small. Name what you are feeling. Write it down. Talk to a friend, or someone trained to help, before it grows heavier. The goal was

never to carry it forever. It is to work through it and come out the other side.

None of this asks you to change your whole life. It asks for a few small returns to yourself on an ordinary day. Do that often enough, at any age, and you build a steadiness that no single fix can give you.

(The writer is a NIMHANS-trained psychiatrist and Chief Medical Officer of Menthra India, an AI emotional wellbeing platform built on the belief that people deserve to resolve what they carry, not simply manage it)



EAT HEALTHY

Monsoon health guide: Staying ahead of colds, coughs and allergies

The monsoon shower makes everything feel a little more alive. The monsoon shower brings us relief from the heat. The monsoon shower also brings some problems. We get sniffles and sore throats and coughs that just will not go away. The monsoon shower makes our allergies act up for no reason at all.

Why Illness Spikes During the Rains

The reason is because of how germs act in weather. Water in the air allows viruses and bacteria to stay around for a time than they do in dry air. Also, when it is raining outside people often stay inside. Those enclosed, not well-ventilated areas help infections spread from one person to another. Dampness also helps mold and dust mites grow, which is not good, for people who have allergies. The good news is that most of this can be avoided if you add a habit to your daily routine.

Wash Your Hands, Often

It sounds basic, but washing your hands properly — before meals, after coming home, after sneezing or coughing, and after touching things like door handles or railings — cuts down your exposure to germs significantly. Keep a hand sanitizer around for times when soap

and water aren't an option.

Don't Ignore Wet Clothes and Damp Spaces

Sitting around in a damp shirt after getting caught in the rain won't give you a cold by itself, but it does wear down your body's defenses over time. Dry off quickly, let your shoes and raincoats air out properly, and try to keep your living space free of lingering moisture, since damp corners are exactly where mould likes to grow.

Eat Well to Keep Your Immunity Up

What you eat matters a lot. Relying on fruits vegetables grains and enough protein helps keep your immune system working the way it should. Warm soups and herbal teas aren't just nice on an evening they really help if your throat feels scratchy.

Watch Out for Allergy Triggers

Seasonal allergies tend to flare up during monsoon — sneezing fits, itchy eyes, a blocked nose, or a dry cough that lingers. Washing curtains and bedding regularly, dusting often, and wearing a mask in dusty areas can help. If you have asthma, stay extra cautious and keep in touch with your doctor during this season.

Don't Skimp on Sleep

Sleep deserves more credit than it usually gets. Skimping on rest weakens your body's ability to fight off infections, so a consistent sleep schedule, paired with light exercise or even a bit of yoga, goes a long way.

Be Mindful of Water Quality

The water quality is something that you should really pay attention to. This is because the flooding that happens during the monsoon season can get into the water supplies and make them dirty. So, it is an idea to drink water that has been filtered or boiled. You should also make sure to rinse your fruits and vegetables well. When it comes to food try to avoid eating at places that do not look clean. The water quality is very important so you should always be careful, with the water you drink. The food you eat.

Know When to See a Doctor

If symptoms like high fever, chest pain, or breathing trouble show up, don't try to tough it out or reach for antibiotics on your own — most colds are viral, and a doctor's advice is the safer route.

With a bit of care, the monsoon can stay what it's supposed to be: a season to enjoy, not endure.

Manushi Chhillar recalls emotional toll of retaking medical entrance exam after 2015 paper leak

Actress and former doctor Manushi Chhillar opened up about the emotional and mental challenges of retaking the medical entrance examination after the 2015 paper leak.

The actress in a heartfelt conversation with Soha Ali Khan during the latest episode of the latter's YouTube talk show, All About Her, opened up about the emotional turmoil she had to go through and also explained how tough the entrance exam is.

The episode, featuring Manushi alongside renowned psychiatrist Dr. Anjali Chhabria, explored the immense pressure surrounding India's competitive entrance examinations, academic burnout, anxiety, and emotional resilience.

During the conversation, Soha asked Manushi, "I want to take you back to 2015, if I may. You had prepared for months, secured a good rank, and done well in the exam. What was it like to be told that the exam had been cancelled and that you had to prepare all over again?"

Reflecting on the experience, Manushi said, "There are two aspects to this, one is my personal experience, and the other is understanding the reality that most students in the country face. I had parents who had gone through the same journey years



ago, so I was mentally prepared for the process. But it was still incredibly difficult because I had to sacrifice everything that brought me joy. I was a Kuchipudi dancer, I loved painting, and I had to put all of that aside for a year to focus entirely on my entrance exam." She added, "While it was one of the toughest phases of my life, I realised it wasn't the hardest compared to what many other students were going through. I met students whose parents had borrowed beyond their means to send them to coaching centres. Many had moved cities, lived in cramped PG accommodations, and spent every single day preparing for one exam."

Speaking about the aftermath of the paper leak, the actress shared,

"When you're told that after months of preparation you have to continue for another 45 days, you wonder how much more you have left to give. But I also recognise that I had immense privilege and support."

Manushi credited her parents for helping her maintain balance during the preparation period.

"One thing my parents insisted on was an hour of exercise every day, no matter what. Whether it was basketball or going to the gym, it gave me an outlet, helped me stay connected to people outside the exam bubble, and protected my mental health. Many of my peers didn't have that luxury. Some had already returned to their hometowns after their accommodation leases ended, losing the

environment they needed to continue preparing," she said.

Later in the conversation, Soha asked Manushi whether there came a point when she realised medicine was no longer the path she wanted to pursue. Responding to the question, Manushi said, "It was gradual. It wasn't as though I woke up one day and decided I didn't want to do it anymore. I genuinely loved studying medicine. But by the time we entered college, most of us were completely exhausted."

She further reflected, "Our seniors used to joke that you would only be happy during the first two days and the last two days of medical college. Looking back, I think it was burnout. We believed clearing the entrance exam was the finish line, only to realise there was an even bigger mountain waiting for us."

For the uninitiated, Manushi Chhillar, who was crowned Miss World 2017, holds a medical MBBS degree. Though she pursued medicine after clearing the medical entrance examination, Manushi later ventured into films and made her Bollywood debut opposite Akshay Kumar in Samrat Prithviraj in 2022. She has been a part of movies like The Great Indian Family, Bade Miyan Chote Miyan, and Operation Valentine.

CROSSWORD

DOWN

- Added to (7)
- All together, musically ? (5)
- Shower (4)
- Egyptian symbol of life (4)
- River crossing (4)
- Greek wine (7)
- Cheeky (5)
- Apply ointment (6)
- Indian Police Service, acronym (3)
- Sound system (6)
- Pre-Euro German coin (7)
- Small French coin (3)
- Caused by motion (7)
- Attractiveness (5)
- Strength (5)
- Capital of Azerbaijan (4)
- Lash (4)
- Small creature (4)

ACROSS

- Later (5)
- States as a fact (7)
- Pedantically find fault (7)
- Classifies or ranks (5)
- Did possess (3)
- Seventeen for Caesar (4)
- Neat (4)
- Dons or wears (4,2)
- Dunks (4)
- Subsided (4)
- Spanish dictator (6)
- Ship's complement (4)
- ___ arms : riled ? (2,2)
- The front part of a ship (3)
- Sleeper's woe (5)
- Fool (7)
- Self-important character (7)
- Of or pertaining to gold (5)

Solution to July 31

SUDOKU

Solution to July 31

Motherhood Shaped my thinking: Karisma

Actress Karisma Kapoor has opened up about her experience of judging Fevicate Idea Labs Season 3. She shared how motherhood has shaped her perspective towards understanding children's creativity and imagination. Speaking about the experience, Karisma said, "What I loved most about Fevicate Idea Labs was that it celebrates something every child naturally has curiosity and imagination. We often associate judging with performance, but here it was about listening to ideas, understanding how young minds think and encouraging them to dream a little bigger."

"Spending time with these children was genuinely inspiring because they look at the world with such honesty and originality. As someone who is a mother myself, I found that especially meaningful, and I hope every child watching feels encouraged to keep creating, asking questions and believing in their ideas."

The four-episode grand finale, set to air over two weekends starting tomorrow on Nickelodeon and JioHotstar, will feature Karisma mentoring and celebrating some of the country's most talented young innovators across two age groups — 5 to 8 years

and 9 to 14 years. Selected from over 3 lakh applicants, the 12 finalists will showcase their unique ideas based on art, well-being and science. Karisma is currently seen judging the reality show "India's Best Dancer Season 5," alongside Geeta Kapur and Terence Lewis. Haarsh Limbachiya serves as the host of the dance reality show.

On the big screen, Karisma Kapoor was last seen in the neo-noir psychological crime thriller series "Brown," where she portrayed Rita Brown, a troubled and determined investigator. The series premiered on ZEE5 on June 5, 2026.

Speaking about her role, Karisma Kapoor had shared that in her over three-decade-long career, she had played several strong female characters. However, she noted that what made Rita Brown unique was that her strength came not just from her courage, but also from her vulnerability and quiet resilience. The actress said in a statement, "Over the years, I've played many strong women, but Rita's strength lies in her fragility and silence as much as in her courage." "Living with this character stayed with me long after the camera stopped rolling, and I think that's what made the journey so personal and transformative for me."

