

Winter

NATURAL BEAUTY RESET WORKBOOK



A step-by-step guide
to live your best
Natural Beauty Winter!

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“What good is the warmth of summer, without the cold of winter to give it sweetness.”

John Steinbeck

YOUR WINTER RESET SHOPPING LIST

SKINCARE

1. **Daily Skincare System** with organic ingredients and pH of 4.6 – 5.0 for face and below 5.5 for body. Check out [TheSpaDr.com](https://www.TheSpaDr.com) for natural and organic ingredients that meet Natural Beauty Reset standards.
2. **Facial Sponge** (natural – such as Konjac)
3. **Sweet Almond Oil**
4. **Castor Oil**
5. **Avocado Oil**
6. **Organic Orange Essential Oil**

MINDSET & MOVEMENT

1. **Journal**
2. **Yoga Mat or Towel**
3. **Warming Teas** – such as those with ginger, cinnamon, cardamom, and cloves.
4. **Organic Sweet Orange or Rose Essential Oil**
5. **Epsom Salts**
6. **Baking soda**
7. **Himalayan Crystal Salt**
8. **Organic Lavender Essential Oil**

FOOD

Choose from any of the following:

- Grains—barley, triticale, wheat berries, quinoa, and oats
- Fruits—apples, pears, kiwis, oranges, grapefruit, lemons, limes, persimmons, goji berries, kumquats, and clementines
- Vegetables—endive, escarole, frisée, radicchio, kale, brussels sprouts, potatoes, yams, beets, carrots, cauliflower, winter squash, celery, mushrooms, onions (red, yellow, and white), leeks, shallots, turnips, rutabaga, parsnips, cabbage, sunchokes, and olives
- Legumes—dried or frozen beans and peas
- Nuts and seeds—walnuts, chestnuts, Brazil nuts, pine nuts, hemp seeds, and cashews
- Animal protein—bison, rabbit, pork, venison, quail, and canned Alaskan salmon
- Herbs and spices—horseradish, fennel, garlic, cinnamon, ginger, black pepper, turmeric, chili pepper, cayenne, paprika, nutmeg, and dried herbs
- Sweets—dates, molasses, and maple syrup (late winter)



STARTING YOUR WINTER RESET

How winter is different from other seasons:

A major concern in winter is low vitamin D, which is more common in winter than any other season. Because this vitamin helps regulate certain neurotransmitters, including serotonin, insufficient vitamin D can lead to low mood—so we want to participate in feel-good activities that help combat this effect. In addition, due to changes in our hormones, winter tends to be a time of high set point for metabolism and stress adaptation. For that reason, you'll want to modify your food, movement, mindset, and skincare routines to help adjust for these changes.

Depending upon where you live, winter can bring extremely cold temperatures along with wind, snow, and ice storms. This can be hard on our physical and emotional well-being because it's harder to retreat to nature to restore our moods and bodies. You can't control the weather in winter, but you can change your behavior to boost energy and mood.

When To Start:

Winter solstice is the shortest day of the year and is typically around December 20 in the northern hemisphere and around June 20 in the southern hemisphere. For women, winter can be challenging for our hormones, moods, metabolisms, and immune systems. We want to keep our internal fire lit to promote warmth and motivation. I recommend starting the winter 7-Day Natural Beauty Reset as early in the winter as possible to help boost your mood, nutritional status, and hormonal balance.

What date will you start the 7-Day Winter Reset?

YOUR WINTER RESET JOURNALING PROMPTS

What are your winter health and hormonal goals?

How is your mood during cooler, less sunny months?

Do you have signs of high or low thyroid? (Go to hormoneseries.com/quiz)

Have you had your vitamin D levels tested?

Are you hoping to get your sleep on track?

When is the closest farmers' market?



WINTER FOOD

In many places, little to nothing grows in the winter, so we focus on late fall and early winter harvest as well as produce that was preserved and stored over the growing months. The produce most commonly available in winter includes root vegetables. For the reasons stated in part I (flavor and nutritional value among them), try to resist buying produce that is grown out of season. Selecting seasonal foods has some variability and depends on your location, but there are certain foods that are known to grow better when the sun is closer to the earth and those that grow better when the sun is farther away from the earth, as it is in the winter.

For easier digestion and assimilation, you want to eat more steamed, cooked, and warming foods in the winter, than raw, cooling, chilled, or frozen foods. In the list below, I include produce that may not grow where you are but is in season in other places, so the produce is more flavorful and nutritious. For additional seasonal foods, check with your local farmers market to find out which produce is freshest where you live. And remember, choose organic and nongenetically modified as much as possible.



Foods Most Abundant During Winter Include...

- **Grains**—barley, triticale, wheat berries, quinoa, and oats: Since they store easily in dry, cool locations, enjoy these more seasonal grains throughout the winter.
- **Fruits**—apples, pears, kiwis, oranges, grapefruit, lemons, limes, persimmons, goji berries, kumquats, and clementines: Depending upon your location, you may need to shop outside your area to find fresh produce. Choose these seasonal fruits as close as possible to where you live to ensure freshness and nutritional richness. They typically last longer after being picked than fruit found in spring and summer months.
- **Vegetables**—endive, escarole, frisée, radicchio, kale, brussels sprouts, potatoes, yams, beets, carrots, cauliflower, winter squash, celery, mushrooms, onions (red, yellow, and white), leeks, shallots, turnips, rutabaga, parsnips, cabbage, sunchokes, and olives: Root vegetables and heartier vegetables are the focus for winter since they grow in cooler temperatures and last longer after harvest.



- Legumes—dried or frozen beans and peas: Store dried legumes in dry, cool places or use freshly frozen so you can enjoy them through winter months.
- Nuts and seeds—walnuts, chestnuts, Brazil nuts, pine nuts, hemp seeds, and cashews: Continue to store nuts and seeds in dry, cool locations to ensure freshness. These are the nuts and seeds you'll find more easily this time of year.
- Animal protein—bison, rabbit, pork, venison, quail, and canned Alaskan salmon: Meat has seasons too, and these are the ones easiest to find locally and fresh in winter.
- Herbs and spices—horseradish, fennel, garlic, cinnamon, ginger, black pepper, turmeric, chili pepper, cayenne, paprika, nutmeg, and dried herbs: Enjoy these herbs and spices to keep you warm through the winter months.
- Sweets—dates, molasses, and maple syrup (late winter): Comfort foods are often desirable when the sun is farther away, so enjoy these sweeteners for a soul-warming treat.

You can also turn to your supply of canned and certain frozen items for additional nourishment and enjoyment.



REFLECTION:

What are your favorite foods from the winter foods list?

Which foods have you not tried that you will be able to find where you live?

Which recipes do you plan to make from the book?

Make note of which meals you enjoy the most so you can continue making them throughout the winter season.



Sample Winter Meal Ideas from Recipes

(Recipes available in the Natural Beauty Reset book)

Here are a week's worth of ideas to help you get started on the 7-Day Natural Beauty Reset for winter. Feel free to modify, substitute, and repeat recipes throughout. Remember, this is not about restriction or limitations; it's about enjoying the flavors and nourishment available during the season you're in. Make note of which meals you like best so you can continue making them throughout the winter season.

Find ways to maximize your time and minimize prep. For example, make more than a recipe calls for and set aside as leftovers or chop a few days' worth of vegetables and fruit and store in a glass or ceramic container in the refrigerator.



Sample Day 1

Breakfast: Barley Porridge with Pears

Lunch: Warming Venison Stew

Dinner: Endive Lentil Salad with Shallot Herb Dressing

Snacks/sweets: Nut Crackers with Black Bean Dip

Sample Day 2

Breakfast: Beet Ginger Smoothie Juice

Lunch: Barley Salad with Roasted Winter Squash

Dinner: Baked Quail with Roasted Parsnips

Snacks/sweets: Gluten-Free Gingerbread Muffins



Sample Day 3

Breakfast: Persimmon Smoothie Bowl topped with Cinnamon Granola

Lunch: Winter Squash Soup

Dinner: Salmon Cabbage Salad

Snacks/sweets: Kale Chips

Sample Day 4

Breakfast: Make your own oatmeal with gluten-free oats, using cinnamon or maple syrup as your sweetener, and top it with chopped walnuts and late harvest (seasonal) apples or pears

Lunch: Black Bean and Swiss Chard Soup

Dinner: Bison Meatloaf with Garlic Broccoli

Snacks/sweets: Baked Apples

Sample Day 5

Breakfast: Make your own baked and sliced yams with cinnamon and cashew nut butter

Lunch: Buy frozen bison patties or use ground bison meat to make your own buffalo burger with a side of winter salad using the Fall Harvest Salad recipe for inspiration

Dinner: Leftover Black Bean Swiss Chard Soup

Snacks/sweets: Beau Pa's Cookies using honey instead of maple syrup

Sample Day 6

Breakfast: Make your own smoothie with a combination of one serving of walnuts, cashews, or pine nuts, one serving of seasonal fruit, one serving of endive, escarole, or kale, and 1 cup of cashew milk, hemp milk, or filtered water. Add cinnamon or one to two dates if more sweetness is desired

Lunch: Potato Leek Soup

Dinner: Pork Chops with Leeks and Mashed Yams

Snacks/sweets: Carrot Salad

Sample Day 7

Breakfast: Persimmon pudding (use the Ginger Chia Pudding with Pomegranate Seeds recipe and substitute fruit with persimmons and top with cashews or walnuts)

Lunch: Make your own kale and apple salad topped with leftover pork chops

Dinner: Leftover Potato Leek Soup

Snacks/sweets: Cinnamon Oat Bites (see fall recipe) using honey instead of maple syrup



Additional Snack Ideas for Fall:

- Sliced apples with cashew butter
- Fruit salad (any combination of apples, pears, kiwis, oranges, grapefruit, or persimmons)
- Mixed nuts (any combination of walnuts, chestnuts, Brazil nuts, pine nuts, or cashews)
- Celery slices and bean dip
- Sliced pitted dates filled with almond butter
- Kale Chips (see fall recipe)

7 Movements for Winter

Circle the movement activities below that you will commit to:

1. **Find an exercise partner and head to the gym.** Setting a date with a fitness friend can give you that extra motivation you need to move your body. When working out with a friend, plan on more time for your workout. Instead of thirty minutes, allow for forty-five minutes to an hour so you have time to socialize. This way, you'll alleviate stress and build those social connections so many of us crave in the wintertime. Opt for a workout that activates a variety of muscle groups. If you and your workout buddy are new to exercise, sign up for a group fitness class or hire a personal trainer for an hour to create a plan together. Use an old-school journal to record your fitness goals and milestones by hand, or tap into the benefits of an app to track your progress virtually. Doing so will help you stay motivated to keep sweating it out!

2. **Sign up for an online video class for a stretch and flex.** You may not feel motivated to leave your home and embrace the winter elements, so doing an online or app-based workout gives you no excuse to skip your daily movement practice. From fitness level to type of platform, there's no shortage of options out there! If you aren't sure where to start, consult a friend or a personal trainer for advice. If you're going to take a class, I recommend signing up for a live paid-for option rather than a free prerecorded one because this way you're more likely to stay committed. Again, it's about setting yourself up for success. Choose a stretching class if your muscles are feeling stiff or if you're feeling unmotivated. Choose a strengthening class when you want to ramp up your energy level and are ready for some muscle-building fun. Go at your pace and your speed. Above all, avoid the temptation to get fit in a day. Take it slow to avoid injury, and build a routine you can sustain for the season and beyond.

WINTER MOVEMENT

During the winter, we may feel less motivated to exercise due to hormonal changes and less sunlight. While we may feel more inclined to catch up on sleep, that doesn't mean we rest all winter. As always, it's about finding balance. Recommendations during this season include stretching and yoga postures that will help rekindle our motivation for movement.

Enjoying the great outdoors in winter months is all about the gear. I've lived in just about every area of the United States and am familiar with winters in all zones and have all kinds of weather-appropriate gear. Layers and comfort are key for winter movement.

Start with a thin layer of wool or synthetic material so that when you sweat, it won't make you cold. Follow that with a temperature-appropriate layer such as a medium-weight wool or synthetic material and a shell or a waterproof or windproof outer layer. Avoid cotton as it absorbs moisture and will leave you feeling cold. Don't forget a hat and gloves plus appropriate shoes with wool or synthetic socks. You want to increase circulation and make sure you don't get chilled. You may want to also wear a neck or face covering in wintry weather if there is wind, freezing temperatures, or precipitation.

Listen to your body and take it easy if and when your muscles and joints feel achy, but don't be afraid to challenge yourself physically to increase circulation and give your mood a boost. Movement is essential during the winter, even when it doesn't always feel easy to get motivated. Look to friends and your community (classes) to help motivate you, but, again, don't be hard on yourself if you take a day off. Going more than a day without movement, though, may impact your sense of well-being, so do your best to at least bundle up and get outdoors for a walk around the block.

3. **Go for a brisk walk, bike, or run during your lunch break.** As long as you can squeeze in a meal before or after, try to fit fitness into your lunch break. It's a great opportunity to step away from your desk and take a breath of fresh air! If you're going hard, eat afterward; if you're taking only a stroll, eat beforehand. Just be sure to be mindful of portions if you're exercising after eating. If lunchtime doesn't work, find another time and add it to your calendar as you would any other commitment. Because you'll be heading outdoors, don't forget your gear! Nab good-quality shoes with traction if it's snowy or icy, and remember your layers as well as head and hand protection. If there's wind, start your workout in the direction facing the wind. This way, when you're at your sweatiest, you'll have your back to the wind and the hardest part will be over.

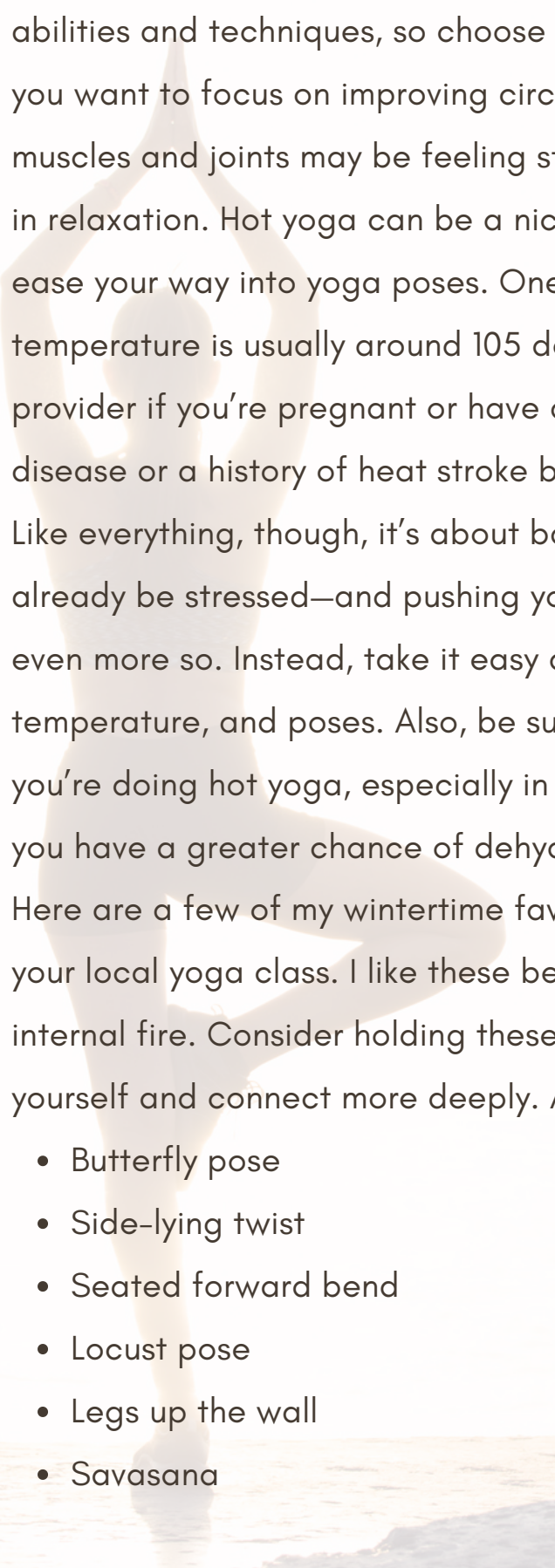
4. **Do a morning workout.** Wake up and put your workout clothes on before you get sidetracked by anything else. Here's a simple workout with a chair and resistance bands. Simply do each of these exercises for thirty to sixty seconds, rest for a minute and then repeat for three total rounds.

- **Booty burn:** Position your body facedown with your elbows and knees on the floor. You can use a yoga mat or towel to protect your hands and knees from a hard floor. Lift your right leg toward the ceiling, keeping your leg bent and your foot flexed. Lift until you feel the burn in your glute and then lower your leg to the ground. Repeat with the same leg for thirty seconds and then switch to the left leg.

- Lateral walk: You'll need a resistance band for this one. Keeping the band flat, wrap it around both legs just above each ankle. Start with your feet shoulder-width apart with the band taut. Bend your knees slightly and move into a half-squat position. Keep your feet in line with your shoulders and your back straight. Stay low with your hips level, take a step sideways with your right leg, and move in and out to the right for ten repetitions. Switch legs to do another ten sidesteps on the left side.
- Classic plank: Place your forearms on the floor with elbows aligned below your shoulders and arms parallel to your body. Orient your body horizontally, and press your toes into the floor, squeezing your glutes to stabilize your body. Be careful not to lock or hyperextend your knees. Keep your neck and spine straight as you look down at the floor. Hold for twenty to sixty seconds, and remember to breathe!
- High knees or running in place: For thirty to sixty seconds, stand up straight and either march or run in place. Try to lift your knees high, at or above the level of your waistline, if possible, being mindful not to strain your back.
- Assisted squats: You'll need a chair or bench for this one. Bend your knees at a 90-degree angle a couple of inches in front of your chair. Lower your butt slowly, not quite reaching the seat, and then stand up with a slight pelvic tilt forward to fully engage the glute muscles as you straighten your legs. Repeat for thirty to sixty seconds.

5. **Find a winter-friendly activity.** Embrace the season! Rent, buy, borrow, or grab your gear and go! Ski, snowshoe, skate, ski, ice skate, sled, or just a walk or run around the neighborhood. You can even shovel snow if it's falling in your area to get a workout during chore time. If it doesn't snow where you live, consider finding some so you can participate in a cold-weather activity. If you're not used to higher altitudes, give yourself time to adjust. Don't skimp on water—cold temperatures can be just as dehydrating as hot ones. Ease into these activities, especially if they're new for you. Take time to warm up and stretch. And don't forget your mineral-based sunscreen for exposed skin because the snow reflects and intensifies sun exposure. If it's early or late in the day, enjoy ten minutes of sun exposure for a quick vitamin D boost before applying your sunscreen.





6. **Take a yoga class.** Yoga comes in many forms and styles. Teachers vary in abilities and techniques, so choose your class and teacher wisely. For winter, you want to focus on improving circulation while being mindful that your muscles and joints may be feeling stiff, and your mind may be more interested in relaxation. Hot yoga can be a nice option to help warm up the body and ease your way into yoga poses. One option is Bikram, where the room temperature is usually around 105 degrees Fahrenheit. Talk with your healthcare provider if you're pregnant or have an existing health issue such as heart disease or a history of heat stroke before doing a hot yoga class.

Like everything, though, it's about balance. In the wintertime, your adrenals will already be stressed—and pushing yourself too hard physically will make them even more so. Instead, take it easy as you choose your yoga location, temperature, and poses. Also, be sure to drink extra water with electrolytes if you're doing hot yoga, especially in the winter when the air is already dryer and you have a greater chance of dehydration.

Here are a few of my wintertime favorite yoga poses to find online or ask for in your local yoga class. I like these because they're gentle yet help stoke our internal fire. Consider holding these poses a bit longer than usual to challenge yourself and connect more deeply. And don't forget to breathe!

- Butterfly pose
- Side-lying twist
- Seated forward bend
- Locust pose
- Legs up the wall
- Savasana

7. Try a new fitness class or sport and seek out fun. Get those feel-good hormones pumping to lift your wintertime mood! There are so many activities that can help you do just that: spinning, rock climbing, dance, Pilates, or kickboxing classes, and indoor tennis or pickleball. Try one that sounds fun, and grabbing a friend or family member to join you may help reduce the fear of trying something new. If the activity doesn't strike your fancy, experiment and try a different one.

You're more likely to overcome the resistance to workouts if you're inspired and looking forward to them. It may take time and a sense of adventure, but trying something new stimulates positive changes for your brain, especially as you age. It helps your brain's neuroplasticity, which is how well your brain is able to adapt.



REFLECTION:

Which movement activities did you enjoy the most?

How did you feel after the morning workout?

Which of the yoga poses did you find most helpful?

What did you notice during and after doing these?

What would you do differently with the next reset?

What would you do similarly in the next reset?



WINTER MINDSET

Winter is the season to rest and restore. It is an ideal time for mindset practices such as forgiveness exercises, gratitude journaling, and deeper, longer meditations. These approaches will help you gain a greater awareness of your mood and needs, which will shift through the season. You may feel more sluggish this time of year due to elevated melatonin levels, but avoid napping for more than fifteen minutes during the day because more than a short power nap can make it harder to fall asleep at night. That said, if your body is craving an extra hour of sleep, give yourself permission to take that extra time to recharge.



7 Mindset Activities for Winter

Tip: Keep a daily journal and write about your activities and insights.

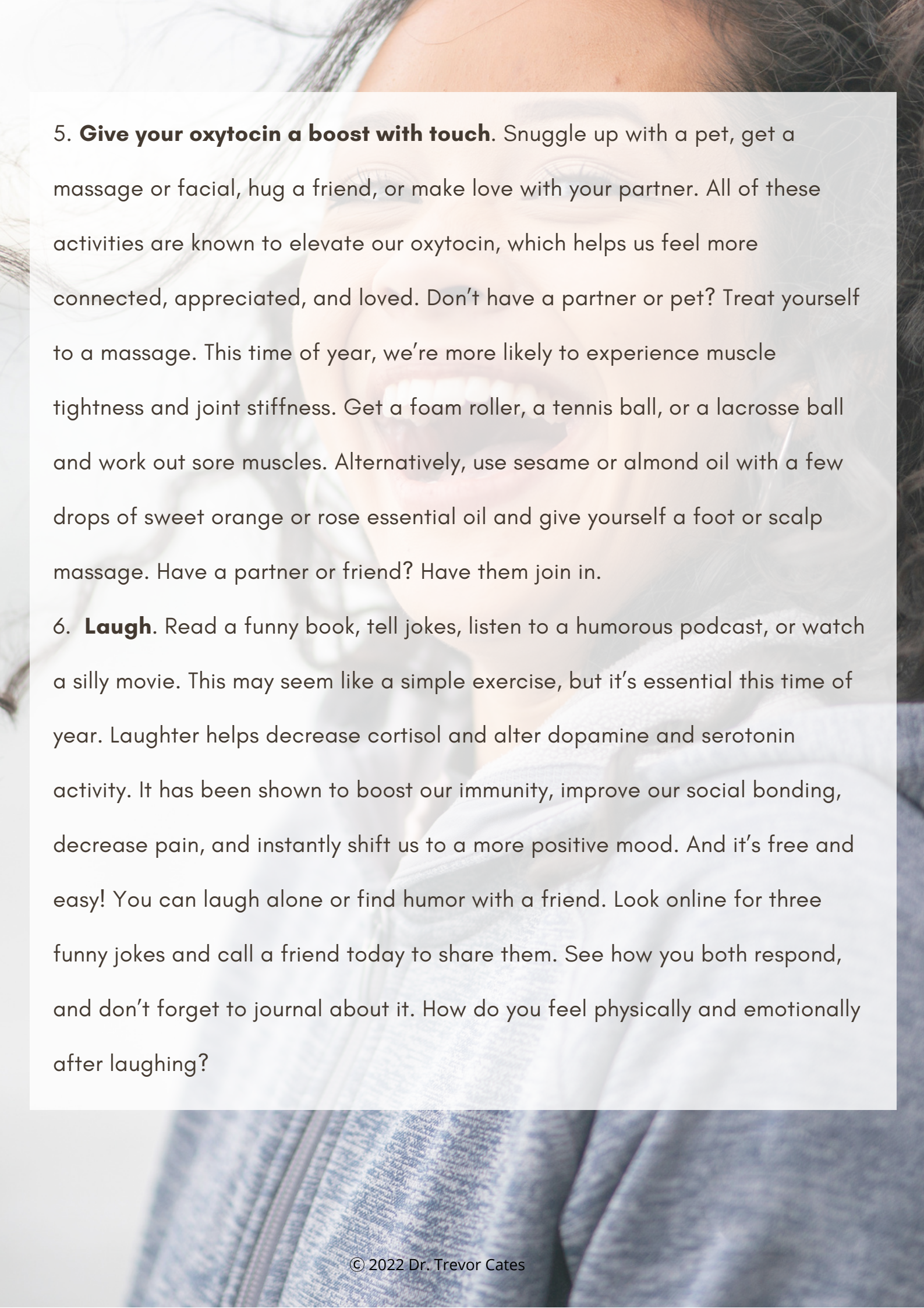
- 1. Start your mornings with invigorating breathwork and yoga.** Full yogic breathing is known for its revitalizing effects and helps alleviate stress and stimulate circulation around the vital organs. Do this exercise before breakfast on an empty stomach for five to fifteen minutes with your eyes closed. You may want to set a timer so you don't have to open your eyes to check the time. Start in a comfortable position, either seated with your spine straight or lying on your back. Close your eyes find a still place in your mind, and allow your thoughts to quiet. Relax your body. Bring your attention to your breathing and inhale deeply, slowly allowing your breath to fill your lower abdomen toward your navel and away from your spine. Once that area is filled, continue your inhalation to your mid-torso, continuing to draw your breath upward from your navel to your ribs and gently expand your diaphragm as your breath continues to rise. Carry your breath to your upper chest into the area of your heart, sternum, and then into your shoulders and the lower part of your neck. Pause for a moment at the top of the inhalation. Then allow for a long, slow exhalation, reversing the flow of your breath through the path it traveled upward. Specifically, relax your body beginning at your upper chest while dropping your breath down and in toward your spine. Move your awareness to your mid-torso, noticing your ribs and navel pull in toward your spine. Finally, continue your exhale from the lower abdomen, feeling this space draw inward toward your spine. Take a moment to pause before repeating your next breathing cycle, starting with your inhalation. After you've completed several rounds of this exercise, allow your breathing pattern to return to normal before opening your eyes and going about your day.

2. **Window bathe in the morning or afternoon sun.** Wintertime often causes a drop in mood, but it doesn't have to. Feel more cheerful without having to brave the elements by basking in the sunlight shining through a window in your home or workplace for five to twenty minutes. While most windows block the UVB rays your body needs to make vitamin D, you can still reap some benefits. Exposure to sunlight is known for its ability to stimulate serotonin release, which happens when our eyes (retina) and skin come in contact with the sun's rays. The benefits appear with UVA exposure, too. It's best to do this on a day when the sun is shining brightly, but be mindful that the UVA rays coming through the window can still be damaging to your skin, so choose your location as well as time of day wisely. Window bathing is not as refreshing as breathing in the fresh air in direct sunlight, nor will it allow for beneficial vitamin D synthesis in the skin, so I encourage you to still bundle up and get outdoors for some vitamin D and fresh air.

3. **Cozy up by the fire with a great book and a cup of warming tea.** If you live in a cooler climate, you can warm your body and soul with some fireside time. If you don't have a gas or wood-burning stove, curl up in a lounge chair or sofa with a cozy blanket. Sipping tea is a nice addition, especially drinking one with warming spices like ginger, cinnamon, cardamom, and cloves. You can choose to make your own tea or pick some up at your local grocery, health, or specialty food store. If you have a furry friend or a loving companion, ask them to join you to bump up your oxytocin.

4. Engage with your community to combat loneliness. In the winter, we may feel more isolated and alone compared to other times of the year. A review of thirty studies on loneliness and social isolation showed an increase in system inflammation, and other research has unveiled a negative impact on brain chemistry and function from prolonged isolation. Take proactive steps to feel less alone this time of year. For instance, attend group classes and schedule meetups with friends. Identify people with similar interests to form new social bonds. Consider joining a book club or a religious studies group. If you enjoy meditation or yoga, search for classes in your area where you can make new friends or go with ones you already have. If you're managing the effects of trauma from a previous life event, consider joining a support group to connect with your peers. Be sure to choose a group with a guide or coach who has reached the other side of recovery to help ensure the experience is a positive one for you. The goal is to help you feel supported and less alone—essentially, to feel that you are part of a community on which you can lean.





5. **Give your oxytocin a boost with touch.** Snuggle up with a pet, get a massage or facial, hug a friend, or make love with your partner. All of these activities are known to elevate our oxytocin, which helps us feel more connected, appreciated, and loved. Don't have a partner or pet? Treat yourself to a massage. This time of year, we're more likely to experience muscle tightness and joint stiffness. Get a foam roller, a tennis ball, or a lacrosse ball and work out sore muscles. Alternatively, use sesame or almond oil with a few drops of sweet orange or rose essential oil and give yourself a foot or scalp massage. Have a partner or friend? Have them join in.

6. **Laugh.** Read a funny book, tell jokes, listen to a humorous podcast, or watch a silly movie. This may seem like a simple exercise, but it's essential this time of year. Laughter helps decrease cortisol and alter dopamine and serotonin activity. It has been shown to boost our immunity, improve our social bonding, decrease pain, and instantly shift us to a more positive mood. And it's free and easy! You can laugh alone or find humor with a friend. Look online for three funny jokes and call a friend today to share them. See how you both respond, and don't forget to journal about it. How do you feel physically and emotionally after laughing?

7. **Create a bedtime ritual.** Sleep is essential for hormonal balance and to support overall well-being. Because darkness is on our side in winter, it's the perfect time to establish an effective bedtime ritual. Personalize yours to your taste. At least an hour before bed, turn off electronics, dim the lights, light a candle, listen to soothing music, read a relaxing paperback or hardcover book (avoid e-readers), stretch, enjoy some calming breathwork, pray, meditate, pamper with soothing skincare, breathe in some de-stressing essentials oil, or take a bath with muscle-easing bath salts. Here is a recipe for a soothing bath:

Body Bath Salts

- 2 cups Epsom salts
- ½ cup baking soda
- 1 cup Himalayan crystal salt
- 30 to 40 drops of lavender essential oils

Combine the ingredients in a glass, ceramic, or metal container. Add to warm bath and soak for 15 to 20 minutes.



REFLECTION:

Which mindset activities did you enjoy the most?

What did you notice during and after doing these?

What community building activities are you doing?

What are you doing to boost your oxytocin?

What would you do differently with the next reset?

What would you do similarly in the next reset?

What is your bedtime ritual?



WINTER SKINCARE

With the sun farther away and spending more time indoors, our skin can appear dry and dull, so the focus of winter skincare is hydration and nourishment. Extra time indoors with artificial heat from forced air or radiant heat means your skin may be even drier this time of year. DIY options include the Winter Body Scrub, Cleansing Body Oil, and Soothing Lip Balm (see recipes).



7 Skincare Practices for Winter

1. **Use a layer of cleansing oil on skin before getting in a warm shower.**

When the weather is cold, we're tempted to shower with extra-hot water to warm our bodies, but the problem is that hot water evaporates quickly and dries out skin. During this time of year, I encourage you to minimize superhot showers. And before stepping in the shower or bath, apply a cleansing oil to your skin to help hydrate and protect it.

Follow the Cleansing Body Oil recipe. Apply 1 to 2 tablespoons to your entire body and then step into a warm shower or bath. Allow this oil to be your cleanser instead of a bar of soap, which have a high pH and strip the skin of natural oils. When you're finished bathing, pat your skin rather than rub it dry so you don't remove all of those fabulous oils on your skin. Be sure to avoid skincare products containing alcohol and those with a high pH, such as the typical bar of soap, which is going to have a pH over 5.4.

2. **Use natural lip moisturizers.** Don't forget your lips! They need extra TLC during the winter months because chapping is common when we're braving the elements. Before you slather on the lip gloss, ChapStick, or lip balm, study the ingredients list. Most lip products contain potentially toxic ingredients such as fragrance, petrolatum, and mineral oil. What you put on your lips ends up inside your body even more so than skincare products applied to other parts of your body. When you lick your lips, or drink a beverage or eat food, much of what's on your lips ends up in your mouth. This means lip-care products are one of the most important products to be toxic-free. You can make a lip balm (see the recipe for Soothing Lip Balm) or buy one made with natural ingredients such as coconut oil, shea butter, vitamin E, beeswax, and organic essential oils.

3. **Steam your face with a hydrating mask or cleanser.** A facial steam (see Herbal Face Steam recipe on page TK) can feel great this time of year, but be mindful that hot water can further dry out your skin. So apply a soothing natural face mask or cleanser to your skin before doing a face steam. I recommend applying the Pumpkin Face Mask (see fall recipe on page TK) or a natural skincare routine such as applying The Spa Dr.'s Step 1 Gentle Cleanser to your face and then doing an herbal face steam with dried herbs such as rose petals and rose essential oil.

4. **Increase your hydration habit, especially at night.** As you can tell from the previous three skincare practices, hydration is key for winter. Because it's easier to catch up on your sleep in winter months compared to the other seasons of the year, it's also a great time to focus on hydrating your skin as you sleep. For your evening skincare routine, start with a creamy oil-based cleaner. The cooler winter air offers a skin perk. Compared to the other seasons, our pores are smaller and less likely to get clogged, so don't be afraid to use plant-based oils, even if you have acne-prone skin. Your skin should not feel tight after cleansing if you're using the right cleanser. Follow with an antioxidant serum, such as The Spa Dr.'s Step 2; a moisturizer, such as The Spa Dr.'s Step 3; and finish your routine by doing a self-massage with face oil. Choose a natural face oil such as The Spa Dr.'s Step 4 or make a blend with your favorite plant-based oils according to your skin type and needs. For example, jojoba oil is typically great for oilier skin and almond oil works well for drier skin types. Place the application of oil in your palms and warm it by rubbing your hands together and then pressing it into your skin (to improve absorption), focusing on the drier skin areas.

5. **Exfoliate dry skin.** Done correctly, exfoliation helps remove dead, dull surface skin cells to reveal the fresh, glowing skin underneath. It also helps detox skin and enhance the effectiveness of your daily skincare routine by increasing absorption of products. There are numerous exfoliants, but only two main types: physical and chemical.

Chemical exfoliants, including alpha hydroxy acids (AHAs) such as glycolic acid and beta hydroxy acids (BHAs) such as salicylic acid, have enzymatic properties that help slough off dead skin cells. Physical exfoliants are those that contain a scrub-type ingredient that causes the exfoliation, such as sugar or coffee grounds. Both chemical and physical exfoliants have their place, but we want to be careful not to over exfoliate with either harsh chemical or physical exfoliants, thereby damaging the skin's microbiome and barrier function.

When using chemical exfoliants, start with more natural versions like papaya or pineapple fruit extract. If you use products with synthetic ingredients, use as directed on the bottle or follow the advice of a well-trained aesthetician. Avoid exfoliants with coarsely ground ingredients and brushes because they may cause microscopic tears that damage the skin. The Spa Dr.'s exfoliant uses finely ground cultured freshwater pearls to create a gentle yet effective physical exfoliation.

Here are a few of my favorite exfoliant ingredients for DIY skincare:

- Papaya: A rich source of vitamins A, C, and E; contains the papain enzyme, which is a natural exfoliant
- Pomegranate seeds: Grind these in a blender until smooth for an antioxidant-rich exfoliant
- Yogurt: The lactic acid in yogurt is a natural exfoliant; it helps balance the skin's pH

Whether you're making your own exfoliant or looking to purchase one made with natural and organic ingredients, don't miss this step in your skincare routine. Spend extra time on rough spots such as knees, elbow, heels, and ankles. To make your own body exfoliant, see the recipe for Winter Body Scrub.

Although exfoliation offers plenty of benefits, it can also harm your skin if you don't follow best practices. Avoid or minimize exfoliating during the following circumstances:

- If you plan to be in direct sunlight for an extended period of time
- If you have extremely sensitive skin
- If you're using a dermatology prescription such as topical steroids, antibiotics, Retin-A, or Accutane
- If your skin is broken, inflamed, sunburned, or otherwise damaged
- If you have been swimming or hot tubbing in chlorinated water
- If your face is windburned, such as after a day of skiing

Facial exfoliants should be much gentler than body exfoliants because the skin on your face is more delicate.

6. **Consider a procedure to address your skin's unique needs.** Now is the best time for minimally invasive procedures you may consider that typically have more potential for sensitivity to sun and damage. Here are three examples of in-office procedures that are less invasive than plastic surgery and do not include any injections of potentially toxic ingredients:

- Microneedling. A roughly fifteen-minute in-office procedure, microneedling involves making tiny needle punctures in the top layer of skin with the goal of improving the skin's overall texture and appearance. The needles are energized with radio frequency to help stimulate collagen growth in the skin. The procedure is relatively low cost, only mildly painful, and it doesn't involve the injection of artificial ingredients. A growing number of dermatologists, plastic surgeons, and integrative doctors are performing these procedures in their offices because of their benefits and the minimal recovery time involved.
- Platelet-rich plasma (PRP) facials. Sometimes called vampire facials, PRP facials can give microneedling a boost. During the microneedling process, the skin opens up and can more readily absorb products. In this case, PRP appears to reach the inner layers of skin, where it aids in the regeneration process. PRP facials involve injecting your own platelets and fibrin, which is obtained from your blood, with the aim of reducing wrinkles and scars in the face, hands, and neck. It also appears to support stem cell proliferation and new collagen formation. Patients whom I've referred for this treatment have noticed a visible reduction in fine lines and wrinkles as well as less acne scarring after three treatments.

- Cosmetic lasers. This procedure can help tighten the skin, promoting smoothness and reducing the appearance of brown spots. As with any procedure, using lasers to correct skin issues poses certain risks, such as equipment malfunction and user error. While they can yield results and don't involve the use of toxic chemicals, certain lasers are more safe and effective than others.

If you're looking for a completely natural look without the help of technology, you may choose to skip these types of procedures. It's all about making educated and healthy decisions that support your short- and long-term goals.

Because these types of treatment can make your skin more sensitive to sun damage, please don't forget your sunscreen! While you have less UVB in the winter, remember that UVA levels are skin agers. Make sure your sunscreen is broad-spectrum or has a high UVA rating.

7. **Get a winter facial.** Whether you choose to pamper yourself with a DIY spa day or one outside of the home, take time for this self-care. Having a spa day or hour can help reduce cortisol, boost oxytocin, and give you a moment to reset. Because you're likely spending less time in the sun, now is the time to consider more exfoliating treatments. Look to seasonal ingredients such as citrus, persimmons, and oats if you're going the DIY route. For store-bought products, check the labels to ensure they don't contain potentially toxic ingredients, or ask your spa of choice about the quality and contents of their products.

REFLECTION:

Which skincare practices did you enjoy the most?

Have you increased your use of natural moisturizers containing plant-based oils?

Did you make any DIY skincare? If so, make note of what you made and what you noticed during and after using them.

Which skin care procedures are you considering?

Have you been able to get a winter facial?

What did you notice during and after doing these skincare practices?



