

10 Reasons Why We Need at Least 8 Hugs a Day

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Hugging therapy is definitely a powerful way of [healing](#). Research shows that hugging (and also laughter) is extremely effective at healing sickness, disease, loneliness, depression, anxiety and stress.

Research shows a proper deep hug, where the hearts are pressing together, can benefit you in these ways:

1. The nurturing touch of a hug builds trust and a sense of safety. This helps with open and honest communication.
2. Hugs can instantly boost oxytocin levels, which heal feelings of loneliness, isolation, and anger.

3. Holding a hug for an extended time lifts one's serotonin levels, elevating mood and creating [happiness](#).

4. Hugs strengthen the immune system. The gentle pressure on the sternum and the emotional charge this creates activates the [Solar Plexus Chakra](#). This stimulates the thymus gland, which regulates and balances the body's production of white blood cells, which keep you healthy and disease free.

5. Hugging boosts [self-esteem](#). From the time we're born our family's touch shows us that we're loved and special. The associations of self-worth and tactile sensations from our early years are still imbedded in our nervous system as adults. The cuddles we received from our Mom and Dad while growing up remain imprinted at a cellular level, and hugs remind us at a somatic level of that. Hugs, therefore, connect us to our ability to self love.

6. Hugging relaxes muscles. Hugs release tension in the body. Hugs can take away pain; they soothe aches by increasing circulation into the soft tissues.

7. Hugs balance out the nervous system. The galvanic skin response of someone receiving and giving a hug shows a change in skin conductance. The effect in moisture and electricity in the skin suggests a more balanced state in the nervous system - parasympathetic.

8. Hugs teach us how to give and receive. There is equal value in receiving and being receptive to warmth, as to giving and sharing. Hugs educate us how love flows both ways.

9. Hugs are so much like [meditation](#) and laughter. They teach us to let go and be present in the moment. They encourage us to flow with the energy of life. Hugs get you out of your circular thinking patterns and connect you with your heart and your feelings and your breath.

10. The energy exchange between the people hugging is an investment in the relationship. It encourages empathy and understanding. And, it's synergistic, which means the whole is more than the sum of its parts: 1 + 1 = 3 or more! This synergy is more likely to result in win-win outcomes.

There is a saying by Virginia Satir, a respected family therapist, “**We need four hugs a day for survival. We need eight hugs a day for maintenance. We need twelve hugs a day for growth.**” Eight or more might seem quite high, but while researching and writing this article I asked my child, “How many hugs a day do you like?” She said, “I'm not going to tell you how many I like, but it's way more than eight.” That really made me smile and touched my heart. And, I realized how organic and deep the need for hugs is.

As a loving father, I get plenty of hugs from my little princess and her Mamma. And as a yoga therapist, I often give and receive them from my students at the end of a session. I find that [love](#), is a miracle drug.

<http://www.mindbodygreen.com/0-5756/10-Reasons-Why-We-Need-at-Least-8-Hugs-a-Day.html>