



Skin Wellness
By Sharmil Elliott Reclusado

5-MINUTE MORNING RITUALS FOR GLOWING SKIN



Give yourself a morning boost with these simple, yet powerful rituals that add a healthy glow to your skin and nurture your overall wellness.

In as little as 5 minutes, you'll energize your skin, reduce inflammation, and set a positive tone—leaving you feeling radiant inside and out.

Before You Begin...

Routine Vs Ritual

A routine is about just completing tasks, while a ritual is about connecting with what you're doing and why. Rituals bring intention and presence to actions, making them meaningful and lasting.

“ANOTHER thing to add to our lives!?” , you exclaim. I get it! Life is busy (perhaps even chaotic.) But fear not, my goal is to help you sneak in "simple" micro-rituals into your day. These little moments can make a big difference in your health & happiness and, over time, actually help to counteract the stress.

Each of these rituals can be done in as little as 1-5 minutes. Find what duration and order works best for you. Do you HAVE to do all of them? In a word,  no. Does each of them provide its own benefits to your life in a stackable, buildable way?

Absolutely, yes! Start where you can with what you can. Our goal is always progress over perfection. Now dive in and have fun!



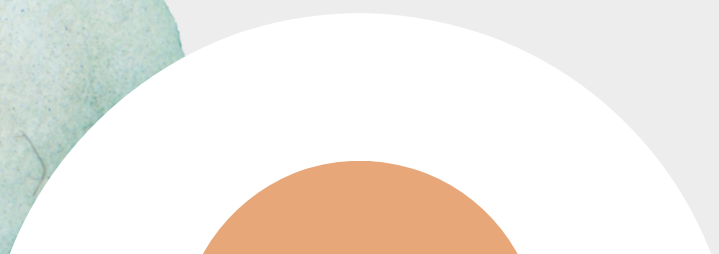
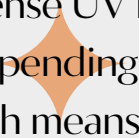
I. Morning Sky Connection/Gazing

Take a moment to step outside or peer out the window at the morning sky. The longer you do this one, the better, so don't skimp! Have you ever considered that we are solar-powered-beings?

Whether it's bright and sunny or full of moody clouds, soak it all in. Embrace the sky's vibe—it's all part of nature's charm.

Natural morning light helps regulate your sleep-wake cycles and circadian rhythms (which impact all of your organ functions), support hormone balance, mental well-being, and ultimately, skin health. The early morning light is particularly special because it contains a unique color spectrum that tells your body it's time to wake up—caffeine-dependent no more! Now you get to drink coffee and green tea for other reasons.

Rich in blue light, morning sunlight signals your body to get going, boosting your mood and energy levels. Additionally, its richness in red light in the morning helps reduce inflammation, supporting skin health. Exposure to morning light also suppresses melatonin—the hormone that makes you feel sleepy. This natural light cue helps set a balanced rhythm for your entire day. Unlike the intense UV radiation in mid-day, early morning sunlight (typically before 9 am-10 am, depending on where you are in our big, beautiful world) has lower UV levels, which means you generally don't need sunscreen. This makes it an ideal time to soak up these benefits without the risks (be sure to assess your individual sensitivities).





Feel the sensations in your body and take deep breaths as you gaze at the sky.

This simple practice fosters a sense of calm and connection to the present moment, benefiting both your mental health and your skin.

BONUS: If you have a bit more time, consider extending your outdoor morning light exposure to get a natural dose of vitamin D. Spend up to 15 minutes outdoors with the sun hitting your skin (like your arms and face) to boost your vitamin D levels, which supports bone health, immune function, and even mood.

Note: The earlier in the morning you can do this, the better for getting your circadian rhythms set properly.

2. Deep Breathing

Take some deep, mindful breaths to reduce stress and boost oxygen flow to your skin.

Try this:

- Inhale deeply through your nose for 4 seconds, letting the air fill your belly.
- Hold your breath for 7 seconds.
- Exhale slowly through your mouth for 8 seconds.
- Continue this until you feel a shift in the 'tension' of your body. If that feels like too much starting out, just do what feels good and work your way up. Feeling lightheaded? Perhaps try this while lying down—you can even do it first thing before getting out of bed.



Deep breathing boosts circulation and expels toxins, giving your skin a fresh, vibrant look. More oxygen means better cellular function, which supports collagen production and healthy skin renewal—key ingredients for that natural glow. Additionally, deep breathing activates the parasympathetic nervous system, which is responsible for rest and relaxation, helping to reduce stress and to calm the body. Lowering stress levels reduces chronic cortisol, an important hormone that can lead to inflammation and skin issues like acne and premature aging if it's too high or at the wrong time of day. Better oxygenation and reduced stress work together to promote healthy skin cell regeneration, leaving you with a natural, radiant complexion.

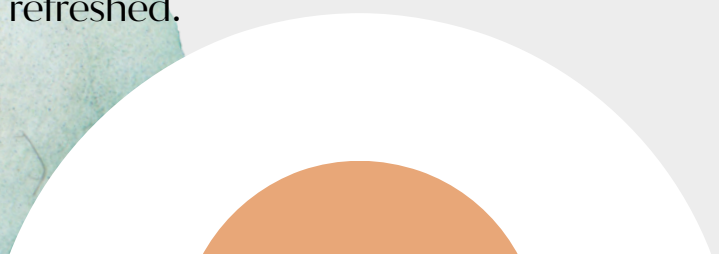
TIP: You can even stack the morning sky gazing and deep breathing! Just pay attention to where your mind goes. Are you doing it just to check it off the list, or are you truly connecting with both practices in a way that feels good?

3. Facial Splash & Massage

Splash your face with cold water to wake up your skin and reduce puffiness. Not a fan of the chilly splash? No worries—lukewarm water works too! It still stimulates circulation and gently wakes up your skin, without the morning shock factor.



Cold water on the face helps stimulate the vagus nerve, triggering the body's "diving reflex." This natural response slows the heart rate, constricts blood vessels, and redirects blood flow to vital organs, promoting relaxation and reducing stress. It also reduces inflammation and puffiness, giving your skin a more toned appearance. As your skin warms up again, increased circulation helps oxygenate the skin, making it look firmer and more refreshed.





Then:

- Prepare by doing a few forward & backward shoulder rolls and raises to get the lymph nodes ready.
 - Apply a small amount of facial oil or moisturizer. Try out my Forest & Fern Prickly Pear face blend with Bakuchiol([add link!](#))—perfect for facial massage. But any single oil or oil blend will work nicely.
 - Start by gently gliding your open hand from your jaw/ear down to your shoulder, and then do a little wiggle/pump above the collarbone where the lymph nodes are. Do this for the whole neck, avoiding the very front over the thyroid.
 - Next, hook your fingers as if making a fist and glide the side of your index finger (between the first two knuckles) along your face and jaw, from the middle (nose/chin) toward the ear/temple, keeping a slight, gentle upward direction. You can also use facial gua sha tools([add link](#)) or facial cups if you have them.
 - Each time you reach the temple, give it a little wiggle or circular massage.
 - Using all your knuckles from the fist, find any tension/"crunchiness" then lovingly dig a little deeper. Use circular motions and wiggle back & forth. I find crunchy fascial adhesions in my jaw and under my chin quite a bit.
- Note: Be sure to go past the hairline getting to those tender spots beneath the scalp. Work your knuckles or tools through your whole head, especially around the back at the base of the skull. Find ways to use gravity to your advantage by slightly tilting your head into the massage. This will help prevent adding muscle tension when you're trying to release it.
- End by gliding your open hand from nose to temple and chin to ear a few times. Make a V between your fingers, place your index finger behind your ear and the rest of your fingers in front of your ear and massage up & down and in circles.
 - Lastly, repeat the open hand glide down the neck to the collar bone.

I know this can seem like a lot when seeing it in writing but just know there's no one perfect way to do this. Just focus on connecting with your body. Find areas of tension and give them some extra care. Check in with these areas—ask what they need or if they have anything to communicate. This practice fosters a deeper connection between your mind and body.



On a physiological level, this massage helps promote lymphatic drainage (think of it like taking out the skin's trash after the all-important overnight repair and purge process). It reduces muscle and fascia tension, and gives your skin that natural glow by boosting blood flow.

Releasing tension in your muscles and fascia is like sending your face on a mini vacation—resulting in smoother, more relaxed skin! Fascia, the connective tissue around and through muscles, can get tight from dehydration, stress, and poor posture like slumped shoulders and forward head & neck position (hmm, hunching over the computer and phone for hours—guilty!). Massaging away muscle and fascial tension helps boost circulation, nutrient delivery, and toxin expulsion.

Relax those tight spots and watch your skin regain its vibrant glow! Plus, reducing tension helps keep deep wrinkles and fine lines at bay, giving you a youthful and refreshed complexion.

And if we needed any more reasons, it just feels good! Who knew a little face TLC could go such a long way?

4. Gratitude Affirmation

Take a moment to set a positive tone for the day with simple affirmations. Affirmations are like little pep talks for your skin—they help reduce stress and boost your mindset, both of which are essential for keeping your skin healthy and radiant. Try any of these that resonate with you or come up with your own:

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- "I am grateful for my healthy, radiant skin."
 - "My skin is vibrant and reflects my inner well-being."
 - "I honor my skin by giving it the love and care it deserves."
 - "My skin is unique, and I embrace its journey."
 - "I love how my skin protects and supports me."
 - "Every day, my skin becomes healthier and more resilient."
 - "I nourish my skin with positivity, and it radiates health."
 - "My skin tells my story, and I cherish every mark."



Look at yourself in the mirror and repeat your affirmation/s (extra points if you do it with confidence!). This "simple" act helps you build a positive mindset, reducing stress and setting the tone for healthier, happier skin.

Or, if you're in the mood for something more playful or need a different approach, give your reflection a high-five in the mirror. Yes, it sounds silly—but it's been shown that positive self-interactions like this can actually build new neural networks that improve your self-confidence and self-compassion.

Finding this one challenging? I get it! We all have a built-in negativity bias, and unless we actively practice being kind, loving, positive, and compassionate with ourselves, we are afflicted by more of the negativity that weighs us down (and shows up on our skin). It's a twisted round-robin. We want to feel good about ourselves but don't, so we talk down to ourselves and then start believing it. Even though it's not true, we end up in a downward spiral. If this describes your self-image, take this opportunity to find one thing that you can love or appreciate about yourself. Put the spotlight on that and keep coming back to it. Start simple: "I appreciate how my skin holds me together in one piece." Build from there.

Could you use some support? I'm here to help!

5. Hydration Boost

Kick off your day with a full glass of warm water (or not-so-warm, if that's your vibe) and a splash of lemon (about a ¼ of a lemon). BUT this is not the time for a cold drink—according to Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), cold beverages in the morning can disrupt digestive fire, or 'yang energy,' which is crucial for lighting up your metabolism and keeping your digestion smooth throughout the day.

Add a couple pinches of mineral-rich sea salt or some trace mineral drops. Think of it as giving your body a refreshing wake-up call.



The lemon adds a boost of vitamin C, which not only supports collagen production (hello, radiant skin!) but also gives your digestion a gentle kickstart. It's like saying to your internal engine, "Alright, let's get things moving!"

As for the minerals, magnesium, sodium, and potassium are like the hydration dream team—helping flush out toxins and keeping your skin plump. These minerals are key for cellular hydration, ensuring that your cells get the water they need to stay happy and healthy. But their benefits go beyond just hydration. Minerals are essential for countless bodily functions: they support nerve transmission, muscle contraction, energy production, and even help maintain your immune system. Just a pinch or two of sea salt or some drops of trace minerals will do the trick, and not only will your skin thank you, but your whole body will feel the benefits!

Notes: If you are using filtered water (which I highly recommend) you need to be adding minerals back in. Check out my blog article explaining why at [How Salt Can Help You Stay Hydrated](#).

How much to add will be based on your “taste”. You can start out with 1 or 2 pinches or shakes of the salt shaker in your water then increase a little the next time. How does your tongue and body respond to this amount? Interestingly, it usually starts tasting better and better and you may even crave it.

If you are using Trace Mineral Drops then start off low and increase according to the label instructions.

You can use both sea salt and Trace Mineral Drops together.



Recommended salts for minerals: Redmond's Real Salt, Celtic Sea Salt, Pink Himalayan Salt (although recent opinions say that this one may contain heavy metals. Check out my online dispensary for mineral options in both salt and supplement forms.



What is NOT the right salt? Regular table salt (sodium chloride), this salt is stripped down of the necessary combination of potassium, magnesium, etc.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. Want to go deeper into the topic? Here's my blog article on minerals for cellular hydration. [How Salt Can Help You Stay Hydrated – Forest & Fern : Integrative Health Coaching & Skincare](#)

Final Thoughts

Are you beginning to notice the common themes?

These simple 5-minute rituals are like giving your skin a morning pep talk—they boost your natural radiance while setting a positive, mindful tone for the day. Consistency is key! Just like brushing your teeth, doing this daily keeps your skin glowing and healthy. And let's be honest—who doesn't love starting the day with a little extra glow and some good vibes?

Is any or all of this feeling like just too darn much to handle? If you need some support with this or any other aspect of your skin health journey, I'm here to help! [Visit here for next steps.](#)

If you're already loving these morning rituals and want to take your skin health game to the next level, why not make it personal? Head over to [my website](#) to schedule a 15-minute Connection Call with me.



In either case, we'll explore your unique skin story. Together, we'll determine the next steps that honor your individuality—no cookie-cutter solutions, just real, tailored support for your healthiest glow yet. Let's take the guesswork out of skincare and make it fun, effective, and uniquely yours!

Ready? [Click here, and let's get glowing!](#)



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