Do you find yourself feeling tired or anxious for no reason? Before you go running to a psychiatrist and their magic little pills, take a look at your diet, more specifically, your fluids. You may not realize or even feel how much fluid your body is losing or how it could be effecting you.

The physical side effects of dehydration are often discussed and are well know, however there are several mental side effects as well. Dehydration is characterized as 1% loss in body mass in fluid, which is not very much. Your mental health can be effected by this loss in fluid. Depression and anxiety symptoms can arise as well as memory issues. Drinking water will not solve your mental issues but it can help. Dr. Batman first discussed this in his book “Your Body’s Many Cries for Water” which inspired Russell Mariani, a health educator, to care more about his hydration. He even started to experience some depression symptoms that medication did not alleviate.

This may sound too good to be true, or even over exaggerated, and I agree with you. I decided to test this theory as best I could. I am an active Division 1 athlete and so is my boyfriend, Alex, so we are constantly losing fluids.



Over the past few weeks, we have been monitoring our water intake and our exercising. We both exercise by swimming two hour practices and burn roughly 800 calories (depending on the work out). Our nutritionist told us to weigh ourselves before and after practice to see how much weight in fluid we lose. Alex is 215 pounds 6’3” and lost 5 pounds during his workout and I am 5’9” 145 pounds and I lost between 3 and 5 pounds. We did not change anything about our fluid intake for the first week to have a baseline. The second week, we increased our water by 48 ounces a day. My boyfriend noticed that he felt more awake throughout the day and had less headaches.

My situation was a little different. I have been diagnosed with a depression and anxiety disorder, so I was very interested to see how it would affect me. It took a couple days to notice any change, but I was in a better mood. I continued to take medication but the increase of water in my system did make a difference.

The important thing to note is the change Alex felt. He reported not only feeling happier and more awake but his cognitive skills increased. While that is hard to prove, he had an easier time studying and memorizing for his tests and was more confident. This is extremely important for student athletes. Alex struggled in meets with his confidence and his times reflected that. In the following dual meets, he swam better due to his boost in confidence.



Water does not solve all of your problems but it will transform your life so easily. Alex has decided to keep trying to drink more water, even as he enters retirement and as he enters the corporate world. So do yourself a favor and have a glass of water!