



Total Wellness[®] BECOMING A TOTAL PERSON[®]

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Get Moving to Stay Young!

Did you know that regular physical activity can actually slow the aging process? Researchers say that just 30 minutes of moderate exercise most days of the week may actually knock a decade off your physiological age.

Exercise not only keeps your heart young, **it also offers these benefits:**

- ◆ It keeps your posture upright and stable.
- ◆ It increases the level of blood circulation in your body to keep your skin looking young.
- ◆ It increases your energy level.
- ◆ It helps you maintain a slimmer, firmer body.
- ◆ It promotes a positive outlook on life and better self-esteem.

If you haven't exercised in a while, here are some suggestions to keep in mind:

- ◆ Start slowly. Avoid throwing yourself into a new exercise regimen. Build up gradually.
- ◆ Be realistic. Avoid expecting to be fit in two weeks. Getting in shape takes time. Realize the long-term benefits of exercise.
- ◆ Explore your options. Try different types of exercise, such as cycling, swimming, dancing, or power walking. Vary your routine so you don't become bored.

Making Wise Choices for a Long Life

Whether you just hit 30, are a baby boomer determined not to get "old," or are ready to retire, it's important to keep your body fit and your mind sharp. To do so, the National Institute on Aging says you need to grow old gracefully by establishing a healthy lifestyle and sticking to it as you grow older. **The following are a few ways you can grow old gracefully:**

- Get plenty of rest. For most people, seven or eight hours of sleep each night is healthy.
- Stay limber. Exercise regularly. Sports doctors quoted in Men's Fitness say stretching is a good way to keep your muscles in shape. Stretching can help maintain your complete range of motion and keep your tendons lubricated. They recommend that you stretch for at least five minutes each day.
- Watch your weight. Eat a healthy, balanced diet. Being overweight increases your risk for many diseases and can cause a lack of energy to enjoy life.
- Practice safe living. Always wear your seatbelt when traveling in a vehicle – whether you're the driver or a passenger. Make your home safe by taking steps to prevent accidents, such as falls.
- Give your time to others. Volunteer at a local homeless shelter or be a big brother or sister to a child who doesn't have both parents at home.
- Control stress. Learn how to say "no" when you don't have time to do something. Prayer, meditation, and yoga might be useful tools to help you relieve stress.
- See the world. Take an exotic vacation. Experience new cultures.
- Be a good friend. Maintain contact with your family, friends, and coworkers. Stay active socially.
- Learn something new. Learn a new skill, game, or language. If you watch TV, watch programs that stretch your mind, such as quiz game shows.
- Have smart pals. Trade ideas online or one-on-one with other people.
- Laugh loud and often. A good sense of humor is essential for a positive attitude toward life. Start each day by reading the comic section in the newspaper.
- Plan for the long-term. Keep your personal and financial paperwork in order.



For more information on aging, visit the National Institute on Aging at www.nia.nih.gov.

For the Health of Your Marriage

Marriage is a partnership that involves give and take. Marriages can be happy, satisfying, and supportive; however, they can also be stressful, painful, and overwhelming. The key to a loving and lasting relationship is work. Good marriages don't just happen. They evolve from constant work and a willingness for the two people involved to learn, change, grow, and be flexible.



Here are several tips on building a healthy marriage:

- ▲ Choose to fall in love with your spouse every day all over again. Know that small gestures—like a hug or a touch on the arm—make big statements.
- ▲ Reminisce about good times you've had together. List the things you enjoy doing together and schedule time to continue to do these activities.
- ▲ Grow together—not apart. The goal is to grow together and strengthen one another. Ask for advice from your spouse and make all decisions together.
- ▲ Be there for each other. Spend quality time with your spouse. Avoid thinking about work or other things when you're spending quality time with your spouse.
- ▲ Compliment each other. Let your spouse know how much you appreciate their special qualities.
- ▲ Argue fairly and know when to agree to disagree. Listen to each other's opinions and avoid being too demanding.
- ▲ Give each other space occasionally. Realize that your spouse needs some time alone or time to spend with his or her friends.
- ▲ Build trust. Be thankful for your spouse and your relationship. Establish open communication lines.

Clean Out the Clutter

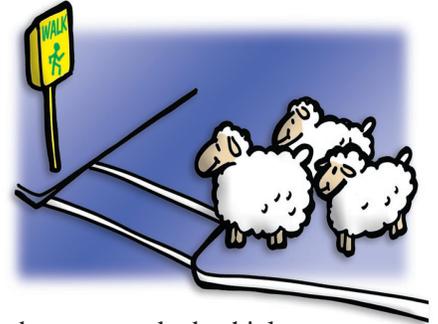
If unexpected guests called to say they were in your neighborhood and wanted to stop by, would your home be ready for them? Or is your home stuffed with clutter? **Here are several tips on how to de-clutter your home:**

- Tackle one room at a time.
- Decide what you can do without, what to keep, and what to trash.
- Store the keepers where you'll use them.
- Use baskets to store miscellaneous items.
- Donate unneeded things to charity.



Keeping Pace with Pedestrian Safety

When crossing a street or intersection, standing on the corner of a street, or walking down the side walk, you put yourself at greater risk of danger. Pedestrians aren't always visible to drivers, which puts you at risk of being hit. **Here are several tips that could save your life when walking:**



- Walk on sidewalks when they're available and always use crosswalks to cross streets. Avoid walking out into the street from between parked vehicles.
- Keep a safe distance from the curb when standing on the corner. When some vehicles turn, they occasionally run up on the curb.
- Assume that a driver doesn't know you're there when crossing a street. When possible, make eye contact with the driver before proceeding across the street.
- Never walk behind a vehicle when it's backing up. The driver may not be able to see you so it's your responsibility to avoid the accident.
- Be visible. Wear reflective or bright clothing, especially at night. Also, carry a flashlight.
- Supervise children when crossing the street. Always hold your child's hand when you walk along the street.
- Set a safe example for your children. Show them safe ways to cross the street.

Are Your Needs Being Met?

Here are questions to ask yourself to determine if your needs are being met:

- Do you get enough sleep, find time to exercise, eat right, and take your vitamins? Fuel your body for maximum performance.
- Are your social needs being met? Establish good relationships with family, friends, and coworkers.
- Are your emotional needs being met? Pay attention to how you feel and share your feelings with others.
- Do you have a purpose in life? Set some personal goals and take steps to achieve them.

How to Ease Muscle Soreness and Cramps

Muscle soreness and cramps associated with exercise may deter some people from working out. However, it's important to remember that the benefits of exercise far outweigh any initial discomfort.

Muscle soreness, which typically occurs a day or two after an activity, results from microscopic muscle or connective tissue damage. These aches and pains should be minor, and are simply indications that your muscles are adapting to a new fitness regimen.

To ease muscle soreness: • First, realize that the soreness is there simply because your muscles are learning something new. • Stretch gently to help restore flexibility. • Massage your muscles for some pain relief. • Apply balms, creams, and/or ice for temporary relief. • Talk to your doctor if muscle pain or soreness continues for more than a few days. You may have an injury.

Muscle cramps – intense, involuntary contractions of a muscle – typically occur toward the end of a long workout or competition. Cramps often stem from dehydration or electrolyte imbalances (loss in body salt through sweat), but according to the American College of Sports Medicine, cramping can also be the result of using a muscle repetitively so that it becomes fatigued.

Here are some suggestions on muscle cramps: • Stretch regularly, stay well hydrated, take in a well-balanced diet, and be conditioned for exercise. • When cramps occur, hold the muscle in a stretched position until the cramp subsides. • Try something unusual. Drink pickle juice. These are urban-legend type remedies for muscle cramps that some athletes say are effective.

For more exercise tips, visit the American College of Sports medicine at www.acsm.org.

Slim Down with Curl-Ups

Do you want to have the “washer board” abdominal muscles seen so often on men and women on TV or at the local gym? Or, are you just looking to lose a few inches off your stomach area so you can fit into that pair of jeans you received as a gift and can't button them? No matter what your reason for wanting to firm up your abdominal area, a good exercise for doing so is curl-ups.

Curl-ups, when done correctly, strengthen abdominal muscles, however, if done incorrectly, they can cause lower back or neck problems. **Here's how to do a basic curl-up:**

◆ Lie on the floor with your knees bent, several inches apart, and feet flat on the floor. Make sure you're comfortable. *Note:* Avoid having your legs held down. This stops the abdominal muscles from working and instead causes your hip flexor muscles to work and puts stress on your lower back.



- ◆ Rest your arms loosely on your abdomen, across your chest, or behind your head. *Note:* Avoid lacing your fingers and holding onto your head. This causes you to pull on your neck which can lead to neck pain.
- ◆ Contract abdominal muscles while pressing your lower back into the floor. Lift your head, neck, and upper back to no more than a 30 degree angle and hold for a few seconds.
- ◆ Slowly relax and lower your upper back, shoulders, and head back to the ground. Keep the movements slow and controlled.
- ◆ Start with three sets of five with a brief rest between sets. Do it three to five times a week. Gradually work up to three sets of 15 sit-ups.

Do You Need a Personal Trainer?

A personal trainer could be just what you need to jump-start your workout. Most health clubs have them or can recommend a trainer who can motivate you and develop an exercise program that's best suited to your needs. Compare costs and get the most for your money.

Improve Your Balance

According to the National Institute on Aging, there are simple exercises to help improve your balance. These exercises can be done almost anytime, anywhere, and as often as you like, as long as you have something sturdy nearby to hold onto in case you become unsteady. **Here are few:**

- *Walk heel-to-toe.* Position your heel just in front of the toes of the opposite foot each time you take a step.
- *Stand on one foot.* Shift from one foot to the other every few minutes while waiting in line at the grocery store or standing at the bus stop.
- *Stand up and sit down* without using your hands.

For more information, visit the National Institute on Aging at www.nia.nih.gov.



Open the Lines of Communication

By Paul J. Meyer



The possibilities for real-time, instantaneous communication are enormous. Modern technology provides a fascinating range of opportunities to improve communication effectiveness in both personal and professional areas of life. However, communication is still a two-way process that depends upon the willingness of people to consider the concerns of others, understand the differences, and respect others' rights to hold different views. In a word, communication is *sharing*.

Several basic attitudes facilitate the sharing that brings about effective communication:

- ◆ Believe that other people are worthy of respect and personal dignity.
- ◆ Recognize the rights of others to hold beliefs, values, and dreams that you cannot accept for yourself.
- ◆ Be willing to learn.
- ◆ Believe that you can learn something valuable from every person you meet.
- ◆ Believe in your own personal worth and dignity.
- ◆ Be open to learning about other people and to realizing something of their dreams and goals.
- ◆ Be willing to reveal a part of yourself to others even though you realize that such sharing may make you vulnerable in some way.

We usually see the world not how it is, but how we are, filtering it through our belief system. Communication is an opportunity to change and enlarge your view of the world. Communication is the wellspring that empowers you to higher levels of personal and professional growth.

Successful communication gives everyone involved a sense of dignity and self-respect. When you realize that others accept you and recognize your potential to make a significant contribution, you gain self-confidence. Then, you are willing to risk attempting some action or project you may have feared in the past. Whenever you try something new or difficult, you grow.

The ultimate benefit you gain from communication is experiencing the essential human connection. And the essential human connection – communication – is the key to your business, personal, and career success. *As you improve your communication skills, you enjoy greater achievements in all areas of your life!*

Paul J. Meyer was a successful entrepreneur and author of personal and professional improvement programs, courses, and books, including his latest book, Forgiveness... The Ultimate Miracle. For more information, visit his website at www.pauljmeyer.com.

Do Something Nice

One of the best ways to guarantee a great day is to focus your attention on someone else. Several years ago the spirit of “Random Acts of Kindness” captured the imagination of the country. What a simple, yet powerful, concept – the idea of doing something nice for someone else with no expectations of anything in return.



One morning, I had the radio on listening for a weather forecast, the temperature, and the traffic report. As I listened, a caller telephoned in on his cell phone to report something he had just witnessed. Several people were standing at a bus stop in the torrential downpour. Since the storm hadn't been predicted, they had no protection from the rain and were getting soaked. One woman was holding her purse over her head, as if it would protect her. The caller reported that he had watched as a car pulled up beside the people on the curb. The driver had jumped out of his car, handed them an umbrella, and then gotten back into the car, quickly moved into the flow of traffic, and was gone. The caller was touched by what he had seen and wanted to share the story of that simple, yet benevolent, gesture with those of us who were listening.

What a beautiful example of doing something for someone else. I recently read, “*Share an umbrella with someone, and your heart will be filled with sunshine.*” The giver of the umbrella that morning surely had a heart filled not only with sunshine, but also with love and compassion for his fellow man. Today and every day, be ready to share umbrellas with those who need them.

Julie Alexander is a professional speaker who works with organizations that want to boost morale and people who want great days on and off the job. She is the author of Great Days: 50 Ways to Add Energy, Enthusiasm, & Enjoyment to Your Life and Make Life Count! – 50 Ways to Great Days. For more information, visit www.JulieAlexander.com or call 1-877-GR8-DAYS.



InSync® Moment – Moving Your Body

Our bodies are moving machines. When not exercised, they feel lethargic, weighty, and don't function as well. Exercising the body strengthens the cardiovascular system, enhances mental clarity, reduces tension, heightens natural attractiveness, and increases energy. Move your body daily.



© Susan Pilgrim, Ph.D., author of Living InSync®. Contact her at pilgrim.s@sbcglobal.net.

Managing Your Medications

Studies show that only about half the people on prescription drugs take them as directed. This failure undermines treatment or prevention, and can lead to emergency room admissions or even death.

Usually people plan to take their pills but they forget. And some drugs have side effects. People don't like how they feel when they take them, so they stop. Instead of making the decision to just stop, contact your doctor or pharmacist anytime a new or unexpected symptom or problem appears. Adjustments to the number of pills taken or time of dosage could be made.

Here are other tips:

- Keep a record of your medicines, including their names and regimens (dose, time, and other instructions for taking). Use a divided, weekly medicine container to sort them.
- Make sure you understand how to take your medications. If you don't, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- Check the expiration dates on your prescription and over-the-counter medications. Throw it away if it has passed this date.

Vitamin E Helps Repair Muscles



Researchers at Ball State University find that vitamin E significantly reduces the damaging effects of high-intensity resistance exercise like weight lifting.

Vitamin E initiates the healing process, allowing muscles to rebuild sooner and grow faster. Taking 400 IU of vitamin E, the most common capsule sold, is recommended for muscle repair.

Build Up Your Heart

Did you know that more than 60 million people are living with heart and blood diseases, and many others are recovering from a heart attack or stroke? Making the lifestyle changes necessary to lower your risks can insure that you live a long and happy life.

According to the American Heart Association, here are tips on how to have a healthy heart lifestyle:

- ♥ Improve your eating habits. Ask your doctor or a nutritionist to help you. Eat fruits, vegetables, cereals, dried beans and peas, pasta, fish, skinless poultry, and lean meats. Cut down on saturated fat, sugar, and salt.
- ♥ Get more physically active. Exercise makes your heart stronger and helps control your weight. Start slow and build up to 30 to 60 minutes on most days of the week.
- ♥ Have regular medical checkups to monitor your health. Follow your



doctor's advice and encourage your family members to see their doctor regularly too.

- ♥ Stop smoking. Make an agreement with yourself to quit. Ask your doctor for information and programs to help you. Reward yourself when you quit.
- ♥ Cope with stress. Spend 15 to 20 minutes each day sitting quietly. Breathe deeply and think of a peaceful setting. Try to accept the things you can't change and realize you don't have to solve all of life's problems.

For more information, visit the American Heart Association at www.americanheart.org.

Prolong the Function of Your Kidneys

More than one in nine Americans have chronic kidney disease, and many more are at risk. The number of people with end-stage kidney disease doubled during the last decade, mainly because high blood pressure and diabetes are often inadequately treated.

Most people with kidney disease are unaware of it because it's possible to function well at half of normal capacity. Over time, however, hypertension and diabetes accelerate the decline. Treatment often requires dialysis or a kidney transplant. Complications include heart disease, weak bones, and anemia.

Everyone should be screened for hypertension and diabetes. Guidelines by the National Kidney Foundation say people with these conditions, a family history of kidney disease, and elderly African-Americans, Hispanics, or Asians, require two more tests: • A urine test for *albumin* which is caused by impaired kidney function. • A blood test for *creatinine* to estimate how efficiently the kidneys are functioning.

Everyone, especially those at risk, can protect their kidneys by losing excess weight, exercising, not smoking, avoiding excessive amounts of over-the-counter pain killers (which are processed by the kidneys), limiting alcohol intake, and eating less salt and protein. Kidney damage can't be reversed, but its progression can be delayed or stopped with these measures. See your doctor for advice.



Learn CPR in Case of Emergency

Even if you haven't taken a course in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), knowing some of the basics could prepare you for an emergency, say doctors at Harvard Medical School.

If a person has collapsed and you suspect a heart attack, check to see whether the person is unconscious. Shout to them or shake them. If the person's heart has stopped and he or she has lost consciousness, they need CPR. **Here are some tips:**

- ✓ Call 911 or have someone else do so to avoid delay. Every minute the heart is stopped reduces chances of survival by 5 to 10 percent.
- ✓ Begin CPR. The goal is to keep the brain and heart alive until a defibrillator arrives. It puts oxygen into the blood. Chest compressions help keep the blood flowing, especially to the brain.
- ✓ Tilt the head back and listen for breathing. If there's no normal breathing, pinch the nose and cover the mouth with yours. Blow until you see the chest rise, probably two breaths that take two seconds each.
- ✓ Pump the chest if the victim is still not breathing normally, coughing, or moving. To do chest compressions, push down 1-½ to 2 inches, 15 times, at a rate faster than one pump per second. Continue the pattern of two breaths and 15 compressions until help arrives.

Living with Heart Failure

Nearly 5 million Americans are living with heart failure, and 550,000 new cases are diagnosed each year. For more information on congestive heart failure, visit the American Heart Association at www.americanheart.org.

Skip the Cruise on Slick Roads

The American Automobile Association says turning off cruise control when it's raining or snowing is just common sense. Not only do you have greater control without it, disengaging cruise is an extra step to take if you're losing control.

Most vehicles call for tapping the brakes to disengage. When it's raining or the road is slick with snow, that can be dangerous.

The danger on roads covered with snow or ice is obvious. On rain-soaked roads, it might not be as apparent. At 60 mph, there can be total separation of the tire from the pavement when it's raining, a situation called hydroplaning. Even new tires can lose significant traction when there's water on the road.



On wet and snowy roads, the AAA recommends:

- ❖ Slow down and turn off your cruise control.
- ❖ Avoid hard brakes and sharp turns.
- ❖ Stay in the tracks of the car in front of you.
- ❖ Increase your following distance.

The same instructions apply when you find yourself in fast, close traffic on the highway. On a highway into town during traffic, everyone is in a hurry. Two or more lines of traffic can be moving at speeds up to 60 miles an hour, and cars are closer together than they should be. Under these circumstances, you need total and immediate control of the car, and that's easier to achieve when cruise isn't engaged. When something happens ahead of you, it will be easier to stop quickly.

Forego the Pain of Falling

Falls are the leading cause of accidental death for older people, but people of all ages can fall. Your own fall may not be fatal, but it can be painful and debilitating.

Most falls occur from tripping over items or falling on slippery floors, says the National Safety Council. **To protect yourself and your family by checking these areas:**

- ▲ **Outdoors:** • Install handrails on outdoor entry steps. • Have a contrasting color and floor texture between the floor and the first step up or down to alert people to the change. • Check outside for slippery or icy areas.
- ▲ **Kitchen:** • Avoid climbing to reach high cabinets or shelves. Using a sturdy

step stool with handrails is best.

- ▲ **Living areas:** • Use caution with throw rugs. Make sure they have non-skid backing. • Avoid glass tables. Use sturdy wooden tables with rounded corners. • Arrange furniture to provide open pathways. • Keep electrical and telephone cords out of walkways. • Keep floors clear. Harmless-looking items like toys can cause someone to slip and fall.



- ▲ **Bathroom:** • Wipe up water on the floor after a shower. • Use rugs with non-skid backing. • Install grab bars by toilets and in the tub and shower areas. • Always keep a night light on in the bathroom.

For more safety tips, visit the National Safety Council at www.nsc.org.

Improve Your Antioxidant Intake

For 50 years or so, a leading hypothesis has been that aging and disease are promoted by highly reactive molecules called free radicals. The older you get, the more free radicals are released into your system, where they destroy tissue. The villain is oxygen. In effect, we rust as we get older!

The good news is the body has a network of defenses against free radicals, called *antioxidants*. Some are produced internally; others are derived from what you eat.

Vitamin E is one such antioxidant. Many other antioxidants also promise protection against diseases. One is *lutein*, found in leafy green vegetables, which may help protect against degeneration of the macula in the eye. Another is *lycopene*, contained in tomatoes, apricots, guava, pink grapefruit and watermelon. This may help prevent prostate cancer. And exciting beneficial efforts are being shown through the antioxidants contained in red grapes, blueberries, and strawberries as well.

As the research continues to pour in, this is the best health insurance policy: *Eat five servings a day of brightly colored fruits and vegetables to help keep the doctor away.* Ten servings will allow you to thrive, especially if complemented with other antioxidant-rich foods such as garlic, hot peppers, green tea, and soy.

Tip: Buy vegetables that are as fresh as possible. When not possible, frozen is the next best choice.

Pamela Smith is a Registered Dietitian and nationally known radio and TV host. For more information, call 1-800-896-4010 or visit her website at www.pamsmith.com. Her book, *The Energy Edge*, gives power points to have energy for life!



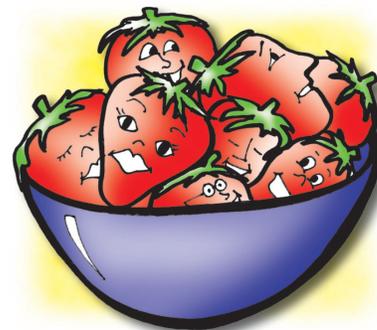
Sink Your Teeth into a Scrumptious Strawberry

There's more to those juicy red fruits than dessert. Many ancient people thought they had magical powers. The Romans believed they could cure just about everything. What are they? They're strawberries!

Mythical healing powers aside, the ancients were still on the right track. Strawberries can be responsible for some great health benefits. In fact, strawberries are low in calories and are filled with numerous vitamins and minerals. They contain only 60 calories per cup and are high in iron. Strawberries are also good for children as they provide 14 percent of the recommended daily intake of Vitamin C for kids. They also are a good source of folic acid, fiber, potassium, and cancer-fighting antioxidants.

The California Strawberry Commission says, pound for pound, strawberries have more vitamin C than oranges. Just 8 strawberries supply 140 percent of the daily need for vitamin C plus fiber and folic acid.

Besides being healthy for you, strawberries can be very versatile says the Commission. They can be used in salads, baked goods, beverages, or eaten plain.



When choosing strawberries, look for bright red ones with fresh green caps on them. **Here are some delicious ways to use strawberries:**

- Purée cleaned strawberries in a blender until almost smooth. Mix in a little honey and a teaspoon of lemon juice. Serve over low-fat yogurt, short cake, or angel food cake.
- Beat softened low-fat cream cheese with enough milk to make a mixture of dipping consistency. Blend in crumbled blue cheese. Makes a wonderful dip for berries.
- Mix halved strawberries and chunks of honeydew melon with a spoonful of lime juice and candied ginger. Sweeten with honey.

For more information, visit the California Strawberry Commission at www.calstrawberry.com.

STRAWBERRY-PINEAPPLE YOGURT PIE

1-1/3 cups unsweetened flaked coconut
2 egg whites, lightly beaten
1 can (20 oz.) unsweetened crushed pineapple
1 envelope unflavored gelatin
1-1/2 cups nonfat plain yogurt
1 cup fresh strawberries, sliced
1 cup ripe banana, mashed
3 TBSP honey

Preheat oven to 325° F.
In a mixing bowl, toss coconut with egg whites. Press on the bottom and up the sides of a 9-inch pie plate.



Bake for 10 to 15 minutes until golden; cool. Drain the pineapple, reserving the juice; set pineapple aside. Add water, if necessary, to reserved juice to make 3/4 cup liquid.

In a saucepan, sprinkle the gelatin over the juice mixture. Heat and stir until the gelatin dissolves; chill until partially set. Whip partially set gelatin with electric mixer until fluffy.

Set aside 1/3 cup of drained pineapple. Fold yogurt, remaining pineapple, strawberries, banana, and honey into gelatin mixture. Pour into cooled crust. Chill until firm. Top with reserved pineapple just before serving.

From Pamela Smith's Healthy Living Cookbook. Visit www.pamsmith.com for more information.

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This newsletter is not intended to provide medical advice on personal wellness matters, which should be obtained directly from your physician.

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mental and social

Fight Stress by Building Healthy Friendships

Often, people wonder if the time they spend with friends is worth the investment. According to a professor of psychology at UCLA, the time spent with friends is definitely worth it. In fact, social support can lower your blood pressure and make you feel much less stressed. Friendships may even help you live longer.

Medical studies prove that men with strong social ties had an 82 percent lower risk of dying from heart disease than men without them. Doctors at Harvard School of Public Health believe the positive effects of strong social ties are the same for men and women.

Talking on a cell phone doesn't count. You have to make time for friends and make it a priority that you won't cancel when something else comes up.

Sharing your joys with friends multiplies your happiness. Likewise, expressing your worst fears to someone else makes them seem easier to handle.

Reel in Your Share of Happiness

You've all known people who had everything but weren't happy in spite of it all. If money won't buy happiness, what will? In his book, *What Happy People Know: How the New Science of Happiness Can Change Your Life for the Better*, psychologist Dan Baker, Ph.D., says the connection between money and happiness is nothing but a trap.

According to Baker, the 12 most important qualities of happiness are love, optimism, courage, a sense of freedom, proactivity, security, health, spirituality, altruism, perspective, humor, and purpose. **Here are points to remember as you strive for personal happiness:**

▲ Appreciation will make you happy. It is the purest form of love. It is physiologically impossible to be in a state

of fear and appreciation at the same time. Appreciation is an antidote to fear.

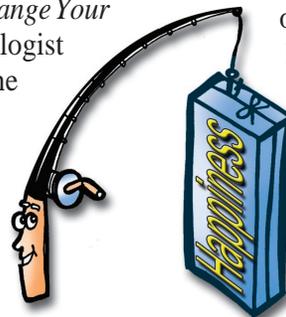
▲ The ability to make a choice can govern your perception. Having no choices or options can lead to feelings of helplessness. Anyone can choose

the course of their life, but only happy people do it.

▲ Using your intellect and spirit will help you begin to focus on your strengths and the solutions to problems. If you begin to fear, stop focusing

on weaknesses.

▲ The power of words and stories makes you see the world as you describe it. What you tell yourself about your life eventually comes true. We can tell ourselves healthy stories or horror stories. It's a matter of choice.



Good News for Chocolate Lovers

If you want to indulge yourself and help your heart at the same time, choose a piece of dark chocolate. It contains three times as many flavonoids as milk chocolate. Flavonoids keep blood platelets from sticking together and forming clots, one cause of heart attacks. And dark chocolate has twice as many antioxidant points. Dark chocolate is an antioxidant superstar!

