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THIS EDITION FEATURES:

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Independence 

Adopting a Mindfulness Mindset

In today's fast-paced world, the concept of mindfulness is gaining traction as a powerful tool for enhancing mental and emotional well-being. Mindfulness is the practice of staying present and living fully in the moment. It can help people navigate the complexities of modern life with greater ease and clarity.

At its core, mindfulness encourages us to pause, breathe, and observe our thoughts and feelings without judgment. This simple yet profound practice can transform our daily experiences. The benefits of mindfulness include:

- Reducing stress and anxiety, which promotes calm and balance
- Improving focus and concentration, which enhances productivity
- Fostering a more compassionate outlook, which enriches relationships

Throughout the day, bring mindfulness to your activities. While eating, savor each bite and pay attention to the flavors and textures. During conversations, listen actively and give the speaker your full attention. These small shifts in awareness can strengthen your interactions and deepen your appreciation for life's simple pleasures.

Mindfulness can also help you manage stress. When faced with a challenging situation, take a moment to step back and breathe deeply. This brief pause can help you respond more thoughtfully rather than react impulsively.

By integrating mindfulness into your life, you cultivate a more resilient, peaceful, and joyful existence. Start your mindfulness journey today and unlock the power of living in the moment.

Source: <https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2021/06/mindfulness-your-health>





Tricks to Limit Treats

Halloween is synonymous with candy overload, making it a challenge for parents to limit their children's intake of sugary treats. Here are some effective tricks to manage the candy chaos:

- Encourage kids to enjoy the experience of Halloween itself. Focus on the fun of costumes, decorations, and spooky stories, not sweets.
- Rather than buying candy for trick-or-treaters, give out non-food treats like Halloween-themed pencils, erasers, and stickers. This can help minimize leftover candy in your home.
- Serve a healthy dinner before you head out to trick or treat. Try making individual ghost pizzas, using a whole wheat pizza crust, marinara sauce, and fresh basil. Cut a slice of fresh mozzarella cheese into a ghost shape to top it off before baking.
- Set a daily limit on treats, such as 2-3 pieces per day, to prevent overindulgence.
- Let your kids decide what to do with some of their excess candy. Options include donating it to a local charity, sending it to troops overseas, or using it in baking projects.

Source: <https://news.ohsu.edu/2017/10/31/the-trick-to-setting-limits-on-halloween-treats>



Take Time for Tea

Whether it's savoring the aroma, warming your hands around the mug, or sipping a hot cup to relax, there are many reasons to enjoy tea. In addition to helping calm you down, hot tea can offer potential health benefits, such as:

- **Reducing risk for certain chronic conditions.** Some studies show that drinking green tea is associated with a reduced risk of heart disease and several types of cancer. Green, black, and oolong teas have been shown to lower cholesterol.
- **Strengthening the immune system.** Tea may help your body fight infection and protect your bones. Antioxidants in tea can protect your body from the effects of aging and pollution.
- **Maintaining a healthy weight.** Tea without milk has no calories, offers satisfying flavors, and helps you feel fuller, which can help you manage your weight.
- **Hydration.** Tea contributes to your daily fluid needs, which helps keep you hydrated.
- **Boosting metabolism.** Drinking green tea has been shown to increase metabolism and burn more calories per day.

To get the most benefits, brew tea and allow it to steep for 3 to 5 minutes. Pour yourself a cup, add lemon or milk, and enjoy the many benefits of tea.



RECIPE

Stuffed Acorn Squash

Ingredients

2 acorn squashes, halved with seeds removed
1 small yellow onion, chopped
3 ribs celery, chopped
1 tsp olive oil
1 medium apple, cored and finely diced
1 tsp dried thyme (or mix of sage and thyme)
1 cup wild rice blend, cooked
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped walnuts
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dried cranberries
 $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup parmesan cheese
Salt and pepper as desired

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Halve squash and scoop out seeds.
2. Place cut side down on a parchment-lined baking sheet and bake for 20 minutes.
3. Sauté onion and celery in olive oil until softened. Add apple, thyme, salt, and pepper. Cook until soft.
4. Mix in cooked wild rice, walnuts, cranberries, and cheese. Remove from heat.
5. Fill squash cavities with the rice mixture.
6. Bake for an additional 20 minutes

Source:

<https://www.loveandlemons.com/stuffed-acorn-squash/>

Easy Time Management Strategies

Extra time is not found but can sometimes be made. Adopting effective time-saving habits can leave you feeling more productive and less stressed.

Here are four tips to help you better manage your time:

1. **Organize your tasks.** Create a to-do list and categorize your tasks into must-do, should-do, and nice-to-do. Place non-urgent items at the end. Prioritization helps you focus on what truly needs to be done, so you tackle the most important tasks first.
2. **Work in intervals.** Allow yourself time to recover and recharge by working in 90-minute intervals with breaks in between. This method helps maintain high levels of focus and energy throughout the day, preventing burnout.
3. **Limit digital distractions.** Stay off email or your phone for an hour at a time. Constantly checking emails or texts can disrupt your workflow and decrease productivity. Setting specific times for email checks or phone breaks can help you stay focused on your tasks.
4. **Prioritize relaxation.** Make time to unwind, relax, and recharge from the day. Balancing work with relaxation is crucial for long-term productivity and mental well-being.

By implementing these habits, you can create more time in your day, increase your productivity, and reduce your stress.

Source: www.simplify101.com





The Power of an Extra Hour

According to experts, an extra hour of sleep could significantly enhance your quality of life. If you're already getting seven hours of sleep or more each night, congratulations! You're enjoying optimal rest.

If you're clocking in at less than seven hours, what's keeping you up may be lowering your quality of life and happiness.

Getting at least seven hours of sleep sets you up for numerous benefits, including:

- **Better health.** Adequate sleep protects your mental and physical health as well as your overall safety. It's crucial for maintaining a balanced and healthy lifestyle.
- **Less pain.** While pain can interfere with sleep, sleep also helps reduce pain. Lack of sleep can create a vicious cycle where increased pain makes sleep more elusive.
- **Clearer thinking and better memory.** When you're well rested, your mind functions more efficiently, improving clarity and memory.
- **Healthier weight.** Tired individuals often feel hungrier and crave high-fat, high-calorie foods. Adequate sleep can help you maintain a healthier weight.
- **Stronger immunity.** Ever notice how you're more susceptible to colds when you're run down? Good sleep strengthens your immune system, so you can fight off colds and infections.

Source: www.healthline.com

Enhance Flexibility and Balance

Being flexible can mean catching yourself before a fall or reacting quickly to dodge an obstacle to avoid injury. Good balance allows us to walk steadily and prevent falls and everyday injuries.

More flexibility. Flexibility helps with daily activities like tying shoes, reaching shelves, and getting in and out of cars. As we get older, our muscles lose elasticity, which can lead to tightness and potential injuries. Daily stretching can help you maintain your flexibility.

Better balance. Balance is crucial for climbing stairs and carrying groceries. A strong core stabilizes your body, reduces fall risk, and improves reflexes. Good balance also boosts mental clarity and eases anxiety. Strengthen your core with exercises like planking, yoga, tai chi, or simply standing on one foot with support nearby.

By enhancing your flexibility and balance, you can maintain a healthy, active lifestyle and reduce the risk of injury.

Source:
www.nia.nih.gov



MONTHLY QUIZ

1. Which of the following is a benefit of practicing mindfulness?

- A. Increased physical strength and endurance
- B. Enhanced focus and concentration
- C. Improved ability to multi-task
- D. Faster decision-making without reflection

1. Which of the following is a good strategy to manage children's candy intake during Halloween?

- A. Allow unlimited candy consumption for one night.
- B. Buy lots of different candy options for the trick-or-treaters.
- C. Focus on non-food items like costumes, decorations, and spooky stories.
- D. Skip dinner to leave more room for candy.

1. Which of the following is a benefit of maintaining good balance?

- A. Increased muscle strength
- B. Reduced risk of falls
- C. Enhanced mental clarity
- D. All of the above

1. B; 2. C; 3. D

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