



Wellbeing

Living a Better, More Vibrant Life

Insights



In This Issue

May: Women's Health Month & Bike to Work Week

- Beyond Beautiful 1
- On the Menu: Strawberries 3
- Bike to Work Week 4
- Mindful Minute 4
- Parenting Corner: Sustaining “You”
in a Kid's World 5
- Osteoporosis At-a-Glance 5
- Financial Focus: Women &
Financial Health 6

Beyond Beautiful

Looking Past the Surface for Women's Health Month

FOUR PERCENT. That's how many women in America self-identify as beautiful. If you're asking yourself what beauty has to do with women's health, the answer, unfortunately, is everything. For starters, the health and fitness industry falsely link beauty, weight and appearance to health as the core of their advertising. Need proof? Just look at the cover and article titles of any fitness magazine or the commentary during an exercise video; it's all centered around looking good. Beyond these misleading messages that

directly link beauty to health, of greater concern is the impact of beauty ideals on body image.

Women begin at a very young age to absorb the messages regarding beauty that surround them in media, advertising and conversations amongst older women and peers. Predominantly, these messages convey the idea that the most important and powerful thing they can be is beautiful, and “beautiful” looks one very specific way.

Continued on page 2



Beyond Beautiful

Continued from page 1

The average woman spends \$15,000 on beauty products in her lifetime, paying into the \$63 billion industry that creates these unrealistic standards for women. As fashion designer and TED alum Carrie Hammer says, “The beauty industry has made a business out of setting unreal expectations of beauty and then profiting from and exploiting the insecurities that they’ve helped create.”

So why does all of this preoccupation with being beautiful matter? It’s distracting women from their own lives, which has large and lasting implications for our whole society. Eight of ten women opt out of events that are important to them because of their appearance. Young girls are foregoing sports and other activities because they don’t want to draw attention to the way they look.

This tendency to dilute our experiences by picturing what we look like doing them is referred to as objectification. The issue with objectification is similar to that of multitasking; if you’re talking on the phone and reading an email at the same time, neither one has your full attention. The same is true if you’re working out, accepting an award or eating dinner while at the same time picturing what you look like doing it. This failure to fully engage in daily activities due to a preoccupation with our appearance is what Renee Engeln, professor at Northwest University, refers to as “beauty sickness,” and she says it’s an epidemic.

The solution comes in many powerful forms. Here are a few ways you can combat beauty sickness in your own life to build a healthier body image and a happier you:

Be kind to yourself. It all starts here. You cannot thrive if you are reinforcing to yourself the media

messages that your worth is tied to your appearance. Send gratitude to your body for all that it does for you.

Increase your media literacy.

There are a ton of false messages of empowerment out there. Ask these three questions from the organization “Beauty Redefined” to recognize the difference:

1. Does the message encourage all women to feel good about themselves, or do the words/images depict one set of features or body type as better than another?
2. Is the message being used to sell a product/service that is intended to “enhance” or “improve” a person’s appearance?
3. Does the message take the focus off of appearance, or does it emphasize looks as the primary feature of a person?

Stop the comparisons. The old adage is true: Comparison is the thief of joy. Comparing yourself to other women in terms of appearance is a fruitless endeavor. Let’s unite instead of competing and comparing, embracing diversity and celebrating each other’s true value. How boring would it be if we all looked the same?

View your body as an instrument not an ornament. Your body has purpose and function outside of its appearance. Appreciate it for all of the life experiences it’s carried you through.

Stay connected to your purpose. You have important work to do in this world and are capable of much more than looking hot. Need some help? For a starting point, spend one minute writing down the answers to each of these questions:

1. What experiences do I want to have in life?
2. How would I have to grow/what training would I need to have these experiences?
3. What do I want to contribute to the world?

Move for the fun of it. Don’t exercise to punish yourself or achieve a certain body type. Instead, find ways to be active that you enjoy. Set goals that are not related to the scale but rather ones related to your physical power or ability to enjoy daily activities.

Stop judging. Whether you think someone puts too much effort into their looks or not enough, just let it go. Decisions related to our appearance are personal choices. We can’t build ourselves up by tearing each other down.

Change the story for a young girl. Don’t start every interaction by commenting on their cute dress or how adorable they are. Try complimenting their actions, abilities or talents and always let them talk. Avoid talking negatively about yourself or other women.

Looking for a deeper dive on anything in this article? Visit beautyredefined.org to begin your journey to positive body image and media literacy.

“Having positive body image isn’t believing your body looks good; it’s believing your body is good, regardless of how it looks. It isn’t thinking you are beautiful; it’s knowing you are more than beautiful. It’s understanding that your body is an instrument for your use, not an ornament to be admired.”

– LINDSAY KITE, PhD



On the Menu

Strawberries

Strawberries have secured their spot as one of the world’s favorite fruits with their sweet, juicy flavor and bright color. They are so beloved in Belgium that there’s a strawberry museum! Americans love strawberries as well, with each of us eating an average of three and a half pounds of these delicious berries each year. In their history, strawberries were a luxury item and believed to be an aphrodisiac; it was a French tradition for newlyweds to enjoy a wedding breakfast of strawberries and cream.

Did you ever wonder where they got their name? Strawberry season is quite short, so to maximize yield farmers protect every berry from potential soil damage by surrounding the base of each plant with straw; hence, the name “strawberry.”

While strawberries are known as nature’s candy, there’s no need to feel guilty eating them. With only 50 calories

per cup, a healthy dose of Vitamins C, K and B6, fiber, folic acid, and potassium, these berries are a treat for your health. Strawberries are incredibly heart healthy, protecting against cardiac disease, high blood pressure and stroke. They’re a great snack for pregnant women due to the high folic acid content and also for diabetics as a sweet treat that won’t send blood sugar through the roof.

Keep It Fresh

Strawberries do not ripen further after they’re picked, so choose deep-red, firm berries free of mold or soft spots. If you do have any damaged berries in your container, discard them before storing. Strawberries should be stored in a breathable container in the refrigerator as they’re quite delicate, and their nutrients are susceptible to heat damage.

Strawberry Spinach Salad

Ingredients:

- 2 cups spinach
- 1 cup sliced strawberries
- ½ cup raw pecans
- ⅓ cup crumbled goat cheese

For the dressing:

- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 Tbsp. honey

Directions:

1. Whisk all dressing ingredients together in a bowl.
2. Portion spinach equally onto four plates or bowls.
3. Layer strawberries, pecans and goat cheese onto beds of spinach.
4. Top with dressing and serve. Make it an entrée by adding grilled chicken breast.

Nutrition Info

Per Serving (¼ of recipe)

Calories	176
Carbohydrates	12.5g
Fiber	1.1g
Protein	5.1g
Sodium	62mg



May 15-19 Is National Bike to Work Week!

Bicycling offers many benefits for our health and our minds, but it's also friendly on our pocketbooks and the environment. The beautiful spring weather is in full swing, and now is the perfect time to leave your car keys on the counter, pump up those tires, strap on your helmet and hit the road on two wheels.

Did you know?

- Americans can save more than \$4.6 billion annually by bicycling instead of driving a car.
- If 50,000 people bike to work for National Bike Week, it will prevent more than 20 million pounds of greenhouse gas emissions into the environment.
- Bicycling just 20 miles per week can reduce the risk of heart disease by 50%.

- Over the past decade bicycle commuting rates in bicycle-friendly communities increased 105%.

Here are some tips to help with your commute:

- Know the rules of the road. Safety is the most important part of bicycling, so be sure to follow all traffic laws just as you would in your car.
- Map out the easiest route and test it on a weekend to allow yourself enough time to get to the office during the week.
- Find some coworkers who live close by and make it a group ride. Friendly encouragement always makes the ride easier.



Want to set up a Bike to Work Week event for your office?
Go to www.bikeleague.org and download their free tool kit.


Mindful Minute



Practicing mindfulness can be a powerful tool for cultivating positive body image. It shifts attention away from how your body appears to how it feels from the inside. We can learn to live in the present moment, showing our bodies gratitude for what they are capable of right now instead of chasing a body ideal that doesn't serve our health or happiness. It also helps us recognize negative thought patterns related to our body so that we may be more in tune and shift to a more loving internal dialogue. This **body-awareness practice** is designed to help you become at peace with your body.

1. Sit quietly with your eyes closed and bring your attention to your breath.
2. Bring your attention to a trait, feature or behavior that has a negative association for you. Allow whatever feelings are associated with this inadequacy to arise.

3. Try to locate where in your body you are experiencing these emotions and the sensations they bring up. Allow them to be.
4. Now, ask yourself, "What might it feel like to accept my body as a whole functioning entity, as it is, right now?"
5. Place your hands on your heart and sit with this feeling as you inhale self-love and exhale discontentment for several breath cycles.
6. Finally, end your practice by repeating any of the following affirmations that resonate with you for several breath cycles:
 - I free myself from judging my body.
 - I am good enough, just as I am.
 - I appreciate my body for all it does for me.
 - I accept myself.
 - May I be at peace.



Parenting Corner

Sustaining “You” in a Kid's World

I remember the very first time someone referred to me as my child's mom. Warmth, pride and happiness overcame me. However, this new of identity of “Tide's mom” began to cloud my personal identity of just being “Sue.”

Once you become a parent it's children first, for everything, all the time. It's easy to start feeling guilty for wanting to be anything other than “mom” or “dad.” However, continuing to develop ourselves as individuals ultimately makes us stronger parents and stronger versions of ourselves. Applying our true individuality in our day to day, even in bits and pieces, grounds us. Here are a few outlets that can help you be your own person, even as a devoted parent:

- **Friends:** Venting sessions, storytelling and simply spending time with other adults can help us keep in touch with who we are. While we will undoubtedly talk about our children in conversation with our friends (and that has its own benefits, too), be sure to make some room to chat about hobbies, events and issues outside of parenting as well.
- **Romance:** Plan a date night with your partner with one simple rule: no kid talk. It's tougher than you think. In the adventure of building a family, your significant other can begin to feel more like a family management partner, and you forget what brought you together in the first place.
- **Exercise:** This is like a padded cell for me. It's the one place, other than the bathroom, where no one wants to follow me. I can clear my head, work out stress and come out a stronger mom. Fit bodies are nice, but fit minds are sensational.
- **Relaxation:** Downtime is not easy to come by, yet it reaps the most benefit. Read a magazine while the kids play in the park, take a hot bath once the little ones go to bed or schedule a pedicure on your lunch. Any of these give you a few minutes for your mind to settle, bringing you back stronger. Taking on a mindfulness practice also can help keep you more relaxed and in the moment on a daily basis. This newsletter offers you a new practice each month.

We all appreciate the joys of parenthood, but being “on” for them all the time takes its toll. Use some of the tips above to stay in touch with the amazing person who created these little bundles in the first place.

Osteoporosis At-a-Glance

Osteoporosis is a disease of the bones that makes them more likely to break. It's referred to as a silent disease because you cannot feel your bones getting weaker, so oftentimes people don't know they have it until after they fracture or break a bone. Osteopenia describes a condition in which the bones are weakening but do not yet pose a serious threat. Osteopenia is a precursor of osteoporosis.

Approximately 10 million Americans are diagnosed with osteoporosis. Half of women and a quarter of men over 50 years old will break a bone in their lifetime due to osteoporosis, equating to an estimated two million broken bones per year and a \$19 billion financial burden to patients and the healthcare system.

Who's at risk?

- **Gender:** Women are at higher risk than men.
- **Age:** People lose about 0.5% of their bone mass each year after age 50. After menopause women lose 1.5 to 2% for the first 10 years.
- **Family history:** A family history of osteoporosis can increase your risk 50 to 85%.
- **Race:** People of Asian or Caucasian ethnicity are at a higher risk, particularly those with a small build.
- **Lifestyle:** Smokers, heavy drinkers, sedentary individuals and those with inadequate dietary calcium and Vitamin D are at an increased risk.

What can I do to reduce my risk of a fracture?

- **Know your bone density.** Those over the age of 50, especially women, should have their bone density tested regularly using the gold standard: dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry or “DEXA.” This is how your physician can easily diagnose you with osteopenia or osteoporosis.
- **Get your vitamins.** Getting adequate calcium, magnesium and Vitamins D, K and C will help keep your bones strong.
- **Get physical activity.** Weight-bearing exercise such as walking, strength-training, dancing, etc. is most beneficial. Your bones respond by strengthening themselves when slightly strained by this type of exercise.* In addition, balance training will help you build stability to reduce your risk of a fall.
- **Check your environment.** Look for fall hazards such as loose rugs and cords laying in walkways. Ensure proper lighting and handrails on porches, stairways and by the shower.

**For prevention only. If you've been diagnosed with osteoporosis or osteopenia, consult a physician before adding weight-bearing exercise.*

Women & Financial Health

Generally, we associate being healthy with frequent exercise, eating right and proactive check-ups. It has been proven, however, that our health extends beyond our body to our mind, family, societal experiences and finances.

Women, in particular, report a higher level of financial stress. This has been attributed to numerous factors, including lower wages, longer life expectancy (i.e., more money needed for retirement), higher cost for everyday items and being the predominant head of single-parent households. This stress causes disease within our body, mind, spirit and relationships. Here are some steps we can take to improve our financial health:

1. Live within your financial means.

A good rule of thumb is to keep housing and transportation costs to no more than 40% of our gross income. That leaves about 45% for other living expenses and 15% for savings. If our housing is out of our financial league, we must steal from other areas of our lives

to make up for it. Spend an hour putting together a chart of the money coming in and going out. Take a few minutes to reflect on the outcome and determine if it aligns with your priorities. Is your money going to the things that are most important to you and your family? Should you have more money left over at the end of each month? If you have a leak, keep track of your spending for a month to uncover the hole and then plug it up.

2. Reduce debt, especially credit card debt.

The average household has a balance of more than \$7,000 on their credit cards. If you have an unhealthy credit card balance, cut back on non-essential spending (that you uncovered in the step above) and focus on paying it down aggressively. Your stress will begin melting away.

3. Create an emergency fund.

Give yourself peace of mind if you/your spouse's job situation changes or your car breaks down. The general rule of thumb is to have three to six months of living expenses saved for an emergency situation. You may have to slowly build this up, but it will be worth it in the end. Don't let this interfere with saving for retirement.

4. Save for retirement.

The average American needs to replace about 80% of their income during retirement. Women tend to live longer, resulting in an average of 25 years in retirement. Social security is designed to provide a fraction of your needs during



retirement. The lion's share of your income will be coming from your personal savings and retirement accounts such as your 401k/403b at work and/or IRAs. Target a savings rate of 10% or more of your pay. Invest this money wisely, seeking help from your service provider for guidance.

5. Protect your assets through insurance.

Make sure you have adequate personal liability coverage through your automobile, homeowners or renter's insurance. Once you enter your 50s, consider long-term care insurance for you and your spouse. Nearly 75% of women age 65 and older receive care that is generally not covered by Medicare policies. These facilities can drain your financial resources quickly, so be proactive.

There's no time like the present to improve your financial health. The benefits you will gain – peace of mind, less stress and confidence – are priceless!

The *Wellbeing Insights* Newsletter is prepared for you by CBIZ ESO. The contributions included in this newsletter do not specifically reflect your employer's opinions. Consult your health care provider before making any lifestyle changes.

Contributing Writers

Abby Banks..... Sr. Wellbeing Account Manager
Cindy Orr Sr. Retirement Plan Consultant
Sue Trogu Wellbeing Consultant
Stephanie Connor Wellbeing Coordinator
Benjamin Morris..... Wellbeing Coordinator

Visit the CBIZ Wellbeing website at www.cbiz.com/wellbeing