



Wellbeing Insights

Living a Better, More Vibrant Life



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Keep Calm & Age On

If you Google “aging gracefully,” you’ll likely find tips galore on staying fit and looking good in your 40 somethings and beyond, but isn’t there so much more to us than meets the eye?

Although we get conflicting messages from society, aging well is less about vanity and more about vitality. This September, during Healthy Aging Month, give yourself the gift of grace by honoring your age, who you are

now and who you are still becoming. Here are some ways to add quality time in your life.

Connect with nature. We spend most of our lives indoors or in the car, working, commuting, doing chores, etc. Mix things up by adding an outdoor activity, such as gardening, forest bathing or camping. Explore the Earth for the sake of connecting with

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Keep Calm & Age On

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it or look at it from another viewpoint, such as from under the coolness of a waterfall or from high up in a hot air balloon.

Engage in meaningful conversations.

When was the last time you had an invigorating conversation with a friend? Especially important for taking care of yourself and navigating life with joy is socializing with friends. However, resist the urge to talk about diets, weight and wardrobes. Challenge yourself to have three deep conversations this month or join a local book club for regular and stimulating comradery.

Practice self-care. If you were sunbathing lathered in baby oil in your teenage years, don't keep avoiding skin checks because you fear the results. Early detection of skin cancers and other health issues can prolong your life. Prioritize every aspect of self-care – from doctor visits and dental cleanings to quality sleep and a mindfulness practice.

Ditch the bucket list. Creating a list of experiences you'd like to partake in can be a fulfilling exercise if you are realistic about the plans you etch in stone. On the other hand, writing down grandiose ideas that are unlikely to be within your reach can leave you feeling disappointed or inadequate. Instead of prescribing yourself a list of things you want to do, take note of new experiences as you go, delighting in the small things.

Attitude of gratitude. Expressing gratitude helps us cultivate optimism, and such positive emotions are predictive of better psychological and physical health. However, at the end of a stressful day (or week) negative emotions are bound to come up. A deliberate daily exercise of stating one thing and one person for whom



you are grateful can help you change course; give it a try for seven days! Or consider handwriting and mailing three thank you notes.

Share what you know. The experience you gain from life is priceless. We can't change the past, but we can help others by sharing what we've learned. It could be as formal as teaching a community college class or as informal as keeping a journal of family history to pass on to future generations. You could serve as a youth program mentor or a peer coach at work.

Act adult-ish. There will be times in our lives that require commitment from our no-nonsense, grown-up selves, but let's not allow that person to consume us. It's possible for us to be responsible adults and experience child-like joy. Be intentional about letting down your guard and seek out opportunities to play and laugh.

Manage boundaries. We are fortunate to accumulate relationships as we age, so long as we don't let them deplete our energy. It can be difficult to set boundaries with others, but overextending yourself emotionally, financially, physically or otherwise can lead to exhaustion. Claim back your energy by communicating your limits.

Give less of your time to people and situations that drain you.

Stand up for something. Find a cause or charity you care deeply about and offer your time and voice. Contributing to your community and feeling safe in it is a key driver of positive overall wellbeing.

Forgive yourself. To age is to have a past that's filled with joy, sorrow, accomplishments and mistakes. Holding on to hurt, even that which we have caused, reduces our quality of life. It's not always easy to let things go, which is why professional counseling offers tremendous opportunity for self-awareness and healing. Find a therapist through your company's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or mental health plan.

Broaden your horizon. While there's comfort in being set in your ways, it also limits opportunities for growth. Engaging in experiences that don't fit your typical pattern and inviting people into your life who have different backgrounds and viewpoints enable us to learn, deepen human connections and live more fully and freely.

On the Menu

Ch-Ch-Ch-Chia Seeds

Did you know that the infamous Chia Pets are, in fact, grown from chia seeds? While these seeds are responsible for the greenery in your Homer Simpson-shaped terracotta pot, their capabilities do not stop there. Chia seeds are touted with dozens of health benefits and uses dating back to the Aztec era. During this time chia seeds were equated with strength, most likely due to the high energy that the tiny black seeds can yield.

Currently, chia is grown in several Latin American countries, but the quickly emerging main producer is Australia. The rise in production can be attributed to the increased awareness of the health benefits chia seeds offer, including:

- High amounts of antioxidants that fight the production of free radicals that can damage cell molecules and contribute to aging and diseases like cancer
- Nutrient dense, meaning they have a ton of nutrients in relation to their calories
- High in quality protein – much higher than most other plant foods
- Decent calcium, magnesium and phosphorus content, which all support bone health

It's good to note that chia seeds can be consumed whole, ground or as an oil. They have a very mild taste, making it easy to integrate into a variety of foods. Many use them in smoothies, puddings, oatmeal, muffins, protein bars, tea and even as a substitute for egg in baked goods. Sprouted chia can be added to salads and sandwiches, similar to alfalfa.

Keep It Fresh

After opening a package of whole chia seeds, it's recommended that they are kept in an airtight container in the refrigerator.



Nutrition Info

Per Serving (1 pudding)

Calories	408
Total Fat	22.7g
Carbohydrates	51.5g
Sugar	15.4g
Fiber	26.1g
Protein	13.9g
Sodium	145mg

Chocolate Chia Seed Pudding

Ingredients:

- ½ cup milk of choice
- 2 Tbsp. chia seeds
- 1 Tbsp. cacao powder
- 1 Tbsp. maple syrup
- 1 pinch of cinnamon
- 1 pinch of sea salt
- Optional toppings: raspberries, strawberries, coconut flakes, cacao nibs, sliced almonds, granola, etc.

Directions:

Add all ingredients to a mason jar or other sealable container. Whisk until smooth. Cover and refrigerate overnight or at least 3 to 5 hours (until a pudding-like consistency is achieved). Serve chilled with desired toppings. Leftovers can be kept covered in the fridge for 4 to 5 days; however, it's best when fresh.

Adapted from MinimalistBaker.com

Yoga Classes Decoded

Yoga classes are popping up everywhere – from laughing yoga to goat yoga and everything in between – and it can be confusing to know where to start.

If you're looking for a physical workout (or to sweat), Vinyasa, power, Ashtanga or hot yoga are your best bet. For relaxation, yoga Nidra, restorative/Yin and gentle yoga are great options. If you want to learn the ins and outs of yoga alignment, find an Iyengar class. If you're dealing with anxiety or depression, all yoga is helpful but especially Kundalini yoga. If you're someone who has a hard time focusing, a more active form of yoga (like Vinyasa) might be a better fit than a slower class like restorative. For those who prefer to practice in their own home, visit www.glo.com for online classes taught by global instructors who are experts in their field.

Here are some common yoga styles decoded to help you find an option that meets your needs.

Hatha/Gentle Yoga is great for beginners. Most yoga classes stem from Hatha yoga. Hatha classes are accommodating for multiple participant levels but aren't geared to be a vigorous workout.

Vinyasa/Flowing Yoga is yoga that links poses with the breath. It is quite active with fairly continuous "flowing" movement throughout the class. Vinyasa classes typically include poses that are more challenging and physically demanding than a Hatha yoga class.



Ashtanga Yoga is a regimented format that includes the same 26 postures in the same order every class. It is physically demanding and requires a great deal of flexibility and strength; therefore, it is not ideal for beginners or people recovering from injuries. It is common for instructors to apply hands-on adjustments. To learn more about Ashtanga and view the class sequences, visit www.ashtangayoga.info.

Hot Yoga is quite popular. It is performed in a room heated to 95 to 105 degrees with high humidity. The postures and sequences performed will vary by class and studio but often include Vinyasa. Be prepared to sweat in these classes; bring a towel and plenty of water.

Restorative Yoga/Yin Yoga is great for beginners, people with limited flexibility and anyone wanting to relax or reduce stress. These classes utilize a variety of props (bolsters, blankets, straps, blocks) so your body can rest in postures. The props provide support and allow your muscles to relax. To find a certified restorative yoga instructor near you, visit www.restorativeyogateachers.com.

Kundalini Yoga is known as the "yoga of awareness." Most poses are completed in a seated position, so if you have low back pain it might be uncomfortable. A typical class includes repetitive yoga postures called "Kriya," each with a specific purpose, such as expanding your energy field or minimizing anger, followed by a meditation. Chanting and sound healing are common elements. To learn more about Kundalini, visit www.3ho.org/kundalini-yoga.

Iyengar Yoga is focused on alignment. Instructors will spot and assist participants, often using props to achieve ideal alignment. Poses may be held longer than a flowing Vinyasa class to promote strength once the alignment is achieved. To find an Iyengar teacher near you, visit bksiyengar.com.

Yoga Nidra is known as "yogic sleep." Its focus is on self-inquiry and conscious relaxation. It is not a physically active class but rather focuses on changing habitual ways of thinking and reacting.



Planning a Sweet & Successful Family Day at the Orchard



Many farms across the country are eagerly awaiting your family to pick and taste the fruits of their labor – from blueberries and apples to sour cherries and snap peas. Whether it's an annual trip in the fall to pick the perfect pumpkin or a spring haul for strawberries, a day at a local orchard is fun for adults and kids of all ages. Here's how to make the most of your visit.

Check the schedule. To find a farm near you, use the [U-Pick locator](#). Check the farm's website for hours and seasonal picking options. Weather conditions and demand determine the supply of a farm's produce, so double check the morning you head out to the farm.

Know the costs. Some farms are more budget friendly than others – from parking and entry fees to the cost of the fruit and local honey in the market. On average, the cost of pick-your-own

fruit is less than at your grocery store, but it's not free. Check out the fees for other activities, such as animal visits, tractor rides, giant slides and even pumpkin canons, and make sure you know which forms of payment are accepted.

Dress appropriately. On sunny days walking the rows of an orchard can feel sticky; stay cool by wearing a baseball cap or sun hat. A bandana can help keep the sweat out of your eyes. Consider wearing long sleeves or pants when picking fruits grown on thorny or prickly bushes. Wear sneakers or comfortable walking shoes; no flip flops. Carry a backpack so you can bring reusable water bottles or a fanny pack for a hands-free experience.

Bring bug spray and hand sanitizer. A little dirt never hurt, but if you plan on enjoying some of your fruit onsite, picnicking on the grounds or petting

goats, bring hand sanitizer. Use bug repellent to protect your crew from bites.

Follow the farm rules. It may go without saying, but be respectful of the farm and the fruit. Picked fruit needs to be handled gently to avoid bruising. Leave fallen fruit alone; it's not appropriate for a sister to pelt her brother with a mushy peach. It can be tough for little ones to resist eating plump blueberries right off the bush, so remind them to follow the rule to pay for what you pick.

Know when to pick. Have your kids Google how to identify when a fruit is ready to be picked. For example, berries don't continue to ripen after they're picked, but other fruits such as peaches will. If the temperatures are hot and you have a long drive home, bring a cooler to transport produce and fresh flowers that tend to spoil quickly. To help avoid the temptation of over-picking, consider how much your family will consume raw, turn into jams or smoothies, and/or freeze for later.

Smile for the camera. A farm is a fantastic place to take family photos, so be sure to bring your camera. If you share on social media, be sure to tag the farm; local farmers are small businesses that appreciate the plugs.

“
Don't be afraid to go out on a limb. That's where the fruit is.”

– H. JACKSON BROWNE

Parenting Corner

Parental Self-Care for the Back-to-School Bustle

With school days in full swing, fall can be an overwhelming time of year for parents and children. Following what is often a more relaxed summer schedule, getting back in the groove – from gathering school supplies, attending parent meetings and syncing family schedules to coordinating lunches, drop-offs, pick-ups, sports and more – can be challenging.

While we don't always have control over school and work schedules, building in space to practice self-care and prepare for the new routine can make the school year more manageable. Here are some tips to help you slow down while keeping up with all of the demands.

■ **Don't let your kids be your alarm clock.** In order to allow yourself time to start the day calmly, wake up an hour before your kids do. Read the paper or a favorite book, enjoy a hot cup of coffee or tea, or go for an invigorating run in the stillness of the early morning.

■ **Get oriented.** Allow yourself extra time to get used to the new routine. Do a timed trial run of how long it takes to get everyone up, ready, out the door, and driven to school and work. Build a buffer into your schedule to allow for the unexpected, such as traffic, forgotten homework and the like.

■ **Block off your calendar and get back-up help.** Create appointments on your calendar for school drop-offs and pick-ups, school-room volunteering, sports events, etc. Arrange plans with a spouse, family member, babysitter, etc. to provide back-up help when needed.

■ **Prepare.** If your child takes a lunch from home, make it the night before (even as a family activity) or Google quick, healthy meal prep for some ideas that will make lunch making a breeze.

■ **Create time to reflect.** Shut down the electronics at least an hour before bed and spend a few minutes writing down some things from the day for which you are grateful. This can also be a meaningful dinner ritual with your family and/or bedtime ritual with your children.



If adding in these tips feels overwhelming in itself, try starting with whichever one you feel most drawn to and give yourself time to see how it feels and what difference it makes. Or, come up with your own ways to create space and make life more manageable. Lastly, keep in mind that, with little eyes watching and emulating your every move, being present, calm and prepared will help instill these qualities in your children as well.

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