

NUTRITION BITES

Winter 2024

Create and Nurture Healthy Habits for a Lifetime

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Making healthier choices can help you feel better and even live longer because these decisions directly affect your health and quality of life, now and tomorrow. You can also reduce your risk for the most common, costly and preventable health problems, like heart disease, stroke, cancer, type 2 diabetes and obesity, by consistently making healthier choices in several areas of your life.



While it can be hard and takes time, change is possible, especially when it comes to creating healthier habits. There are proven strategies that set

you up for success. Here are eight strategies to try.

Eight Strategies for Building Healthy Habits

- 1. Make a plan.** Identify unhealthy patterns and triggers. Set realistic goals, and write down steps to help you achieve them.
- 2. Alter your surroundings.** Find ways to make selecting healthier choices easy. One method is to remove any temptations.
- 3. Seek support.** Find friends, family, co-workers, neighbors or groups for support, or ask people to join you in building healthier habits.
- 4. Fill your time.** Try exercise, a favorite hobby or spending time with family and friends.
- 5. Monitor your progress.** Journal your experiences to help you stay focused and catch slip-ups or negative self-talk.

- 6. Look to the future.** Think about and visualize future benefits to stay focused.
- 7. Celebrate.** Give yourself a reward when you've achieved a milestone, like a massage or personal time.
- 8. Practice patience.** Improvement takes consistency and time, and setbacks will happen. Focus on progress.

Eight Dimensions of Well-Being (DOW) for Nurturing Healthy Habits

The eight co-dependent dimensions of well-being (DOW) are emotional, physical, occupational, social, spiritual, intellectual, environmental and financial. Balance among these eight dimensions helps you create and nurture healthy habits that last a lifetime.

The **AON Well-Being** program is modeled on the DOW, and Well-Being offerings in each dimension are shared monthly. Stay tuned for opportunities to engage with colleagues.



How Will You Enhance Your Well-Being in the New Year?

Emotional Dimension

What it is: Understanding and respecting your feelings, values and attitudes while appreciating the feelings of others.

Examples: Starting a gratitude journal and begin with listing one item you're grateful for once a week.

My Plan: _____

Physical Dimension

What it is: Caring for your body and prioritizing staying healthy now and in the future. Thinking you don't have enough time? Get inspired by this [TED Talk](#).

Examples: Walking, running, exercising, participating in team sports or doing classes at the gym.

My Plan: _____

Occupational Dimension

What it is: Participating in work by contributing your unique gifts, talents and skills that are personally meaningful, rewarding and enriching your values, goals and lifestyle.

Examples: Joining a club or taking a class in an area that interests you (even if it is not related to work).

My Plan: _____

Social Dimension

What it is: Maintaining healthy relationships with others and your community. Caring about them and allowing them to care about you.

Examples: Attending a club of interest in your local community or volunteering once a month at a local charity or non-profit of your choice.

My Plan: _____

Sources:

<https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2018/03/creating-healthy-habits> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5508938/>

Spiritual Dimension

What it is: Finding purpose, value and meaning in your life and participating in activities that are consistent with your beliefs and values.

Examples: Writing down once a week your core values and beliefs.

My Plan: _____

Intellectual Dimension

What it is: Valuing lifelong learning, maintaining curiosity and expanding knowledge and skills while discovering the potential for sharing your gifts.

Examples: Reading, journaling, and experiencing the arts at a play, concert or museum.

My Plan: _____

Environmental Dimension

What it is: Understanding how your social, natural and built environments affect your health and demonstrating a commitment to a healthy planet.

Examples: Starting by looking at ways you can improve your environmental health, staying safe during extreme temperatures and looking at your home air quality. For more information on this dimension, visit <https://www.nih.gov/health-information/environmental-wellness-toolkit>.

My Plan: _____

Financial Dimension

What it is: Managing your resources to live within your means including setting goals and preparing for short-term and long-term needs while being aware that everyone's financial values, needs and circumstances are unique.

Examples: Taking advantage of Creative Planning's 1-on-1 consultations and attending their monthly webinars.

My Plan: _____



Featured Recipe

One-Pot Tuscan White Bean and Kale Soup

For complete recipe and nutrition facts: [Minimalist Baker](#)

Prep Time: **15 minutes**
Total Time: **45 minutes**

Cook Time: **30 minutes**
Servings: **5**



INGREDIENTS

- 1 **tablespoon** olive oil
 - 1/2 **large** yellow onion, diced
 - 2 **medium** carrots, peeled and diced
 - 2 **large** celery stalks, diced
 - 3/4 **teaspoon** sea salt, divided, adding more for taste
 - 1/2 **teaspoon** black pepper, divided
 - 2 **tablespoons** tomato paste
 - 4 cloves garlic, minced
 - 1/4 to 1/2 **teaspoon** red pepper flakes, to taste
 - 1 **tablespoon** freshly chopped rosemary or thyme (or substitute it for 1 teaspoon of dried rosemary or thyme)
 - 1 **teaspoon** dried basil
 - 3 **cups** vegetable broth
 - 2 (15-ounce) **cans** white beans, drained and rinsed
 - 1 (15-ounce) **can** diced tomatoes
 - 4 **cups** chopped kale leaves or baby spinach
 - 1 **tablespoon** balsamic vinegar
 - 3/4 **cup** full-fat coconut milk
- For Serving (Optional)**
- Parmesan cheese
 - Fresh basil
 - Croutons

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Heat** the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. **Add** the onion, carrots, celery, 1/4 teaspoon salt and a few cracks of fresh black pepper. **Cook, stirring** occasionally, until softened (about five minutes).
2. **Add** the tomato paste, garlic, red pepper flakes, rosemary (or thyme) and basil, and cook until fragrant (about one minute).
3. **Add** the broth, beans, tomatoes and 1/2 teaspoon each of salt and pepper. **Scrape** up any browned bits on the bottom of the pan and bring to a simmer. **Reduce** the heat to low, cover and simmer for 15 minutes, until the veggies are fork-tender, and the flavors are well developed.
4. Optional: For a more blended soup consistency, use an immersion blender to **purée** the soup in short bursts, only puréeing part of the soup (mostly the beans) and leaving plenty of whole pieces of vegetables.
5. **Return** the soup to a light simmer. Then **add** the kale, **turn off** the heat and **cover** the pot for five minutes. Once the kale is softened, **uncover** the pot and **stir** in the vinegar and coconut milk. **Taste** and adjust as needed, **adding** more red pepper flakes for heat, vinegar or tomato paste for richness, coconut milk for creaminess and salt for overall flavor.
6. **Serve** warm and garnished with parmesan cheese, thinly sliced basil and croutons (optional toppings).
7. **Store** cooled leftovers covered in the refrigerator for up to three to four days or in the freezer for up to one month. **Thaw from frozen before reheating. Reheat in the microwave, on the stovetop in a saucepan or pot over medium heat (covered) until thoroughly warmed. Add more broth or water as needed to thin.**

Nutritional Information:

Serving Size: 1 cup

Calories: 303; Total Carbohydrates: 40.4g; Dietary Fiber: 11.7g; Sugars: 9.5g; Protein: 11.3g; Total Fat: 10.9g; Saturated Fat: 6.4g; Sodium: 928mg.

