

Active Aging

Waterman Village Home and Community Services

December 2024

Let Exercise Help You Maintain Your Emotional Health this December

Every holiday season, we celebrate the 4 F's: fun, friends, family, and food. However, we are often so caught up in our festivities that we forget about another essential factor—fitness. Not only can exercise help our bodies maintain physical health as we eat holiday treats, but it can also promote mental and emotional health. These types of health are just as important, especially since this holiday season carries the additional stress associated with the coronavirus pandemic. Here are just a few ways that regular exercise can help support your mental and emotional health this holiday season.

Reducing stress. Exercise can be an excellent stress reliever after a long day. Exercise increases levels of a chemical called norepinephrine in the body, which impacts the brain's response to stress. Rising levels of this chemical through exercise can help the brain more effectively handle stress and reduce mental pressure.

Reducing depression and anxiety. Exercise can also help alleviate symptoms of anxiety and

depression. By increasing levels of serotonin, endorphins, and other anti-depressive chemicals, exercise promotes feelings of calm and happiness. Studies have shown that exercise can reduce anxiety and depression in patients after about nine weeks of regular activity.

Inspiring creativity. Got writer's block? Try putting down your pencil and returning after a short, brisk walk. According to a study published in the *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, exercise can boost creativity for up to two hours after your workout. For an additional creative boost, exercise outdoors to allow yourself to connect to nature.

Increasing self-esteem. Feeling healthier physically can boost your confidence and cause you to feel better emotionally. Exercise can raise your alertness and self-esteem by helping you sleep better, giving you more energy, and toning various muscles in your body. Additionally, exercise can make you focus more easily, helping you stay organized and concentrate on important aspects of your life.

Preventing cognitive decline. As you age, so does your brain. When diseases like Alzheimer's kill brain cells, the brain shrinks and loses several functions. However, exercise can help the brain fight this cognitive decline. Working out boosts chemicals in the brain that defend the brain's hippocampus against degeneration, protecting memory and learning.

Next time you find yourself in a rut or need a mood booster, get out and get active. Your body and mind will thank you later.

Waterman
Village

HOME HEALTH CARE &
OUTPATIENT THERAPY

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(352)385-1138

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Social Interactions & Sense of Purpose

According to Neuroscience News, older adults who experience more positive social interactions report feeling a higher sense of purposefulness, especially after retirement. A research team found a correlation between adults reporting feeling more purposeful in the evening after experiencing more positive interactions during the day. For older adults, the people in their lives matter significantly and can fill one's life with positivity.

A higher sense of purpose is often associated with maintaining some health behaviors, such as more physical activity, healthier sleep, higher consumption of fruits and

vegetables, smoking cessation, and increased use of preventive healthcare services. By increasing a sense of purpose, retired older adults are more likely to experience cognitive and physical health benefits.

Ways to increase social interaction and feel a sense of purpose:

- Meet up with others regularly to converse on common interests.
- Participation in social activities in the community, such as game night, an exercise group, or a book club.
- Stay connected with friends and family through technology,

using social media platforms such as FaceTime, Instagram, and WhatsApp.

- Adopt a pet or obtain a plant to care for in your home.
- Engage in meals together in a dining area to be able to interact and enjoy the company of others.
- Maintain attendance at a desired religious place of worship.
- Volunteer to assist in an area of interest within your community.

“Every Person has a longing to be significant; to make a contribution; to be a part of something noble and purposeful.” - John C. Maxwell

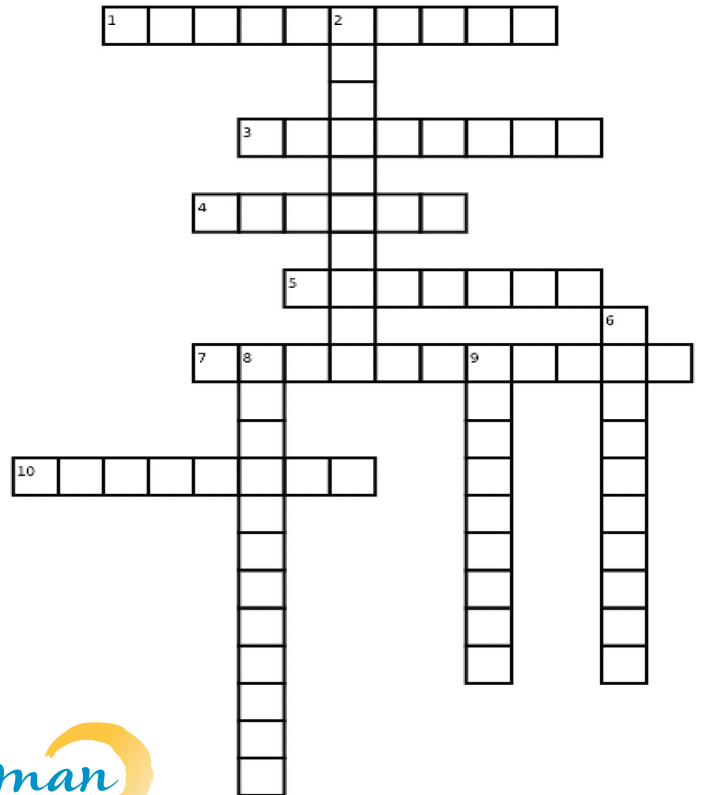
Crossword Puzzle: Purpose

Down:

- 2. to have a part in making something happen
- 6. state of being positive
- 8. biology of nerves, nervous tissue
- 9. group of people within a larger society

Across:

- 1. social, profession, or commercial relationship
- 3. something that arouses attention
- 4. having interaction within society
- 5. an end to be obtained for a reason
- 7. mutual or reciprocal action or influence
- 10. exchange thoughts and opinions in speech



Word Search: December Fitness

PHYSICAL
FAMILY
MEMORY
BOOTS
BEANIE
OUTDOORS
MITTS

RUN
ENDORPHINS
COLD
HEALTH
HAPPINESS
MOOD
WINTER

LEARNING
THERMALS
SEROTONIN
JACKET
FUN
EMOTIONAL
BIKE

ACTIVITY
EXERCISE
FOOD
SNOW
CREATIVITY
NOREPINEPHRINE

A T P P H Y S I C A L L E Z P F A M I L Y V J M K R
Z O Z A S I O E W M E M O R Y P A C D V M U G D M M
B O O T S Q O N T H H F Y B E A N I E P E H L C G O
K O M E F X A Q R N L S N C H J E N D O R P H I N S
M U U P F Z Y B U K B G H S O K D P P R H P L Z X E
G M I T T S C I N B Y P L A Z L B C A U A W E M T R
U P B L D E F H E A L T H E P J D F L V U W A K H O
B V D D N O J C K E L N H K M P B J Y G Y I R K E T
H D U C F D O V R M B C S D P D I V B Y M N N F R O
Z W H Q T C J R C O I U C B A R E N E U O T I L M N
J Y N K M H H T S T K X A A R C S X E A O E N R A I
I A X E O L D D Z I E J L R T N T A E S D R G L L N
F Z C L B E N H H O E C M S I T R I L R S B W P S Y
O T K K A E F Q N N G A R L P V R Z V G C V T L Y M
O S E S E J E U V A M F R L R X N B V I U I Q K V V
D N O Y M T Q V N L P G B J N V S Q X D T U S A A W
J O E H O O Z O B C R E A T I V I T Y T W Y E E Q L
Y W Q K O R C O O N O R E P I N E P H R I N E O K W

Monthly Spotlight

Are You Washing Your Hands Properly?

December 1-7 marks the 2024 National Hand Washing Awareness Week, and what better way to celebrate than to practice proper hand washing technique? According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, you should wet your hands before applying soap. Then, lather the backs of your hands and the spaces between your fingers and under your nails. Before rinsing your hands, scrub them together for at least 20 seconds. Don't forget to dry your hands! Follow these instructions when you wash your hands to prevent sickness every day.



Online Resources



- Parkinsons - <https://www.parkinson.org/resources-support/pd-library>
- Alzheimers - <https://www.alz.org/>
- Diabetes - <https://diabetes.org/>
- Heart Disease - <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/heart-healthy-living>

Highlights: Classes for mind, body, and harmony

Exercising with Therapy

Monday 10:30 Lakeside
 Wednesday 2:00 Oaks Ex Room

Bone Builders

Tuesday and Thursday 11:30

Water Aerobics

Water Fitness Tues/Thurs 10:00
 Water in Motion Fri 10:00

Yoga/Tai Chi

Yoga Mon 2:30 Lakeside and Thurs 10:30 Oaks
 Tai Chi Tuesday 1:30 Lake Side

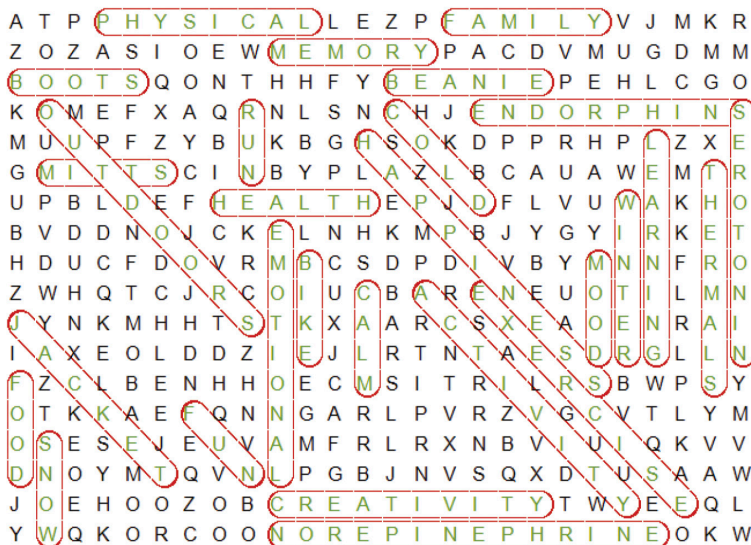
Brain Body Balance (BBB)

Thursday 1:00 Lakeside

Kindness Resources:

- [Social Interactions Tied to Sense of Purpose for Older Adults](#)
- [Sense of Purpose in Life and Five Health Behaviors in Older Adults - NCBI](#)

Word Search Key



Crossword Puzzle Key

