



As we step into 2016, I'm excited to continue to bring you more new and compelling information to assist and support you on your journey to health and well-being. This year, together, we'll **move** more, **eat** better, **learn** new things and **live** a more full and rich life. True wellness is the integration of a healthy mind, body, spirit and emotions. My goal this year is to provide you with resources to help you further establish these cornerstones of wellness. So let's get started!

Here's wishing you the faith to after the "big things" in life, the perspective to appreciate the little things, the strength to hold on to what's important, and the courage to let go of what isn't! **Happy New Year!**

Be Well!

Lynise Anderson, N.D., C.N.C.

Self-Acceptance for a Healthy Life

Many times, we are motivated to set a health or weight loss goal by the fact that there's something about our current life or body that we're unhappy with. Who hasn't had a moment of disturbing truth in the dressing room mirror or feeling overly winded after a flight of stairs? But here's the truth: feelings of self-criticism and shame might motivate a few workouts or "good" eating days, but they motivate many more falls off the health wagon than on.

Want to create lifelong change in your health? Come at it from a different angle: one of extreme self-acceptance, rather than self-critique. You only get one body, so you might as well love it and take wonderful care of it, in part by incorporating healthy food and fitness practices into your daily life. And here's the bonus, self-acceptance triggers a relaxation response that can help reduce the stress and anxiety so many of us feel about trying to create new healthy habits – and we think that makes those habits even more likely to stick.

Here are a baker's dozen (plus one!) action items for shifting into a self-acceptance mindset in 2016.

Set a self-acceptance intention. Before you do anything else, you have to be willing to release what

might be lifelong patterns of blame, doubt and contempt. Once you decide that you're ready to live a life of self-acceptance rather than self-loathing, you can truly begin your journey to a lasting, healthy relationship with yourself, your body and your life.

Stop comparing. There's a wise saying that it's dangerous to compare the inside of your life to the outside of someone else's. Think about it. On the surface, we rarely present the whole truth. If you're feeling down in the dumps and someone asks you how you are, you're more likely to say, "Great!" than tell them how it really is. Remember that what you're admiring from afar may not be as good, or as perfect as it seems.

Discover what makes you unique. Make a list of things you can do that sometimes surprise or impress other people and learn to embrace what makes you YOU.



Appreciate more. So often we dwell on things we don't have, don't think we're capable of or don't like about ourselves. But with a little bit of work, we can train our minds to appreciate all we are capable of. For every negative thought, write down two counter thoughts—like two things you do have for every thing you don't, or two things you love about yourself every time you get hung up on an imperfection.

Surround yourself with support.

Distance yourself from negativity—people who put you down and don't support your journey to self-acceptance. Begin to seek out and surround yourself with people who have positive personalities and tend to look on the bright side, including the bright side of you!

Rethink failure. In life, what seems like failure in the short-term can often turn out over time to be a gift of the lessons and course-corrections that make us who we are. And in the endeavor to live a healthy life, the only true failures are: (a) not to start and (b) to quit trying. Everything else isn't failure – it's part of the journey.

List your achievements. What have you done that you're proud of? Check in with your accomplishments every so often. Sit down with a piece of paper and write down everything you've succeeded at recently—everything from bigger and better career moves to exercising 3 days last week like you resolved to do this year. You'll probably surprise yourself.

Fast forward to the "happy." When we're down on ourselves, it's easy to get into happiness-deferment mode. "I'd be so much

Continued on page 4.



Black Bean and Butternut Squash Chili

This easy black bean and butternut squash chili will fill your kitchen with wonderful aromas while it simmers in the slow-cooker all day.

INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 3 onions, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- 2 jalapeños, seeded and minced
- 4 15-oz. cans black beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 14.5-oz. cans diced fire-roasted tomatoes
- 3 tablespoons chili powder
- 2 tablespoons cumin
- 1 tablespoon dried oregano
- 4 cups butternut squash (about 2 lb.), peeled, seeded and cut into 1/2-inch dice
- Salt and pepper to taste

PREPARATION

1. Warm oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Sauté onions until tender, about 3 minutes. Add garlic; sauté 1 minute. Add bell peppers and jalapeños; sauté until tender, about 3 minutes.
2. Transfer pepper mixture to slow cooker. Stir in beans, tomatoes, chili powder, cumin and oregano. Arrange squash on top. Cover and cook on low for 6 hours.
3. Season chili with salt and pepper. Serve with sour cream, salsa and other accompaniments, if desired.



Write it on
your heart that
every day is
the best day of
the year.

~Ralph Waldo Emerson

Is Sitting the New Smoking?

You've already heard that sitting is the new smoking. Now, scientists reveal exactly how it hurts the body—and novel ways to undo the damage (without clocking hours at the gym). You might want to stand up for this.

We like to think we're a stand-up species. After all, that's what drove our evolutionary march away from many of our four-legged ancestors. But everywhere we go are invitations to sit down. Hop into your car and what's there? If you're lucky, a plush bucket seat designed with just the right tilt for your back.

On the subway to work? A less comfortable seat, to be sure, but you'll grab one if you can. Once at work, an office chair. At home, your favorite fauteuil. But all that hospitality, all those opportunities to give your feet a break, are doing untold things to the rest of your body.

From standing desks and fitness trackers to groundbreaking pilot experiments in high schools in several cities, the movement to sit less and stand more is gaining momentum. Which is a good thing, because new evidence suggests that the more than eight hours the average American spends sitting every day could be exacting a serious—and previously misunderstood—toll.

Studies have long connected sedentary behavior to poor health, including heart disease, diabetes, obesity and hypertension. But doctors thought those problems could be traced to the fact that people who sat more were probably just not working out very much. But while exercise is critical, it alone can't make up for the ills of idleness. New research shows there's a big difference between exercising too little and sitting too much. That's because a standing body uses energy altogether differently from a sedentary body—and also from an exercising one.

This research has doctors and health experts calling for a paradigm shift. "In the same way that standing up is an oddity now, sitting down should be," says Dr. James Levine, director of the Mayo Clinic-Arizona State University Obesity Solutions Initiative and probably best known as the inventor of the first treadmill desk. "My argument is that whatever building it is—a movie theater, airport, arts complex—a fundamental part of our thinking has become that people who enter that space will need to be seated." And that's what got us into all this trouble in the first place.

This Is Your Body On Sitting

It's not entirely our fault. As we moved from an active, agricultural lifestyle to one of offices and automated transport, every aspect of our day, from our meals to our jobs and our entertainment, have been adapted with one priority in mind: our comfort. Where our ancestors spent the large bulk of their waking hours on the go, modern life entails sitting for as much as half the day (and that's not counting sleeping).

The first studies to connect sedentary behavior to poor health emerged in recent decades, and revealed a clear message: People who spent more hours of the day sitting were more likely to develop a host of health problems.

A recent review of 43 studies¹ analyzing daily activity and cancer rates found that people who reported sitting for more hours of the day had a 24% greater risk of developing colon cancer, a 32% higher risk of endometrial cancer and a 21% higher risk of lung cancer—regardless of how much they exercised. In another study involving a

group of men and women who reported exercising the same amount, each additional hour they spent sitting was linked to a drop in their fitness levels. In other words, sitting was chipping away at some of the benefits of exercise.

The human body is designed to move, and a moving body is a needy body, siphoning off calories to make sure every cell is doing what it's supposed to do. But even when we're not exercising, we're moving and us-

ing energy. A body that's sitting isn't expending energy, so the signals that normally result in you moving—and which, in turn, burn calories—start to check out, molecularly bored with not being called into duty. Meanwhile, the processes that build up fat get busier. When that happens, it gets harder and harder to get off the chair.

Becoming a body in motion

Even if you're wired in some ways to sit, can you become a stand-up person? Absolutely, says Levine. Just as sedentary behavior can change the brain and body to prefer sitting, getting up and becoming more active will prompt you to want to stay in motion. Even if you don't have the help of a forward-thinking boss to transform your workplace, there are ways to make yourself get up. For the more ambitious, there's changing your work station to a standing one.

But even simply fielding phone calls on your feet is a good way to start, or pacing while you talk. You could also keep a small glass of water on your desk so you're inclined to get up more frequently to refill it, taking walks around the office or your home while you're at it. For the more ambitious, says Levine, urge your colleagues to try standing meetings.

"By simply changing your work style, from a chair-based work style to a [standing] one, you can burn 500 to 1,000 extra calories a day,"

"What we need to do is change the default," Levine says. "I want us to have to find excuses to be sitting down."

Imagine that. Maybe standing really could be the new sitting.

¹ <http://jnci.oxfordjournals.org/content/106/7/dju206.full>
<http://time.com/sitting/>



Turn your desk into a stand up desk!



Sitting for extended periods increases your risk of some cancers, hypertension, obesity and diabetes.

Harvest Bake

An unusual combo of squash and granola good enough to eat any time of day!

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups fresh butternut squash, peeled, seeded, cubed ½ inch
- 2 tsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1/3 cup fresh red onions, peeled, diced
- 2 ¼ tsp fresh jalapeno pepper, seeded, diced
- ¼ cup fresh red bell pepper, seeded, diced
- 1 Tbsp red quinoa, dry
- ¼ cup canned low-sodium black beans, drained, rinsed
- 3 ½ tsp fresh oregano, chopped
- 2 ½ Tbsp sweetened applesauce
- ¼ tsp kosher salt
- 2 Tbsp fresh lime juice (optional)
- 3/4 cup low-fat granola, no fruit



DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 °F.
2. In a large bowl, toss squash in 1 tsp olive oil. Spread onto a large baking sheet

- sprayed with nonstick cooking spray. Roast in oven at 350 °F for 30 minutes or until tender and lightly brown around the edges. Remove and keep warm.
3. In a small bowl, toss onions, jalapeno peppers, and red peppers with remaining olive oil. Spread vegetables evenly onto a baking sheet sprayed with a nonstick cooking spray and roast in oven at 350 °F for 15 minutes or until tender and lightly brown around the edges. Check the vegetables often, they will brown very quickly. Remove and keep warm.
4. Rinse quinoa in a fine mesh strainer until water runs clear, not cloudy. Combine quinoa and ½ cup water in a small pot. Cover and bring to a boil. Turn heat down to low and simmer until water is completely absorbed, about 10-15 minutes. When done, quinoa will be soft and a white ring will pop out of the kernel. The white ring will appear only when it is fully cooked. Fluff with a fork. Set aside. A rice cooker may be used with the same quantity of quinoa and water.
5. In a large bowl, combine squash, black beans, quinoa, and oregano.
6. Mix in applesauce, salt, and optional fresh lime juice.
7. Add onions, jalapeno peppers, and red peppers. Mix well.
8. Pour mixture into an 8" x 8" nonstick baking pan. Press gently to pack. Sprinkle granola evenly over the top of mixture. Bake for 30 minutes at 350 °F. Granola should be



LIVING HEALTHY

Get Your Cardio In!

Exercise is a key contributor to health and happiness. Beyond triggering that runner's high, it's associated with a higher quality of life, improved health, and a better mood. But missing a few gym sessions doesn't mean staying active has to fall by the wayside.

Sneaking cardio into daily life can save time and improve fitness, sometimes on par with the benefits of a scheduled sweat session. And more time getting moving in our daily lives means less time sitting, which can lower the risk for heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and early death. While intense exercise is good for us, it doesn't completely erase the effects of a sedentary lifestyle, so making an effort to get moving throughout the day can have some serious long-term benefits.

So how much cardio is enough, and what are some ways to fit it in? The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends 150 minutes per week of moderate aerobic exercise, plus two days per week of strength training.

Whether it's 30 continuous minutes of activity or three 10-minute sessions, here are 10 simple ways to get more active for even the busiest person, whether at home, work, or play. Just

keep in mind calories burned varies depending on age, build, gender, and weight.

**one
step
at a time.**

AT THE OFFICE

1. Be a stair master: But consider taking them one at a time, not two. Researchers found

that while the rate of caloric expenditure is higher when taking two at a time, the burn over an entire flight is more when taking one at a time. In one



study, participants climbed a 15-meter stairway five times a day with an average of 302 calories burned per week using one step and 266 calories per week using the double step.

2. Walk and talk: Hold walking meetings with co-workers. While moderate walking uses almost two-and-a-half times the energy of sitting in a meeting, mobile meetings can also strengthen work relationships, improve health, and boost creativity.

3. Please stand up: Think of your ring tone... or email chime... or clock chime as an alarm to get up out of the chair and move around a little. Invest in a cordless headset for your office phone so you can stand up and move around while you're on a long conference call.

ON THE GO

4. No more lazy layovers: Stuck in the airport because of a delayed flight? Don't just sit there. Do terminal laps — but skip the moving side-walks!

CHORES GALORE

5. Clean machine: Chores — they have to get done, so why not make them into a workout? Vacuuming can burn about 75 calories per half-hour, while washing the car uses more than double that.

6. Made in the shade: While running errands, park in the shadiest spot, not the closest, to log more steps and keep the car cool.

7. Take a lap (or three!): Browsing the perimeter of a grocery store can do more than just promote healthy food choices. Take a couple of laps

to compare prices and rack up some steps! Pushing a cart around the grocery store uses 105 to 155 calories in a half-hour. Bonus points for lugging home the groceries.

WEEKEND FUN

8. Hit the dance floor: Shake it to your favorite beat. Just 30 minutes — or about seven or eight songs — of fast dancing can use up 180 to 266 calories.

9. Take an active date: Challenge your date to a game of tennis. In addition to burning 210 to 311 calories in 30 minutes, tennis may improve bone health, reduce risk for cardiovascular disease, and lower body fat. Looking for more options to give dates a fitness twist? Try bowling, ice skating, biking or taking dance lessons together!

10. Game night: So-called "exergames" — such as on the Kinect or Wii Fit Plus — have been shown to increase energy expenditure up to three times more than just sitting. But while these games are better than parking on the couch, energy burn can vary quite a bit depending on the game.



THE TAKEAWAY

Exercise doesn't have to be done at the gym, on a track, or even in workout clothes. Little bits of exercise throughout the day can add up — just get creative! Pair some of these sneaky cardio boosters with unexpected strength training to vary the routine and meet the weekly recommendations for exercise.



What's on Your Mind?

Have an idea for an article or a question about a health topic? Are you enjoying the newsletter?

[Click here to send me an email](#)

I want to hear from you!

CAMPUS SPOTLIGHT

WELCOME!!

We start the new year off by welcoming two new members to the Benefits Consortium: Appalachian College of Pharmacy located in Oakwood, Virginia and Averett University located in Danville, Virginia. Wish we had a cheer we could cheer or a fight song to sing. For now, we'll just say welcome to the Consortium. We look forward to serving you in health and wellness.



Self-Acceptance (cont.)

happier if I were thinner/more beautiful/had more money/had a better job, etc.” Do this exercise: think of the people in your life or even celebrities who have the things you think you need to be happy. You won't have to think long before you realize that none of these things, on their own, are a magic ticket to happiness. Now do this exercise: decide to feel as happy *right now* as you think you would be if you had all those items you thought were prerequisites to happiness.

Try it! If you can do it for even a moment, you can practice doing it every day, and you will gradually learn that your little imperfections and life challenges have no power to keep you unhappy or stuck.

I can! **I am!** **I will!** **Intentionally counter negative self-talk with positive words to yourself.** In front of the mirror, we often run through a little catalogue of insults to ourselves that we would never, ever say to another human being, cataloguing everything from pimples to love handles to cellulite dim-

ples. And in the gym, forget about it – we should have done more cardio, lifted more weights, stayed longer, or come more often.

Here's a challenge: get and stay conscious of the times you say negative things to yourself throughout the day. Every time you have such a thought, intentionally counteract it with a positive truth about yourself. Soon, instead of focusing on how little time you spent at the gym, you'll be giving yourself kudos for showing up in the first place, and the whole thing will be much less painful.

Perform acts of kindness.

When you sacrifice something for someone in need, whether it be time, money, personal belongings, expertise, or whatever you have to give, it's hard not to feel good about the person you are inside.

Purge your life of things that trigger negative self-thoughts. Junk food, your scale, clothes that haven't fit in months,

unflattering mirrors, beauty magazines, old photos—whatever they may be, identify them and say good riddance. And yes, this might include getting rid of relationship patterns that involve criticism, put-downs or shame.

Treat yourself to things that make you feel good.

To counter all of those items you purge, replace them with things that make you feel happy. Replace the junk food with a drawer full of fresh fruits and veggies, or your favorite green smoothie. Get off the scale and go for a walk with a friend. Trade all of those ill-fitting clothes for a dress or blazer that flatters your figure and makes you feel good. Trade those magazine subscriptions for a library card and read books that makes you laugh or inspire you. These little things add up and can make a big difference in your mood.

Learn how to accept a compliment.

When someone says something nice about you, say, “Thank you,” and give a smile. (In fact, if you want to truly boost

your looks, smile more – every smiling face is beautiful, if you think about it.) It's a wonderful thing! Trusting that the great things others think and say about you are true can be a gateway to seeing those things in yourself.

Use your body to have active fun.

Spend your spare time doing things that make you feel good physically and emotionally, like taking a long walk with your friends (canine friends count!) or trying new, active hobbies like gardening, hiking or dancing. The more you move your body and use it to enjoy the present moment, even when you're not specifically “working out,” the easier you'll find it is to be grateful for that body and how well it serves you – how wonderful it is to have this body that helps you access the various joys life has to offer.



That moment when you feel like giving up, when it doesn't seem worth it... *that's* when change happens.

Healthy Resolutions That Have Nothing To Do With Weight Loss

Want to get healthy in 2016? Forget trying to lose weight. A healthy lifestyle isn't how much extra weight you lose, but what you gain in the process.

If you're looking to adopt better habits for you overall health, take a look at some of the alternative resolutions below.

Meditate more often. There are so many benefits to meditation, from lower blood pressure to an improved immune system. All it takes is a few minutes a day.

Say one nice thing to yourself every morning. Studies show that self-acceptance is paramount to a happier life, but it's the habit many people practice least. As you get ready in the mirror or go about your daily commute, think of one positive trait about yourself every day. You deserve to feel loved.

Ditch your device before bed.

Sorry, Instagram scrollers. Research shows the blue light emitted from screens can wreak havoc on your sleep quality. Try to unplug before crawling into bed each night.

Start Journaling. Writing down your thoughts has a

multitude of mind perks, from goal setting to a better memory. The great news? It doesn't have to be time consuming. Try jotting down just three things you're grateful for each day. Research suggests gratitude can improve your physical and mental well-being.

Read more books. Get lost in a good story. Reading has a host of health perks. You'll have a sharper mind, feel less stressed and get better sleep. Talk about a fun way to improve your well-being.

Make a happiness appointment.

Research shows spending money on experiences, not things, is key to greater happiness. Make an “appointment” with yourself each week or month to do something you've always wanted to try. It could be a new exercise class, a weekend road trip or even just window shopping. The point is to schedule some “me time” and do something small to make yourself more joyous.

The best gift you can give yourself is the knowledge of who you are and what makes you healthy and happy. Everything else will fall into place – including any resolutions to better your life. Remember, being healthy is more than just a number on the scale.

DID YOU KNOW???

WHEN YOU QUIT SMOKING....

- ◆ **Within the first 20 minutes.** Your heart rate and blood pressure drop.
- ◆ **Within 12 hours.** The level of carbon monoxide in your blood returns to normal.
- ◆ **Within two to three months.** Your circulation improves and your lungs work better.
- ◆ **Within one to nine months.** You don't cough as much or feel as out of breath. The tiny hair-like structures in your lungs called cilia start working better to clean the lungs and clear mucus, lowering your risk of infection.
- ◆ **Within one year.** Your risk for heart disease is reduced by half.
- ◆ **Within two to five years.** Your risk for a stroke is the same as a nonsmoker.
- ◆ **Within five years.** Your risk for mouth, throat, esophageal and bladder cancer is cut in half.
- ◆ **Within 10 years.** Your risk for cancer of the voice box and pancreas is lower, and your risk of dying from lung cancer is cut in half.
- ◆ **Within 15 years.** Your risk for coronary heart disease is the same as a nonsmoker.

YOU CAN
QUIT
SMOKING!

American Cancer Society website: *When smokers quit — what are the benefits over time?* (accessed June 2014); cancer.org.