



BeWell

WINTER 2022
EDITION

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8 DIMENSIONS OF WELLNESS

Our wellness program's mission is to inspire employees to lead a balanced healthy lifestyle across all dimensions of wellness.



INTELLECTUAL



EMOTIONAL



PHYSICAL



SOCIAL



OCCUPATIONAL



FINANCIAL



ENVIRONMENTAL



SPIRITUAL

Wellness Tips from the Top

CONVERSATION WITH SISTER MARY JOSEPH ALBRIGHT, VICE PRESIDENT OF MISSION INTEGRATION AT PENN STATE HEALTH HOLY SPIRIT MEDICAL CENTER.



Can you share more about your background prior to your current role?

A personal value of mine has always been servant leadership. It has driven my work over the years. Before coming to Holy Spirit, I taught in elementary schools in the tri-state area, and conducted

bereavement services for couples grieving the death of a child. Later, I cared for multiple handicapped, blind girls in the Philippines. Finally, I oversaw an international program held in Uruguay, and then in 2015, I began my mission integration role at Holy Spirit Hospital in support of the Sisters of Christian Charity sponsorship of the hospital.

What is your role at Holy Spirit Medical Center?

As Vice President, Mission Integration, I have the privilege and responsibility to ensure that Holy Spirit's mission, vision, values, Catholic identity, and "spirit of caring" thrives. I work to integrate spiritual wellness into the business components of health care. My work as a spiritual director has also influenced my incorporation of the physical, emotional, and spiritual into all aspects of the health care ministry. Supporting the well-being of staff impacts the healing mission of Holy Spirit.

Why is personal wellness important for employees?

To serve our patients best, we must take care of ourselves through self-care. It is important to understand that this starts with an attitude of prioritizing well-being. Self-care is a process

of growing and investing in yourself, so you are in the best position to help others. At Holy Spirit, this is demonstrated by spreading love, joy, peace, and healing through our services and "spirit of caring."

How have you seen Penn State Health prioritize employee wellness?

Penn State Health offers its employees excellent benefit options and resources. (Employee Wellness Resources found at: <https://bewell.pennstatehealth.org>). Dedication to employee wellness in this way is crucial for supporting the positive employee culture at Penn State Health.

How is spiritual wellness integrated into Holy Spirit's priorities?

We are faith-based and our Values Prayer and Journey Statement prayed before and after meetings ground and unite us in the "why" of what we do and sets the tone for a positive meeting.

What are your motivators to stay well?

I'm very competitive with myself, and I also share my goals with friends to hold me accountable. For example, I'm planning a walking retreat in my hometown in New Jersey to walk 81 miles over 9 days in June.

What do you do to prioritize your own well-being?

Journaling, poetry, painting, and going to art galleries are all things that I enjoy which help support my well-being. Also, connecting with employees in the hospital and checking in on how people are doing rejuvenates and energizes me. I continue to coordinate an annual employee art show to foster sharing and support among my colleagues, but also the opportunity to pause and appreciate the creativity and imagination that surrounds us.

By Elizabeth Hivner, CHES, M.Ed, a Project Manager with Penn State PRO Wellness. She manages components of the BeWell employee wellness initiative for Penn State Health employees in partnership with Penn State Health Human Resources.



The Importance of Happiness during Difficult Times

Dr. Laurie Santos knows a thing or two about happiness. She's an expert on the science and psychology of well-being, sharing her findings with thousands through her wildly popular Yale University course, *The Science of Well-being*. And while it may sound counterintuitive, happiness is exactly what we need to get us through the challenging period of change, anxiety, and uncertainty.

1 **"Happiness itself can bring about a lot of positive life circumstances. Happiness itself can give us the tools we need to change structures and change situations in the world."** While we may feel a sense of guilt for being joyful while others are grieving, happiness is paramount in challenging times. Focusing on our own happiness can give us the resilience we need to change situations in our personal lives and on a larger scale.

2 **"We can harness the toughness to experience the power of post-traumatic growth."** Difficult situations have the potential to make us stronger and may even make us happier in the long run. By surviving a particularly tough scenario, we learn to appreciate what is truly meaningful and essential in life and better prepare us to face future adversity.

3 **"If we want to be happier during times of stress, we need to use a special mechanism of protecting ourselves, and we can do that through social connection."** Loneliness and isolation can have a major negative impact on both our mental and physical health. Make an

effort to reach out to a loved one – whether it's for support or just to take your mind off a stressor – when you're feeling overwhelmed.

4 **"The studies on happiness suggest that happiness comes not from self-care but from focusing on other people."** We hear a lot about self-care these days, but the reality is that truly happy people are "other-oriented." Helping others, especially during times of crisis, makes us feel good and gives us a sense of purpose. Not only are we boosting our mood by lending a hand, but we are also working towards solving real problems. Helping others means a better future for ourselves and them!

5 **"If we want to be happier and if we want to protect our willpower and get more resilient and even improve our performance, we need to harness the power of gratitude."** Gratitude might not be the first thing that comes to mind during a difficult and life-altering experience – like a global pandemic – but acknowledging even the little things we appreciate can improve our well-being and boost emotional resilience. Not sure where to start? Try writing down 3-5 things that you're grateful for each day.

6 **"If we want to be happy, we need to find ways to be in the present moment, even if that present moment sucks."** Mindfulness and meditation are powerful tools, especially when we're living in a constant state of stress. Did you know that we spend 46.9% of our day with our minds wandering? By learning to truly focus on the present, we can be more productive and enhance our sense of well-being by improving our stress response.

7 **"If we want to protect ourselves during tough times, we need to make room for healthy practices."** When stress levels are high, it's all too easy to skip a workout or two, make less nutritious choices at mealtimes or deprioritize our sleep. It can feel overwhelming to have to put this extra effort into "being healthy," but the reality is that these are the times where we need it the most. Beyond our physical well-being, exercise is a great way to relieve stress and improve our mental well-being. A balanced diet can have mood-boosting benefits. Getting the recommended 7-9 hours of sleep each night can keep us happier, more focused and improve our immunity. By maintaining these healthy habits, even when we don't feel like it, we are becoming physically and emotionally stronger to deal with the current stressors and will be better equipped to handle difficult circumstances in the future.

Resource: Virgin Pulse

THE NEW BeWell Employee Wellness website is LIVE!

The website features fresh, up-to-date content about all things wellness, relevant topics, and information about upcoming wellness events. The Human Resources Total Rewards team created the site in partnership with Penn State PRO Wellness. Visit <https://bewell.pennstatehealth.org>.



The Truth about Weight Management

By Lindsay B. Curtin, PharmD, BCPS

The promise of a new year tends to bring a renewed commitment to wellness. What good habits can we start, and what unfavorable behaviors should be left behind? Of course, weight management is always a popular theme in resolutions. Still, unreasonable weight management goals and misinformation often challenge it. Most of the wellness industry wants everyone to believe they're just one exercise equipment purchase away from a new body.

Unhealthy weight gain and obesity are common in nearly all places worldwide in all demographic groups except some areas of sub-Saharan Africa. Contrary to messages in popular culture that simplify weight management to match food consumption and energy expenditure, weight management is a complex process. While we can control nutrition and physical activity, we can't as easily impact hormones, genetic makeup, or internal processes that affect our health. Person A and person B could eat the same diet and perform the same exercise with very different outcomes. A lot of energy handling in our body is out of our control, but we can improve health and encourage a healthy weight. These strategies are not quick fixes, and they require a lifelong commitment! It is better to make smaller, achievable changes over a more extended period than drastic, unrealistic changes for the short term.

So, let's equip ourselves with the facts. In short, body composition is commonly defined by body mass index or BMI. The BMI calculation uses kilograms (kg) of body weight, and height in meters (m) reported as kg/m² to determine weight categories. It has limitations but is the least invasive and quickest way to get a sense of where you may fall. The CDC's website offers a BMI calculator to serve as a tool for understanding your measurements. BMIs between 18.5 – 24.9 kg/m² are considered healthy. Anything higher is overweight, and anything lower is underweight. It is important to note that some ethnicities, like Asian Americans, have more significant health risks at these BMIs and may benefit from intervention at lower BMI thresholds. BMIs > 25 kg/m² increase the risk of death from coronary artery disease, stroke, respiratory disease, and cancer for the general population. BMIs > 30 kg/m² increase the risk of many conditions, such as type II diabetes, cancer, high blood pressure, asthma, chronic back pain, heart attack, sleep apnea, and depressive and other mental disorders.

So, where do we start? (1) The first step should always include a discussion with your physician to discuss any concerns with weight management. Important topics include setting healthy goals for weight loss in the short and long term, dietary management, changes in physical activity, and the need for potential medical or pharmaceutical intervention for weight management. Your provider should be able to describe healthy lifestyle choices that will benefit your overall well-being and be appropriate strategies for weight management.

(2) Be prepared to focus on maintaining healthy eating habits. In studies, dietary changes alone were more effective than exercise alone in losing weight. Diets should include a lot of fiber, high-quality protein, complex carbohydrates instead of simple sugars, and less than 30% of daily calories from fat. Very restrictive diets are not effective for long-term weight loss, and clinical trial data for weight loss do not support them. (3) Dietary changes combined with physical activity are most effective for weight loss. The American Heart Association recommends at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise per week to optimize cardiovascular health and support weight loss efforts. Studies show that even 10-minute bursts of exercise throughout the day are effective at maintaining health! It can improve cardiovascular health, improve the metabolic profile like cholesterol and blood sugar values, and improve mobility and overall functionality.

Weight management is a never-ending process that requires frequent evaluation of goals and behaviors. No two individuals will have the same weight loss journey, and it is essential to be patient with yourself. Start with a conversation at your provider's office or with a registered dietician. It is a vital step not only in changing your weight but in improving your health!

Resource: CDC





SupportLinc, coming to Penn State Health employees on March 1

SupportLinc will be replacing ComPsych Employee Assistance Program. This program offers emotional well being and work-life balance resources for you and your family.

SupportLinc offers expert guidance to help and resolve everyday issues and offers:

- In-the-moment support
- Short-term counseling
- Financial expertise
- Convenience resources
- Legal consultation
- Convenient, on-the-go support via web or mobile app

More information for SupportLinc will be provided through the Daily Brief and the BeWell Employee Wellness website—<https://bewell.pennstatehealth.org> in the coming weeks.



Tips to Improve Sleep

Sleep plays a vital role in our overall health and well-being, yet 1 in 3 adults aren't getting the recommended amount. Sleep expert, Dr. Matthew Walker shared his top tips for getting consistent, high-quality sleep for better health.

- Maintain a regular sleep routine, going to bed and waking up at the same time each day.
- Avoid computers, tablets, and phones in the last hour before bed as part of a nightly wind-down routine. If possible, try to keep phones out to the bedroom.
- Get screened for sleep apnea if you are known to be a heavy snorer and/or feel excessively tired during the day.
- Get exposure to natural daylight, especially in the first half of the day.
- Avoid stimulants like caffeine and sedatives, like alcohol, later in the day.
- If you can't sleep, get out of bed and do a relaxing activity away from the bedroom, like reading in dim light. Only return to bed when you're sleepy.
- Consult your doctor if you are experiencing insomnia, including a discussion about cognitive behavioral therapy for insomnia (CBTI).
- Engage in some form of physical exercise during the day.

Resource: Virgin Pulse



How to Bounce Back from Challenges

Since childhood, we have heard stories about individuals overcoming unthinkable circumstances - situations no one believe they could overcome and coming out stronger than before.

Resilience is at its core about getting through the pain, disappointment, and heartbreak in life without letting such instances crush your spirit. Research has uncovered resilient people's various skills and attitudes to overcome traumas, missteps, and setbacks.

Resilience doesn't just live in a world of superheroes but in everyday individuals. The ability to have the same outcomes as those heroes are within your reach. You don't have to be super to take on the very personal real challenges in your life.

- Accept how you feel, no matter what the emotion may be.
- Know that accepting the reality of your situation does not mean you have to like it.
- Share your circumstances with the people that love and care for you.
- Do not obsess over the situation or problem; it will not give you a solution.
- Never forget where you have come from—the various previous hardships you have overcome.
- Problem-solving a plan with a friend or loved one.
- Discover what you can learn from the situation.
- Find gifts that will come from difficult situations.

Resource: CuraLinc

Penn State Health BeWell Champion Spotlight



Esteem Penn State Health Cosmetic Associates has gone to great lengths to improve health and wellness initiatives for its employees as part of the BeWell Champion Initiative. Funded through Penn State Health Human Resources in collaboration with Penn State PRO Wellness, this initiative enhances wellness within the Penn State Health community. Since the fall of 2019, a network of BeWell Champions across 32 Penn State Health Community Medical Group sites has led employee wellness efforts.

Sharon Amato (manager) is the BeWell Champion for Esteem Penn State Health Cosmetic Associates. When asked why she would wish to serve as a Champion, she commented, "Being part of a wellness program is an adjunct to the Cosmetic center. Dedicated to improving our patients' lives; wellness, health, and beauty are the cornerstones of our center."

Through her role, she has been able to host many wellness activities for her staff. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Sharon successfully offered yoga and Pilates classes to increase physical activity levels and support well-being. Sharon commented that staff "really enjoyed and bonded" through this particular program. Another initiative included offering a self-defense class to her team, which they found "very helpful and felt more in control." Sharon will continue with her third year in the program and will focus on increasing physical activity levels. She intends to host another Pilates/Yoga class, bring in a self-defense speaker, and conduct a steps contest for her staff at Esteem Penn State Health Cosmetic Associates.



Budgeting for Financial Success

Without a plan for financial success, it is difficult to know which decisions are the right ones to make. Creating and sticking to a budget provides you with a clearer financial picture and gives you a better sense of control over your money.

To create a budget that works, follow one simple rule: Don't spend more than you earn. Some kinds of debt, such as a home mortgage loan, are unavoidable. These debts are managed through monthly payments over a set period. What you want to avoid is the kind of debt that keeps you from realizing your long-term financial dreams. For that, you need a budget.

Getting Started

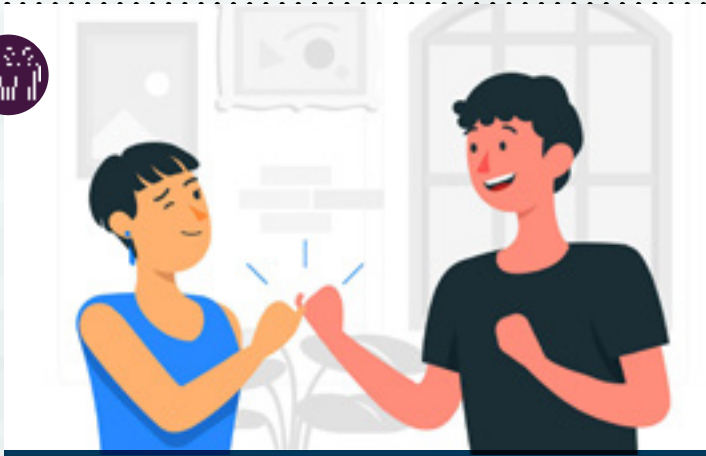
You will need your pay slips, bank and investment statements, bills and credit card statements, receipts, paper, and a pen to get started on your budget. Begin by estimating monthly income and expenses to get a real sense of how much you are earning and how much you are spending. Here are the steps involved:

- Estimate your take-home pay by looking at the net (after-tax) amount on your pay slips. Bank statements may also be helpful to measure such non-wage income as interest, dividends, etc.
- Calculate your expenditures. Include all your typical expenses, such as mortgage payments, car loans, transportation costs, utilities, child and elderly care, food and clothing, education, medical bills, car repairs, retirement savings, entertainment purchases, and miscellaneous expenses.
- Subtract all expenditures from revenues. If you have a surplus, aim to save as much of it as possible. If you have a deficit, you need to cut expenditures. Experts recommend setting a goal of saving at least 10 percent of your earnings and having at least three months' income set aside for emergencies.

Tips for Living within Your Budget

- Focus on savings versus spending. Rethink your priorities.
- Evaluate your expenditures by listing them in order of priority and determine which purchases can be eliminated or reduced. Rethink big-ticket items unless you are absolutely sure they are necessary.
- Document every transaction. Create a system to file and organize your revenues and expenditures. File all receipts and bills as you process them and keep your financial records up to date.
- Computerize your efforts. Consider buying a financial management program to help you balance your accounts.
- Monitor your budget on a monthly or weekly basis to ensure you are on track and to keep you motivated.
- Pay off your credit card balance each month. When using credit cards, make an entry in your financial records for each individual charge the day the purchase is made. This will prevent charge card bills from catching you without adequate cash in your bank account to cover them.
- Confide in your partner, and have your partner follow these procedures as well. Once you have created a budget to properly deal with your financial situation, you will enjoy greater peace of mind knowing exactly how you have spent your money.





4 Tips to Build Everyday Trust in Relationships

When you think of trust in relationships, you likely think of rebuilding after an incident where trust was challenged and/or lost. Some common reasons trust becomes an issue in relationships are dishonesty, unreliability, and betrayal.

Let's focus on building a foundation of trust from the start of the relationship. To prevent the pitfalls of the issues listed above, here are four practical, concrete ways to establish trust and maintain it.

Building Everyday Trust

- Say what you mean and mean what you say. Your word is so important, so it is essential to match actions with words. An example of practicing this is honoring commitments. If you say, "I'll be there to help you move on Saturday," you should make sure to be there on Saturday. It is extremely easy to promise the world (especially in new relationships) because you care for someone. However, you do MORE

damage when you make promises that you cannot keep. This is not to say that you are not allowed to change your mind about something. Just be sure to communicate this to your partner. Saying what you mean and meaning what you say lets your partner know they can trust your words.

Communicate your intentions clearly

- Having adequate and clear communication is vital in maintaining a successful relationship professionally and with friends and family. It is just as important in romantic relationships. Your partner is NOT a mind reader, so state your intentions and state them often. Communicating your intentions keeps your partner informed of your thoughts, so they do not have to guess, make assumptions, and get caught off guard.

Admit your mistakes

- Reliability and accountability are important in all relationships. Your partner wants to know that you will admit when you have made a mistake! We all make them. Building trust within a relationship is taking accountability for your mistake, asking how you can make it better, and making a commitment that you will not make that particular mistake again (or at least making a plan to limit that particular mistake).

Always tell the truth

- This one may seem like a no-brainer, but you would be surprised how many good-hearted people lie. Good people sometimes lie to avoid conflict, get out of situations, and please the person in front of them. When you are dishonest about small things (think white lies), it makes it hard for others to trust you when it comes to more significant issues. An alternative to telling a white lie is allowing yourself time to think about the issue. "I'm not sure yet, can I get back to you?" or "I am feeling emotional about this topic, I would like to table it and come back when I am feeling more grounded" are much better options than lying. Always telling the truth is the first step in establishing everyday trust in relationships.

Resource: <https://www.gottman.com/blog/4-tips-to-build-everyday-trust-in-relationships/>



NEW!

WW's Most Personalized Program Ever

No Two Plans Are Alike

WW's NEW! PersonalPoints™ Program can help you drop the pounds you want while eating what you love and living your life fully.



With WW, you'll find success with the program made for your life! Here's a look at the exciting new offerings:

- PersonalPoints are tailored to you:** Your unique Points Budget and ZeroPoint™ foods list (foods you don't need to track!) will be customized to the foods you love.
- Science, simplified:** WW makes healthy eating easier by boiling complex nutritional information down to one number—a PersonalPoints value. Just eat and track—how simple is that?
- For the first time ever, you can earn Points!** You can now add Points to your Budget by eating non-starchy vegetables, drinking more water, and being active. Building healthy habits has never been more rewarding!

Already a WW member? You'll automatically experience these exciting advancements!

Haven't joined WW yet? Take advantage of our wellness benefits! Join WW for as low as \$8.48 a month for up to 6 months per year.*

To learn more or sign up, visit WW.com/us/PennStateHealth

*"As low as" price reflects the Digital membership plan for your organization's employees. Monthly payment is required in advance. You will be automatically charged each month per company pricing until you cancel or your employment with your organization terminates.



Recipe

Gluten Free Spiced Waffles

No one will ever know that these sweet and spiced waffles are gluten-free and heart healthy! With maple syrup right in these gluten-free spiced waffles, you don't need any extra syrup on top.

Ingredients:

1 cup apple cider or apple juice	1/2 tsp ground ginger
2 cups almond flour	1/4 tsp salt
1 cup tapioca flour	4 large eggs
2 tsp gluten-free baking powder	2 Tbsp melted coconut oil
1 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon, plus additional for garnish	1 Tbsp maple syrup
1/2 tsp ground nutmeg	1 apple, sliced
	Light whipped cream or coconut cream, for garnish

Preparation

1. In a small saucepan over medium-high heat, bring the apple cider to a boil. Continue to cook until it is reduced by half, or about 1/2 cup, about 15 minutes.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together the flours, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger and salt until well blended. In another bowl, whisk together the eggs, coconut oil, reduced apple cider and maple syrup. Add the egg mixture to the flour mixture and whisk well until smooth.
3. Preheat your waffle iron. Cook according to your waffle maker's instructions.
4. Top with sliced apple, a dollop of whipped cream and a sprinkle of additional cinnamon, if desired.

Nutrition Facts

1. **Waffle per Serving:** Calories: 198 Fat: 13g Saturated Fat: 3g Cholesterol: 62mg Sodium: 281mg Carbohydrates: 16g Fiber: 4g Protein: 6g

Celebrating Diversity with Children

DIVERSITY is part of what makes the world a vibrant and beautiful place. As children enter school, play sports, participate in activities and explore their community, they'll get to know peers with a wide variety of abilities, cultures, languages, and backgrounds.



It's totally natural for children, particularly very young ones, to notice similarities and differences and express curiosity. Here are some simple ways to model acceptance of diversity and to frame it as a strength.

- **Lead by Example.** Remember that kids are always listening and watching. Show kindness in your own daily life and be aware of the way that you talk to others. Even though it may seem like harmless fun, making comments or jokes that encourage stereotypes can undo what children have been taught about respecting others.
- **Have Open Conversations about Diversity.** Comments such as "we don't see color" or "we're all the same on the inside" don't acknowledge the reality that differences do exist. Part of what makes the community fabric so rich is that individuals come from unique backgrounds, ethnicities, and cultures. Have discussions about the importance of accepting people as they are and answer your child's questions honestly.
- **Correct Insensitive Comments.** Sometimes children will not realize that what they're saying is offensive. Turn it into a teaching moment. Gently correct them and explain that it's hurtful to talk about someone because they are different. Remind the child to treat others the way that they want to be treated themselves.
- **Provide Exposure to Different Racial and Cultural Backgrounds.** Schedule activities or play dates with children from different backgrounds. You can also explore another culture's food, read books together or watch diversity-themed movies.
- **Celebrate Your Own Heritage.** Children can readily learn acceptance by embracing their own culture. Explore your family tree, participate in cultural or religious traditions and visit extended family to strengthen your child's sense of identity. Increasing their self-esteem about what makes them unique means they will be more likely to appreciate and respect others.





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SNACK
gluten-free recipes

