

BALANCE MY CHOICE

Wellness Pointers

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JOGGING IS VERY BENEFICIAL. IT'S GOOD FOR YOUR LEGS AND YOUR FEET. IT'S ALSO VERY GOOD FOR THE GROUND. IT MAKES IT FEEL NEEDED.
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PHYSICAL

Emotional | Environmental | Financial | Mental | Occupational | Physical | Social | Spiritual

In The Gardens

Two gardens, Eden and Gethsemane, provided the stage for two choices that brought opposite results. Scripture vividly contrasts these choices: Adam's decision to sin had the potential of bringing condemnation to all, while Christ's decision to die for sin provided potential justification to all (see Rom. 5:18). Adam never would have eaten the fruit had he known the acute consequences his choice would bring to himself and to his race.

Jesus' decision in Gethsemane, however, brought immeasurable blessing for humankind. In the same way, our own choices can produce good beyond imagination. When a man named Mordecai Ham shared the good news of Jesus Christ to a young boy, he had no idea at the time the good that would result. Not many people know Ham's name, but through his simple faithfulness, God converted Billy Graham.

Anyone can count the seeds in an apple, but only God can count the apples in a seed. Only the Lord knows the staggering potential inside each decision we make. Like Adam in Eden, we can compromise God's Word in the here and now and live with overwhelming regret. Or, like Jesus in Gethsemane, we can take God at His Word -- even when it costs us dearly -- knowing the Father makes the potential worth the sacrifice.

Every day, Lord, I walk in the garden of decision. Jesus made the hard choice of obedience in the garden for me -- and for all mankind. Help me fight the good fight today and choose the long-term benefits that faithfulness offers.

I cannot continuously say no to this or no to that, unless there is something ten times more attractive to choose. -Henri Nouwen

Do What Moves You

Push Past Your Obstacles and Get Active!

People come up with lots of reasons to avoid physical activity. They feel too tired, too busy, too out of shape, too old... and the list goes on. But these obstacles pale in comparison to the many benefits of boosting your activity, even by a modest amount. Regardless of your age, gender or athletic ability, physical activity can enrich your health and well-being.

What can physical activity do for you? Coupled with a healthy diet, it can help you achieve and maintain a healthy weight. It can help prevent or delay the onset of chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure and some types of cancer. Your overall well-being may brighten as well, because physical activity can help you reduce stress, gain energy, sleep better, and fight depression and anxiety.

Some physical activities -- such as weight-bearing exercises like jogging, tennis and weight lifting -- can also help you build and maintain healthy muscle and bone. That's important at any age, but especially critical for older adults.

Experts recommend that adults get at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity most days of the week. Moderate-intensity activities make you breathe harder and make it more difficult to talk, but you should still be able to carry on a conversation. Children and adolescents need double what adults do. If weight loss is your goal, aim for at least an hour of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity each day.

If you're reluctant to get physically active, think about the top three hurdles you face. Write them down, then list possible solutions. If expense is a concern, choose free activities like walking around parks or nature trails. If weather is an obstacle, consider walking around the mall or working out with fitness videos at home.

If the demands of family, friends and work leave you pressed for time, add physical activity to your daily routine. Try taking lunchtime walks, using the stairs instead of the elevator or enjoying an evening stroll around the neighborhood. Even everyday chores, like household cleaning and yard work, can get you moving.

Some people prefer structured exercise. No matter what kind of physical activities you choose, be sure to include some that are fun. Maybe you'd enjoy gardening or bike riding. Pick whatever activities fit your schedule, and set your plan in motion.

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Crunchy Green Tahini Salad



Salad:

2 12-oz. bunches kale, stems removed

1/2 cup lemon juice

1/3 cup olive oil

2 Tbs. tahini

2 Tbs. Bragg Liquid Aminos, optional

3 cloves garlic, peeled

1/4 tsp. honey, optional

Optional Add-ins:

1 cup chopped parsley or mint

1 cup grated carrots

1 lb. roasted red potatoes

1/4 cup dried cranberries

1/2 cup toasted pine nuts or almonds

1 orange, divided into segments

1/2 cup feta cheese

Directions

1. Stack 8 kale leaves, and roll into tight cylinder. Slice into thin strips. Repeat with remaining kale. Transfer to large bowl.

2. Blend 1/3 cup water, lemon juice, oil, tahini, Bragg Liquid Aminos (if using), garlic, and honey (if using) in blender or food processor until smooth. (You'll have about 1 cup dressing.) Toss kale with 3/4 cup dressing, more if using any add-ins. Season with salt and pepper, if desired.

Hitting the Trails

Follow a few guidelines to ensure your hike is an adventure rather than a tragedy.

Research the area you will be hiking, including terrain, conditions, local weather, and possible hazards, before you start. Decide on a route -- including alternatives -- and departure and return times. Share this information with others.

Ensure your equipment, clothing, food, and emergency supplies are adequate. Test equipment and learn to use it before leaving. Bring extra clothing, food, and water. At a minimum, you should carry a first aid kit and locating devices such as whistles and mirrors. Bring along a GPS-enabled smartphone if you have one.

Know your limits and be realistic. Monitor energy levels, physical comfort, and supplies. Stop if you start to feel you can't complete the intended hike.

Stay on your planned route. Avoid contact with unknown plants and wild animals.

Have a plan for if something goes wrong. If you become lost, hurt, or confused, stay put until someone finds you.