



A Weekly Bulletin for "Choose a PATH to Wellness"

Vibrant

**Week 8
Balance**

TEXAS ASSOCIATION of COUNTIES
HEALTH AND EMPLOYEE BENEFITS POOL



Together. Better. Stronger.

An Olympic Challenge

Mission Eight

BALANCE

Doing What You Love

How do I find the time to incorporate leisure activities into my day?

"Reserve your right to think, for even to think wrongly is better than not to think at all." – Hypatia

Conversation around the water cooler, or other gathering places often progresses to a standard statement: "I've always wanted to try that!" So why haven't you?

You haven't got another second to spare for a fun new adventure? You're afraid to spend time and energy on something that may not be all that exciting in the end? It may just be a passing fancy and not something you have truly always been passionate about? What if you found that it really wasn't your bag?

These are all good questions when it comes to making change and finding time to do so. Change is a process and readiness is key. Making the statement, "I've always wanted to try that," is the first step. That statement means you are at least "contemplating" change. But in order to be ready to truly make the leap, a few factors have to be in place. Here are some tips on being successful:

Passing fancy or real passion - you don't have to invest lots of money and time to determine if you really love a leisure activity. Start by watching someone else engage in it, read a little about it, talk with people who already are passionate about it. What's your motivation for wanting to do this activity? If your motivation and desire for the benefits of doing this aren't strong enough to overcome the lack of time factor, then it is certainly a passion fancy at this point. Explore your motivation.

What's a reasonable way to get started - write down what it would take to really engage and learn this new activity. Maybe it's not as time

consuming as you thought. If it is a lot of time and energy, this is a good way to begin to chunk it up into chewable bits.

Add it to the to-do list - make it believable and give it respect by writing it down on your to-do list so you see it every day. Once the activity is on paper, it's real, rather than being a mournful wish taking up guilt space in your brain, get it out and on paper. What equipment, training and knowledge do you need to do this activity successfully?

Avoid global statements - adding, "I want to learn how to ice skate" to your to do list may overwhelm you. Start instead by adding steps such as, "call the ice rink to learn about instructors and times."

Match the resources for the activity with your level of interest - be sure you have the minimum equipment necessary to really enjoy what you'll be doing. Don't feel you need to be an expert or devotee right off the bat. Easing into any activity is smart and reasonable.

Pitfalls are inevitable and change is cyclical - Work on dumping guilt or regret in the trash. Everything falls out of focus at times. We cycle in and out of behaviors both good and bad until habits become ingrained. Even then it's common to get out of our routines once in a while. Shake these pitfalls off because they are always only temporary, and move forward rather than dwelling on them or speaking poorly about yourself. Talk about pitfalls with friends and experts, then put yourself back on track with your to-do lists.

So you find out it's not your bag - no damage done; now it's off your list and out of your brain, leaving space for the next new and fun idea, activity or exercise. Cross it off and move on with confidence.



Training Table Recipe

Spicy Italian Ski Team Soup

- 1/3 cup onions, chopped
- 1/3 cup green bell pepper, chopped
- 3/4 tsp garlic, minced
- 1/4 tsp crushed red pepper
- 1-1/4 tsp olive oil
- 1 cup reduced-sodium beef broth
- 1 cup water
- 11 oz canned kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1-1/4 cups canned Italian style stewed tomatoes
- 11 oz frozen Italian-style vegetable combination
- 3/4 tsp dried basil leaves
- 1/2 cup small shell pasta
- 2/3 cup spinach leaves, loosely packed

Saute onion, pepper, garlic, and red pepper in oil in large saucepan until tender, 3-4 minutes. Stir in beef broth, water, beans, tomatoes, Italian vegetables, and basil; heat to boiling. Add pasta and simmer, uncovered, until vegetables and pasta are tender, about 10 minutes. Stir spinach into soup; simmer 1-2 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. If desired, add a teaspoon of prepared pesto sauce into each bowl of soup.

Calories 200, Fat 2.2g, Protein 10.9g, Carbohydrates 36.9g, Fiber 9.1g, Sodium 498mg





Training Tips

This Week's Stretch & Strengthen Exercise:

Balance & Core

About the Olympics

Early '90s—Freedom & Sensibility

1992 - Barcelona/Albertville. These were the first games since the '20's that were completely boycott free. The changes in the world leading to these games were phenomenal. The Soviet Union had split into 15 separate countries, the Berlin Wall had fallen, Communism was gone, and to everyone's great joy, Apartheid in South Africa was abolished. Nelson Mandela, the icon of freedom then, became the first black president of South Africa. Much seemed right with the world.

The first appearance of a unified German team (East and West together) since 1936; and the former Soviet republics formed the "Unified Team".

The only mark on freedom was the looming threat of genocide and ravaging war in Yugoslavia. The International Olympic Committee made an appeal to the world that the original, ancient Olympic Truce be officially observed from this point forward - that nations would put down their weapons for the sake of the Olympic Spirit every four years. Croatia and Sarajevo competed as independent nations.

Baseball and Badminton make their debuts.

1994 - Lillehammer. For the first time since they began in 1924, the Winter games split from the Summer games and thus began to be held every four years - alternating every two years from the Summer games.

The 4-man bobsled race highlighted the "Bosnia and Herzegovina" team which was composed of 1 Croatia, 2 Bosnians, and 1 Serb. At the worst of times for these men, the true meaning of the spirit of the Olympic Truce shone through.

Instructions:

- ♦ Standing firmly on your left leg, raise your right knee and place both your arms out in front of you.
- ♦ Straighten your right leg out to the side and point your toe.
- ♦ As you straighten your leg, pull your fists into your hips, keeping your elbows tight to your sides. Squeeze your shoulder blades together.
- ♦ Repeat the sequence with the other side and continue to alternate legs until you've done 10-20 on each side. Start with 10 and work up to 20 over time (adding one more repetition each time). Repeat the entire set if you feel strong enough.
- ♦ As you get stronger, hold a weighted object such as dumbbells or a medicine ball.

Important Cautions:

- ♦ Always give your body a day of rest in between these exercises.
- ♦ Always keep your knees soft - never lock them.
- ♦ Keep your lower back flat and your stomach tight.
- ♦ Keep your shoulders loose and stand up straight.



Safety Corner

Preventing Accidental Medication Poisoning

- ♦ Call 1-800-222-1222 in case of poisoning.
- ♦ Keep all household products and medicines locked up, out of sight and out of reach.
- ♦ Use child-resistant packaging properly by closing the container securely after each use.
- ♦ When products are in use, keep children in your sight, even if you must take them along when answering the phone or doorbell.
- ♦ Keep items in original containers.
- ♦ Leave the original labels on all products, and read the label before using.
- ♦ Always turn the light on when giving or taking medicine so you can see what you are taking. Check the dosage every time.
- ♦ Avoid taking medicine in front of children.
- ♦ Clean out the medicine cabinet periodically and safely dispose of unused and outdated medicines.



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