

# Well~Connected

## BLIND SPOT



While driving down the highway, have you ever switched lanes and been startled by a HONK from an angry driver that seemed to appear out of nowhere? Just as in driving, we all have a blind spot in our life. Do you know what yours is? Your spouse or best friend can probably easily point out a few.

All joking aside, when it comes to your health, in what area are you blind to seeing the importance and/or impact on your physical, mental or emotional wellbeing?

Awareness is the first step in transforming your blind spot into a new strength.

### *Convert Setbacks to Comebacks*

Whether in the personal or professional arena, feedback from peers, family members or co-workers can be particularly helpful. If you are brave enough to open yourself up to the possibility of learning hard truths, you are also opening yourself up to growth and the opportunity for change.

### *Break Free of Damaging Patterns*

Do you head straight to the fridge when you walk in the door, or perhaps snack mindlessly while you watch TV in the evening? In both situations, you're not particularly hungry, it's just habitual. This little routine may be sabotaging your weight loss journey. Be intentional about your food choices. Eat out of hunger rather

than boredom or habit and measure out an appropriate portion size.

### *Pause and Reflect*

Take a moment and think about a situation in which you would like a different outcome. Without judgement or criticism, think about the experience objectively. What thoughts/feelings did you have in that moment? What skills or attributes would have helped to cultivate your desired outcome?

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WITHOUT REFLECTION,  
WE GO BLINDLY ON OUR WAY,  
CREATING MORE UNINTENDED  
CONSEQUENCES,  
AND FAILING TO  
ACHIEVE ANYTHING USEFUL.

-MARGARET WHEATLEY-

**ASBA**  
Insurance Trust

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Spring 2022 Campaign

Fitbit® Challenge Winners



## Healthy Minds, Healthy Bodies

*"Laughter has a way of instantly connecting people. . . but more than that - laughter can increase confidence, self-esteem, creativity, positivity and resilience, bringing positive changes to all aspects of our lives." - Joe Bluet*

As adults, life tends to throw a series of stressors, deadlines, and unexpected trials our way. Have you noticed? One of the most overlooked remedies to combatting stress is something very natural—laughter! As children, this probably came easy, but as adults, it's still important to understand the tremendous physical, mental, and social benefits that are found from this human response.

- 1 **Physical Health Benefits:** Boosts immunity, relaxes the body, and lowers stress hormones
- 2 **Mental Health Benefits:** Improves mood, helps to recharge, and shifts perspective
- 3 **Social Health Benefits:** Strengthens relationships, enhances teamwork, and helps diffuse conflict

Laughter can't be forced. To unwind and induce these benefits, consider the ideas below:

- Watch your favorite sitcom or funny movie
- Read a light-hearted book
- Enjoy a comedy show
- Spend time with friends and family who make you feel happy!



## SLEEP CARE AS SELF-CARE: WHY IS SLEEP SO IMPORTANT?

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected us all in many ways. At its peak, worries about COVID-19 kept many from getting enough sleep and having a set sleep schedule. Plus, being stuck at home, social distancing and losing track of time may have also made it challenging to get enough rest. If you found yourself with "coronasomnia" or other disturbances to your sleep pattern, you may still be feeling negative effects to your lifestyle and daily routines.

The good news is, there's plenty of room to practice new habits for a healthy, happy lifestyle. Now more than ever before, it's important to take care of yourself and this includes getting a good night's rest.

### How to get better sleep—and why it's important

If you are struggling to get a good night's rest, don't worry! There are some steps you can take to get back on track:

**Create a sleep routine.** Have a wake-up time, a wind-down time and a set bedtime. This means waking up at a fixed time every day, winding down or getting ready for bed, and having a set time you want to fall asleep. It is important for your circadian rhythm, the natural process your body goes through to regulate your sleep and wake cycle.

Try having your alarm clock, phone, tablet or other electronic device on the other side of the room. This will help ensure you don't have any distractions.

**Practice good sleep hygiene.** This means using your bed for sleep and sleep only. Try to avoid sitting or lounging in your bed when it's not bedtime. If you have a TV in your bedroom, move it to another room in your house. It can also be a hard habit to break if you've become accustomed to working from home in your bed.

If you're tempted to look at your phone or devices before bed, simply leave them on the other side of the room when it's time to turn in.

### Exercise.

Physical activity can make you tired and help you sleep well. Walking, stretching and relaxing before bed can help ensure you get a good night's sleep. That's because it helps regulate your circadian rhythm so your body stays on a regulated schedule. It's important to make

sure you do any exercise one to two hours before bedtime, to give your mind and body time to wind down after your workout is complete. Exercise creates endorphins, which can keep you awake and make it difficult to fall asleep.

**Eat a balanced diet.** You are what you eat! You've probably heard this saying before, but when it comes to your diet and sleep, studies have shown it really does matter what you eat throughout the day. Try to avoid sugary snacks or drinks before

bed, including alcohol or anything with caffeine. You should also avoid a high carb intake before bed, as carbs can reduce the amount of time your body spends in the deep sleep cycle.

Instead, try sticking to a diet loaded with fresh fruits and vegetables, vitamins, minerals, lean meats and fish. If you need a snack before bed, choose something small and packed with protein, such as nuts, cheese or hummus.



**Q:** My doctor told me I had to exercise most days of the week and recommended walking. I started out great, but then as the days got hotter, I struggled to get out and exercise. Honestly, if it's not the weather, usually something else will pop up and stop me from exercising that day. What do you recommend?

Ask the  
*Health*  
Coach



You doctor is right. Exercising most days of the week is helpful to staying healthy. Also, walking is great exercise because you can do it anywhere and you don't need any specialized class or equipment. However, as you mentioned, the weather can impact how regular your exercise routine may be. You were very honest to note that if it's not the weather, other factors may stop you from walking consistently.

It seems to me that a healthy choice has to be worthwhile, otherwise more desirable options may crowd it out. Ask yourself: What would motivate you

to regularly choose exercise? Does exercising give you more energy? Does it keep your weight in check? Does it help you to model the importance of this to your children? Does consistent exercise mean taking fewer medications or visiting the doctor less frequently? What would truly motivate you to make exercise a habit?

Also, consider looking at the type of exercise you are doing. Some people love to walk and others find it boring. What type of exercise do you find energizing? There are so many ways to get exercise—choose one that you would enjoy, that fits your schedule and takes into account triple-digit weather!

## MYTH or FACT: CARBOHYDRATES MAKE YOU FAT



**MYTH:** Carbohydrates make you fat.

**FACT:** Consuming excess calories from any source can lead to weight gain. Many processed foods contain refined carbohydrates. Relying on such foods has several disadvantages. You don't get the advantage of feeling full from fiber found in unprocessed carbohydrates. For example, whole grain pasta is more filling than white pasta and can help you to feel satisfied longer even though they have about the same number of calories. What can change the total calories is the amount of cheese toppings you put on your pasta! A diet that relies on refined carbohydrates without enough protein or beneficial fats and oils is imbalanced. Over time, this can imbalance metabolism, especially when combined with stress and a lack of exercise.

## Fit Tip: HEALTHY EATING WHILE ON-THE-GO

When thinking of fast-food, fried foods usually comes to mind. But if you navigate the menu wisely and are aware of potential high-fat, high-sugar items, you can have a healthy meal without sabotaging your diet.



1 Opt for a broth based soup



2 Get the grilled chicken



3 Pick veggies and/or beans when possible



4 Avoid sauces and gravy



5 Choose salad with a lean protein and skip creamy dressings, bacon and cheese toppings



## I Am Entitled To My Opinion!



When opinions differ, a typical response is that “we can agree to disagree” because everyone is entitled to their opinion, right? Since it has been around so long, it must be true! Unfortunately, that approach sometimes puts the brakes on forward movement. We often unconsciously rely on the opinion entitlement scheme to justify our thoughts and actions.

Before we continue, how do you regard people that feel entitled? In all likelihood, we all want others to be responsible and contribute to society. What if we work to be responsible, rather than entitled, for our opinions? Anyone can express an entitled opinion, but isn't a responsible opinion more attractive?

There is a corollary between responsibility and critical thinking. One must labor over an idea - consider consequences - to arrive at a responsible opinion. We all tend to do better when we pause to consider the things we say and do. For example, striking a match to light a campfire is valid; but tossing it into a dry patch of grass next to the forest could result in catastrophic consequences. The things we say can sometimes produce similar results.

As members of an interdependent community, we create better outcomes when we consider one another and think through consequences as we challenge ideas, collaborate, and adapt to an ever-evolving world.

When someone shares a seemingly entitled opinion, gently encourage them to think further about their idea and its ripple effect. A helpful place to start is to request sharing ideas to arrive at understandings that benefit all parties. This approach can help us move from ‘entitled’ to responsible opinions and more productive outcomes.

alliance work partners  
A WAPD Program

## 2022 Spring Wellness Campaign



COMMIT  
TO STRETCHING  
FOR AT LEAST  
10 MINUTES  
EACH DAY.



PARTICIPANT PRIZE

## Fitbit® Challenge WINNERS



*"Your good cholesterol is fine, but your bad cholesterol is plotting to hack into your computer, empty your bank account and steal your wife."*

### November

Aubrey Zaugg  
Safford Unified  
School District

### December

Anna Abe  
Western Maricopa  
Education Center

### January

Nellie Montijo  
Eloy Elementary  
School District