

# Healthier Living

CREATE A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE THROUGH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, NUTRITION, AND LIFE BALANCE

**SWWC**  
LIVE WELL

## KINDNESS It's Good for You!

**T**here are two reasons why you should spread kindness: **it's good for others and it's good for you.** Sometimes all it takes to make someone's day a little better is a small act like holding the door, complimenting their shoes, or letting them merge into your lane. The bonus is that it can also improve your mental and physical wellbeing.

Here's how kindness is good for you:



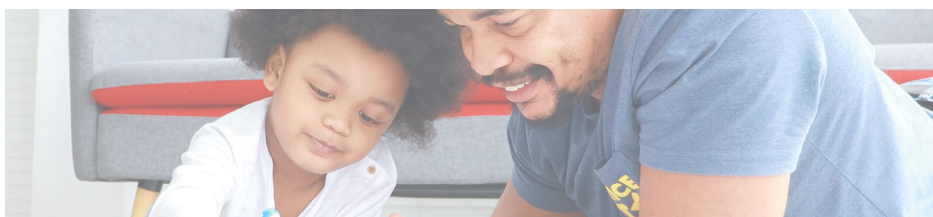
**The Mind.** Small acts of kindness have been shown to decrease cortisol, the stress hormone, and increase serotonin and dopamine, hormones in the brain that create feelings of satisfaction and wellbeing. Certain acts of kindness can also reduce loneliness, improve low mood, increase self-esteem, and enhance your relationships overall. Writing a letter to a friend, calling up your family, or complimenting a stranger at the store can all achieve that.



**The Body.** From lowering blood pressure to releasing endorphins, your body's natural painkiller, kindness helps heal your body. Most importantly, being kind provides a feeling of purpose. Studies show that people with a sense of purpose are more likely to live longer with a significantly lower risk of heart disease, stroke, and dementia. Oxytocin is another chemical released in your brain and it has been linked with several benefits like reducing inflammation, which in turn protects you from obesity, diabetes, and cancer.



**Where to Start.** The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation has a long list of options for you to choose from if you need ideas. When in doubt, you can always fall back on the golden rule: treat others the way you want to be treated. From donating materials to those in need to being patient on the road, acts of kindness can help both you and the people around you. Challenge yourself to do one kind task, big or small, each day and experience the difference it can make. ♦



## QUICK CLICK volunteer match



[www.volunteermatch.org](http://www.volunteermatch.org)

Volunteering strengthens your ties to the community, broadens your support network, and exposes you to people with common interests. It also helps to uplift neighborhood resources and fun activities to participate in. Volunteer Match is a non-profit that you can use to find local volunteer opportunities. ♦



### FEATURED RECIPE

## AIR FRYER SALMON

### INGREDIENTS

- 4 salmon fillets
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- ½ tsp. paprika
- Salt and pepper, to taste

### INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat air fryer (or oven) to 400°F. Coat each fillet with olive oil and seasonings. Place the salmon on an air fryer basket or aluminum foil lined pan and bake for 7-9 minutes or until thoroughly cooked.



# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

## food for on the GO!



**W**hen you're on the go, fast food or pre-packaged snacks are convenient and tasty. With the convenience, however, you often sacrifice nutrition, so here are a few fulfilling snacks and meals you can have at the ready.

**Raise the breakfast bar.** Combine rolled oats with nut butter, honey, vanilla extract, flaxseed, cinnamon, and a pinch of salt. Then add some fun mix-ins like chocolate chips, dried fruit, or toasted nuts. Roll into a ball and chill to set. It's all the convenience of a granola bar without all the preservatives.

**Jar lunch.** Make a salad with a shake by putting all the ingredients in a jar. Start with dressing at the bottom, then add tomatoes, cucumber, carrots, beans, and anything else you like. Top with lettuce and you're all set.

**Soups on.** Soup is easy to make in bulk, and anything you can't finish can be frozen for another day. Use low-sodium broth or blend up your vegetables into a tasty puree. Add some protein like beans or meat and season to your liking. All you need to do is heat it up.

**Come prepared.** You can easily replace your freezer meals and packaged snacks with healthier options. The key is making your meals in bulk and planning ahead. You can make meals for the entire week with a little preparation and to-go containers to put them in. ♦

# MIND MATTERS

## Break Time!

**E**ven if you love your job, the workday can be long, draining, and stressful, so it's essential to **take a break** every now and then.



Prolonged stress can transform into **chronic stress**, which can negatively impact your sleep patterns, eating habits, and relationships, and lead to a range of health issues.

Taking breaks throughout the workday is one way to **destress and reenergize**. Move your brain away from work mode by going for a walk, listening to music, reading a book, stretching, or watching a video. Many jobs deplete your "brain fuel" but taking breaks helps reduce fatigue and improve focus.

The best break of all is a **vacation**. Taking an extended break is good for you and your performance at work. It interrupts the cycle of stress that many people develop in their work routines. Time off can improve your mood, increase productivity, and provide energy.

Whether you take time off or give yourself a weekend of recuperation, it's important to **completely unplug yourself from your work side** and focus on taking care of your personal side. ♦

## Exercise Anywhere!



### Camel

Chest, shoulders, and neck stretch. Sitting tall, roll shoulders down and back, placing both fists on lower back. Lift chest and head toward the sky. Hold for 3 - 5 deep breaths.

*Regular movement is fundamental to good health. Moving or changing postures every 30 minutes is recommended.*

### Challenge of the Month:



Get outside for a walk, roll, or run at least 10 times this month. Go alone, with a buddy, or bring your dog. Outdoor movement is great for your cardiovascular fitness, lowering blood pressure, and decreasing stress.