



The Sampler

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Issue #1

Becoming a Better Parent Through Self-Care

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Becoming a Better Parent 1

Successful parenting requires a high level of commitment, consistent effort, and emotional maturity. While it can be challenging to not feel guilty for taking time for self-care, we can't effectively offer love, support, and connection when we are tapped out. Fatigue and burnout both greatly hamper our abilities as parents to connect with our children and to

be emotionally available and present in their lives. Conversely, taking time for proactive self-care can help us create conditions necessary for deep, mutually fulfilling connections with ourselves and others.

Consider the following strategies for self-care:

Meditation and mindfulness: Regular mindfulness or mediation helps individuals to respond to daily stressors more calmly (Behan, 2020). One way to practice meditation is through the app Headspace (free version available). Or, check out this introduction to meditation https://bit.ly/3khU9X2

Enjoyable physical activity: Exercise has positive benefits for physical and

mental health, including increased brain function, improved energy, improved sleep, and much more. If you are a social person, it may be helpful to choose a group exercise activity such as a sports league or fitness class. If you are an introvert and need alone time, you can choose an activity that doesn't require a partner.

Adequate nutrition:

Eating healthy is affected by many factors, including our stage of life, personal situations, preferences, access to food, culture, and traditions.

Everything you eat and

drink matters. The right mix can help you be healthier now and in the future. Consider these ways to improve your nutrition:

- Focus on variety, amount, and nutrition
- Choose foods and beverages with less saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars
- Start with small changes to build healthier eating styles

See more information at MyPlate Plan.



Sufficient sleep: Insufficient sleep can contribute to a myriad of problems. According to leading sleep researchers, there are several techniques to combat common sleep problems. Some examples include, limiting or avoiding caffeine, alcohol or smoking, having a set bed time each night and discontinuing the use of screens 90 minutes before bed. For additional tips see https://www.apa.org/topics/sleep/why.

Time dedicated to personal interests and friends:

Free time has often been viewed as unnecessary or optional. However, research indicates that when time is spent regularly engaging in self-selected activities, there is a benefit to both our physical and mental health. Some examples of these include recreational activities, leisure activities (napping, reading, etc.), and hobbies.

How to improve your efforts in self-care:

While all of these areas are important, self-care, like parenting, is a lifelong effort. It can be overwhelming to address each of these areas at once. Consider these tips to improve self-care without becoming overwhelmed:

- Identify what you need. The Self-Care checkup found here can help you identify an area to focus on first.
- Choose one specific thing that you want to work on.
- Don't "should" yourself.
- Make a plan that is realistic to your life and circumstances.

While it can be challenging to find time for self-care, as you do so, you will not only have increased personal well-being, but you will also have increased energy to stay on top of your parenting game.

~Naomi Brower and Elizabeth David

References: American Psychological Association (2020). Why sleep is important. https://www.apa.org/topics/sleep/why

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Here are some Valentines Day fun food ideas for your kids.

Strawberry Banana Smoothies

1 cup milk 1 cup frozen strawberries ½ frozen banana

Combine the ingredients in a blender and puree until smooth. If the smoothie is too thick, add more milk.

Valentines Day M & M Rice Krispy Treats

6 tablespoons salted butter 8 + 2 cups mini marshmallows 6 cups rice Krispy cereal ½ teaspoon kosher salt ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract 1 cup milk chocolate M & M's



Line an 8x8 pan with foil. Gently cover with cooking spray. Set aside. In a large pot, melt the butter over medium low heat. Once melted add 8 cups of the mini marshmallows to the pan. When the marshmallows are just melted, add the vanilla, kosher salt, and Rice Krispies cereal. Remove from heat. Stir. Once the Rice Krispies cereal is mostly covered with the melty marshmallow mixture, add the remaining 2 cups of mini marshmallows and the M&M's. Stir to combine. Place the Rice Krispies treat mixture into the foiled pan. Gently press* into an even layer.

*When pressing the Rice Krispies down, don't press too hard as you don't want them to be too compact.

Strawberry Cheesecake Dip

6 ounces cream cheese softened to room temperature 1 ½ cups plain Greek yogurt ¼ cup powdered sugar 3 tablespoons strawberry jam 1 tablespoon vanilla extract Strawberry jam or finely chopped strawberries

In a large bowl, beat together the cream cheese and yogurt until smooth. Mix in the powdered sugar, strawberry jam, and vanilla extract. Transfer to a serving dish and lightly swirl in additional strawberry jam or top with finely chopped strawberries. Serve immediately with fruits, graham crackers or lightly

Family and Consumer Science Events

Home Buyer Education Virtual or In Person Classes

- Saturday, Jan 8, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- Saturday, March 12, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- Saturday, April 9, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- Saturday, May 14, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- Saturday, July 9, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

These classes help prepare people for the home buying process. Topics that will be covered are: how much can you afford, mortgage loans, credit, shopping for a home, what to expect at closing and much more. Cost is \$30 per household.



Call 801-399-8207 to register.

Free Financial Webinars

Empowering Financial Wellness has many free financial webinars coming up. Learn about dealing with debt, credit tips, debt reduction, and much more. To sign up for any of these classes and see additional classes coming up go to https://www.eventbrite.com/e/227251965747

January 6, 2022, 1:00 pm - Hacks to Empower Women dealing with Debt

January 13, 2022, 1:00 pm - Get Your Finances into Shape with Budgeting Hacks

January 20, 2022, 1:00 pm - Get Back on Track with Organization Hacks

February 1, 2022, 1:00 pm & 7:00 pm - Credit Tips We love for Women

February 8, 2022, 1:00 pm & 7:00 pm - Our Most Hearted Debt Reduction Tips

February 15, 2022, 1:00 pm & 7:00 pm - Sweet Budgeting Tips

February 22, 2022, 1:00 pm & 7:00 pm - Organization Tips We Love

March 2, 2022, 1:00 pm & 7:00 pm - Estate Planning for Women

Stronger Marriage Webinars

Say YES! How to Increase Optimism in Your Marriage

January 4, 2022, 6:00-7:00 pm

Learn practical ways to say "yes" more in your marriage and develop a more outlook on yourself, your partner and your relationship! Registration Link: https://usu-edu.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN PD1foCImQoySV0LHaGkIyg

"What Happened to Our Relationship Connection?" Tips for Feeling Closer Again

January 27, 2022, 6:00-7:00 pm

Not long after the "newness" wears off in relationships, it's common to start drifting emotionally apart. Stress, kids, work, screens, and hectic schedules get in the way of time and attention with your partner. So, what happens next? First step is understanding your situation of relationship ruts and routines is normal and second, listen to Dr. Dave's science-backed tips and hacks to strengthen your connection and push back on distractions. Registration Link: https://usu-edu.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_eK3eFwj1QOa6uv8i4rn1DA

Stepfamilies: Playing on Expert Level

February 9, 2022, 6:00-7:00 pm

Learn how to navigate the waters of remarriage, and rediscover your roles in your stepfamily and co-parenting partnerships. Registration Link: https://usu-edu.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_gsPRoSLORTGhjUIUivBbeA

A Deep Dive into Growing Calm and Connection through Conflict

February 23, 2022, 6:00-7:00 pm

Learn about why your brain and body responds the way it does when it comes to conflict, attachment, and emotion, and how to use this knowledge and the opportunity of conflict to grow emotionally closer with your partner! Registration Link: https://usu-edu.zoom.us/webinar/register/

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After registering for anyone of the Stronger Marriage Webinars, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.



FRIDAY | FEBRUARY 11 | 2022

ONLINE VIRTUAL EVENT | 6-9:30 PM | BONUS WORKSHOPS FROM 4-6 PM

10 per couple through January 1 | 15 per couple starting February 1

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: MEG JOHNSON

All sessions will be recorded and available on demand following the event.

Extension
UtahStateUniversity.



For tickets and more information, visit: Relationships.usu.edu/MarriageCelebration2022



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Tips to Achieve Your Financial Goals

Resolving to be better with your money is among the top three categories for New Year's resolutions in the US according to a recent survey (Finder, 2020). According to a 2020 article from Magnify Money, about 51% of Americans were planning on setting new year's resolutions for 2021 that were finance related but only 53% who actually set finance related resolutions for 2020 reported that they achieved their goals. Why? Consider these tips to understand common reasons why financial goals fail to be achieved:

- You know your "what" but not your "why?" You know what you want to achieve, but you have either forgotten or never established why achieving that goal or making that change is important to your life.
- You have no social support. If you don't have a social support team or partner to be accountable to then it can be so much easier to slack off on making the needed change to reach your goals. Change can be hard, especially changing financial habits, so it is so important to have support to keep you going when it gets hard.
- ♦ You don't track your progress. Right now is a great time to do some reflecting on both what has been successful and what hasn't worked for you in the past. Be sure to celebrate your progress no matter how big or small. Recommit to why it is important to you and what small, measurable steps you are going to take to see success in 2022.
- You're treating a marathon like a sprint. Good things take time with any goal, but especially financial goals. Be patient and take small steps that allow you to see sustainable progress. If you make drastic changes all at once they may be hard to sustain.
- Too much thinking and not enough doing. Make sure that your goals are specific and measurable, but don't spend so much time planning them out that you overwhelm yourself and don't make any progress.
- People set them and then forget them. Many people set goals and forget about them until the end of the year. Then they wonder why they didn't make any progress. It is important to revisit your goals often and reflect on your progress and ways you can do better going forward.

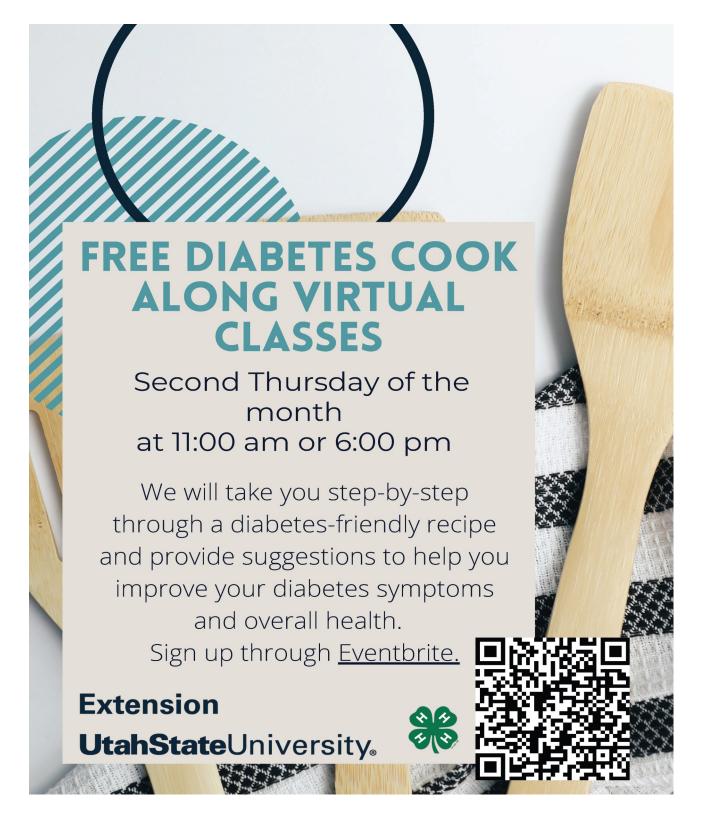
So, now that you know what not to do, consider these tips of what you can do to ensure that you see success in your 2022 financial goals:



- ◆ Make sure you don't set too broad of a goal. If you find that you have, make your goal more specific so it is more achievable.
- Have a way to track and measure your success with your goals. Have an accountability partner that can keep you on track. Have a way to reward your progress.
- ♦ Make sure that your goal is something that is realistic for you to achieve. Don't set goals that aren't realistic or it will be hard to have any motivation to try and make progress. For example, don't set a goal to save \$50,000 in a year if you only make \$40,000.
- Have frequent, specific times to evaluate your progress. This can be essential in maintaining motivation to keep going. This will keep the "what" and the "why" of your goals on your mind so that you don't forget.

These same principles can be applied to your short-term goals for 2022 as well as your intermediate and long-term goals. As Dr. Lucy Delgadillo, professor at USU, once said, "We do not have financial goals, we have life goals with financial consequences." As you achieve success with your financial goals, you will have success with other goals in your life. Just remember to keep the "what" and "why" of your goals on your mind and evaluate often.

~Alicia Nelson-Bell, Finance Intern



Class Schedule 2022

January 13th: Carbohydrates

February 10th: Protein and Blood Glucose Control

March 10th: Diabetes and Weight Loss April 14th: Diabetes Plate Method

May 12th: Fiber, Healthy Fats, and Snacks

Create Better Health News Corner



Healthy and Sustainable Goals for The New Year

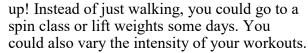
REACH

GOAL

Whenever a new year begins, it can be easy to get sucked up in all of the "new year, new you" talk that goes around. This kind of talk from those around us or through the media can lead us to make drastic changes that are usually unsustainable, and at times, a bit extreme. This new year, I encourage you to make healthy and sustainable lifestyle changes. It's

important to adopt eating and exercise patterns that you enjoy, make you feel good, and you can continue throughout your life. Remember to aim for consistency, not perfection!

Here are some healthy goals you can make for the new year (or any other time-just start small and start now!)



- → Take rest days! Rest days help prevent burnout and injury.
- Set goals outside of weight loss or body composition goals. For example, you could

make a goal to go on a certain hike that is challenging or you could make a time goal for a 5k race. Exercise has so many benefits outside of how it makes our body look!

◆ Don't look at food as a reward for doing exercise. Look at exercise as the reward for nourishing ourselves well. Eating well helps our bodies stay healthy and strong

so we can keep exercising throughout our life.

Sustainable Physical Activity Goals:

- Choose types of exercise you enjoy and have fun doing. You will be more likely to stick with it long-term.
- Exercise with friends or family members. This holds you accountable and makes exercise more fun and social.
- → Start small so you don't get burned out. Start where you are fitness wise...don't run a marathon first, start with a mile. Be patient.
- Find your "why." Why do you exercise?

 Maybe it's for your mental health, maybe it's to reach a goal, or maybe it's to age better,
- → Focus on the benefits of exercise. For example, blood pressure improvements, more energy, better sleep. Our bodies will change throughout our life and our weight fluctuates. You should enjoy exercising and moving your body regardless.
- → Choose a workout routine that fits your current lifestyle and schedule so you can realistically keep up with it.
- Vary your workouts. If you get bored doing the same exercise every day, then change it

Sustainable Nutrition Goals:

WORK

- ➡ Eat more fruits and vegetables. Try to include a variety of whole fruits and vegetables in your meals and snacks.
- ➡ Eat more lean sources of protein. Try eating more plant sources of protein, like beans, nuts, legumes, and tofu. Try swapping out fattier meat options for leaner meats. Eggs and lowfat dairy products are also a great source of protein.
- → Eat more whole grains. Make at least half your grains whole. Try out a new grain that you haven't tried before, like bulgur or millet.
- → Choose fat-free or low-fat dairy products.
- Limit the amount of added sugar, saturated fat, and sodium in your diet. Eating less processed foods, eating more whole foods, and cooking at home is one great way to help achieve this goal.
- → Eat more nutrient dense foods and less calorie dense foods. Doing this will help you get all the nutrients your body needs to be healthy and strong and help you stay within the number of calories your body needs.

- → Eat foods you enjoy! You won't be able to stick to an eating pattern for long if you don't enjoy the food you're eating.
- → Include foods in your diet that are part of your personal and cultural preferences. Adjust if need be. For example, if you enjoy pasta, you can choose tomato-based sauces instead of cream-based sauces. If you love breakfast cereal, you can choose whole grain options and add fruit to make it a more balanced meal.
- Remember it is unrealistic to expect yourself to completely avoid treats or foods that are not as nutritious. Enjoy celebrations and fun gatherings and let yourself eat those foods on occasion without feeling guilty or anxious. Remember consistency over perfection.
- → Cook at home more! It will save you money and help you develop a new, important skill.
- Grow a garden or buy produce locally.
- → Get the whole family involved in meal planning and preparation.
- → Meal plan and grocery shop to help save time, money, and frustration.
- Give yourself adequate time to eat your meals and snacks.
- → Don't skip meals! This tends to leave you feeling ravenous later on and can lead to binging, or it could lead to feeling tired, unmotivated, and unwell.
- Make your meals and snacks more balanced. Following the MyPlate diagram and include all the food groups in your diet. This helps you feel more satisfied, energized, and keeps you fuller between meals on snacks.
- → Prioritize eating more healthy fats and less unhealthy fats. Focus on consuming more unsaturated fats and omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids. Avoid eating trans-fat and limit the amount of saturated fat you consume.
- → Eat more fiber. You can get more fiber in your diet from whole grains, fruits, vegetables, legumes, beans, and other plant-based foods.
- → Eat enough to fuel your lifestyle. Our society always talks about the dangers of eating too much, but undereating has a lot of serious consequences as well.
- Avoid fad diets and cutting out food groups from your diet unless you have an allergy.

- ◆ Stop focusing on weight so much. Focus on building long-term, healthy habits. Weight is definitely not the only measure of good health.
- Listen to your hunger and fullness cues. Be more mindful while you eat. Trust that your body knows what it needs. Our bodies are amazing! Treat them with the love and respect they deserve-YOU deserve.

I hope some of these goals and ideas resonate with you. Please be kind to yourself and your body going into the new year and always!

~Kelsey Braithwaite, CBH Ambassador

Here's a fun recipe for you to try. These make for a great pre-workout snack or a treat!

1 cup Medjool dates pit removed (this was 10 for me) 1 cup cashews salted

½ cup quick oats

2 teaspoons vanilla

1 tablespoon maple syrup or other liquid of choice ½ cup chocolate chips

Add all ingredients except chocolate chips to a food processor. Blend and pulse until well combined and mixture starts to form a ball. Remove from food processor and place in bowl. Knead (or stir) in chocolate chips. Roll into balls. If the dough feels too sticky, put a little oil on your hands before rolling them. Store in refrigerator or freezer.

*Recipe from Featherstonenutrition.com

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact 1.800.221.5689 or visit online at http://fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/coalition/map.htm. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture's policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.