



**Live Clutter-free
Starting Today!**

WINTER 2016

**VEG
OUT!**

**5 STEPS
TO CHANGE
YOUR DIET**

New Year, New Life

Finding Joy in Fitness

**BUILD
A BODY
THAT'S FIT
FOR YOUR
LIFESTYLE**

**3 Inspiring
Stories
OF OVERCOMING
HEALTH OBSTACLES**

In Pursuit of a Joyful Life



What does your ideal life look like? What do you need to support that joyful lifestyle?

We rarely ask ourselves these questions as we bounce from chore to chore, from obligation to obligation. Yet with every choice, we are building the walls that enclose our lives. If we are not intentional in our actions, we could wind up in a cage instead of a place of joy.

A joyful life is not a life without struggle. I was reminded of that again by the people in this issue. In our article “Overcoming Health Obstacles,” we interviewed people who refused to let health problems keep them from living a full and fulfilling life. We also met Maria Barton and Rita Moore, shown on our cover. Both battled obesity and found joy (and success) from exercising and dieting with friends and coworkers. How inspiring!

One of my favorite articles in this issue was “Tidy Up.” In fact, I was so intrigued by Marie Kondo’s advice that I went home and used her method to start organizing the madness in some of my drawers and closets. Afterward, I felt a sense of accomplishment and, yes, even joy from giving away things that might bring joy to others. The ideal life I envision contains less “stuff” and more family time. Being organized frees me up for truly joyful experiences like watching my grandchildren’s bright-eyed wonder as they explore and discover the world.

As we head into 2016, I hope you will begin to discard whatever is weighing you down. Start small, but consider big things, too, like changing your job, your neighborhood, your possessions, or your social circle. Creating a more joyful life is possible. I’m in. Are you?

Happy New Year,

A handwritten signature of Cheryl Carlson in black ink.

Cherryll Carlson, H2U Executive Editor

Happiness lies
in the joy of
achievement
and the thrill of
creative effort.

– Franklin D. Roosevelt

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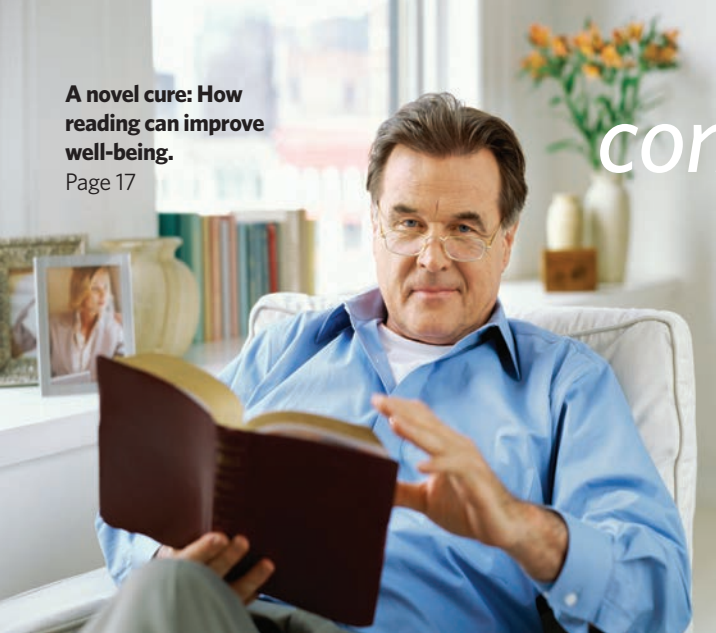
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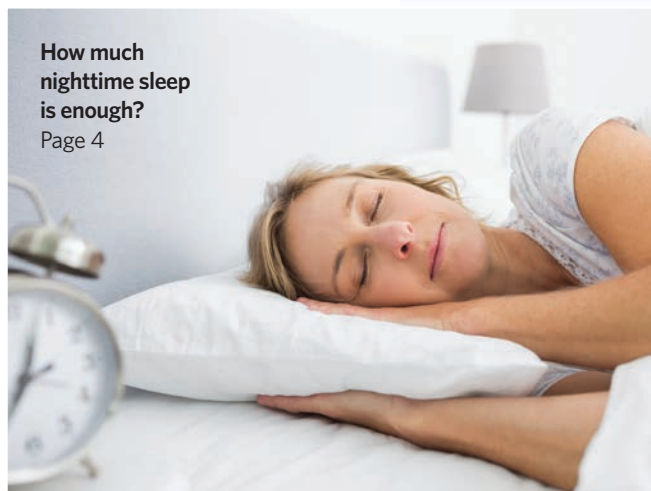
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On the Cover
Maria Barton (left)
and Rita Moore

PHOTO CREDIT:
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Delay Caffeination

If the first thing you do in the morning is stumble to your kitchen and guzzle down a cup of coffee to get you going, your routine may need a makeover. Having a caffeinated drink as soon as you wake up may actually be hampering your body's natural ability to perk up.

Scientists say that cortisol, a chemical in our bodies that increases alertness, typically rises in the morning. Drinking something caffeinated tells your body, "Hey, you don't need to produce so much cortisol." So you're replacing a natural boost with a caffeinated one, which can cause you to become even more dependent on caffeine to kick-start your day.

A better time to grab that first cup is about an hour after waking. Cortisol levels also surge between noon–1 p.m. and 5:30–6:30 p.m. So if you tend to need a caffeine jolt during the day, try scheduling it outside of those peak cortisol-producing hours. ■

Time to Take a Stand?

If all the news about the risks of sitting has made you stand up and take notice, a new study may point to your next move. The *International Journal of Epidemiology* reports that health problems linked to sitting are not caused by how much you're lounging, but by the fact that you are not moving enough. So that standing desk you were considering may not help—unless it gets you to move more. ■

Artificial skin ... that can feel?

Imagine touching something with your hand but not being able to feel whether it's hot or cold, hard or soft, smooth or rough, round or square. People with prosthetic devices struggle with this daily. Without the sense of touch, objects can be difficult to handle. For example, you might need to grip a soft item tighter, yet a too-tight grip could cause damage.

Now researchers at Stanford University have created an artificial skin embedded with clear plastic sensors. Pressure on the sensors sends signals to the brain. The scientists are still using animal subjects to perfect the system, but they say it's a big step toward "smart" prosthetics.

Meanwhile, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) is testing a prototype of a mechanical hand with sensors that send "touch" information directly to the brain. The hand can produce a "near-natural" sense of touch, increasing the wearer's ability to detect and manipulate objects. ■

Chew Gum for Your Gums

If you don't have time to brush your teeth during the day, grab a stick of gum. Chewing sugar-free gum speeds up the production of saliva, which helps wash out trapped food, remove plaque and reduce acidity in your mouth. ■





Back Pain?

Don't Rush Into Physical Therapy

So you exercised a bit too much yesterday and now have a nagging backache. Your friend thinks you should go see a physical therapist right away. However, researchers at the University of Utah might disagree, pointing out you may do just as well with self-care and time.

In their recent study, which was published in *JAMA*, researchers found that starting physical therapy as soon as low back pain begins can provide modest improvements at first, but seems to make little difference over the long term.

When low back pain is mild to moderate and isn't causing numbness, weakness or tingling in your legs, you can probably try treating it at home first. The National Institutes of Health recommend applying ice for the first 24 to 48 hours and using over-the-counter pain relievers. If exercise is painful, lay off for a few days, but do try to walk and do gentle stretches. If pain doesn't begin to subside within a week, go ahead and call your doctor. ■

Kale Beaters

Kale is tremendously trendy for salads, side dishes and juicing, but many people find it bitter and tough. If kale doesn't tickle your taste buds, other leafy greens may do the trick. And many are even more nutritious than kale, according to a new nutrient density rating system. ■



Vegetable	Nutrient Score
Watercress	100.00
Chinese Cabbage	91.99
Chard	89.27
Beet Green	87.08
Spinach	86.43
Leaf Lettuce	70.73
Romaine Lettuce	63.48
Collard Greens	62.49
Turnip Greens	62.12
Mustard Greens	61.39
Endive	60.44
Kale	49.07

Source: CDC. See entire list at tinyurl.com/tastygreens.



Winter Viruses

Have you ever wondered why more of us get flu and colds in winter? For years, scientists thought it had to do with spending more time indoors, but now it's becoming clear that winter also provides friendlier skies for airborne viruses. That's because winter air is drier—colder air can't carry much water vapor before turning into precipitation—and viruses thrive in dry conditions.

To understand why, consider what happens when we cough or sneeze. We spray tiny, germ particles into the air. When the air is moist, these particles tend to fall to the ground. But in dry air, they can divide into smaller pieces and float around for hours or days. So when we walk into a dry room, we're breathing airborne germs from everyone who's recently been there.

Humidifying the air may reduce the spread of colds and flu, according to a few studies. However, the best way to avoid germs is what you learned in grade school: Wash your hands often, and cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing. ■



The Sweet Spot For Sleepers

If your alarm clock buzzes at 6 a.m. each day, you know staying up past midnight is probably a bad idea. Although occasional late nights rarely cause health problems, consistently getting too little sleep is linked to obesity and heart disease. Oddly enough, oversleeping is also linked to these conditions and depression and diabetes, as well.

What's the magic number for sleepy time? The National Sleep Foundation recommends between seven and nine hours, but new studies show the sweet spot may be wider than we thought.

A recent study published in *Arteriosclerosis, Thrombosis and Vascular Biology* found that people who sleep less than five hours or

more than nine hours each night had more calcium in their arterial walls and stiffer arteries—two factors that put them at risk for heart disease. The study found that sleep quality mattered, too. Participants who slept poorly (no matter how long) had the same results as those who slept less.

Modern life may have something to do with how much time we need between the sheets, according to a new study of remote hunter-gatherer groups. These people sleep an average of five to seven hours a night, yet live long, healthy lives. The researchers suggest that living without modern amenities like electricity may keep people more in tune with their internal body clocks and with environmental factors like light and temperature, which play a role in when we sleep and when we wake up.

At the end of the day, what may be enough sleep for hunter-gatherers or your next-door neighbor may not be the right amount for you. If you feel sleepy during the day, you could probably benefit from getting more shut-eye at night. ■

Beware Powdered Caffeine

Caffeine has been showing up in unexpected products like beef jerky and oatmeal. Some manufacturers are even selling pure, powdered caffeine by the bag, mostly on the Internet. The FDA sent warning letters to producers, which health advocates hope will curtail sales. Why the concern? Safe amounts are tiny and hard to measure. A teaspoon is equal to about 28 cups of coffee. A full tablespoon can be lethal. ■



Soda Drinking Is Going Flat

Sales of full-calorie soda have dropped more than 25 percent in the past 20 years and are still falling, reports the *New York Times*. As a result, kids are consuming about 80 fewer calories a day by reducing sweetened beverages. Even better? More Americans are drinking water. ■



Fat be Gone!

If eating less and exercising more won't get rid of those pockets of fat around your belly, thighs or hips, the FDA has approved two non-invasive procedures that can destroy those pesky fat cells.

SculpSure, the latest to gain approval, melts away fat using a laser to heat fat cells below the skin.

CoolSculpting targets fat cells with a controlled cooling device. Both procedures damage unwanted fat cells, which then die and are absorbed by the body over time. As a result, treated areas shrink.

Unlike liposuction, which sucks out fat cells, SculpSure and CoolSculpting are non-invasive and do not require anesthesia. The downside? Treatments are expensive, insurance rarely pays, and long-term effects are unknown. ■

SUPPLEMENT WATCH

Hidden Harms in 'Herbal' Supplements

Herbal supplements are often marketed as a "natural" and healthy way to lose weight, strengthen muscles or improve sexual performance. The claims may sound enticing, but some of these supplements are dangerous. A recent study from the *New England Journal of Medicine* found that approximately 23,000 people visit the ER each year as a result of supplement use.

Many supplements are spiked with stimulants, as well as substances like steroids, hormones and allergens.

Weight-loss supplements, for example, have been found to contain BMPEA, an amphetamine-like chemical that can raise blood pressure and heart rate to dangerous levels. Many "herbal Viagra" products actually contain the same active ingredient found in Viagra. Labels don't always list these powerful ingredients.

Not all supplements are bad, but beware of products that promise immediate results or hyped-up benefits. Talk to your doctor before starting on any supplements. ■



Cheers!

Wine May Help Those With Diabetes

This may be cause for celebration: A glass of wine a day—especially red wine—may help people with type 2 diabetes avoid heart disease. A two-year study at Ben-Gurion University in Israel found that drinking red wine modestly increased par-

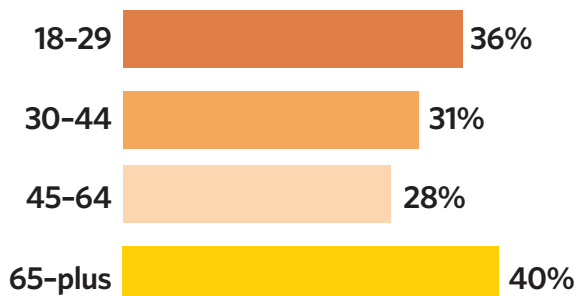
ticipants' "good" HDL cholesterol while decreasing total cholesterol. White wine didn't have that effect, but both red and white wine helped lower blood sugar and triglyceride levels. Experts stress that people with diabetes should not drink more than a glass a day. Too much alcohol can trigger hypoglycemia, which can be severe in those with diabetes. ■



Age Myth Busted

Aging may slow us down, but a survey of 85,000 adults found that those 65 and older are more likely than younger people to say they are "thriving" when it comes to physical health, finances, relationships and happiness with their community. ■

PHYSICAL HEALTH | Having good health and enough energy to get things done daily (by age group)



Source: Wall Street Journal

The Skinny on Your Stomach

Of the 78 organs in your body, few receive more attention than the stomach. You have to fill it at least three times a day. If you don't, it's likely to complain—sometimes quite loudly. Surprisingly, our stomachs not only influence our eating habits, but may also affect our emotions and even our ability to think.

Biologically speaking, the stomach is a muscular, J-shaped pouch located on the left side of the upper abdomen—not directly over your belly button, as you were probably taught as a child. Its main role is to store and prepare food for digestion, says Dr. Veronica Guerrero, a gastroenterologist at Valley Regional Medical Center in Brownsville, Texas.

When we swallow, food moves down the esophagus and enters the stomach through a muscular valve. Specialized tissues in the stomach release enzymes and hydrochloric acid that starts breaking food down into simpler components. To protect itself from the powerful gastric acid, the stomach produces thick mucus to coat its lining and bicarbonate to help neutralize the acid.

Ridges of muscle called rugae, or gastric folds, line the stomach and churn the food, mixing it thoroughly

with the digestive juices. The gastric folds also enable the stomach to expand as it fills with food.

The stomach is remarkably flexible. When empty, an adult's stomach shrinks in volume to about a third of a cup, but can hold nearly a gallon, though not comfortably. A normal meal expands the stomach to about four cups.

Food can remain in your stomach for 1–2 hours after a normal meal. The churning and gas-

tric juices turn food into a thick fluid called chyme that passes through another valve into the small intestine, where most digestion occurs.

Tummy Troubles

Aside from occasional heartburn or nausea, the most common stomach ailments are gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) and ulcers, says Dr. Guerrero.

GERD is caused when stomach contents leak into the esophagus,

causing chronic heartburn. Obesity, alcohol, diet and abnormalities in the valve that connects the esophagus to the stomach can cause GERD. Medication and lifestyle changes such as losing weight, eating smaller meals and sleeping with your head elevated can alleviate the problem.

Sometimes, ulcers cause abdominal discomfort, depending on their severity. In fact, ulcers may cause little or no discomfort or trigger severe abdominal pain and possibly bleeding. For years, doctors believed stress and spicy food caused ulcers, but researchers in the early 1980s proved that a common bacteria called *helicobacter pylori* was more often the blame. Antibiotics and medications that promote healing are now used to treat these ulcers.

Taking nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as aspirin or ibuprofen can also cause some ulcers. According to Dr. Guerrero, limiting use of NSAIDs can reduce the risk of developing ulcers.

Stomach cancer is no longer as common in the United States as it was until the 1930s, reports the American Cancer Society. Today, stomach cancer affects mostly people 65 and older, but the reasons why are still not clear.

Shrinking Stomachs

Though obesity is not strictly a stomach condition, many people turn to stomach surgery to shed pounds. Dr. Guerrero says there are three major kinds of bariatric, or weight-loss, surgery:

1 Gastric bypass surgery, also called Roux-en-Y or RYGB. The surgeon removes most of the stomach, leaving a small pouch that can hold only a tiny amount of food. The surgeon also removes tissue that



produces ghrelin, a hormone that triggers hunger pangs. After surgery, most of what you eat goes straight to the small intestine, reducing the amount of food that is digested.

Gastric bypass is the oldest type of weight-loss surgery, so more is known about its long-term results than other procedures. According to Dr. Guerrero, gastric bypass surgery is an excellent option for people with diabetes and can even cause a partial or complete remission of the disease.

2 Sleeve gastrectomy, a procedure almost as common as gastric bypass, removes a significant portion of the stomach, but leaves a “sleeve” or banana-shaped tube rather than a pouch. (See sidebar.)

3 Adjustable gastric lap band surgery was once quite popular, but has now fallen out of favor, in part because it’s not as effective as the other options.

“Deciding which surgery may be the best is determined on an individual basis between you and your surgeon,” says Dr. Guerrero.

Keeping Your Belly Happy

The best way to maintain good stomach health is to eat a well-balanced diet, exercise regularly, maintain a healthy weight, limit alcohol consumption, and don’t smoke, advises Dr. Guerrero.

Also, skip the detox diets and cleansing fads. There’s little if any scientific evidence that these help, and they may actually be harmful. Some detox diets lack crucial nutrients, and cleansing can cause dehydration and disrupt the balance of good bacteria in the colon.

Speaking of gut bacteria, science is learning more about the connections between bacteria and our brains.

“We know that our emotions may affect our digestive system, but new studies are finding the reverse to be true, as well. Our digestive system

may influence our moods and emotions,” Dr. Guerrero says.

“I think research into how this complex digestive system affects our emotions will lead to improvements in treatments for several digestive conditions,” she adds. ■

Stomach Surgery Helped H2U Director Shed 100 Pounds

Rita Moore was good at losing weight, but not so good at keeping it off. Over the years, she tried one diet after another. She’d lose 30, 40 or 50 pounds, and then slowly regain it.

“If I could cheat on a diet, I would,” she says. “Food was my lover; I called it ‘Flabio.’”

In 2013, Moore, the H2U director at MountainView Hospital in Las Vegas, finally got fed up with yo-yo dieting and decided to find out if weight-loss surgery would help her break that cycle.

“I had been evaluated as being morbidly obese. I also had high blood pressure and sleep apnea,” Moore says. “I didn’t have the body I was supposed to have. As a wife, a mom, an aunt and a grandmother, I wanted to be around for a long while yet.”

Moore scheduled an appointment for a laparoscopic gastric sleeve procedure—a surgery that removed about 80 percent of her stomach. Post-surgery, Moore adjusted her diet and eating habits to ensure she was getting adequate nutrition and wasn’t overeating.

“I learned to take my time and chew my food thoroughly before swallowing,” she says. “Now I talk to people while we eat, which makes meals more pleasant.”

Moore also attends a support group, walks at least 10,000 steps a day and does an exercise class three days a week. So far, Moore has lost 100 pounds—down to 175—and she plans to lose 30 more in the coming year. ■



A woman with dark hair, wearing a magenta tank top and black leggings, is captured mid-air as she jumps over a low, light-colored stone wall. She is wearing magenta and yellow sneakers. Her right leg is bent and tucked over the wall, while her left leg is extended downwards. She has a joyful expression, smiling and looking towards the camera. Her right arm is raised high in the air, and her left arm is extended forward. The background is a clear blue sky with a few wispy clouds. The overall mood is energetic and positive.

Amanda Young

Overcoming Health Obstacles

Beethoven was deaf when he composed his Ninth Symphony, “Ode to Joy.” Franklin D. Roosevelt was paralyzed from the waist down when he became President of the United States. And Stephen Hawking spearheaded scientific breakthroughs despite being unable to walk or speak due to having ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig’s disease.

We’ve all heard these stories and others of people who were able to accomplish remarkable things while coping with disabling and sometimes catastrophic health conditions. How do some people manage to push beyond their illnesses and succeed when so much is stacked against them?

To be clear, these folks aren’t superheroes—and they don’t try to be. But they are optimists who believe in their power to get through whatever life throws at them, says New Jersey-based psychotherapist and life coach Diane Lang. Those who rise above their limitations often do so because they acknowledge they can’t do it alone, Lang says. In fact, telling ourselves “I should be tough enough to get through this myself,” is more likely to hold us back than move us forward.

To understand how to overcome seemingly insurmountable health challenges to achieve remarkable feats, we asked several people to share their experiences and insight.

‘I’ve always had an inherent drive to succeed.’

People joke about teenagers sleeping all day, but **Yuri Cataldo’s** overwhelming exhaustion at age 16 was no laughing matter. That was the year he was diagnosed with an incurable blood disorder

requiring lifelong vigilance to control its worst effects.

Cataldo, now 35 and the director of creative enterprises at Emerson College in Boston, has thalassemia minor. This inherited condition affects proteins in



red blood cells that carry oxygen and leads to anemia. Though the most serious form of thalassemia can be fatal, Cataldo’s type causes chronic mono-like symptoms that often leave him feeling depleted and depressed.

However, Cataldo didn’t let that stop him from studying at Juilliard and Yale or from working on Broadway and in films. He also launched an award-winning, bottled-water company, IndigoH2O, and now leads a program to help budding artists develop business skills.

“The exhaustion just beat me in the beginning,” says Cataldo. “But despite the fact that I didn’t feel well, I couldn’t just do nothing because I knew I would

fail. I’ve always had an inherent drive to succeed.”

Standard treatment for thalassemia minor—increasing iron intake—didn’t work for Cataldo. And at the time of his diagnosis, there wasn’t much doctors could do for him, so he sought out alternative ways to improve his health. He eventually consulted with a naturopathic physician who laid out a holistic approach, which includes taking liquid vitamin and mineral supplements.

“Rather than taking a shotgun approach, the naturopath was more of a sniper,” Cataldo explains. “It wasn’t sudden, but gradually I felt better and had more energy.”

Cataldo rigorously maintains a healthy diet and fitness regimen. He also pays close attention to his symptoms and checks in with a traditional doctor multiple times a year. His doctor recently prescribed modafinil, a wakefulness-promoting drug, to test how it affects his ability to focus. Though his health battle continues, Cataldo points out that fighting this disease may have contributed to his success in life.

“I realized there was no such thing as a pill that would solve what I have,” Cataldo says. “My ability to push through thalassemia definitely helped me push through a lot of other things. Other challenges didn’t seem so bad. It gave me perspective.”

‘Know what you want.’

Some days, **Amanda Young** is afraid to brush her teeth.

This simple daily ritual can set off a series of painful shocks in her face that randomly plague her throughout the day. Though diagnosed in 2008 with trigeminal neuralgia, Young, a former middle-school social worker, has become one of New York City’s elite personal trainers. She leads others to

take charge of their health even when it literally hurts her to smile.

Trigeminal neuralgia is a chronic pain condition affecting one of the main nerves in the head. Relatively rare, the condition has no known cure and can trigger both searing and stabbing pains, “like I’m getting electrocuted.” Some people call it the “suicide disease.”

“It is considered one of the most painful diseases that exists,” Young explains. “Some days it feels like someone lit my ear on fire, and other days it’s like someone knocked some of my teeth out.”

Young eases her symptoms with medication and acupuncture, but the pain still occasionally prevents her from leaving the house. To cope with her ups and downs, Young has adopted a can-do attitude that generally sees her through a grueling schedule as a

“This is something I can do to access my skills to help people, without having to leave the house and jump around,” Young says.

Though her illness often makes life difficult, Young has made peace with her limitations. “My philosophy is to know what you want and realize you can still live a completely fulfilling life—but maybe not in the exact way you imagined it.”

‘It’s a matter of evolving.’

Howard Shulman’s earliest memories are filled with doctors, hospitals and surgeries. Days after his birth in 1961, Shulman developed a bacterial infection in his face that ate away parts of his lips, lower eyelids and nose, disfiguring him so badly that his parents were unable to deal with the tragedy and abandoned him.

Shulman spent the first three years of his life in the hospital and endured frequent medical visits until he was 16, undergoing dozens of procedures to reconstruct his face. All the while, he was living in foster homes and facing hateful taunts from classmates that cut him to the core.

Despite these seemingly unbearable circumstances, Shulman has written a happy ending for himself,

authoring the memoir *Running from the Mirror*, which was released in October 2015. Now happily married and the stepfather of two, the California resident speaks to kids around the country about bullying and the power of a positive self-image.

“I had the physical pain of surgeries to go through, and at the same time I was in and out of different schools and

constantly bullied,” recalls Shulman, 54, who completed facial reconstruction in his 20s and today works in financial services. “It’s a matter of evolving. If you don’t accept yourself, no one else will accept you. Because once you reject yourself, you reject life.”



Howard Shulman

“If you don’t accept yourself, no one else will accept you. Because once you reject yourself, you reject life.” — Howard Shulman



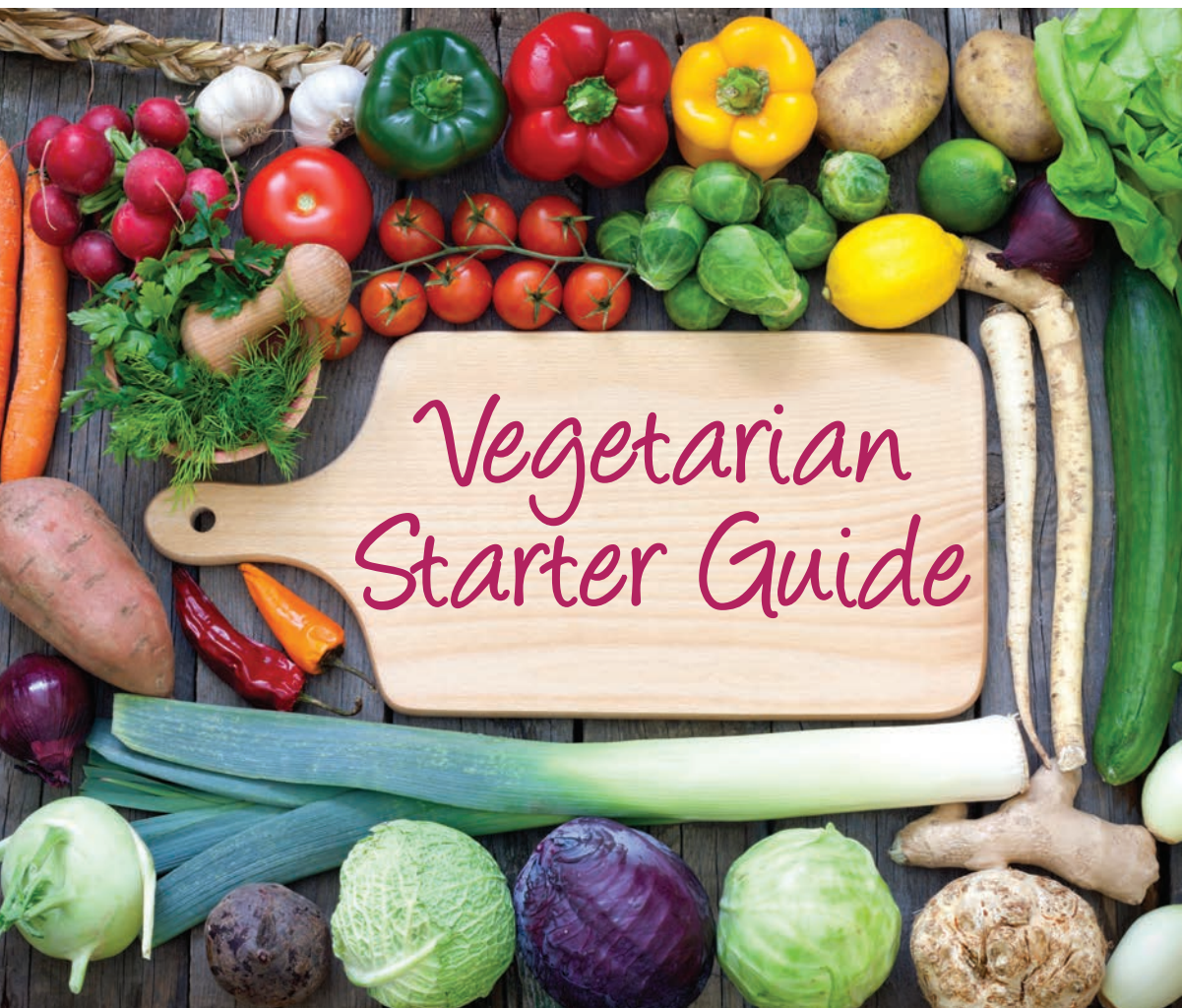
Amanda Young

trainer and instructor at several top fitness clubs.

To raise awareness of trigeminal neuralgia, Young enlisted 16 of New York City’s top physical trainers to hold a fitness class fundraiser last October. She hopes Face the Change will eventually become a nonprofit organization that can unearth a cure for this invisible but devastating disease.

Shulman hasn’t just managed to rise above his traumatic medical and personal odyssey. He’s also helping others learn to thrive in spite of health and social challenges. For example, he works with children in hospital burn units, who he says inspire him more than they might imagine.

“My book addresses something we all have in common: rejection,” he says. “Rejection comes in every form—maternal, coworkers, social, romantic. Everyone has been rejected in some form. ... The [book’s] audience is anyone who feels different or rejected or lonely or without hope.” ■



Whatcha Eating?

Melanie Martin has been a vegetarian for just over six years. Here's a glimpse of what a normal day looks like for her.

Breakfast: Eggs with soy sausage, spinach and onions

Snack #1: Cashews and low-fat sharp cheddar cheese

Lunch: Stir-fried vegetables (any mix of broccoli, green beans, cauliflower, etc.) with whole-wheat pasta and marinara sauce

Snack #2: Greek yogurt with fruit

Dinner: Asian-spiced tofu with quinoa and vegetables

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Melanie Martin of Livermore, California, was 37 when she decided to switch to a vegetarian diet. After years of eating meat, Martin says she was “grossed out” by documentaries and books describing the meat production process. The decision to become a vegetarian was easy, Martin says.

“I just stopped eating meat all at once,” she explains. “The biggest struggle for me was eating out. For some reason, lots of restaurants think that vegetarians get a real kick out of eating red pepper, Portobello mushroom and onion sandwiches. If I never see another one of those sandwiches, it will be too soon.”

Though Martin became a vegetarian for ethical reasons, others choose a plant-based diet to get healthier, to lose weight, or for environmental reasons (meat production is a big cause of pollution).

Making the Change

If you've been eating meat for years, switching to a vegetarian diet may feel daunting. But doing so can result in

better health, experts say. Vegetarians are more likely to have a lower risk of heart disease, cancer, kidney disease and stroke, as well as lower blood pressure and lower cholesterol.

“The key is to be well-educated,” says Amy Freeman, a registered dietitian and nutritionist at Ocala Regional

Medical Center in Ocala, Florida. “People will tell me they’re a vegetarian, and then say a normal meal consists of cheese pizza and French fries, because those are vegetarian foods. But there are no health benefits in those foods. There has to be some careful planning.”

If you're thinking about going vegetarian (or just reducing the amount of meat you eat), these five tips can help.

1. Do your research. Meat eaters contemplating a vegetarian diet often worry about getting enough protein and other essential nutrients.

But it is possible to get the nutrients you once got from meat or dairy from nuts, legumes and green, leafy vegetables, says Abby Greenspun, a registered dietitian and nutritionist

in Westport, Connecticut. She says vegetarians should eat five servings of whole grains, four servings of vegetables, three servings of fruit and two servings of legumes every day.

For those new to vegetarian cooking, look for cookbooks and online recipes that explain the nutritional benefits of the ingredients used.

“I read several blogs that are either strictly vegetarian or have lots of vegetarian recipes,” Martin says. “I also have Mark Bittman’s *How to Cook Everything Vegetarian* and several Moosewood Restaurant [a New York-based vegetarian restaurant] cookbooks.”

2. Transition slowly. Martin quit eating meat immediately, but you may not find it that simple, especially if you love the taste of meat.

“Eating vegetarian doesn’t have to be all or nothing,” Greenspun says. “Try to incorporate a meatless meal once in a while so you can learn to appreciate meals that don’t have meat. Start with a ‘Meatless Monday’ and go from there.”

3. Revise your recipes. Switching to a vegetarian diet doesn’t mean giving up your favorite meals. Many recipes containing meat can be turned into vegetarian dishes simply by substituting tofu or beans for the meat. Curries, as well as Mexican and Italian dishes, are especially easy to transform in this way.














Here are a few meat-to-veggie recipe transformations:

- Add mushrooms or olives to store-bought marinara sauce.
- Replace the ground beef in tacos or burritos with lentils or pan-fried tempeh (a fermented soy product).
- Make lasagna with layers of sliced, raw vegetables.

If you prefer to use imitation meat, Martin recommends veggie crumbles and soy sausage patties made by

Plenty of Protein

The Food and Nutrition Board recommends men eat 56 grams of protein daily and women eat 46 grams. A 3.5 oz. serving of meat or fish has approximately 22–30 grams of protein.

	spinach, ½ cup	3 g
	walnuts, ¼ cup	5 g
	oats, ½ cup, dry	5 g
	pinto beans, ½ cup	6 g
	lima beans, ½ cup	6 g
	almonds, ¼ cup	7 g
	milk, 1% fat, 1 cup	8 g
	wheat bread, 2 slices	8g
	peanut butter, 2 T	8 g
	lentils, ½ cup	9 g
	tofu, ½ block	9 g
	soybeans, ½ cup	11 g
	scrambled eggs, 2 large	12 g

Morningstar Farms and veggie burgers made by Amy’s Kitchen. Both brands can be found in the frozen food sections of most supermarkets.

“The [Morningstar Farms] crumbles are indistinguishable from meat when you add seasonings,” she explains. “I know this because I served soy meat tacos to my super-picky nephews one night, and none of them noticed.”



Common Misconceptions

Many people have mistaken beliefs about vegetarianism that keeps them from trying it themselves. Here’s a look at common myths.

Athletes can’t be vegetarians. Athletes can get the nutrients they need by pairing high-protein, plant-based foods with whole grains and energy-producing carbs, like pasta.

You miss out on nutrients. With the right food choices, you shouldn’t experience nutritional deficiencies. However, registered dietitian Abby Greenspun of Westport, Connecticut, recommends that vegans take a vitamin B12 supplement, since B12 is found only in animal products.

Kids can’t be vegetarians. Actually, many families introduce their children to a vegetarian diet at an early age. Vegetarian foods that children like include oatmeal, toast with almond butter, soymilk, bean burgers, roasted veggies, and all kinds of fruit.

You’ll lose weight. Many people do lose weight when they give up high-fat meats, cheeses and other processed foods. But there’s no guarantee you’ll lose weight, particularly if you are eating too many simple carbs and sweet treats. A vegetarian diet still requires a healthy balance, Greenspun says.



“Most people know that I don’t eat meat,” Martin says. “I don’t want anyone to make an all-vegetarian meal for me, but I also don’t want to embarrass or anger anyone who’s gone to the trouble of making a special meat lasagna for supper.”

The Emily Post Institute, a leading etiquette organization, says it’s best to mention to your host that you are a vegetarian at the time of the invitation. Offer to bring a quiche or a vegetarian dish that everyone will enjoy so your host doesn’t feel pressured to make something you can eat. (See pages 18 and 19 for some quick vegetarian recipes.)

Hosting the party yourself? Most guests won’t mind a simple pasta dish with a meat-free marinara sauce or a vegetarian soup, says the Emily Post Institute. In fact, they may not even notice there’s no meat.

Whether you’re hosting a meal or attending one, be prepared to take some ribbing from your companions, Martin warns.

“There’s always one person in every crowd who thinks it’s hilarious to offer me meat. It doesn’t bother me, but I do wish they would get better jokes.” ■

more Want to try Melanie Martin’s Asian tofu? Download the recipe at H2U.com/H2Umagazine

4. Stock your pantry. Keeping your pantry filled with vegetarian staple items will help make the switch smoother and easier. Start with beans and legumes—canned or dried garbanzo, pinto, black and kidney beans are tasty as a side dish or as a hearty and filling meat substitute in casseroles, soups, salads and other dishes. Keeping whole grains like quinoa, brown rice, oats and whole-grain pasta on hand will make it easier to throw together a meal on a busy weeknight.

Expand your spice rack while you’re at it. Plant-based foods can go from bland to grand with spices like oregano, cumin, chili powder, turmeric, red pepper flakes, garlic powder and curry powder.

5. Get out of your comfort-food zone. Many cultures have a wide variety of vegetarian dishes you can try. Sampling ethnic restaurants is a great way to discover new flavors and cooking techniques you can use at home. The next time you eat out, look for these entrees on the menu.

- **Indian:** Dal, a spicy porridge with lentils or yellow split peas
- **Mexican:** Burritos or tostados with beans and rice
- **Italian:** Cacio e Pepe, a pasta made with grated cheese
- **Chinese:** Buddha’s Delight, a mixture of vegetables, tofu, mushrooms and garlic
- **Mediterranean:** Curried vegetable and chickpea stew with lemon couscous

The Dinner Party Dilemma

When joining non-vegetarian friends for a dinner party, you may feel uncomfortable discussing your dietary restrictions. Or, if you’re hosting the party, you may worry that your non-vegetarian friends will not like being served meat-free dishes.

But most vegetarians say eating with omnivores is usually easy if you communicate your situation beforehand.

Lentil Salad (Serves 4)

Courtesy of Amy Freeman, a registered dietitian at Ocala Regional Medical Center in Florida.

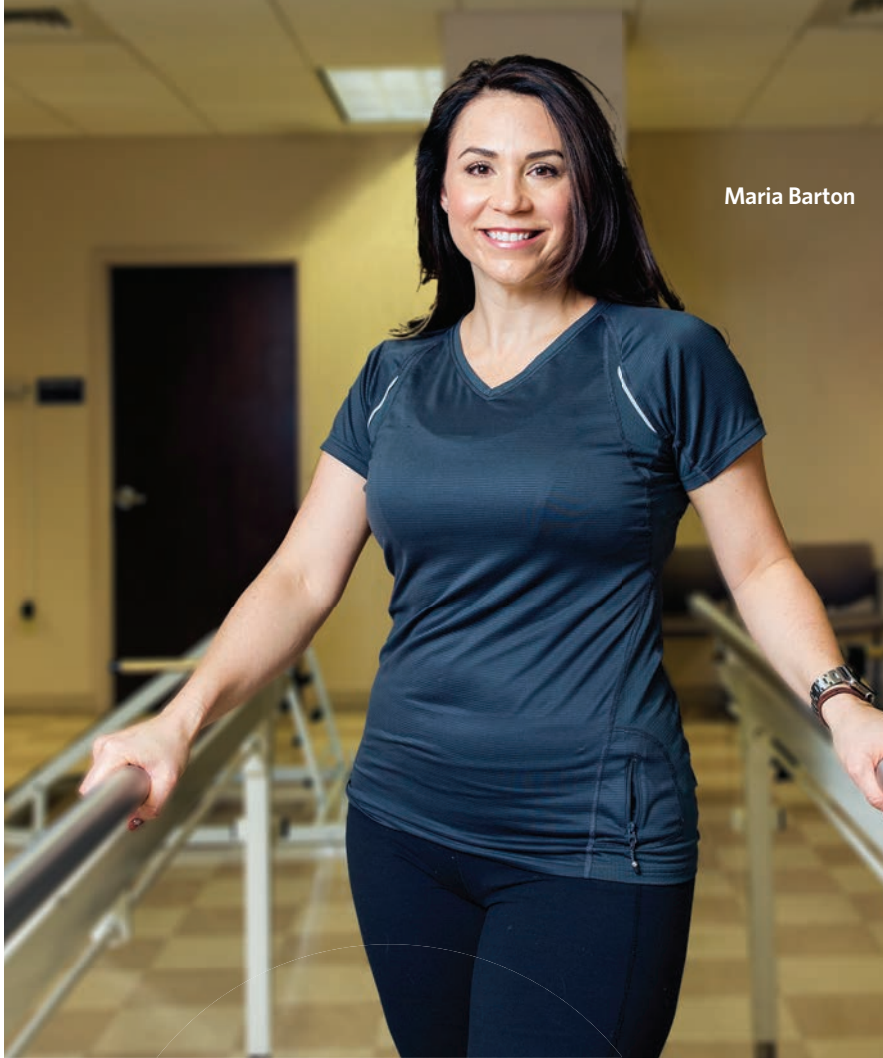
Ingredients

- 1 cup dried lentils, rinsed
- 4 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- 2 cups broccoli flowerettes
- 1/8 tsp. of kosher salt
- Fresh cracked pepper, to taste

Directions: Add 2½–3 cups of water to a medium saucepan and bring to a boil. Stir in lentils. Lower heat and simmer for 40 minutes or until soft and cooking water is absorbed. Steam broccoli in separate pan. When lentils are done, add the balsamic vinegar, salt and cracked pepper. Combine lentils and broccoli in a bowl and toss to mix.

Note: For a flavor boost, add curry powder or garlic to the cooked lentils. Or add a few threads of Spanish saffron, ground cumin and cinnamon to the lentil cooking water. You can also add veggies like mushrooms, peppers or carrots.

Nutrition information (per serving): Calories 188; Total fat .7 g; Protein 14 g; Sodium 92 mg; Fiber 16 g; Sugars 2 g; Carbs 32 g ■



Maria Barton

Rediscovering the **Joy** of Exercise

Maria Barton hasn't always enjoyed exercise. In fact, she hates to work out alone and needs lots of extra motivation. Her active—though not particularly *athletic*—lifestyle of working two jobs in college helped her stay slim. But graduate school involved eight hours of classes a day, plus a heavy homework load that left little time or energy for physical activity. In just two and a half years, she gained 50 pounds, topping out at 200 pounds.

"I didn't gain the freshman 15 in college. Instead, I gained the graduate school 50 pounds," Barton says.

"Everything I do with exercise at MountainView Hospital is on a volunteer basis," says Barton, who began the BLC Season 8 in January 2016.

"I was able to snap out of [battling my weight] because I work with very supportive people," Barton says. "My students come to me for exercise and motivation, and I'm motivated by being accountable to them.

"It's not like going to the gym. Instead, it's a bunch of us hanging out and giggling and exercising," she says.

Barton, who also clocks at least 10,000 steps a day seeing patients on the job, now weighs 160 pounds—most of it lean

Barton, now a physical therapist at MountainView Hospital in Las Vegas, knew she needed to make a change and consulted a dietitian who recommended a 1,500-calorie a day diet and exercise plan. Barton lost 50 pounds in four months, but was unable to maintain her target weight. For the next few years, she was a classic yo-yo dieter, repeatedly losing and then regaining the weight.

Barton's struggles with diet and exercise resonate with many people. The late, great Yogi Berra once said, "Baseball is 90 percent mental, and the other half is physical." The saying could also apply to physical fitness. We all know how easy it is to find a reason not to exercise—and how hard it is to work through a lack of motivation. Sometimes, doing it for others helps you do it for yourself.

'I'm motivated by being accountable.'

Since Barton found dieting wasn't working and she hated exercising alone, in 2010 she got the OK from her hospital administrators to start a "Biggest Loser Challenge" (BLC).

"I began to hold exercise classes and, to ensure that it was a good experience for everyone, I became a certified aerobics instructor," she says.

To her surprise and delight, the participants in the first challenge wanted even more exercise. Barton did, too, and started teaching a separate strength conditioning class. And in the process, she began to slim down.

muscle mass. She also keeps looking for new ways to motivate herself and her students. For instance, she organized a 1920s-themed “flashmob” dance performance at the hospital for Christmas; nearly 40 participants spent weeks practicing the energetic routine.

“I’m the world’s biggest cheerleader, and I am thrilled that my students—my friends—love exercising together as much as I do,” she says.



“I am thrilled that my students—my friends—love exercising together as much as I do.”

—Maria Barton
(Shown here with Rita Moore)

‘I started walking off 200 calories a day.’

Christopher Anderson of Athens, Georgia is an attorney, consultant and father of three who travels often to see clients and speak to professional groups. Though he swam in high school and played soccer as a teen and later in adult soccer leagues, increasing amounts of travel, meetings, fancy dinners and sitting began cutting into his exercise time and motivation. Around 2004, he gave up soccer and, eventually, the lack of exercise began taking a toll on his health.

“For years, my weight ranged between 205 and 220 pounds, and then it hit 230 in May 2015. I was taking Vytorin for high cholesterol and my blood pressure was up,” Anderson says.

With three young children at home, he began worrying about his future. “It just felt like the beginning of a very long, slippery slope to not being the dad I want to be, or the husband, or the man.”

To motivate himself to start getting fit, he challenged a colleague to a weight-loss competition. The pair hired a personal trainer to coach them on nutrition and exercise, which included strength conditioning, sprints and weekly 30-minute jogs.

“At first, I resisted the one thing that has made the most difference—logging my food. But then I found an app, MyFitnessPal, that makes it very simple to do,” he says.

He limited himself to 1,650 calories a day, and the weight started to come off. After 10 pounds, the app “rewarded” him with a goal adjustment—cut calories to 1,600 daily.

“I was already hungry all the time. So, I decided to do

something to burn off the excess faster, and I started walking off 200 calories a day,” he says.

The trainer suggested adding sprints to the walks to burn more calories faster, and the sprints evolved into runs. Anderson now logs about 20 miles a week, working runs into his travel schedule.

“Running is an ideal exercise for people who travel a lot. I just pack my running shoes and clothes and run,” says Anderson, who has also resumed swimming regularly.

Now weighing in at 175 pounds, Anderson’s blood pressure and cholesterol levels have fallen, and he’s feeling healthy again. Though his colleague didn’t complete the challenge, he has been supportive and is still working toward his goals, Anderson says.

It’s never too late to get back into shape, whether you like working out with a group or running alone. Federal guidelines recommend at least 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity such as brisk walking, or 75 minutes a week of vigorous intensity aerobic activity such as jogging or running. Or do a combination of both.

If you don’t enjoy running or walking, check out exercise classes in your neighborhood. If you love music, try dance workouts like Zumba or Jazzercise. Spinning (on a bike), swimming and water aerobics are also fun. Be sure to squeeze in some muscle-strengthening activities that work all major muscle groups, which helps burn calories even faster. ■





Tidy Up

“Does it spark joy?” That’s the question Marie Kondo, a Japanese home-organization guru, asks about everything in her home. This may seem like an odd question to ask about shoes, dishes or craft supplies, but Kondo says if the things you own don’t spark joy or serve an essential purpose, you should toss them.

Why? Mess means stress. Reducing physical and visual clutter in your home helps you sweep away mental and emotional cobwebs. On a more practical note, decluttering also can reduce your risk for falls and eliminate health hazards like mold, dust and germs.

In her book, *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up*, Kondo says her method of decluttering focuses first on deciding what to keep, rather than what to toss. She outlines a step-by-step method for creating order out of disorder and explains how to store items you choose to keep.

Take note: Kondo’s style of “tidying up” is more than reorganizing your closet on a rainy afternoon. Her

approach is more like downsizing. If you follow her advice, you’ll be taking stock of every single item in your home, category by category. The process can take months.

Organizational Mis-steps

After years of experimenting with decluttering methods, Kondo concluded that messiness isn’t linked to your DNA or your hectic schedule.

“It has far more to do with the accumulation of mistaken notions about tidying, such as ‘it’s best to tackle one room at a time’ or ‘it’s better to do a little each day’ or ‘storage should follow the plan of the house,’” she says.

The problem with most organizing methods, she says, is that people tend to store similar items in multiple places. By tackling one room at a time, you can’t get an accurate idea of how much of something you actually have, such as old documents, unworn clothing and so on. Tidying up in spurts can be discouraging if your hard work never seems to get you across the finish line.

Instead, make organizing a special event, Kondo says. Start early in the morning, and sort like items, such as books, files or cleaning supplies; tackle just one category at a time in one fell swoop. Then when you’re done, you’re done—immediate gratification! Even a self-described lazy person, she says, can commit one day to clearing out one category of clutter.

Cleaning up Kondo-Style

“Selecting and discarding one’s possessions is a continuous process of making decisions based on one’s own values,” says Kondo.

Start by visualizing your ideal life. Ask yourself why you want to live that way, and then determine what you need to support the life you want.

Next, decide what to keep, then where to put it. Do it in that order. Begin with items that are easy to part with, such as clothing; sentimental items can be more difficult to discard.

Here is Kondo’s recommended order for organizing all your stuff:

- **Clothes:** Start with off-season items, and include socks, underwear, accessories, handbags, shoes and “event” wear like uniforms and swimsuits.
- **Books:** Warning: Do *not* start reading your books while cleaning!
- **Papers and files:** Discard everything that is not currently in use unless it must be kept (financial records, birth certificates, etc.). Store papers in one place only.
- **Miscellany:** CDs, DVDs, skin care products, makeup, valuables, electrical devices, kitchen equipment, seasonal items, and so on.

• **Mementos:** Photos should come last as they're the hardest to part with and tend to pop up while organizing other items.

Gather every item in a category from the entire home and pile it on the floor. Then pick up each item and ask, "Does this spark joy?" If not, put it in the discard pile. If you hesitate tossing something even if it doesn't spark joy, ask yourself why you acquired it in the first place. If it's already served its purpose, let it go.

'Storage Experts Are Hoarders.'

Kondo's statement is a bold one, but she is adamant that hiding stuff in sneaky storage spots is simply creating the illusion that you've solved your clutter problem. This is why she warns against putting anything

away until you've completely finished discarding what you don't want to keep.

When you're ready to stow everything away, she has some simple tips:

- > Every item gets a designated home.
- > Store all items of the same type in the same place.
- > Don't scatter storage spaces throughout the home.

Kondo also recommends you focus on making things easy to put away rather than easy to get out. Clutter, she says, results from failing to put things back where they belong because they're difficult to put away or because it's unclear where they go. Give every item a home, and then upkeep will be simple. ■

Read Your Way to Wellness

Want to visit a school for witches, wizards and magical creatures? Zip down a winding country road on a high-speed car chase? Solve a mystery?

Then open a book.

"Reading is an escape," says Sally Geib, a music teacher in Louisville, Kentucky. "It helps me unwind by transporting me somewhere else. I can cast off the cares of my day and push them from my mind as I enter a new realm."

While people have been turning to self-help books for years, some studies show literary fiction may actually be better at helping people cope with problems, understand complex emotions and even treat others with more empathy.

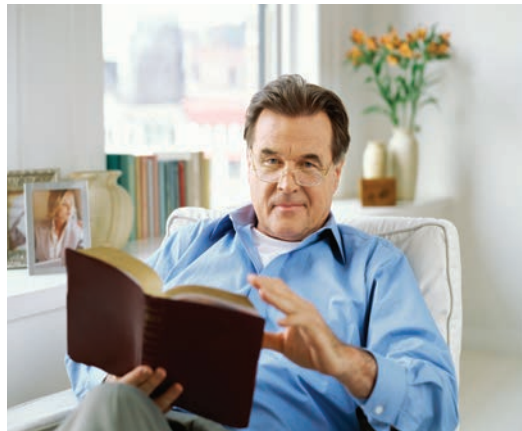
In fact, the London-based "School of Life" offers a bibliotherapy program, where reading "therapists" Susan Elderkin and Ella Berthoud recommend

books based on their clients' current life situations and reading habits. Many people, Elderkin and Berthoud say, seek book prescriptions when they're stuck in a rut, feel depressed, or new to parenthood.

Elderkin and Berthoud are also the authors of *The Novel Cure: An A-Z of Literary Remedies*. The book is written like a medical dictionary, matching ailments with a reading prescription. Someone struggling with vanity might be given the book *Gone with the Wind* by Margaret Mitchell.

For book lovers, it comes as no surprise that reading is a cure for life's headaches. Avid readers know that reading can produce the same effects as meditation or deep relaxation.

"I often feel less stressed when I read," explains Geib. "I'm able to forget my problems for a while. My mind is frequently processing a million different thoughts and ideas: thinking about my day, preparing for the next day, or worrying about that one thing I have no control over. Reading helps focus my mind."



Studies also show that readers have a lower risk of depression, stronger cognitive functioning and may even have a lower risk of dementia or Alzheimer's disease.

So the next time you need help getting out of a rut, try cracking open Milan Kundera's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, say Elderkin and Berthoud. Or if you suffer from insomnia, the duo recommends *The House of Sleep* by Jonathan Coe, though they say don't read it at bedtime as its content is far from peaceful. ■



Find out how reading may ward off dementia at [H2U.com/H2Umagazine](https://www.h2u.com/H2Umagazine)

Veggie Dishes Made Easy

Looking for some delicious recipes that you can spend hours preparing? We thought not. Everyone is so busy these days that finding time to cook a healthy meal sometimes seems impossible. However, knowing how to make a few simple, but hearty dishes can put family-pleasing meals on the table without a lot of effort. To help you expand your cooking repertoire, we gathered a few veggie dishes that go together in a snap and will satisfy vegetarians and meat lovers alike. Bon appétit!



Minestrone Soup (Serves 6)

Ingredients

- 1 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- ¾ cup onion, chopped
- 3 cups fat-free vegetable broth
- 2 cups cabbage, chopped or shredded
- 1 cup carrot, diced
- 1 cup canned cannellini beans
- ¾ cup celery, diced
- 1 tsp. minced garlic
- 1 cup green beans
- 1 tsp. dried basil
- ¼ tsp. dried oregano
- 1 (28-oz.) can diced plum tomatoes, including liquid
- ¼ cup elbow macaroni

Directions

Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onion and sauté for 4 minutes or until lightly browned. Add all other ingredients—except macaroni—and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer on medium-low heat for 25 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add macaroni, cover and cook an additional 10 minutes.

Quick Prep Tip: Use frozen veggie mixes to reduce chopping time.

Slow Cooker Version: Combine all ingredients (except macaroni) in a 6-quart slow cooker. Cook on low heat for 6–8 hours. Before serving, cook macaroni on the stove and add to soup.

Nutrition information (per serving):

Calories 203; Total fat 3 g; Protein 10 g; Sodium 219 mg; Fiber 11 g; Sugars 9 g; Carbs 37 g

more

Find more easy vegetarian recipes like Red Pepper Frittata and Pinto Bean and Butternut Squash Soup at H2U.com



Chickpea Waldorf Salad (Serves 4)

Dressing Ingredients

- ½ cup nonfat Greek yogurt
- ¼ cup low-fat mayonnaise
- 1½ Tbsp. lime juice
- ½ tsp. sugar

Salad Ingredients

- 1 cup canned chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 2 stalks celery, diced
- ½ cup walnuts, chopped
- 2 cups apples, chopped
- ½ cup unsweetened dried cranberries or chopped grapes
- 4 cups fresh spinach

Directions

Stir together all dressing ingredients in a bowl and set aside.

In a large bowl combine remaining ingredients, except spinach. Stir in dressing until evenly coated. Refrigerate about 30 minutes. Serve on top of spinach leaves or cut pita bread in half and fill with salad to make a sandwich.

Nutrition information (per serving):

Calories 367; Total fat 17 g; Protein 16 g; Sodium 170 mg; Fiber 11 g; Sugars 10 g; Carbs 41 g

Mexican Quinoa (Serves 4)

Ingredients

1 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
½ cup yellow onion, diced
2 tsp. minced garlic
1 cup dry quinoa, rinsed well
1 (14.5-oz) can salt-free diced tomatoes
1 cup cooked, low-salt black beans
1 cup frozen corn kernels
1 ½ cups low-sodium vegetable broth
¼ tsp. black pepper
½ tsp. sea salt
½ tsp. cumin
1 tsp. chili powder
Juice from 1 lime



Directions

Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion and sauté until tender, about 4 minutes. Add garlic and continue to sauté for 1 minute. Stir in quinoa, vegetable broth, beans, tomatoes, corn, chili powder, cumin, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil; cover, reduce heat and simmer until quinoa is cooked through (about 20 minutes). Stir in lime juice and garnish with chopped cilantro.

Nutrition information (per serving):

Calories 279; Total fat 7 g; Protein 10 g; Sodium 277 mg; Fiber 7 g; Sugars 3 g; Carbs 45 g ■

Fast from the Microwave

Don't use your microwave just for reheating foods. These little powerhouses can cook delicious veggies in less time than it takes to pull out your steamer and start the water bubbling. (Be sure to use microwave-safe bowls and plates!)

Broccoli: Cut a head of broccoli into bite-size florets and place in bowl. Add about 2-3 tablespoons of water and cover tightly. Microwave for 3-4 minutes.

Season it: Mix olive oil, minced garlic and red pepper flakes; toss with broccoli and finish with a squeeze of fresh lemon juice.

Corn on the cob: Leave ears of corn in their husks to help trap heat and moisture. Microwave 1-2 ears at a time for 3-4 minutes. When cool enough to handle, cut off the stem and slip the husks off.

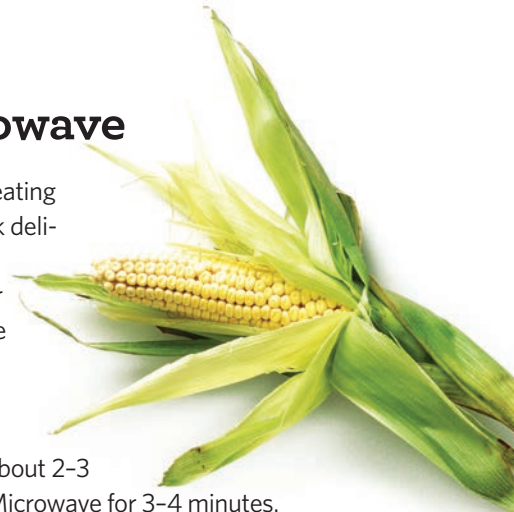
Season it: Drizzle with a little olive oil and a sprinkling of Parmesan cheese.

Potato chips: Instead of reaching for the Lay's, make healthier chips. Thinly slice Yukon gold potatoes. Toss with a little olive oil and a dash of salt. Place potato slices in a single layer on a plate or a microwave bacon tray. Microwave uncovered at 80 percent power for 2-3 minutes. Flip slices and continue cooking until edges are crisp and brown. Allow to cool completely. (Chips will continue to get crispy as they cool.)

Season it: Sprinkle on spices such as paprika, Cajun seasoning or chili powder. Or garnish with minced, fresh rosemary.

Butternut or acorn squash: Pierce whole squash several times with a knife to allow steam to escape. Microwave for about 10 minutes or until squash feels fork tender. Allow to cool. Then cut squash and remove seeds and fibers. Scoop out remaining squash and mash with your choice of flavorings.

Season it: Mix in a little butter with a dash of cayenne pepper and ground cinnamon to taste. ■



CURIOUS MINDS Does Microwaving Make Food Less Nutritious?

In the 1980s-era movie "American Hustle," Long Island housewife Rosalyn Rosenfeld is given a microwave oven. She calls it a "science oven" and tells her husband she read that microwaves destroy the nutrients in food. Today, this wives' tale still resonates even though research doesn't support this claim.

In some cases, microwaving food may actually make it better for you. Nutrients like vitamin C, for example, are heat-sensitive and start to break down when exposed to heat, whether from a microwave, oven or stovetop. Since microwave cook times are shorter, heat-sensitive nutrients stay intact longer. According to Harvard Medical School, the healthiest method of cooking is one that is quickest, heats food for the shortest amount of time, and uses the least amount of liquid. Microwaving fits all three criteria. ■



Focus on Functional Fitness

Tossing a football with your grandson, jogging around the neighborhood or working in your garden may be your idea of a perfect day. But as you age, muscle aches and pains can prevent you from doing the things you love. To maintain muscle strength and flexibility needed for everyday activities, focus on what physical therapists and personal

trainers call “functional fitness.”

Rather than isolating specific muscles like many weight machines do, functional fitness exercises target groups of muscles, using the body’s weight or simple equipment like resistance cables to get results.

Functional training was developed originally to help patients regain strength after an injury or surgery. Today, functional fitness routines are used by all kinds of people to improve endurance, strength, balance, posture and coordination, making it easier to do daily activities with less fatigue or muscle soreness.

“Functional fitness is different for everyone,” says Rami Aboumahadi, a certified personal trainer who manages employee wellness programs at three HCA hospitals in Florida.

“One of the first questions I ask people is what they do for a living and about their current workout routine. Oftentimes people are doing the wrong exercise for their daily activities. I choose exercises and stretches based on their lifestyles.”

To increase our functional fitness, Aboumahadi recommends strength training one or two days a week. Aim for 10–15 repetitions of your exercises to challenge muscles. Do cardio (like swimming, biking, jogging or walking) on your other workout days. Choose a combination of the exercises below based on how you spend your day. ■



Visit [H2U.com/H2Umagazine](https://www.h2u.com/h2umagazine) for a printable copy of Rami Aboumahadi’s full-body, at-home workout with photos.

If you do a lot of standing and walking

Chair squats: Stand with your feet hip-width apart. Keep your back straight and squat down until your butt touches the chair. Hold, then rise back up.



If you do a lot of sitting

Low back extensions: Hold your hands by your head, keep your back straight and chest up, and tilt your hips forward. Keep knees locked and lean forward until your back is parallel to the floor.



If you do a lot of lifting

Cable rows: Anchor resistance cables at a chest-level point (a door knob, for example). Keep your back straight and pull back on the handles of the cables as far as you can. Hold, then release.



Try this full-body exercise to help with every activity:

Planks: Lie facedown on the floor and anchor elbows directly below shoulders. Anchor toes and lift up until your body is straight. Hold for 10–15 seconds.



Share the Savings

Prescription drugs can be expensive, especially when you don't have insurance or a drug isn't covered. H2U helps cut these costs with the CVS Caremark discount card printed on the back of your member card. You also get a CVS card to share with family members in the H2U welcome letter.

If you didn't get a welcome letter in the mail or you misplaced your extra card, you can print a card at **H2U.com**. Log in to H2U.com and select the "My Account" button at the top of the page. Then scroll down and click the link for your card. Print it and cut it out. Then remove the pharmacy discount portion and pass it on to a family member who needs it.

To use the card, just show it to the pharmacist at CVS or any of the 60,000 participating pharmacies, including Walgreens, Walmart and others. Learn more on the Discount pages at **H2U.com**. ■



Your CVS Caremark card can be used by family, too.

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- > Unlimited access to the H2U.com health and wellness portal
- > Discounts on health and security services, travel and shopping

To purchase an H2U membership, go to **H2U.com/join**, or pick up an application at an affiliated hospital. To find an affiliated hospital or purchase gift memberships, call (800) 771-0428.



H2U's Personal Health Record Keeps You Organized

When you need medical care, having all your health information in one place can save time and possibly keep you healthier. The H2U Personal Health Record (PHR) is a downloadable form where you can record basic medical information like names of doctors and insurance providers,



prescriptions, family health history, medical procedures and more.

The form can easily be completed, printed and saved on your computer, or a blank copy can be printed for writing your information to share with others. Having up-to-date health records helps individuals, families, caregivers and healthcare providers make better medical decisions and perhaps prevent unnecessary or duplicate tests. Using the form can also streamline doctor appointments because you have information like prescriptions and pharmacy numbers on hand.

For a downloadable copy of this form, log into your account at **H2U.com**. Look for the Health Record on the Health Resources page. You can save the form securely to your computer and fill it out at your convenience. Don't forget to update it each time you see your doctor, fill a prescription or go to the hospital. ■

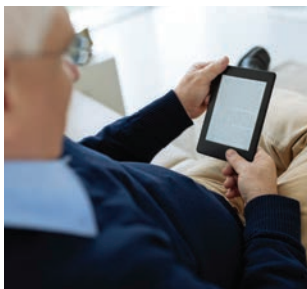
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5 Fun Ways to Survive a Dreary Day

When rain or snow threatens to put a damper on your day, these activities can lift your spirits.

1 Download a book on your e-reader. (Freebies may be available through your local library.) Or check your bookshelves at home for an old favorite



to re-read. Brew a cup of tea, pull out a cozy blanket and let yourself get whisked away to another world.

2 Learn to play a new game. Dig out that deck of cards and ask your partner or a neighbor to join you in a two-handed game like rummy, which has dozens of variations. Find rules for variations at www.Pagat.com.



3 Try a new recipe. First, browse your kitchen to see what you have on hand, then look for recipes in your



cookbooks or at online sites like CookingLight.com. If you're missing an ingredient, make substitutions instead of running to the store. Extra points for creativity!

4 Make your own book. Start writing down family stories or copying recipes to share at your next reunion. Or use the surprisingly easy online tools at sites like Shutterfly.com or Snapfish.com to create a photo book from all those vacation photos you never printed.

5 Embrace the weather. If you have the right clothing, walking in the rain or wandering through a snowy wonderland can be invigorating. Just be careful on slippery walks. If it's a snow day, join your kids or grandkids in building a snowman!

