

# Words of Wellness

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## Summer Fun

June is the kick-off for the summer months. We often think of summer as a time to relax. But stress management and relaxation need to be included as an important part of every day!

Of course, relaxing means kicking back and taking it easy, like enjoying a cold drink while sitting outside on a warm and sunny day.

Relaxing can also be active, such as shifting your activities by doing something that refreshes your body and mind, like taking a walk or doing an enjoyable hobby.



## Hobbies

What is a hobby? A hobby is an activity you do regularly in your free time. Many people don't even realize they already have a hobby. There are many different hobbies that benefit us in different ways. Some hobbies have physical wellness benefits. Yoga, running, meditation are great hobbies because they require physical movement, stretching and can help relieve stress.

Gardening is another great hobby. Not only does it have the economic and health benefit of growing your own produce, but it can also improve your physical wellness. Tending to your garden requires physical labor, which can be great exercise. There are many things that you can grow in your garden such as flowers, shrubberies and fruits and vegetable. Many people enjoy growing their own tomato plants, with a payoff in both physical activity and nutrition! Art is a great hobby, and it can involve painting, drawing, writing, and sculpting as well as many other things.

Art is a great way to express your creative side and to relieve stress. Since art requires our creativity, it can help our intellectual wellness and, for many, contributes to spiritual wellness. Sharing a creation or creating with others boosts social wellness.

Displaying beautiful and meaningful creations enhances our environmental wellness, too. Almost everyone has experienced a hobby they truly enjoy. However, as adults, many people get caught up in work and other life responsibilities and feel they do not have time for a hobby.

Whether you are a young adult or older adult it is a perfect time to reactivate and old hobby or learn a new hobby. if you're struggling to decide what hobby to get involved in think about whether you already have one. Or think about trying a new hobby. There are so many to choose from and remember hobbies can help strengthen many dimensions of wellness.



## 5 Steps to Good Mental and Physical Wellness

### Step #1: Pause & Breathe

- ☼ Meditation and mindfulness activities help you manage and reduce stress—both immediate and long-term.
- ☼ Regular mindfulness practice improves mental focus and boosts compassion towards yourself and others.
- ☼ Yoga, tai chi, and similar activities offer exercise, mindfulness, and relaxation, especially if you pay attention to your breathing and focus on the present moment.

### Step #2: Reach Out and Connect with Someone

- ☼ Talk to a friend or supporter—social support relieves stress and can even keep you healthy.
- ☼ Hug a pet! Spending time with animals can be calming and make you feel less alone. Taking care of a pet can give you a sense of purpose and responsibility.
- ☼ Spend time around others—join a club or book group, volunteer as a friendly visitor, or help with a community project.



### Step #3: Focus on Sleep

- ☼ Good sleep habits (also called “sleep hygiene”) can help you get a good night’s sleep.
- ☼ Getting enough sleep and rest refreshes your mind and your mood, helps your body heal, and improves your memory.
- ☼ Be consistent with the times you go to sleep and wake up. Sleep in a cool, dark space. Turn off screens at least 30 minutes before bedtime. Avoid large meals, caffeine, and alcohol before bedtime.

### Step #4: Move More

- ☼ Try walking just 10 minutes 3 times/day for 3 days out of each week.
- ☼ Physical activity helps control weight, improve health, lower your risk of heart disease, and lengthen your life.
- ☼ Walking and other aerobic activities can help improve your mood and reduce symptoms of depression.



### Step #5: Eliminate Harmful Substances

- ☼ Cut down or quit smoking, other types of tobacco and nicotine, alcohol, opioids, and other harmful drugs.
- ☼ Many harmful substances cause mental health problems and are linked to depression and suicide.
- ☼ Alcohol, marijuana, and other substances can disrupt your sleep, and many harmful substances are associated with increased health problems, including cancer, liver problems, heart disease, and difficulty breathing

