



Winter is in full swing, and the holidays are over for yet another year. I don't know about you, but I am ready for a new year!! With the economic downturn still, well, down, and the weather being dark and cold, many folks are struggling to get up, keep up and keep going.

I want to give you some simple ways to keep going this month, ways to make small changes in your routine to move your health- mental and physical—in the right direction. So let's go!

Move, Move, Move!

It doesn't matter what you do, our bodies were meant to move. Although I prefer to get outside regardless how cold it is, I know many of you don't like the cold, so I say, just move somehow!! Exercise movement is not chasing around a toddler. Exercise movement needs to fulfill a couple requirements:

- It needs to rev up your heart rate for a period of time to give cardiovascular benefit- 20 minutes minimum
- It needs to be part of your stress reduction plan, not stress producing!
- It should leave you feeling tired, happy, invigorated and strong all at the same time!

This leaves it open for a lot of possibilities. Here are some that I think are good choices:

- Learn to love winter by taking up snowshoeing, cross country skiing, hiking or ice skating. Make it a family adventure if you want. Right now, many parks are primed for winter hiking. Trust me, it might be cold, but I guarantee you will warm up within 15 minutes of exercise!
- Splurge on a winter membership to a local gym and use it: take a class, use the track, and swim. Whatever interests you, now is the time to say YES. Bargain for winter rates, and make a promise to your self or to a friend, and just do it!
- Borrow exercise videos and DVDs from your local library and try stretching, yoga, Pilates or Sumba! The sky's the limit, and this is free!
- Hook up with a friend who has WiiFit and make it a date to exercise together.
- My favorite: try a hot yoga class! I recommend [Riverflow Yoga](#) in Lambertville, NJ if you live nearby. It is simply the best for burning calories, stretching and loosening tight bodies and building strength while cleansing every cell in your body!

Snack Smartly

When times are stressful, snacking gets ugly. I know, I've been there (recently, to!) Much like in other parts of life, it is best to have a plan. During winter, we all have the tendency to eat more. I think it's part of the hibernation process! But we have to be mindful about what we put past our lips. In past letters, I have recommended a return to heavier foods during the winter, such as soups and stews with plenty of vegetables, winter squashes, beans and whole grains. Too, it is a good time of year to add small snacks in mid-morning and mid-afternoon to stave off unhealthy binges. As long as you choose healthy snacks and don't over eat at mealtime, you will give yourself the energy you

need without adding to your waistline. Snacks should include a bit of protein coupled with fruits or veggies—this makes it a great mini meal for energy and disease-protecting nutrients! Here are my best picks:



- A handful of raw nuts or seeds. A handful! Not a bowl full! Brazil nuts, walnuts, cashews, sunflower and pumpkin seeds, almonds. All are terrific protein sources and have calcium and essential fatty acids. Please avoid roasted nuts—they cause the fats to be denatured and potentially toxic.
- Clementines! Hand fruit of the gods, in my mind. These portable lovelies are perfect for a snack and brimming with fiber and vitamin C.
- Red grapes, frozen berries, in organic Greek yogurt, soy yogurt or coconut milk yogurt.
- Veggie sticks and hummus. Chop up a bag full of celery, carrots, red pepper, and fennel. One of Elin's favorites!
- A handful of homemade trail mix. Make your own by visiting the bulk bins and combining nuts, seeds and dried fruits. Try to pick fruits that are organic, or

processed without sulfur dioxide or added sugar. Keep it to a small handful, as this is very calorie and nutrient dense!

Eliminate the Multi-tasking Mentality

I have said this before, and I will say it again. There is nothing worse for stress reduction than having a long “to do” list and trying to multi-task your way through the whole thing. Stop. Breathe. Now pick one thing that you feel is important, and do it with your whole heart and mind. If you are washing the dishes, wash them and nothing more. Don't plan out dinner in your mind, or run through your list of things for tomorrow. Don't talk on the phone while you fold the laundry. Do one thing. A motto that one of my favorite Christian missionaries, Elizabeth Eliot used to say is “Just do the next thing”. How simple! I actually painted this on a rock that I use as my door stop. In reality, we can only do the next thing. If we constantly try to do a zillion things at once, we will live our lives in a constant whirlwind and have little joy or knowledge of what our life really is about. Stop and smell the roses!



Doing one thing at a time is a difficult thing to learn, but it is vital to having a life you enjoy and remember! It is part of what I call mindfulness meditation, and I have talked about this in the past.

Find your Daily Pleasure

Even when you are busiest, you must take time to find some pleasure in your day. Even if only

for 5 minutes, you are worth taking the time for something that brings a smile to your face and peace to your heart. Here are some suggestions:

- Start your day with a daily devotional or thankfulness prayer. Keeping in touch with your spiritual side and giving thanks are great ways to begin the day.
- Revisit the snowman. Or make snow angels and snowballs and call forth your inner child. Children and dogs are great motivators for snow time!
- Take out your camera and try to capture winter's beauty. It may help you to enjoy the season more!
- Take a hot bath. Fill a tub, add some Epsom salts, baking soda and a few drops of lavender or mint essential oils and soak for 20 minutes. Light candles and relax. Read a fun magazine or just chill. You will sleep better and feel great.
- Hang a bird feeder outside a window that you can see from your comfortable chair. Now make a cup of tea and allow yourself to watch the birds for a few minutes while you sit and sip. Ahhh!

I hope that winter finds you all well. As I work my way through my final 2 classes, I see the end of my educational tunnel—for now! I, too, struggle with the stress of having too many things to do at one time. Too many assignments due, not enough hours after work. Dogs that want to go for hikes, laundry that beckons. But I, like you, have to take it one thing at a time. It isn't easy, but it's the only way.

Please share this newsletter with others that might find it useful and enjoyable. And as always, contact me if I can be a motivation or help to you in any way! And keep taking your vitamins daily!!



Have a wonderful winter and we'll revisit in a month!

Diane

www.womensnutritionmatters.com

herbalmgem@gmail.com