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## 5 ways to bring more joy to your life

Kristin Bogdonas, Nutrition and Wellness Educator,

When you're feeling down in the dumps, what do you do? You have two options: keep doing what you're doing or try one of these happy hacks to bring a smile back to your face and ultimately boost your mood.

Here are five simple ways to bring more joy to your life right now.

**1) Unplug-** "Comparison is the thief of joy" - Theodore Roosevelt  
If you are vulnerable to social comparison, limit your time spent on social media. Social media can help us stay up-to-date with our social networks but too much of a good thing can have negative effects.

Studies have shown frequent cellphone use to be associated with higher anxiety levels and reduced happiness. Be careful how much time you spend scrolling through your newsfeed so you can stay present in your own life. There is no substitute for human interaction so if you miss seeing your friends, give them a call and find out how their day is going.

**2) Get moving-** one of the best ways to put more pep in your step is to get up and get some exercise. Blood flow will increase oxygen to your brain. If you're feeling a bit low on energy, don't just sit there, bust a move! Try some of the many free fitness videos online, go for a walk, put on your favorite song and dance around in your jammies. Dancing always does the trick for me. Aim for 30 minutes of moderate-intensity activity every day.

**3) Reach for a healthy snack-** if you're feeling less than ideal, don't reach for a snack to match. In other words, don't fill up on junk food. Instead, fill your body with vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients to help turn your day around. Fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds and even a little dark chocolate could be just what you need. Don't forget about the sunshine vitamin! Getting outside for a healthy dose of Vitamin D can also help boost your mood. One healthy habit will lead to another and start a chain reaction.



*"Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy."*  
-Thick Nhat Hanh

**4) Develop an attitude of gratitude-** we all owe someone our deepest thanks. Whether you take the time to write a heartfelt letter, compose a song, or virtually connect online, make it a point to express your gratitude toward someone that has made an impact in your life. In recent years, I've sent cards to my K-12 teachers and they are touched to know they are still remembered and appreciated after all these years. It's a small act that can bring joy to your life and that of the receiver.

Other strategies to enhance feelings of gratitude include, journaling or writing down what you are grateful for each day, meditating or praying on gratitude, and thinking about someone or something you are grateful for.

**5) Take some deep breaths-** stop reading this article for a second and take a long deep breath and calmly exhale... Don't you feel better already? When you're in the grip of anxiety or a stressful situation, the body wants to transition to short, thoracic breaths (chest-breathing).

By practicing a deep breathing exercise, you can return to a more relaxed state. The next time you're feeling stressed, try breathing in for 4 counts and slowly exhaling for 4 counts. Repeat this process until you're in a peaceful state of calm.

Hopefully these tips will help bring you more joy!



## Fall Garden Checklist

Fall is the perfect time to begin preparations for next year. Taking care of a few details now means fewer chores, pests and problems in the spring. University of Illinois Extension horticulture educators share tips to check off your to do list:

### How did your garden do?

Take stock of how your plants did. Do a walk through and take notes on plant locations and performance.

- **Sketch out your vegetable garden.** Crop rotation is important in preventing disease. In the spring, refer to your sketch and plant vegetables in different locations.
- **Review perennials and annuals.** Note whether plants met expectations or if different plants or varieties are needed. Would a different location help? Do any perennials need to be divided? Do it now or make a list for next spring.

### Landscape Clean Up

- Remove diseased plants and discard them before they spread problems to other plants.
- Remove annuals and cut back tops of tall herbaceous perennials after the first frost.
- Or, tall perennials can be left to overwinter and provide habitat for wildlife. Many may reseed this way. Cut them back in the spring.



### Spring Bulbs

- Dig up tender bulbs such as gladioli, dahlia, and canna lilies. Dry them, and store in a cool, frost-free area.
- Plant in October/November in Illinois for spring blooms. Garden centers have hardy bulbs such as tulips, daffodils, and crocus in stock in the fall.
- Plant bulbs two to three times as deep as the length of the bulb, measured from the bottom of the bulb.
- Plant groups of bulbs together for the greatest visual impact and large drifts or waves of color.
- Or, plant bulbs with other perennials and shrubs to screen the foliage after blooms fade.

### Tools

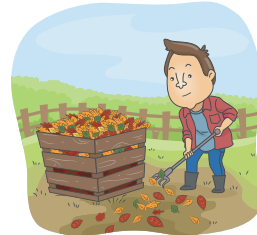
Clean, oil and sharpen your garden tools before putting them away for the winter.

### Leaves and Compost

Do not let fallen leaves accumulate and mat down over grass, which actively grows again before winter. Fallen leaves can be used as winter mulch around tender plants or locate them so they are handy to use as mulch next year. Or, use leaves to start a compost pile.

### How to Start a Compost Pile

1. Pick a shady, moist spot.
2. Use one-part green materials and two parts brown materials. Add in alternating layers.
3. Do not add diseased or pesticide treated plants, weeds with seed heads, twigs, meat or bones, dairy products, human or pet waste.
4. Occasionally adding non-glossy paper or a bit of soil.
5. Turn monthly to aerate and mix.



### Greens (nitrogen):

Kitchen scraps and coffee grounds, fresh grass clippings, grass/grain-fed livestock manure.

### Browns (carbon):

Fallen leaves, non-glossy shredded paper or cardboard, wood ash, straw, sawdust, hair trimmings.

### Container Plants

- Add annuals and container soil to a compost pile.
- Clean containers with a mild bleach solution of 10-parts water, one-part bleach.
- Bring tender perennials and tropical plants indoors when temperatures drop below 55°F. Inspect for pests and diseases.

For more resources visit our webpage:

[extension.illinois.edu/hmrs/horticulture-programs](https://extension.illinois.edu/hmrs/horticulture-programs)



**TAKE YOUR LOVE OF GARDENING TO THE NEXT LEVEL! BECOME A MASTER GARDENER IN 2022!**

### The self-paced online course starts Jan 31, 2022

Take recorded classes taught by University of Illinois Extension horticulture educators.

### The hybrid course start February 15

It includes Q&A sessions with instructors and meetings with other trainees on Tues mornings, Feb 15 - April 26 as well as the recorded classes.

Learn more and register @

[go.illinois.edu/MasterGardenerTrainingWinter2022](https://go.illinois.edu/MasterGardenerTrainingWinter2022)

# Free Workshops with University of Illinois Extension:

## Healthy Cents, Nov 8, 5:30 - 6:30 PM

Healthy Cents combines nutrition education and food resource management principles to make healthy food choices on a limited budget. This course will focus on how to develop a food budget. Topics covered will include: Making choices between food needs & food wants. Developing a spending plan that works for you. & Making a food budget for you. Class will be held online via ZOOM, register at: [go.illinois.edu/healthycentrockisland](http://go.illinois.edu/healthycentrockisland)

## Building Resiliency in Yourself & Your Organization, Tues. Nov 9, 10 AM, IL Extension, Milan, IL

Every one of us has been challenged by a tough situation sometime in our lives. We have witnessed highly resilient people that have the ability to adapt, recover and grow stronger from difficult situations. In this lesson, learn what characteristics resilient people and organizations possess that help them create opportunities from challenges, and how YOU can also nurture and strengthen your resilience. Presented as a LIVE webinar at the Extension office giving you a chance to ask questions of the presenters. Sign up at [go.illinois.edu/BuildingResiliency](http://go.illinois.edu/BuildingResiliency)



## Wellness Strategies: Preventing Diabetes, Nov 10 at Noon

Let's bust the myths surrounding diabetes and work on skill power! Recognize the importance of reducing your risk through simple-to-do wellness strategies and develop personal goals to living a heartier lifestyle. Learn how to swap unhealthy recipes for healthy ones, enjoy great tastes, and live life to the fullest. Presenter: Susan Glassman, Nutrition and Wellness Extension Educator. Register @ [go.illinois.edu/PreventDiabetes](http://go.illinois.edu/PreventDiabetes)  
If an accommodation is needed to participate email Susan Glassman at [susang@illinois.edu](mailto:susang@illinois.edu).

## Conscious Consumerism | Nov 10, Noon

This webinar series by Illinois Extension will help you learn how to make the most of your financial resources.



Do you want to ensure that your spending is ethical and making a positive impact on the world? Is being mindful about where your money goes important to you? This webinar provides the tools you need to think critically about your own consumption. Learn how you can align your own behaviors with your personal values and goals. Presented by Natalie Daniels, DePaul University, and Andrea Pellegrini, University of Illinois Student Money Managing Center.

Register at [go.illinois.edu/ConsciousConsumer](http://go.illinois.edu/ConsciousConsumer)

If reasonable accommodation is needed contact Kathy Sweedler at [sweedler@illinois.edu](mailto:sweedler@illinois.edu).



## Autumn Health Picks

Dive deeper into specific health conditions in this free online series offered Wednesdays at noon.

Register at [go.illinois.edu/HealthPicksAutumn](http://go.illinois.edu/HealthPicksAutumn)

### Nov 3 | Brain Waves: What Can They Tell Us?

Many of you have probably heard about "brain waves," but what are they and where do they come from? More importantly, how can we measure them and what can they tell us about the brain? Join Grace Clements as she discusses the history, methodology, and some current research on these so-called "brain waves."

### Nov 10 | Understanding Genetic Screens

Genetic screening is one of the most powerful tools used in biological sciences, allowing researchers to learn more about genetic interactions and risk factors. Outside of the lab, genetic screening has transformed the way some diseases, including certain cancers, are treated. Join presenter Sneha Das as she discusses how genetic screening works, unpacks some of the latest research, and highlights how this tool is helping researchers and clinicians better understand and treat diseases.

### Nov 17 | Health Data: What Does HIPAA Protect?

Lately, the acronym HIPAA is showing up everywhere! Are you familiar with the term? Do you know what it truly means to have protected health data, and have you taken measures to ensure that yours is safe? Join Erica Noel as she talks about the history of HIPAA and keeping your health information from falling into the wrong hands in a post-COVID world.

## Illinois Strong Couples Project

Discover strategies to help you and your partner enjoy a healthy and strong relationship. Illinois couples who are married, engaged, or have been living together for at least six months can enroll. The self-paced, six-session program is entirely online and uses the scientifically-proven ePREP platform. The program is free to qualifying Illinois couples and includes support from trained program coaches affiliated with University of Illinois Extension. Discover if the Illinois Strong Couples program is the right fit for your relationship. Learn more at [publish.illinois.edu/strongcouples/](http://publish.illinois.edu/strongcouples/)



# Enjoy the holidays with these easy tips!

Susan Glassman & Mary Liz Wright, Nutrition and Wellness Educators

Have you always brought dessert to the holiday gathering? Maybe you are not used to preparing a full meal, but this year may be different. Enjoy the holidays with a new twist this year. If you are cooking a full meal for the first time – You can do it!

This can be a daunting task. Plan and strategize and pull this dinner off without a fuss. Have fun cooking with members of your household and enjoy the leftovers (or planned overs).

## Holiday Meal Planning

- Decide on the menu. Make what you and your family like.
- Share recipes with family members ahead of time so you all can enjoy your favorite dishes.
- Assign tasks to family members, get everyone involved.
- Shop ahead.
  - Let's talk turkey! You may not need a 30 lb. bird this year. Is the crowd smaller? Plan for 3/4 pound of turkey per person, thaw in the refrigerator: 24 hours per every 5 pounds.
  - Bake a turkey breast rather than a whole turkey (bone-in gives better flavor broth)
  - Think about oven space—you can cook the turkey the day before, slice and refrigerate and heat in the microwave
  - You can purchase an oven-ready or even a pre-cooked turkey
- Cook ahead and reheat when possible. Bake pies or buy your favorite. Assemble casseroles and refrigerate uncooked; bake on the holiday.
- Cut and prep vegetables, garnishes 2-3 days before.
- Set the table the day before.
- Relax the timetable: sleep in, have a leisurely breakfast and enjoy a late afternoon holiday meal.
- There is no law against a dessert, cranberry sauce or bread product purchased from the store.
- Reduce the number of dishes or cut the recipe in half. (see tips on right for reducing your recipe).



## To reduce a recipe by one-half the amount, follow these measurements:

- Full amount | Amount to divide in half
- 1/4 cup | 2 Tablespoons
- 1/3 cup | 2 Tablespoons + 2 teaspoons
- 1/2 cup | 1/4 cup
- 2/3 cup | 1/3 cup
- 1 Tablespoon | 1-1/2 teaspoons
- 1 teaspoon | 1/2 teaspoon
- 1/2 teaspoon | 1/4 teaspoon
- 1/4 teaspoon | 1/8 teaspoon
- 1/8 teaspoon | dash

For more information on cooking turkeys and other recipes for the holidays, visit [Turkey for the Holidays](#) from Illinois Extension.



## Sign up for these helpful resources and take charge of your health!



## Find Food IL Map

Visit the site at:  
[go.illinois.edu/ILFoodMap](http://go.illinois.edu/ILFoodMap)

To help Illinois residents and families meet their basic food needs, University of Illinois Extension launched a new community food map that allows individuals to search by Illinois zip code for all food resources in that area.

## Sign-Up for the EAT.MOVE.SAVE. Healthy Text Program!

Choose ONE of three ways to sign up to get 1-2 text messages per week!  
*Text message and data rates may apply.*  
*Text STOP to unsubscribe at any time.*



Use a smartphone camera to scan and sign-up with an online form.

OR

If you live in Rock Island or Mercer County:  
**Text "rockisland7" to (833) 369-2916**

If you live in Henry or Stark Counties:  
**Text "henry7" to (833) 369-2916**

# Breakroom Buzz



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## November is National Sweet Potato Month

**Yams vs. Sweet Potatoes.** Yams are tubers with rough and scaly skin, and very lightly colored flesh. Sweet potatoes have smooth skin with flesh ranging from orange to purple or white. *You will find sweet potatoes most often in grocery stores.*

**Why eat sweet potatoes?** Because they are a powerhouse of good nutrition! They are fat free, high in vitamins C and A, a good source of calcium and potassium, and an excellent source of fiber. You cannot beat that at 100 calories per 3.5 ounces!

### Try this savory option:

Wash hands with soap and water. Preheat oven to 425°, place parchment paper or tinfoil on rimmed baking sheet, wash and dice sweet potatoes into 1 inch cubes, toss with a small amount of olive oil. Spread in an even layer on baking sheet, sprinkle with seasoning (garlic, pepper, herbs) to taste, Bake 30-40 minutes, or until desired texture (chewy to crisp)

Source: Adapted by Mary Liz Wright, Nutrition & Wellness Educator, Mississippi State University Extension & North Dakota State University Extension, Prairie Fire.

## Are you at risk?

### PREDIABETES

COULD IT BE YOU?



- Are overweight
- Are 45 years or older
- Have a parent, brother, or sister with type 2 diabetes
- Are physically active less than 3 times a week
- Have ever had gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy) or given birth to a baby who weighed more than 9 pound
- Are African American, Hispanic/Latino American, American Indian, or Alaska Native

**If you are at risk of developing diabetes, please make an appointment with your healthcare provider.**

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021

## I Didn't Know That!

### World Kindness Day is November 13, 2021

This is a global day that promotes the importance of being kind to each other, yourself, and to the world. Incorporating kindness into your day can make you feel better physically, emotionally, and mentally.

Here are just a few suggestions for completing a least one act of kindness daily for a week:

- Rake leaves for a neighbor.
- Write a thank you card or thinking of you card to someone.
- Pay for someone's movie ticket or lunch in a drive thru.
- Give a sincere compliment to someone.
- Text someone a good morning.
- Put a surprise note in a significant other's or child's lunch box.
- Write a letter to deployed or wounded member of the military.
- Instead of texting or emailing, make a phone call to a family member who lives afar.
- Bring in favorite food or snacks to your office mates.
- When making gift purchases, think about buying a for a child in need or part of an organized effort.

Don't forget to practice self-kindness such as, mediating, going for a nature walk, dancing to a favorite song.

Source: Adapted by Tessa Hobbs-Curley, Family Life Educator. American Psychological Association, "When doing good boosts health, well being. September 3, 2020. <https://www.bradaronson.com/acts-of-kindness/>; <https://www.womenshealthmag.com/uk/health/mental-health/a3460066/physical-benefits-of-kindness/>; Tessa Hobbs-Curley, Family Life Educator, 2020