



ChallengeME MONTHLY MINUTE



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Monthly topic:

Stress

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There's a lot to feel stressed about this year, but in addition to COVID, the holidays bring their own dizzying array of demands.

Follow these steps to help prevent stress and depression in the first place:

- 1. Acknowledge your feelings** - It's OK not to be OK.
- 2. Reach out** - Join a group, talk to a friend, volunteer.
- 3. Be realistic** - Things change and this year is not the exception - make new traditions and find new ways to celebrate.
- 4. Set aside differences** - Try to accept family and friends as they are, even if they don't live up to all of your expectations. Set aside grievances until a more appropriate time for discussion.
- 5. Stick to a budget** - Give homemade gifts or start a family gift exchange... don't over spend!
- 6. Plan ahead** - Set aside time to get things done.
- 7. Learn to say no** - You're only one person after all.
- 8. Don't abandon healthy habits** - Eat healthy, eat smaller portions, get plenty of sleep, breathe, limit how much time you spend watching the news or on social media.
- 9. Take a breather** - Make time for yourself.
- 10. Seek professional help if you need it** - It's OK to need help. If you're depressed, talk to your doctor.

Working Out to Relieve Stress

Regular exercise reduces the harmful effects of stress. Stress can cause low energy, headaches, upset stomach, aches and pains, rapid heartbeat, insomnia, weakened immune system, agitation, dry mouth, poor judgment, lack of focus, depression, anxiety, obesity... the list goes on!

Exercise increases your overall health, both mental and physical, and your sense of wellbeing by pumping up your endorphins, improving blood flow, strengthening your muscles, and improving your cardiovascular, digestive, and immune systems!

Many gyms and fitness apps are currently offering extended free trials and free workout programs.

You can find free live and prerecorded workouts by Planet Fitness, Orangetheory Fitness, Gold's Gym and more with just a quick google search!

Start small, set goals, find a friend (up for a virtual ZOOM cardio class, anyone?), and make some time to focus on you and your wellbeing this winter.

Speak with your doctor before starting a new exercise regimen!

52 Week Money Challenge

If you were saving for the holidays, you've made it! December marks the last few weeks of the challenge!

DECEMBER 2020

S	M	T	W	T	F	S	\$
29	30	31	01	02	03	04	\$49
05	06	07	08	09	10	11	\$50
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	\$51
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	\$52
26	27	28	29	30	31	01	\$53 BONUS

Monthly Total: **\$153**
Grand Total: **\$1378**

A Little Holiday Gift Guide

Not sure what to give everyone this year? Here's a few thoughtful ideas to help get you and yours through this holiday season:

- Curate your best recipes for a homemade cookbook
- An air fryer or kitchen gadgets that make cooking a walk in the park
- Gift cards to local businesses
- Small crafting project kits, puzzles, books; anything to pass the time
- Means of video chatting (any smart device with a video camera)
- Fuzzy blankets and warm socks
- Tickets to a virtual concert
- A food subscription box
- A subscription to a TV streaming service (Netflix, Hulu, Disney, etc.)

Coming Up January: Changes and Challenges

Comments, questions, ideas, or submissions?
Please email: kara.a.aguilar@maine.gov