

Balanced Living

March 2025



Becoming an Accepting and Supportive Person

Many members of the LGBTQIA+ community face obstacles and may be hindered due to the biases of others, in life and in the workplace. Therefore, it's important to take an opportunity to self-reflect on our own beliefs and actions, as well as how they affect those around us. As the Greek philosopher Socrates once said, "An unexamined life is not worth living." Though we should always treat others with respect and kindness, we might fall short at times or not realize how exactly to show support. If you would like to work on being an accepting and supportive ally to the LGBTQIA+ community, here are some points to consider.

Individuality makes us human. It takes all different types of people to make the world go round. As long as one's actions don't harm others, no one should be shamed or threatened for expressing their uniqueness. You can still respect and support someone else even if you don't agree with everything they believe or do.

Expand your horizons. Try being more receptive to new people. If you tend to interact with the same people in your daily routine, challenge yourself to say hello to someone new. Maybe it's someone you cross paths with on a regular basis but have never really talked with. Could you be more open to having dialogue with people who have different beliefs and points of view? Think of it as an opportunity to grow and expand your own perspective. Make sure to be respectful when engaging in dialogue with others, even if your points of view differ.

Be mindful of your own judgments or assumptions. We all make judgments, and sometimes it can feel like an automatic process in our brain. If you notice that you jump to immediate judgments about others, practice shifting your brain to simply making observations. Also, avoid making assumptions about others. We might do this when we are out in public observing strangers or with people we know in our daily lives. However, we can never know the inner workings of someone else unless they tell us. As Don Miguel Ruiz wrote in his book *The Four Agreements*, "It is always better to ask questions than to make an assumption."

Take the time to listen. Challenge yourself to truly listen when conversing with others, rather than just waiting for your turn to talk. As the Dalai Lama once said, "When you talk, you are only repeating what you know. But when you listen, you learn something new."

Ask others how you can support them. Don't be afraid to be direct and ask your friends, family, or others in your life how you can best support them.

Not everyone will agree on some things. Try not to let others' opinions and beliefs affect you negatively. Instead, focus on what you can do. Continue to spread positivity and maintain an open mindset even when others are not. If you see someone getting bullied or harassed in the workplace, offer your support, help them get to a safe space, and report the behavior through the appropriate channels. Remember to stay in control of your emotions, as this can help de-escalate the situation.

© 2025 Life Advantages, LLC

Deep Cleaning Your Life

Every so often a deep cleaning may be warranted and can improve not only your physical living space, but your mental space as well. A cluttered, messy physical space can contribute to anxiety, stress, and an overall feeling of disarray. Here are some tips to help you through the process of cleaning your environment for a clear head.

Donate Items You No Longer Use

Items you don't use contribute to clutter and collect dust, but they could be useful to someone else. If you no longer need or use something, it's time to pass it on. Drop off the items in the box to a local charity or thrift store once a month or whenever a box gets full. Decluttering your physical space not only makes it easier to keep the space clean, but you'll also notice the positive impact the process can have on your mental state as well.

Clean Out Your Closet on a Regular Basis

At least once or twice a year, go through your closet and donate any clothes you haven't worn in a while. This frees up space and creates less indecision about what to wear. After a proper clean out, you might notice clothing items you had forgotten about or find that you have more storage space for items that you'd rather tuck out of sight.

Develop a Cleaning Routine

Keep track of household chores that need to be done on a regular basis, such as dishes, laundry, vacuuming, mopping, and dusting. Develop a daily, weekly, monthly, and even yearly routine. Assign jobs to roommates or family members so everyone pitches in. Prioritize what needs to get done, such as doing the dishes and a load of laundry.



Clean Up Your Emotional Space

Once you've tidied up your physical space, evaluate the state of your emotional space as well. If you tend to hyperfocus or dwell on the negative in situations, reorient yourself to be grateful for the good things in your life. Both meditation and exercise are effective tools to help clear your mind and make room for more positive mental energy.

Don't let your mind become like a browser with too many tabs open. By prioritizing, learning to let things go, and realizing you can only control so much, you can lighten your mental load and enjoy each day more thoroughly.

Life Advantages, LLC © 2024

Developing Effective Decision-Making Skills

It's not easy making decisions, especially when those decisions impact your personal life and the lives of those you interact with on a daily basis. That kind of responsibility can often cause you to avoid the issue and postpone making any decision at all. When this happens, it can create openings for the other elements of your life – family, friends, coworkers, and major events or issues – to make decisions for you. Do you really want to hand over the control of your life to random events or people who might not have your best interests in mind? It's time you put your life back into focus by following these tips and learning how to become a smarter decision maker.

Avoiding Rushing Into a Decision

You can't resolve a problem in your life if you don't know exactly what's happening. Take the time to consider what's happening, who might be involved, and how different outcomes might impact your life.

Be Rational in Your Decision Making

Every day decisions can be made with your heart, but big decisions, life altering decisions, should always be made with your head. Consider the pros and cons and take the time to consider the short-term and long-term outcomes of your solution. Avoid making decisions off-the-cuff that might actually create more problems for you in the future.

Look at All of the Options

You can't use the same solution to solve every problem in your life. Be willing to step back and consider all of the possible solutions – even the ones that aren't so obvious – to make the decision that's best for your needs.

Learn From Your Mistakes

Not every decision you make is going to be the right one. Some solutions might start out fine but not work out over time. Pay attention to which decisions helped you reach your goals, and which ones created additional roadblocks. Consider the feedback you receive from those impacted by your decisions. Learn from those experiences and use that knowledge to help you make a better decision in the future.

© 2025 Written by Life Advantages - Author Delvina Miremadi



Webinar Now Available:

Developing Critical Thinking Skills

The ability to make good decisions quickly and to creatively solve problems is what sets some people apart. In fact, for many employers, it is often the most sought-after skill set. We all encounter a high volume of information every day. How do we know what is most important or reliable? Though most credit their ability to think critically with their experiences in school, can we cultivate this capacity in our daily personal or professional lives? The answer is yes!



[Log-in](#) any time this month to watch the webinar!

To Access:

- Login: **www.AWPnow.com**
- Select **Access Your Benefits**
- Enter your **Username & Password**
- Click **“HelpNet”**
- Click **“Connect to HelpNet”**
- Click **“Webinars”** (4th row; 3rd column)
- Select the archived webinar you would like to view.

1st time login? Contact us at AM@alliancewp.com for your Registration Code.



awpnow.com

Optimized for all devices including: desktops, laptops, tablets, smart phones and more.

It is now easier than ever to access the online resources provided by your EAP, Alliance Work Partners.
Contact your Account Manager for log-in instructions

AM@alliancewp.com | 888-327-4636



Visit your EAP Website today.
AWPnow.com





The Wellness News

Tips and resources for living well

March 2025

National Nutrition Month

Personalizing Your Nutrition Plan: One Size Doesn't Fit All

When it comes to nutrition, there is no such thing as a universal approach. Each of us has unique needs influenced by factors like age, activity level, health goals, and dietary preferences. National Nutrition Month is the perfect time to explore how you can create a personalized nutrition plan that works for your body and lifestyle.

How to Build a Personalized Nutrition Plan

By taking the time to understand your unique needs and preferences, you can create a plan that not only supports your health but also fits seamlessly into your life.

Assess Your Current Habits

Start by keeping a food diary for a week. Record what you eat and drink, portion sizes, and how you feel after meals. This can help identify patterns and areas for improvement.

Set Clear, Realistic Goals

Define what you want to achieve with your nutrition plan. Are you looking to boost energy or increase nutrient intake? Setting specific and measurable goals provides direction and motivation.

Consult a Professional

A registered dietitian or Health Coach can provide personalized advice based on your medical history, lifestyle, and goals. They can help you navigate challenges like food allergies or managing chronic conditions.

Focus on Balance

Aim for a balanced plate at each meal. Fill half of your plate with fruits and vegetables, a quarter with lean protein, and a quarter with whole grains.

Experiment and Adjust

Your needs may change over time, so be flexible and willing to adapt. For example, if you're starting a new workout routine, you may need to increase your protein and calorie intake.

<https://www.myplate.gov/myplate-plan>



The Wellness News

Tips and resources for living well

March 2025

The Power of Balanced Meals: Understanding Macronutrients

We have all been told to eat a balanced diet at one time or another. However, research shows that very few assess the healthfulness of their diet accurately. So, what does it mean to eat a balanced diet? A balanced diet is all about variety. Your body needs the right nutrients to fuel it throughout the day. The best way to get what you need is to enjoy nutrient-rich foods from a variety of food groups.

The Plate Method

A typical recommended balanced diet using “the plate method” is to include half fruits and veggies, a quarter protein, and a quarter grain on your plate at meals. While your specific needs are determined by factors like your height, weight, and activity level, at their most basic, the standards set by MyPlate encourage:

- 50% of your food should be a variety of whole fruits and vegetables.
- 25% of your foods should be protein, particularly lean protein.
- 25% of your food should be grains, with at least half of those being whole grains.
- 3 cups of dairy per day.

A well-balanced diet that includes the right amounts of proteins, carbs, and fats is crucial for maintaining optimal health. Consuming healthy, nutrient-rich foods provides a variety of significant health benefits, including better weight management, brain health and cognition, mood stability, heart health, a strong immune system, and a reduction in risk for chronic diseases. However, if you are living with a health concern that requires a more purposeful eating plan, you are best off following a diet specific to your condition recommended by your health care professional.

Source: <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/balanced-diet>

Source: <https://www.wholeliving.com/2025/10/01/balanced-meals-your-key-to-optimal-health-in-2025/>



The Wellness News

Tips and resources for living well

March 2025

Building Resilience Through Life's Transitions

Life is a constant cycle of change, from shifting seasons to evolving routines and personal milestones. These transitions can bring excitement, uncertainty, or even discomfort, but they also offer opportunities for growth. Rather than resisting change, we can learn to embrace it with adaptability and resilience. By adjusting our perspective, we transform transitions from disruptions into moments of renewal, allowing us to move forward with greater ease and confidence.

Changes in weather, schedules, and priorities often challenge our sense of stability, making it essential to reassess our routines. Instead of holding onto habits that no longer serve us, we can modify them to align with our current needs. As daylight hours shift, adjusting our sleep schedule or incorporating different forms of movement can help maintain balance. Each transition presents a chance to refresh our goals, explore new interests, or deepen our self-care practices. When we approach these shifts with a growth mindset, we cultivate flexibility and make space for personal evolution.

Navigating change also requires self-compassion. It's natural to experience a mix of emotions during transitions, but by giving ourselves grace, we can focus on progress rather than perfection. Small victories—whether maintaining a new habit, adjusting to a new schedule, or simply recognizing our own resilience—deserve celebration. Surrounding ourselves with supportive relationships provides encouragement and helps us gain perspective, reminding us that we don't have to navigate change alone. Taking care of our physical and mental well-being through nourishing food, movement, mindfulness, and rest ensures we have the foundation to manage transitions with strength.

While transitions may feel uncertain at times, they also offer fresh beginnings and the chance to step into something new. By embracing change with openness and intention, we transform life's inevitable shifts into opportunities for self-discovery, renewal, and lasting resilience.

Source: <https://www.apa.org/topics/resilience>



The Wellness News

Tips and resources for living well

March 2025

Frittata with Asparagus, Leek, & Ricotta

Ingredients

- 8 large eggs
- ¼ cup crème fraîche
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground pepper
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 cups thinly sliced leeks (about 2 medium), rinsed well and patted dry
- 1 pound asparagus, trimmed and cut into 1-inch piece
- 1 ¼ cup part-skim ricotta
- 2 tablespoons pesto
- ¼ cup fresh basil

Directions

1. Position rack in the upper third of oven; preheat broiler.
2. Whisk eggs, crème fraîche, salt, and pepper in a medium bowl; set near the stove. Heat oil in a large cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Add leeks and asparagus and cook, stirring frequently, until soft, 5 to 6 minutes.
3. Pour the egg mixture over the vegetables and cook, lifting the edges so uncooked egg can flow underneath, until nearly set, about 2 minutes. Dollop ricotta and pesto on top and place the pan under the broiler until the eggs are slightly browned, 1 1/2 to 2 minutes. Let stand for 3 minutes.
4. Run a spatula around the edge of the frittata, then underneath, until you can slide or lift it out onto a cutting board or serving plate. Top with basil.

Nutrition

Per Serving

Calories: 369 | Protein: 18g | Carbohydrates: 14g | Dietary Fiber: 3g | Saturated Fat: 9g | Total Sugars: 5g | Sodium: 549mg | Cholesterol: 389mg

Source: <https://www.eatingwell.com/recipe/7951834/frittata-with-asparagus-leek-ricotta/>

We know it is not always easy to juggle everything & realize simple tips can help provide a different approach.
Your EAP is here to help with family, work, health, well-being & legal issues.

1-800-343-3822 | TDD 711 | www.AWPnow.com

Here for you as life happens



Working Solutions



March 2025

Gam-Anon: Help for the Family or Friend of a Compulsive Gambler

Those in relationships with compulsive gamblers are overwhelmed and feel powerless to help. Initial focus is naturally on tactics for managing the gambler's behavior, but the path to mental stability for loved ones is self-care. This means protecting oneself physically and emotionally, placing a priority on one's well-being, and setting boundaries. This is the purpose of "Gam-Anon," a 12-step self-help group modeled after Alanon (for loved ones of problem drinkers). When loved ones set boundaries, understand skills of healthy detachment, and prioritize their own well-being, then compulsive gamblers often quickly recognize the true impact of their behavior, become motivated to seek help, and ultimately accept it. Gam-Anon meetings are found nationwide. If you are affected by another person's gambling, talk to the EAP to discover more about this powerful source of help.

Building Resilience: Mastering Composure Under Fire

Negative interactions at work sometimes happen, so why not develop the art and skill of preventing them from throwing you off your game and derailing your mood? You'll stay productive and maintain a better sense of well-being. Call it "staying composed under fire" or "workplace emotional resilience." It takes practice, but you should start by understanding these four principles: 1) The key to staying in control is realizing that your reaction is a choice. It may feel like pure reflex, but with practice you'll see how this can flip. 2) Be aware by identifying emotions like frustration, anger, or stress that appear in response to everyday interactions. 3) Practice pausing before reacting. This gives you a mini-time gap to respond more thoughtfully rather than impulsively. 4) And here's a reframing trick—when you witness negativity on the job, don't personalize it. Instead, see it as a reflection of the other person's stress or struggles and focus on solutions, not drama.

Your Inner Voice Can Prevent Workplace Miscommunication

Pay attention to your inner voice when you sense a need to follow up, clarify, or check in with others concerning projects, events, and deadlines. You'll prevent misunderstandings, delays, and unnecessary stress. By acting on this intuitive sense, you will hone a skill that helps you avoid costly problems while increasing workplace productivity. This week, try identifying passing thoughts such as "Should I double-check that deadline?" or "I wonder if she heard me say how many people will be at the meeting." These kinds of thoughts are so fleeting that they are easily dismissed or forgotten in a busy day until the consequences of not acting on them appear. The skill is to recognize these cues—often felt as a gut instinct—to follow up, pause, assess, or take action to prevent a problem. The next part of the skill is to act promptly and dismiss the temptation to avoid acting because of the hassle it may entail. Ask experienced employees and managers and they will tell you this skill is honed from hard experience. Understand that your brain can process thousands of thoughts, but your intuition will capture the gaps and potential pitfalls, which are prompts for action. Avoid the last-minute panic and distress that come with "I should have..." or "I knew this would happen..." Doing so will surprise you with smoother workflows, fewer crises, improved morale, and happily avoided stress.

Fresh Perspectives: 'Your Job Finances Your Journey'

You need your job for income, but it's also a tool for achieving your life's dreams. Consider this perspective to manage stress: "Your job finances your journey." This mindset makes workplace challenges easier to handle and helps you find more purpose and motivation in daily tasks. Staying focused on what truly matters—your personal journey—also brings other benefits, like better work-life balance. By creating emotional distance between work and personal life, you can worry less and enjoy your time off more.

Do Highly Processed Foods Contribute to Depression

You may get drowsy after eating burgers, fries, or pizza at lunchtime. It's annoying, but eating ultraprocessed food often can also contribute to health problems like diabetes and possibly depression. A recent study discovered that among 32,000 participants, those who ate ultraprocessed food the most often, including artificial sweeteners, had the highest rates of depression. Do you frequently consume ultraprocessed foods? If you suffer from depression, is your diet a contributing factor or making it worse? If you're being treated for depression, is your diet undermining wellness? Talk to your doctor about a diet that supports your health or request an assessment from your employee assistance program to learn more. Below is a list of ultraprocessed foods and healthier food choices. You might be surprised to discover that some foods labeled as "healthy" are ultraprocessed and unhealthy. Study: <https://jamanetwork.com> [search "ultraprocessed foods depression"] List of ultraprocessed foods: <http://knowablemagazine.org> [search "ultraprocessed foods"]

Create an Action Plan for Your Well-being

Don't wait for healthcare problems to suddenly appear in your life but instead create a personal action plan to thwart illness and chronic disease. It's been said that 80-90% of health problems are associated with lifestyle and failure to prevent them, and research consistently supports this observation. Of course, genetics and the environment play a role in health, but lifestyle far outweighs these factors. Put these six pillars in your personal plan: 1) nutrition; 2) physical activity; 3) stress management and mental well-being; 4) sleep quality and recovery; 5) avoid toxic and environmental assaults (excessive screen time, too much negative news, noise, and chemicals/additives, etc.); 6) personal growth/creativity/self-improvement/joy. To get started, check out this PDF from Mindset Business Psychology: <https://www.mindsetbps.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Mindset-Wellbeing-Action-Plan-editable.pdf>

Stress Tips from the Field: Declutter a Small Space to Manage Stress

Spend 15 minutes decluttering a small space within your living area as a stress management technique. Decluttering gives you a win, but there is more to it. Your brain sends a signal that there can be order and control at a time when you're not feeling much of it. This positive state of mind has ripple effects when you benefit from a feeling of accomplishment and well-being. A small release of dopamine occurs when you declutter, and cortisol, the stress hormone, lessens. This then elevates your mood. Some studies have demonstrated improved sleep quality, too. So, the next time life feels chaotic, take a few minutes to declutter and get the calm, control, and renewed energy back into your day. Research: <https://extension.usu.edu> [search "declutter mental benefits"]

Credit Education Month: Get a Grip on Impulse Spending

We often tell ourselves that spending is based on necessity, but emotions play a major role—which is why big ad agencies devote all their efforts to influencing them. Unplanned, emotionally driven purchases of things we don't really need, triggered by some desire but with little thought, are called impulse purchases. Intervene with impulse purchases by increasing your awareness with two personal interventions. 1) Wait 24 hours before buying to see if you still want it. 2) Set a meaningful goal for the money you'd otherwise spend. This creates a strong incentive to skip the impulse purchase in favor of something more valuable later.

We know it is not always easy to juggle everything & realize simple tips can help provide a different approach. Your EAP is here to help with family, work, health, & legal issues.

To access your EAP services
1-800-343-3822 | TDD 1-800-448-1823
www.AWPnow.com

Here for you as life happens ...

