

2016

UWSP Employee Wellness Newsletter Volume 9

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Schmitz

"HEALTHY AS A DAWG" Wellness Role Model

By: Brooke Goehring

Congratulations to our *Healthy as a Dawg* winners for the Fall 2016 semester!

The Healthy as a Dawg program recognizes deserving UWSP faculty and staff who incorporate most, if not all, seven dimensions of wellness into their lives. Fortunately, this semester we received an abundance of outstanding nominations and are recognizing two wellness role models: Tom Bertram (award winner) and Karin Hyler (honorable mention).

Tom works in Human Resources where he is responsible for processing and providing functional support for faculty recruitment, software, and research. He received several nominations acknowledging Tom for all-around dedication to wellness. Karin is an Academic Department Associate who also displays a very accomplished lifestyle that is recognized by others.

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*Pictured is Healthy as a Dawg
Winner, Tom Bertram and
Honorable Mention, Karin Hyler*

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“HEALTHY AS A DAWG” Wellness Role Model Continued

Others respect Tom as someone who willingly promotes a healthy lifestyle not only for himself, but for others as well. He encourages individuals around him to enjoy life and work and to focus on what is going well and how to strive for positive results. Tom used to participate in Pump classes held at Adventure 212 and has now expanded his talents in to becoming an instructor. One of his most recent proud moments, is challenge instructing offers both mentally and physically outside of his work in academics. He has learned that one is “never too old” and that although learning new skills may not easy, it is im-

portant to prove that you can do it! This drive and desire that Tom models stems from the desire to be better and progressing in his wellness journey. He believes that it's essential to understand not to invest energy in to things that aren't working, but to reprioritize and be willing to try new things instead. This positive outlook and lifestyle that Tom practices, truly solidifies why he is pronounced this semester's Healthy as a Dawg winner.

Karen makes effective use of her time while on campus by squeezing in quick workouts before heading home for the day. She enjoys attending group fitness classes at the Allen Center where the student instructors are encouraging and don't leave her feeling judged. She has also participated in the Winter 100 challenge, personal training, and yoga series. In addition, Karin's job often requires her sitting in front of a computer most of the day, so she now utilizes a standing work station to keep herself more alert and energized. This positive well-being practice demonstrates why she is deserving of this recognition, as well.

“The goal is not to be better than others, but better than you were before.”

- Tom Bertram

Save on Energy Costs this Holiday Season

By: Riley Charette

With the holidays coming up and cold weather on the way, it is time to talk about ways to save money on energy costs. Not only does this help your personal financial wellness, but is also good for the environment. There is no question that as the weather gets colder, energy costs tend to rise. There are several ways to combat this and save some money during the cold months.

The first tip is to cover windows or doors that might allow cold air to come in through the house. To do this, use a heavy-duty, clear plastic sheet and tape it to the frame or inside the window frame. Make sure the plastic is sealed tightly. To see if you have air coming in, use the match test and hold it up around the windows to check. If the flame is wavering then the seal may not be tight.

Next, adjust the thermostat to the lowest temperature that is comfortable to you. When you are sleeping or away from home, set the thermostat ten or fifteen degrees lower. This can easily be done on a programmable thermostat. Doing this will save around ten percent a year on heating and cooling bills.

If you have a fireplace in your home, be sure to use it. Doing so will reduce the amount of energy you use from other heating systems. When using a fireplace, lower the thermostat ten to fifteen degrees.

Lastly, you can turn down the temperature of your water heater to the warm setting as water heating accounts for about eighteen percent of the energy consumed in the home.

If one or all of these tips are followed, you will reduce your energy costs throughout the winter. Doing so will allow you to save more money or spend more on items you want.

For more information, visit: <http://energy.gov/energysaver/fall-and-winter-energy-saving-tips>



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Susan Woods is a Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) advisor, trainer, and supervisor. She has designed the MBSR and MBCT professional certification programs and has taught at numerous locations worldwide.

An Interview With Susan Woods

By: Marie Krengel

On October 28th, the UWSP campus was fortunate enough to have Susan Woods come for the day and hold a seminar geared to individuals interested in coaching. At this seminar, she introduced mindfulness based stress reduction (MBSR), explained what MBSR is, and described what happens when embarking on mindfulness based practice. Before this seminar occurred, I got the opportunity to conduct an interview with Susan via Skype.

Marie: How has mindfulness become your profession?

Susan: I started practicing mindfulness in yoga. Then I began developing a practice in meditation. I did it for myself because I found it beneficial in actively understanding how my mind actually works in a variety different situations. It's really helpful when developing self awareness of how behaviors could get triggered and allowed me to pause, reflect, and eventually choose different behaviors. In the mid 90's, I took an internship working with John Kabat-Zinn (founder of MBSR) at University of Massachusetts Medical School. I became fascinated with what was being offered to people who would not normally be interested in meditation. I was also interested in the research, which led me to think about teaching the MBSR program at my local hospital. At that time, I had a private practice that offered group and individual therapy. Teaching people skills around how to recognize when they get high jacked by negative thinking and high levels of emotions and align them to have a practice that disengages them from that behavior and brings them back to the present moment. Then, that gives them a different behavior choice. I believe mindfulness is becoming the foundation of therapy. This all has been a journey for myself; it didn't just happen in a day. It's been an involving process and I've loved it.

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An Interview with Susan Woods Continued

Marie: Why is it hard for people to be mindful and self aware?

Susan: The mind is very powerful. The difficulty people have being mindful is they have to keep the practice going. What I tell participants is if you think about brushing your teeth, we brush our teeth twice a day. And if we didn't, your breath will start to smell, then gum disease arises, and then our teeth start to decay and fall out. It's a pretty nasty scenario. We wouldn't think twice about brushing our teeth twice a day. In a way, the practice of mindfulness is hygiene for the brain. It allows us to be with the way our attention moves and the way awareness develops in terms of that movement of attention so we begin to understand how to let that just run without getting caught in the way the mind's working.

That takes time and that's why it's difficult. A little and often is better than forty minutes sitting by yourself once a week. If you can take ten minutes to just sit and be aware of your breath and your body, you're doing a very good job.

Marie: If you had to give one piece of advice to someone who wanted to be more mindful, what advice would you give?

Susan: What I would suggest is this. Take one thing that you do every single day. Like taking a shower, or that first cup of coffee, or even getting dressed, and bring your full attention to what you are doing. And stay as close to what you are recognizing when you do that in three areas: body sensations, thoughts, and emotions. People know how to do this; they just need the support and encouragement.

To learn more about Susan, and the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction/Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy professional trainings she offers, visit: <https://slwoods.com>

"If you can take ten minutes to just sit and be aware of your breath and your body, you're doing a very good job"

-Susan Woods



Managing Blood Pressure

By: Drew King

High blood pressure is one of the leading risk factors for heart disease, yet also, one of the most controllable. About 80 million Americans, or one out of every three adults over age 20, have high blood pressure. This isn't accounting for the nearly 20 percent who don't even know they have it. Before we get too far ahead of ourselves, it's beneficial to know what blood pressure readings and terminology actually means. Systolic, the top higher number, measures the pressure in the arteries when the heart muscle contracts. Diastolic, the bottom lower number, measures the pressure in the arteries when the heart muscle is resting between beats and refilling with blood. The normal range for a blood pressure reading is characterized by the systolic being less than 120 and the diastolic being less than 80. Any readings at 120/80 or higher can place a person anywhere from the prehypertension to hypertension category. When seeking to minimize the risk of developing hypertension, these are a few tips to keep in mind.

1. **Exercise Regularly:** Regular physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day can help lower one's blood pressure. The key is consistency, because if you stop participating in physical activity, your blood pressure may begin rising again.

2. **Reduce Sodium Intake:** Even a small reduction of sodium in one's diet can help lower blood pressure. In general, below 2,300 milligrams of sodium per day is a great goal to aim for, however, the lower the better. You can keep track of sodium intake by reading food labels, eating less processed food, and not adding salt to food.

3. **Limit Alcohol Consumption and Smoking:** Drinking more than moderate amounts of alcohol can significantly raise one's blood pressure. In addition, it can also reduce the effectiveness of blood pressure medications. Every time a person smokes, their blood pressure increases for many minutes even after finishing. Quitting smoking can help return blood pressure to normal levels and can also increase life expectancy.

4. **Reduce Stress Levels:** Chronic stress is a large contributor to having high blood pressure. Take some time to think about what is causing you stress. Could it be work, family, finances, illness, or something else? Once one is able to identify their stressors, they may be able to begin addressing the issues to further eliminate or reduce stress.

It's easy to forget to check and realize the importance of your blood pressure, but make it this year's new year's resolution to monitor your blood pressure!

The Path to Social Wellness

By: Elliot Thiem

Social wellness refers to one's ability to interact with the people around them. It is the ability to relate and connect with other people in your world. The ability to maintain positive relationships with family, friends, and co-workers, while still respecting yourself, is key to having a healthy, long living social wellness.

Social Wellness follows two tenants:

1. It is better to contribute to the common welfare of our community than to think only of ourselves.
2. It is better to live in harmony with others and our environment than to live in conflict with them.

To help contribute to the Stevens Point community, check out: <https://www.volunteersrock.org> for different volunteer opportunities in Portage County. The community also offers numerous opportunities to engage in social activities even during the cold winter months. You and your friends can try some cross country skiing through Standing Rocks County Park. Or, bring your family to the hills of Iverson Park for some sledding, snowboarding, and tobogganing. Also, Iverson and Goerke Park have amazing outdoor skating rinks! The parks are typically open from the second week of December through the end of February, so come on out and enjoy the great winter activities Stevens Point has to offer!



The trails of Standing Rocks County Park, located in Eastern Portage County



Play some hockey at Goerke Park, or enjoy a nice skate at the other rink offered



Be Merry, Be Resilient

By: Kristyn Mattson

As most people know, stress is not beneficial to your health. The more stress, the more likely you will have negative health consequences such as frequently getting sick or having low energy levels (just to name a few). The common mistake people make is trying to get rid of 100 percent of their stress. Unfortunately, it is impossible to get rid of all stressors in the world. That is where building emotional resilience comes in handy. According to the American Psychological Association, resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, and threats of significant stressors—such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems, or workplace and financial stressors. Essentially having emotional resiliency means to “bounce back” from difficult times of stress. This trait is something you are not born with, which means you develop it through behaviors, thoughts and actions throughout your lifetime. Many factors contribute to developing resiliency, such as the ability to form realistic plans and take steps to carry them out, positive self-image, great communication, problem solving skills, and the ability to manage deep feelings and strong impulses. These factors can contribute, but the leading factor to acquiring emotional resiliency involves being in caring and supportive relationships within your family, friends, peers, and acquaintances.

There are different ways to build emotional resilience, here are a few.

- **Connect with others.** Form good relationships with family members, friends and others. Accept the support from those who care about and listen to you. Getting involved in organizations or groups can provide social support.
- **You cannot control the uncontrollable.** Stressful events do happen, try not to let them interrupt your life long-term. See the positive in the situation.
- **Work toward your goals.** Make goals that are SMART, specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and have a timeline, no matter how big or small.
- **View yourself positively.** Increase confidence in yourself and it will lead to the ability to problem solve and trust your instincts.
- **Try optimism as a mindset.** By having a healthy perception, you already create the expectation of good things accruing in your life. Focus on visualizing what you want instead of being worried about your fears.
- **Other ways to increase resilience.** Some people find it helpful to write down their deepest thoughts related to stressful events they go through. Another way to build resilience is through meditation and spiritual practices.

<http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience.aspx>

Intellectual Wellness

By: Sallie Scovill

The intellectual dimension of wellness focuses on partaking in creative, stimulating mental activities.

Some examples include

- Trying New Things
- The Desire to Keep Learning
- Curiosity in the World

Many universities have used this wellness quiz to help their students and employees assess the current status of their intellectual health.

Try it and see how you score.

The intellectual dimension of wellness involves embracing creativity and mental stimulation. Read each statement carefully and respond honestly by using the following scoring:

Almost always = 2 points

Sometimes/occasionally = 1 point

Very seldom = 0 points

_____ 1. I am interested in learning new things.

_____ 2. I try to keep abreast of current affairs - locally, nationally, and internationally.

_____ 3. I enjoy attending lectures, plays, musical performances, museums, galleries, and/or libraries.

_____ 4. I carefully select movies and television programs.

_____ 5. I enjoy creative and stimulating mental activities/games.

_____ 6. I am happy with the amount and variety that I read.

_____ 7. I make an effort to improve my verbal and written skills.

_____ 8. A continuing education program is/will be important to me in my career.

_____ 9. I am able to analyze, synthesize, and see more than one side of an issue.

_____ 10. I enjoy engaging in intellectual discussions.

Score: 15 to 20 Points - Excellent strength in this dimension.

Score: 9 to 14 Points - There is room for improvement. Look again at the items in which you scored 1 or 0. What changes can you make to improve your score?

Score: 0 to 8 Points - This dimension needs a lot of work.

Look again at this dimension and challenge yourself to begin making small steps toward growth here. Remember: The goal is balanced wellness.

What is your score? Use this assessment to make a plan today to build or maintain this dimension of wellness. One way is using available technology, computers, tablets and phones to find ways to increase your brainpower and try some fun brain teasers, memory games, or solve puzzles. Many of these sites are free. Here are a few we have tried in Employee Wellness:

<http://www.mindgames.com/game/Brain+Trainer>

<http://www.rinkworks.com/brainfood/p/latreal1.shtml>

UWSP 2016 Safety and Wellness Fair



With around 20 vendors and over 100 UWSP Faculty Members in attendance, the 2016 Safety and Wellness Fair was a big hit. This year's theme was to "Set a Goal" and participants played an interactive football game where if they visited a certain amount of vendors, they "scored a touchdown" which allowed them to enter into our raffle of donated prizes. Whether participants got a free massage, or beat one of our Employee Wellness students in bag toss, the fair was a great experience for all involved. Make sure you check out the next fair in 2017!



Upcoming Events

December 11th

- 2:00-3:00 PM "Winter Wonders" Planetarium Show at the Science Building Blocher Planetarium

December 12th

- 7:30-9:30 PM Jazz Ensemble Concert in Michelsen Hall of the Noel Fine Arts Centers

December 13th

- 9:30 AM Tai Chi at the Plover Library
- 7:00-9:00 PM UWSP Women's Basketball vs. North Central in Berg Gym of the Health Enhancement Center

December 14th

- 1:00 PM Adult Coloring and Chocolate at the Plover Library

December 17th

- 8:00 AM-12:00 PM Winters Farmers Market at Redeemer Lutheran Church

All these events have free admission!

