

The Wellbeing Strategy Exchange Inventory

Take one and leave one. (Email your strategy to eclayton@northernlight.org)

Or just take one! Or two or three.

Physical Wellbeing

- Amy balances on one leg while brushing her teeth to build strength and balance.
- Elizabeth flosses in the morning because flossing at night is too hard when you're tired. She got the tip from a dental hygienist who understood that good enough is better than not at all.
- To keep his lower leg flexibility and to fight off plantar fasciitis, while working Donald stands on a platform that flexes the front of his feet to keep his Achilles stretched out.
- To overcome just vegetating at night, Diane forces herself to get up to her 7,000 daily step goal by rewarding herself with a treat (usually fruit of some sort) when she gets her steps in. The payoff is she feels better knowing she accomplished her goal and gets to satisfy her craving for a snack at the same time.
- When she's eating emotionally, Victoria says to herself, "I have taken food as far as I can take it without it hurting me," after having a reasonable amount of chocolate or whatever she has chosen to comfort herself with.
- Rakefet is able to get herself to the pool every day by tricking the avoidance monster. The night before she gets her bag ready and commits to putting on her swimming suit and driving to the pool in the morning. This is manageable because she doesn't have to in, giving herself full permission to sit in the pool parking lot or walking inside and just sitting by the pool. Getting there is the hard part. Once she's there, 9 times out of 10 she's in the pool.
- For flexibility, Deborah takes the opportunity to do some stretching if she is listening in on a meeting without a need to take notes.
- Jason puts reminders and meetings in his Outlook calendar to remind him to get away from his desk and walk around a little.
- For flexibility and strength, Danya often stands on one leg while working.
- Sam breaks his daily exercises into a few smaller components that he spreads out during the day. He also makes a point of getting outside at least a little bit each day, weather allowing, and starts each day by taking a multi-vitamin with a warm glass of water which helps get digestion going.
- To increase her intake of plain water, which Dr. Luann Hammami does 3 times a day, she requires herself to drink water every time she eats something, even if it's a small glass. She drinks other things, too, but with this solution she has been able to add a lot of water all day long.

- Aspen chooses one yoga pose or stretch a day to hold for 60 seconds to increase blood flow, movement and brain power.
- Julie invites a friend to walk with her which makes her less likely to blow it off.
- When walking up a flight of stairs Jani tightens her glutes to get some extra oomph out of the climb.
- Every time Rhonda gets up from her desk she does some door stretches to open up her chest wall and counteract the shoulder hunching that can come with sitting.
- Rita balances on one leg while brushing her teeth and also attempts to balance while putting on pants and socks.
- To help pills and vitamins go down more easily, Anne takes them with fruit pieces while also doing her Achilles heel stretches.
- To break up long periods of sitting, Claire does her dinner dishes at night during the commercial breaks of her favorite TV show. When the show is done, so are her dishes!
- For dental health, Christina keeps a handy supply of “The Doctor’s Brush Picks” interdental toothpicks beside her living room chair.
- Sandra keeps plackers (those little pre-made flossing plastic thingies) in her car and flosses on the way to work and on the way home.
- After Anna uses the restroom, she stays in there a little longer to do 1 set of her “Exercise of the Day” which can be squats, lunges, wall pushups, jumping/walking Jack's, etcetera. She then goes back to her desk and drinks a big glass of water so at some point she is going to have to repeat this all over again. This way she gets her water and gets in a little bit of strength training during the day.

Emotional/Psychological Wellbeing

- To ward off sadness, before going to sleep at night, Jocelyn intentionally thinks about those things causing her emotional pain, acknowledges them, and then finds a reason for and chooses gratitude.
- Katrina goes to sleep listening to a variety of meditative offerings, sometimes tuning into a philosophical topic, sometimes a spiritual discussion, sometimes spoken meditations, and other times relaxing, healing music/sounds.
- For emotional resilience and perspective, Doug gets out every day into the woods or a place with a view to remind himself that the world is large.
- To avoid getting sucked into negative online topics or comments, Wesley limits the amount of time he is exposed to social media. When he is on Facebook or YouTube, he sticks to the posts and channels that are positive.
- Because his inclination is to rush when trying to get somewhere which only fuels stress and anxiety, Aaron slows his driving down by taking different routes to get to his destination. Driving a different route requires him to be more mindful and present to

the environment. The irony is that he often gets there earlier than he would have before without the increased stress and risk to himself and others.

- When Henry gets overwhelmed, he goes outside and looks up. His stress and anxiety lessen when he looks up at the stars at night or sees the passing clouds in the daytime. It resets him and reminds him that there are grander and greater events in motion and the stress he feels will pass.
- Feeling feelings and giving herself a hug for the difficult ones helps Eleanor slow down her habitual reactions to them. In slowing down, Eleanor recognizes what's going on, and instead of reaching for food, or getting busy -- which are two of her typical reactions to feelings -- she has the awareness to make a different decision. In approaching it this way, Eleanor has discovered that the feelings don't annihilate her, and that she can survive them, even though it really doesn't always feel that way.
- Each morning Jonathan makes his bed to kick the day off with a win and get the ball rolling for more wins. As he's heard said before, if the day was a rough one, he has a nice, made bed to come home to.
- Cheryl spent years being "dependably late" to work and events in her personal life, always getting a sick, feeling of anxiety. She solved the problem by "tricking" herself into believing the arrival time was 30 minutes earlier. Nowadays she can no longer tolerate the adrenalized feeling of anxiety if she happens to run late which keeps her from lapsing into her old habit.

Intellectual Wellbeing

- Joyce uses the incentive of an unbroken streak to get her to do a daily Italian lesson. She's up to 122 days in a row.
- Josiah makes time each day to read, mostly quality fiction. He makes a point of avoiding self-help or how-to books having learned more about life and human nature from a good novel than from self-professed life coaches and self-help gurus. Josiah keeps a reading journal which he's kept up for the last 25 years, recording the author, book title, number of pages, year published and the book's opening line. Doing this allows him to have a tangible record that he can go back and review or simply track his annual reading amount to stay on track.

Social Wellbeing

- Stephanie sets monthly reminders in her calendar to reach out to various out-of-state friends, so they don't lose touch.
- When leaving for work in the morning, Kirsty asks the house to look after the cat and the cat to look after the house, as a way to and be in relationship with life in a more

expansive and connected way while also broadening her sense of community. Upon arriving at work, she thanks her car for getting her there.

- Penelope practices being kind in small, simple ways with her pets and all animals, her spouse and children, her friends, and sometimes a random stranger by pre-paying for their coffee or opening a door for an elderly person or some other way to establish a kind connection. The key for Penny is the intentionality of her actions.
- As a way to engage with the community, meet new people and gain the satisfaction of doing something that makes a difference, Wesley volunteers at local non-profits like the animal shelter or United Way.
- To enhance her day, Melinda thanks those who help because it feels good to her and to them.
- Nurse S looks for people and the services they provide to be thankful for and expresses that gratitude.

Occupational/Sense of Purpose Wellbeing

- Dr. Vanessa Little slows everything down in the midst of chaos. A palliative care doctor, she learned this when taking care of patients who were in delirium. Delirium invariably creates chaos in the home. Joining the frenzy by rapidly throwing more medications into the mix or more strategies to try only fueled the chaos.

Environmental Wellbeing

- To remember the importance of connecting with nature and environmental stewardship, Aaron spends time in nature every day, even if it's simply feeding and watching the birds in his backyard.

Spiritual Wellbeing

- Ed finds podcasts or videos on YouTube that explore and discuss a variety of spiritual perspectives or religious traditions.
- To connect with something larger than herself, Nurse S reads books that relate to change, focus and support spiritual blossoming.
- In the morning, when Amaranta wakes up, she's grateful for having a roof, heat and two cats that make her smile! When a baby is loudly crying, instead of rolling her eyes and feeling annoyed, she chooses to feel compassion and sends kindness vibes to the baby. Whenever a friend or acquaintance has something to celebrate or something that causes them grief, Ama shows them that, "they are seen, they are important, and they

matter.” She does this by writing them a note or texting them an inspirational phrase. It is her way of extending caring love to them.

Financial Wellbeing

- Lillia auto-deposits her entire paycheck into categories for gifts, vacation, health, maintenance, emergency, etc.
- To avoid “buyer’s remorse” down the line, Emilia monitors her desire to spend in relation to her emotional state of mind. While she enjoys the occasional splurge on a caramel latte or sometimes a bigger purchase, she never forgets that, for her, these decisions are sometimes driven by a need to fill an emotional gap.
- A compulsive spender, Cheryl has gotten a grip on her emotional spending by giving herself permission to put an item back on the shelf as well as permission to come back and get it if she decides she really needs it. (She usually forgets she ever thought of buying it.) She also gives herself permission to return an item she decides she didn’t really need and sets herself up to do that by putting the receipts in a Ziploc bag and taking it to the item if she knows it was truly an impulse buy. If something can only be returned for store credit, Cheryl considers that a much better move than keeping an item she will never use. For online purchases including Amazon and Fingerhut, Cheryl puts things in her shopping cart, saves it for later, then closes out of the program.