



THE MINKA MONTHLY

Official Newsletter for the Minka Learning Lab for Living Well



EXERCISE YOUR BRAIN!

By Leah Flake, Intern

Regular physical activity can greatly improve your overall quality of life. Whenever you work out, your brain releases neurotransmitters called endorphins, dopamine, norepinephrine and serotonin. These neurotransmitters play an important role in regulating your mood and making you feel better all around. Just 30 minutes of exercise, even just a brisk walk, can release these neurotransmitters and put you in control of your mood. Along with the mental health benefits, regular physical activity can improve your brain function, protect against chronic diseases, improve your heart health, aid in weight management and more.

Many people think that to stay in shape they need to exercise every day. Glenna Bower, Kinesiologist and Associate Dean of the Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education at USI, says that is not the case. "You need to give yourself at least a day of rest so you don't exhaust your body. And when you do work out, make sure you have fun! This could be doing an exercise dance class or going to the gym with your friend. Your workout needs to be something you can realistically keep up with and maintain."

One big issue that many college students face is access to proper exercise facilities. Most college campuses have a gym, but if a student lives off campus, then they might not have time to drive to campus. Therefore, Bower suggests doing exercises at home that students can find on YouTube or taking advantage of surroundings and going for a run.

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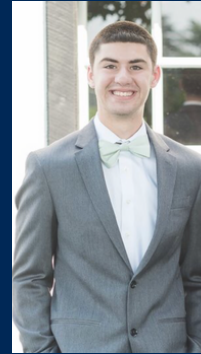
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EDITOR CORNER

SOCIAL MEDIA: THE TRUTH

By Thomas Engels, Intern



Growing up in a generation constantly surrounded by technology has been a blessing and a curse. The world of social media for my generation has created low self-esteem and confidence issues among many people. In the book *Zconomy* by Jason Dorsey and Denise Villa, they shared, in a 2016 national study, that 42% of Gen Z say social media affects how they feel about themselves. Since the survey was done in 2016, I believe the percentage of people who feel that way has risen.

The book quotes a Gen Z person as saying, "I think it's really sad. Honestly, really common in our generation. A lot of work goes into how many "likes" you get. It's directly linked to the fact that getting likes releases dopamine in the brain." Most people can sadly relate to what this person is saying about how social media is used by Gen Z. In one of my classes, we discussed this topic, and a lot of students agree with what the authors of this book have to say about social media. To help overcome these issues, here are some ideas that students in my class came up with:

- Turn off notifications
- Go outside to enjoy fresh air
- Take breaks from social media (days or weeks)
- Only follow accounts that create a positive environment
- Post what makes you happy instead of what will get you the most likes
- Remember that photos can be edited
- Not everything on social media is true

Although social media can be an amazing platform to communicate and connect with friends, it is important to remember that social media should not define how a person should live their life.

This month's newsletter contains articles about exercise, healthy living, mental health and interviews with USI faculty. Enjoy!

If interested in contributing to this newsletter, please contact Thomas Engels at teengels@eagles.usi.edu

UPCOMING EVENTS

Alzheimer's Association Virtual Event:

Tuesday May 25, 5 p.m. CT -

Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia for Independent Living Facilities

To register for this free event, visit [USI.edu/alzheimerassociation](https://www.usi.edu/alzheimerassociation)

Contact Thomas Engels at teengels@eagles.usi.edu for more information

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HEALTHY LIVING - NUTRITION

By Leah Flake, Intern

We all know eating healthy is important but sometimes it can be hard to maintain a nutritious lifestyle. Healthy foods and produce can be expensive, fast food options are cheap and easy, and our bodies have been programmed to crave fats and sugars. With all these obstacles, it's easy to ignore your body's needs and tell yourself you will start eating healthy "soon". A balanced diet will do so much more for you than just improve your physical wellbeing though! Eating healthy can improve your emotional and mental state, give you more energy and prevent chronic diseases later on in life. To give you a better understanding of maintaining a nutritious lifestyle, here are some tips from Beth Young, dietitian and Instructor in Food and Nutrition, in the College of Nursing and Health Professions.

What is the biggest misconception people have about nutrition?

"People often think their diet can be corrected with a quick fix. The main culprit to this way of thinking is 'fad diets.' Fad diets oversimplify eating healthy and usually suggest harmful eating habits like removing an entire food group from your meals such as keto. This isn't to say that keto is entirely bad, there's a lot of pros and cons, but its original intention was to treat people with epilepsy. Thinking about the average person following a keto diet, or any other kind of diet plan, the question to ask yourself is, 'can you maintain this?' When you get on a new diet you want to make sure it is sustainable and something you can stick with."

What is the biggest issue college-aged students need to worry about regarding nutrition?

"There's a lot of different obstacles when it comes to eating healthy while in college. First and foremost, is shopping on a budget. To navigate this try going shopping with your roommates and splitting the cost of groceries, buying generic brands, and opting for produce that is in season. It is also a good idea to plan out your meals before going to the grocery store, so you don't end up wasting money on food you don't need or won't eat."

What are your healthy-eating suggestions for people 55+?

"Firstly, you have to think about how to work with the natural aging process. Taste and smell change as you get older so think about incorporating herbs and spices to flavor things better as opposed to overusing salt. At this age range, budget also comes back into play so it's important to plan out what you need before you go to the grocery store."

What are your general suggestions for living a nutritious lifestyle?

"I'm a big proponent of adding things before taking things away from your diet. Instead of trying to go into caloric deficits to lose weight/eat healthily, it's a good idea to substitute junk food for nutritious foods. So, reduce your fats, salts, and sugars, and in their place, eat fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Also, it's important to not be too hard on yourself. Try to make the best choices you can but some days you need to treat yourself. Lastly, failure to plan is planning to fail. Planning your meals is the most helpful thing you can do to stay healthy."

Continuation from page 1 Next, Bower discussed her exercise suggestions for people that are older than 55. She explained that it is important for adults to exercise on a regular basis. Although getting up and walking around works, weight training a couple of days a week is really beneficial. Bower explained how her parents were involved with the Silver Sneakers program at the YMCA. "These classes are designed exclusively for older adults looking to improve their strength, flexibility, balance, and endurance. There are also a lot of nursing homes that provide exercise programs. It's important to realize that activities change over the years. You have to let go of what you did when you were younger. Don't get down on yourself because you can't do the same things you did before."

As a final piece of advice, Bower suggests that people should sit down and look at their schedule to block off time to exercise otherwise it's too easy to forget about and not do. Not having enough time is a main reason why people do not exercise, so planning in advance can help combat the issue. Exercise is important for your quality of life—your brain needs it!



"Eating healthy can improve your emotional and mental state, give you more energy and prevent chronic diseases later on in life." —Leah Flake



"Try to make the best choices you can but some days you need to treat yourself." —Beth Young



"Your workout needs to be something you can realistically keep up with and maintain." —Glenna Bower

GERO 101

EXERCISE TO ENHANCE THE HEALTH OF MUSCLE AND BONE

By Alyssa Weatherholt, Assistant Professor of Exercise Science

Summer is that time of year when many of us think about going outdoors and exercising more frequently. Exercise is beneficial for adults of any age because it can help prevent falls and broken bones later in life. As age progresses, lack of exercise can cause low muscle strength and mass, which increases your risk of low bone mass or osteoporosis that can cause bone fracture if you should fall. A bone fracture can be debilitating for anyone because it could cause you to lose independence due to not performing daily living activities. One common site for bone fracture due to falls is the hipbone. One year after sustaining a hip fracture, there is a high risk for death due to the loss of mobility, independence and susceptibility to infection. Exercise is crucial for adults to strengthen bones and muscles. Exercise programs for adults should provide an overall functional benefit to performing daily living activities easily. The exercise program prescribed for muscle and bone benefits includes balance, resistance, weight-bearing and flexibility training.

Balance means to keep your body upright and steady without falling. Balance training is important, so the body gets trained not to fall. General recommendations for balance training include performing activities such as difficult postures that gradually reduce the base of support (two-legged stand and one-legged stand) or continuous movements that perturb your body's steadiness (tandem walk and circle turn) for two to three days per week at 20 to 30 minutes per session. Exercise classes that incorporate balance include yoga and Tai chi.

Resistance means your body is working against the resistance of another object that has some weight. Resistance training is important for building bones and muscles so you can prevent falls and fractures. Resistance training recommendations for older adults include a program of at least two days a week performing exercises for the arms, chest, shoulders, legs, stomach and back; one to two sets of 10 to 15 repetitions for each muscle group. Types of activities for muscle and bone strengthening include free weights, machines or resistance bands. It is also recommended not to train the same muscle group two days in a row but to rest between training days.

Weight-bearing means that your lower body (for example, legs and feet) supports your body weight upright. Weight-bearing activities are important for adults in the prevention of hip fractures. Weight-bearing training includes walking, stair climbing, hiking and dancing. It is recommended to perform these activities three to five days a week for 30 minutes each session. Activities that are not weight-bearing include swimming or bicycling, which means your lower body is supported by something other than your legs.

Flexibility means that you can move your joints freely without undue stress. Flexibility activities are important for adults to allow their muscles also to move freely. Flexibility training includes stretches that are held in place or classes such as Tai chi and yoga. It is recommended to perform flexibility activities five to seven days a week, holding the stretch for a total of 60 seconds per joint.

Safety when exercising is always a worry. Suppose you currently have low muscle strength or have been diagnosed with osteoporosis or another disease. In that case, it is important to contact your primary care provider before starting an exercise program to make sure there are no restrictions. If you currently have osteoporosis, avoid exercises that could put you at risk of fractures, such as twisting or high-impact activities. If you are new to exercise, it may be beneficial to contact a certified personal trainer before you begin.



"Exercise is beneficial for adults of any age because it can help prevent falls and broken bones later in life."
—Alyssa Weatherholt

TECH & U

COLLABORATION ACROSS CAMPUS THROUGH STANDARDIZED PATIENT SIMULATION

By Carly Andrews, MHA, Coordinator of Clinical Simulations

The Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP) recently ran its first Interprofessional Simulation in the Minka Learning Lab for Living Well. A standardized patient played the role of Opal, a 78-year-old woman with COPD who recently moved into an assisted living facility struggling with her progressing dementia. This scenario focused on interprofessional communication and teamwork. Three different disciplines participated, Occupational Therapy, Health Services Administration (Gerontology) and Social Work. Each discipline, starting with Occupational Therapy, visited Opal via telehealth while she was in the comfort of her "assisted living apartment" — staged at the Minka. As the scenario progressed, the disciplines picked up on behavioral cues that Opal provided, and communicated those behavioral cues to each other effectively as a team. As the first official interprofessional standardized patient simulation, it was an incredible success. Each of the students playing active roles in the simulation fully participated and engaged with the scenario enthusiastically.

It was an absolute privilege to develop this scenario and collaborate with our USI faculty Paul Arthur (Occupational Therapy), Quentin Maynard (Social Work), Karla Diekemper (Gerontology), and the GWEP Project Coordinator, Lisa Fournier. Faculty and staff contributed to the development and success of this simulation by attending meetings to review drafts of the scenario and providing their expertise to each of their discipline's roles.

A special thank you goes to our Standardized Patient, who truly embodied the role of Opal, and made the student's experience as genuine and authentic as possible. Both of our trained Standardized Patients reviewed the scenario multiple times, did run-throughs and a dress rehearsal. They were both fully committed to making this simulation a success.

The success of this simulation has made me excited about the possibilities to collaborate across campus with different disciplines, and I look forward to doing so again in the future.



"Each of the students playing active roles in the simulation fully participated and engaged with the scenario enthusiastically."

—Carly Andrews

WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN NEXT...?

THE MINKA IS SMART!

By Dr. Lisa Fournier, DSL, MPM,
Project Coordinator, Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program

If you are on campus this summer, we have lots in store, including:

- Ethernet: We got "wired up" at the Minka! Check out a few of the pictures from our site meeting with State Group Industrial
- Smart home hub and devices: we are excited to announce we will be working with Paragon Sight, Sound, and Security to automate the Minka using Control 4 and to install IoT (Internet of Things) devices.
- Simulation equipment: Laerdal is vendor of choice for the Minka to manage, record, and assess simulation training. The SimCapture Ultraportable equipment allows for camera and recording capture as well as sharing and collaborating across disciplines.
- Dementia Live by AGEucate is a high impact, dementia simulation experience that immerses participants into life with dementia to better understand what it is like to live with brain changes. Stay tuned to our Fall Workshops as we introduce this important learning about living with dementia!

Stop by the Minka Learning Lab for Living Well this summer to see what is going on!



More pictures on
next page

MINKA CONSTRUCTION PICTURES



LET'S TALK ABOUT DEMENTIA THAT FAMILIAR SONG

By Dr. Lisa Fournier, DSL, MPM,
Project Coordinator, Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program

Listening to music can stir strong emotions. Music can put us in a good or bad mood. Whether you like Van Halen or Van Morrison, familiar songs remind us of everything from concerts and friends to reflections and breaking up. We might remember Woodstock, Casey Kasem's Top 40, MTV Unplugged or TikTok Songs of 2020. Hear that annoying song playing in your head, like Baby Shark? You're welcome!

Music doesn't stop with brain changes. Research has shown music remains preserved in our being with or without a diagnosis of dementia. In fact, according to Dr. Emily Ihara in the Department of Social Work at George Mason University, music can be used to decrease agitation and apathy, and increase engagement and joy. For a person living with dementia and their care partners, music can improve their daily living experience, and decrease fear and confusion.

In her article, *Results from a Person-centered Music Intervention for Individuals Living with Dementia*, Ihara writes, "music has positive emotional effects and physiological reactions, stimulating multiple areas of the brain that oversee emotion, mood control, motor skills, attention and memory." Listening to a familiar song brings on a smile, even if words have been lost.

Golden Carer's blog, "How To Plan Music Activities For Dementia Care," offer the following tips for a music session:

- The location of the session should be familiar to the person; their bedroom is often ideal for an undisturbed and serene setting.
- Use 'live' music. Various musical instruments can be used: flute, portable keyboard, ukulele, violin, or accordion.
- If using recorded music, it should be chosen according to the individual's preferences.
- Start session by asking the person which song she/he would like to hear.
- Try to engage the person by asking them what the song reminds them of to encourage reminisce.
- Sing the song and leave a few words at the end for the person to finish.
- If the person has difficulty singing, try humming or la-la-ing.

Whether you shake, rattle and roll, do the macarena or doom doom ta, give the gift of a familiar song!



"For a person living with dementia and their care partners, music can improve their daily living experience, and decrease fear and confusion."

—Lisa Fournier

HEALTHY LIVING

MENTAL HEALTH, WELLBEING AND FLOURISHING AT ALL STAGES OF LIFE: TAKE CARE & PREPARE

By Laurel Standiford Reyes,
Assistant Professor of Psychology

Mental health is important at every stage of life. The pandemic has brought the reality of mortality to the forefront of our everyday lives and increased negative attitudes about aging. Our attitudes towards aging in all stages of adulthood, correlate with wellbeing in older adulthood (Faudzi et al., 2019). Many of us are feeling the effects of normal life stresses and the added stress of the pandemic. How can we flourish in this current environment and maintain wellbeing?

“Human well-being or flourishing...consists [of] mental and physical health, but also encompass[es] happiness and life satisfaction, meaning and purpose, character and virtue and close social relationships” (VanderWeele, 2017; The Harvard Flourishing Program). The fact is, there is so much we can do right now to flourish. **Caring for yourself now means you will be caring for your older self too!** I share this to-do list below (and helpful links) with my students each semester. Let’s each choose an action step and commit to improving our wellbeing now and for our future selves:

1. Are you getting the **nutrition** you need? (**USI Healthy Eating Resources**)
You literally are what you eat so make room for good food in your daily diet.
2. Get enough quality sleep. (**why & how**).
3. **Exercise**. Get moving and **spend time in nature**. Be more active today than you were yesterday.
4. **Meditative Practice**. We see benefits from various types of meditation: the traditional meditative practices, prayer or spiritual practice, mindful gratitude practices, ...just **checking-in with yourself** and paying attention to how you are doing can be a meditative practice. If you realize you are not okay, take action (**NYTarticle; USIwellness resources**).
5. **Creativity**. We all arrive with an innate need to create. **Find** something you love to do and get into the **flow** of creating.
6. **Healthy relationships**: resolve conflict in important relationships. Find, and invest in, reciprocal trusting relationships. This is considered the most important aspect of a long and happy life! (**Harvard Study of Adult Development**)

Remember: Keep your future self in mind; they will appreciate it!

HEALTHY LIVING - YOGA

By Leah Flake, Intern

A lot of people like to focus on cardio or weightlifting when it comes to staying physically fit. Both of these are great forms of exercise that will keep your heart healthy and improve your mobility later on in life. There are other aspects to fitness besides endurance and strength though. Especially with aging, it is important to work on your balance, range of motion and breath control. A great way to improve these aspects is by doing yoga. Read on to learn more about yoga from Andrew Rosenberg, USI yoga instructor.

What are the benefits of yoga?

“When you practice yoga, you can focus on the aspects of health you often overlook. This includes balance and strength, range of motion and control of your breath. This is not to mention the numerous mental benefits one can gain from yoga. Yoga will increase your focus and expend the body's nervous energy like stress and anxiety build-up.”

How is yoga different than other forms of exercise?

“Yoga isn’t performance-based like other exercises. In weightlifting, if you don’t reach your goal weight on a machine you can feel like you have failed. In yoga, it’s all about focusing on how the exercise makes you feel and perceiving its benefits. Yoga trains the body and mind to work together and once you learn this in class, you can apply this focus to other areas in your life. Also, you will always be able to do yoga. There may be some poses that become a little more difficult, but the base movements will always be attainable. I recommend it for all age groups.”



"The fact is, there is so much we can do right now to flourish."
—Laurel Standiford Reyes



"There are other aspects to fitness besides endurance and strength though." —Leah Flake

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

GROUP EXERCISE CLASSES: A RESOURCE TO USE AT ANY AGE

By Sandra Davis,
Program Coordinator of Fitness, Recreation, and Wellness

Group exercise classes at the Recreation, Fitness, and Wellness Center are a great way to enhance several aspects of your personal wellness including physical, emotional, social and spiritual.

Maintaining some sort of physical activity throughout your life will help you to maintain your physical health. Classes such as Butts N' Guts and Ultimate Upper Body work to tone and sculpt your body with various moves. Indoor Cycling, Step & Tone and Body Blast raise the heart rate a little more and encourage the heart and lungs (along with various other muscle groups) to get stronger week after week. Want to feel like you are going to a dance party? Then WERQ is the class for you! If you need a class that allows you to get a little stretching AND strengthening, then Yoga is the class for you. Yoga also adds a mind-body connection that may hit the spiritual and emotional aspects of your wellness journey.

The social aspect of group exercise classes allows you to meet new people and to become part of a community. Additional benefits because of this social setting include accountability and support. Having a core group of people that are doing a workout together keeps you more motivated to return and will push you to get the most out of your workout.

Variety, a well-balanced workout, and having fun are all additional benefits of group exercise classes.

Beginner? No problem! Been working out for a while and want to change it up and try something new? No problem! Whatever your overall personal goal is, the USI Recreation Fitness & Wellness Center has a class to meet your needs. Let us help you achieve your goals.

Please note: Only USI employees and students can use the Recreation, Fitness, and Wellness Center

SOCIAL MEDIA



To follow the Minka Facebook page, visit [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com)



To follow the Minka Instagram page, visit [instagram.com](https://www.instagram.com)

PAST NEWSLETTERS

Click [here](#) to view the April newsletter all about dementia

Click [here](#) to view the March newsletter all about the Minka



"The social aspect of group exercise classes allows you to meet new people and to become part of a community."

—Sandra Davis

Summer 2021 edition of The Minka Monthly will be released in July!

MINKA VISION STATEMENT

Aging well is personal. Each of us expects to live where we want and how we want as we go through life. Our homes are not always set-up for aging well. In addition, our communities may be stifled by issues with access to healthcare, crime and violence, food insecurity, inclusion, age discrimination and more. The Center for Healthy Aging and Wellness wants to transform southwest Indiana by creating a Learning Lab for Living Well housed in the Minka house at USI. The Learning Lab for Living Well offers an interdisciplinary focus to involve students, faculty and campus stakeholders in research, healthcare leadership development, and simulations that address challenges for living-in-place and open health profession career opportunities. In addition, the Learning Lab for Living Well provides everyone in the local community a place to learn about and to adapt home innovations for living-in-place. Home innovations designed to integrate smart home technology, health coaching and learning workshops for a personalized, adaptable approach to aging well. The Center for Healthy Aging and Wellness at USI looks to offer a blueprint for other rural communities to address social determinants of health.