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## REFLECT ON YOUR **WELLNESS WHY** THIS WINTER

*a unique window  
into YOUR individual  
motivations to your  
best health.*

The new year is a perfect time for reflection, to take a step back and assess your priorities thinking about where you are and where you'd like to be when it comes to happiness and wellness.

If you were one of the 1,500+ participants to watch the Education video as part of the Wellness Program, you may remember that one of the quiz questions asked **why you care about your wellness**. Whether you answered immediately with the first thing that popped in your mind or pondered the notion for a moment, the answers provided a unique window into your individual motivations to your best health.

Sure, a few people answered their 'why' was simply the fifty dollar incentive, but most were heartwarming and centered around family and friends, spending quality time with those they care about most. Many of them involved enjoying our amazing Montana landscape by hiking, hunting, fishing or simply sitting by a river. Others mentioned their love of travel or living a long, enjoyable life. Some folks were going through a rough patch and their wellness why was harder to pinpoint or articulate that day. It's a good reminder that we all experience periods of hardship and it's important to find your way back to your passions and what provides the most joy or purpose in your life.

**SEE THE STAFF'S FAVORITES RESPONSES ON PAGE 2**

# WHY YOU CARE ABOUT YOUR WELLNESS

Here are some of our staff favorites  
– *we hope you enjoy  
them as much  
as we did!*

I like to be able to do all of the physical activities I enjoy. I also like to look sexy for the ladies.

To torment my family with endless “dad” jokes ... and also general overall happiness.

I want to fit into cute work clothes again!

I want to have energy to play with my kids and have patience with them rather than wanting to sleep all the time and being cranky.

To break the ‘rut’ of just work and home. Activity leads to getting out and pursuing the relationships that you need to lean into when it is time to ask for support or help. I’d like to live for a long time, and I want those to be quality years not ones to be endured.

I started late in life with family. I’m 50 now and my boys are 3 and 5. I want to be able to out-wrestle them 20 years from now.

It FEELS good to be balanced. I deserve to feel good!

I have a circus at home, and I don’t trust my husband to care of it if I die before him.

I prefer feeling happy to feeling depressed all the time.

To live healthier and longer, so I can annoy my kids at a very old age!

**#1 STAFF FAVORITE**  
**CHUCK NORRIS**  
Because champions are the breakfast of Chuck Norris.

Take time to reaffirm your wellness why as part of your New Year’s Resolution process, if that’s your thing, and set your best intentions for 2023.



# BENEFITS OF NATURE ON HUMAN HEALTH

## This new medication is called ‘Get Outside!’

### STUDIES HAVE REVEALED THE BENEFITS FROM INCREASED TIME IN NATURE:



As a country we are looking at screens and other media more than ever before but not getting outside nearly enough.

AMERICANS ARE UP  
TO AN AVERAGE OF

**13.5 HOURS  
PER DAY**

OF MAJOR MEDIA TIME

**56% OF  
ADULTS**

REPORT SPENDING LESS  
THAN 5 HOURS/WEEK  
OUTDOORS

The long days full of warmth and sunshine make summertime an easier sell to get people outside in nature, but with seasonal affective disorder and depression increasing during winter, it's all the more imperative to get out and reap the stress-reducing and mood-boosting benefits nature has to offer. Sure, wintertime is great for curling up under a cozy blanket with a warm cup of cocoa, maybe with a fire in the woodstove if you're so lucky, but it is also crucially important to include plenty of time outside.

### How the heck do you get out more and enjoy the cold, dark winters?

The fine folks in Norway embrace a concept of *friluftsliv* (pronounced “free-loofts-liv”) that you can easily implement if you don't already utilize the same basic lifestyle. It roughly translates to ‘open-air living’ and is all about being out in fresh air, connecting to nature and its calming, grounding effects — even when the weather isn't great.

## HERE ARE SOME TIPS TO NOT JUST LIVE THIS WINTER, BUT TO **FRILUFTSLIV:**

### BE LIKE AN ONION – HAVE MANY LAYERS

The Norwegians have a saying that goes hand in hand with this lifestyle: there is no bad weather, just bad clothing. Chances are you have enough long underwear, coats, hats, mittens, scarves and balaclavas around the house to get out in most any weather. Get yourself bundled up and get out there!

### DEEP CHILL IN THE WINTER

Hanging out with friends and family outside doesn't have to just be a summertime affair. Make/buy a fire pit or patio heater, bring out blankets and pillows and drink warm beverages while you roast marshmallows on the fire.

### AL FRESCO WORK MEETINGS OR LUNCH

Invite your coworkers to bundle up for an outside coffee or pack a thermos of warm grub to enjoy together for a winter picnic. Call yourselves the Polar Bear Club and set a goal for at least one outdoor meeting or lunch each month of the year!

### RECREATE

There are numerous cold weather activities to enjoy during the winter. Here are just a few: sledding, ice skating, skiing (both cross country and downhill) snowshoeing, hiking (don't forget the traction!), snowball fights, building a snowman, ice fishing, hockey etc.

### TALK OF THE POSITIVES

Even if you're not a winter-lover, find things you enjoy about winter and say them out loud. Make a commitment with friends, family or coworkers to keep an optimistic winter mindset and encourage each other to get out regularly.

### MAKE IT EASY(ER) TO GET OUT

A big hurdle to winter nature time is the inertia required to get dressed and out the door. Have your warm gear organized by the door so it's convenient to bundle up and get out there.

### INDOOR MICRO NATURE DOSES

Add potted plants to work and living spaces and take good care of them. If you have the option, position workstations with a view of the outdoors — every possible nature exposure helps with anxiety and stress.

- ▶ *If you're stuck in hibernation-only mode this winter, start small and increase time outside whenever it works. Remember, as little as 15 minutes of time in nature each day provides health advantages, and increasing to 5-10 hours each week can really maximize benefits. Yelling “friluftsliv!” when you head out to brave the cold isn't necessary ... but it sure is a lot of fun. Embrace the Norwegian spirit and give it a try!*



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## WELLNESS GIFT CARD TIPS

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- Activate your card either by calling the number on the label or at [www.prepaid-usa.com](http://www.prepaid-usa.com) ASAP if you haven't already. Cards that have not been activated cannot be replaced by MMIA if lost, but funds from registered cards may be able to be recovered through Prepaid-USA. If nothing else, take a picture of the card or write down the number.
- You can use your card at the gas station, just not at the pump. Take your card to the cashier to prepay.
- Cards cannot be used at liquor stores, bars, smoke shops, post offices, ATMS, or some self-checkout machines.
- You may need to register the card on the website for some online transactions, even if you have already registered by phone.



- Restaurant/Salon/Service station use – some merchants preauthorize up to a 20% gratuity and your card may be declined if your balance cannot accommodate the additional gratuity.

### USE THEM BEFORE YOU FORGET!

**Cards are valid for one year  
and expire 11/30/2023.**