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A Year of Health & Wellness

2022 – A Year of Wellness Planner for Health & Well-being

Make 2022 your year of health and well-being! This journal will help you build a healthier lifestyle by adding one new healthy habit each week. Make sure you continue with the previous ones as you add each new healthy habit to your wellness tool-kit!

Week 1

Get Enough Sleep -- If you find that you're going to bed on time and still are sleepy during the day, please get a physical examination to rule out health issues such as sleep apnea. Healthy adults need between 7-9 hours of sleep each night.

How did it go this week? What changes did you make to your sleep routine?

Week 2

Move More -- Set a goal of getting in 15 mins more exercise this week, and every week going forward. Try simple indoor activities such as dancing to music; or set a timer during household chores forcing you to work faster and harder, thus burning more calories.

How did it go this week? What changes can you make to increase your commitment to exercising more consistently in the future? _____

Week 3

Stay Hydrated -- It can be hard to remember that you need plenty of water to stay healthy. Regardless of the weather you still need to drink your 8 glasses a day, and possibly more if you are exerting yourself.

How did it go this week? What changes can you make to increase your commitment to drinking more water throughout the day? _____

Week 4

Eat Clean – Avoid highly processed foods that are artificially flavored, and choose nutrient-rich, organic whole foods loaded with fiber and vital nutrients. You'll get full faster, get more quality protein and healthy vegetables in, and probably even drop some weight.

How did it go this week? What other food substitutes can you make to eat clean?

Week 5

Get a Health Check -- Visit your doctor for a complete health check. Early medical intervention can save your life, whether you are young or old!

How did it go this week? What other food substitutes can you make to eat clean?

Week 6

Spend Time with Loved Ones -- It can be easy to get busy and forget about spending quality time with your loved ones. Take the time to give your spouse a kiss when they arrive home and ask your children some open-ended questions.

How did it go this week? What positive responses did you receive from your increased attention to those you love? _____

Week 7

Avoid Sitting Too Much -- Most people have sedentary jobs these days. Try to get up and walk or move around every 90 minutes at least for about three to five minutes. Aim for 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week.

How did it go this week? What changes can you make to increase your commitment to move more often throughout the day? _____

Week 8

Keep Healthy Snacks Nearby -- Depending on your diet, it's important to have healthy snacks nearby to avoid problems with becoming overly hungry. A small pack of nuts, an apple, a banana, or something equally healthy are good choices.

How did it go this week? What healthy snacks did you choose? _____

Week 9

Take a Nutrition Class -- If you're not sure about nutrition, the best way to get help is to take a class. Ask your healthcare provider for more information, as your insurance may help pay for a certified nutritionist or dietician to help you.

How did it go this week? What new information did you learn? _____

Week 10

Ride a Bike -- A bike is a good way to start exercising even if you're not in the best shape, and you can scale up the intensity as you get fitter.

How did it go this week? What changes can you make to increase your commitment to moving more throughout the week? _____

Week 11

Avoid Toxic People -- It might surprise you to know that negativity can play a huge factor in your physical and mental health. The more negative the people who surround you are, the more unhappy you'll be, and subsequently the less healthy and happy you'll be.

How did it go this week? What part of this challenge did you find difficult or easy?

Week 12

Reduce Your Device Dependencies -- When you can, turn off all your electronics. Turn off the notifications on your phone, on social media, and email. Try to spend at least a few hours after dinner each night without accessing technology.

How did it go this week? What part of this challenge did you find difficult or easy?

Week 13

Be More Empathetic -- Attitude is more than 80 percent of the reason you either feel good or bad about anything. But empathy is something that is necessary to feel good about people. The more love and care you have in your heart for others, the more it will come back to you.

How did it go this week? What did you learn about yourself? _____

Week 14

Eat More Salad -- You can eat all the fresh salad fruits and vegetables your heart desires if you avoid sugary and fatty dressings. Try making a dressing with raw fruit, vinegar and spices blended for a natural alternative.

How did it go this week? What changes can you make to increase your commitment to eating more salad in the future? _____

Week 15

Plan Meals -- One of the biggest factors in success for any diet is to plan. Plan before you shop, and then plan before each day so that you're never in a hurry and tempted to run through a fast food drive-through.

How did it go this week? What changes can you make to increase your commitment and follow-through to meal planning? _____

Week 16

Think Before You Speak -- One thing that often interferes with a happy life is your mouth. Your mom was right; if you can't say something nice, don't say it at all.

How did it go this week? What did you learn about yourself? _____

Week 17

Learn Something New -- Keeping your mind active is an important part of being healthy. Focus on learning something new this week. It doesn't matter what it is about, as long as it's new to you.

How did it go this week? What new things did you learn? _____

Week 18

Smile More -- It might seem strange, but your mind is connected to your muscles in such a way that if you smile more, you'll feel happier. Not only that, but others will also respond in a positive manner, increasing the effect.

How did it go this week? What part of this challenge did you find difficult or easy?

Week 19

Learn Chair Exercises -- One great way to combat a sedentary lifestyle is to learn about chair exercises. You can do quite a workout right in your office chair as you work.

How did it go this week? What new exercises did you learn? _____

Week 20

Get More Sunshine -- If you work inside, try to get more sunshine. You need it for Vitamin D production. If you're unable to get at least 20 minutes of sunshine a day you may want to supplement with Vitamin D. Discuss your Vitamin D levels with your doctor.

How did it go this week? Do you know your Vitamin D levels? _____

Week 21

Invest In or Create a Standing Desk -- Weight-bearing is essential for maintaining bone density and avoiding osteoporosis. It will also help you prevent blood clots and other conditions worsened by a sedentary lifestyle. Invest in a standing desk or create your own so that you can stand and work.

How did it go this week? What part of this challenge did you find difficult or easy?

Week 22

Go For a Walk In The Woods -- **Shinrin-Yoku**, translated into English as 'forest bathing', means taking in the forest atmosphere during a leisurely walk. It is an approach where you take the time to reconnect with nature, with your body, your senses, feelings, and emotions. It has recently become one of the well appreciated techniques used to improve your mental health and wellness in an easy, well accessible way, for anyone, anywhere around the world.

How did it go this week? What did you learn about yourself and your emotions?

Week 23

Try Yoga -- One of the best exercises for most people in most stages of health is yoga. There is a practice at the right level for almost everyone. Check with your local gym or YMCA to find classes or watch some free YouTube videos.

How did it go this week? What part of this challenge did you find difficult or easy?

Week 24

Laugh More -- Laughing is the best tummy exercise you can do. Not only that, but when you laugh you release feel-good endorphins that will make you feel good even if you're feeling unwell that day.

How did it go this week? What part of this challenge did you find difficult or easy?

Week 25

Eat More Raw Fruit & Vegetables -- The original fast food is good for you too. The natural sugar and fat in fruit are always better for you than from processed food.

How did it go this week? What changes can you make to increase your commitment to eating more raw fruits and vegetables in the future? _____

How are you doing? You're half-way there – keep going!

Week 26

Upgrade Your Protein and Healthy Fat -- Reduce your processed food intake. Eat whole cuts of meat – chicken, beef, pork, or lamb – instead of processed variants. Eggs are excellent and help to make you feel fuller for longer.

How did it go this week? What changes can you make to increase your commitment to eating more healthy proteins and fats in the future? _____

Week 27

Be More Generous -- You don't want people to take advantage of you but focus on being more generous with your time and talents when you can, and it will foster positive feelings about yourself and others.

How did it go this week? What part of this challenge did you find difficult or easy?

Week 28

Park at a Distance -- You can get more steps into your day by parking further away from every entrance. Not only will you be walking as you shop or run errands, but you'll get in those extra steps that can improve your fitness level.

How did it go this week? What part of this challenge did you find difficult or easy?

Week 29

Take Martial Arts Classes -- Whether you choose Taekwondo or another form of martial arts, you'll get healthier without feeling as if you're exercising. You will also gain more confidence in yourself which will also improve your outlook.

How did it go this week? Did you choose to take the challenge, if not why?

Week 30

Get the Family Involved -- Whether it's cooking a healthy dinner or moving more, if you get the entire family involved, you'll also be making amazing memories.

How did it go this week? What did you learn about yourself and your family?

Week 31

Bring Back the After-Dinner Walk -- Before we got so busy it was normal for people to take leisurely after-dinner walks around the neighborhood. People would stop and chat, but also get much needed fresh air and exercise.

How did it go this week? What part of this challenge did you find difficult or easy?

Week 32

Eat Less Sugar -- Commit to eating less sugar. Type 2 diabetes is a killer, and it sneaks up on you. Don't add table sugar to anything and read the labels to know which foods have way too much sugar in them.

How did it go this week? What changes can you make to increase your commitment to eating less sugar in the future? _____

Week 33

Start Your Day Right -- Most research shows that people who work-out first thing in the morning as a habit are more likely to stick to the plan. But, if you're not a morning person that's okay, just do whatever physical activity you're going to do as soon as possible each day.

How did it go this week? What changes can you make to increase your commitment to engage in physical activity during the day? _____

Week 34

Write Down Goals -- If you have any health and well-being goals it's important to write them down. Don't forget to write down the steps needed to achieve them.

How did it go this week? What part of this challenge did you find difficult or easy?

Week 35

Don't Compare Yourself – Many of us have a strange compulsion to compare ourselves to others when it comes to weight and appearance. This is not a positive trait at all, as everyone's situation (and genetics) are different. Feel good about who you are and stop comparing yourself to others.

How did it go this week? What did you learn about yourself and your feelings?

Week 36

Stop Drinking Soda -- Whether you call it pop, soda, coke, or soft drinks - they're very bad for you. If you like carbonation or the fizzy feeling, you can replace your soft drinks with carbonated natural waters and juices.

How did it go this week? What changes can you make to increase your commitment to drinking less soda in the future? _____

Week 37

Get Accountability -- There are many ways to find an accountability partner. You can look for a partner close to home, or across the country through your wearable and other online communities to help you stay on track with your fitness goals.

How did it go this week? What part of this challenge did you find difficult or easy?

Week 38

Improve Your Gut Bacteria -- Many people who experience gas, GERD, and other digestive issues, have poor gut health and not enough good bacteria. Your gut health can't be any better than the food you give it. Reduce sugar and flour-based foods and consider adding a daily probiotic supplement.

How did it go this week? What part of this challenge did you find difficult or easy?

Week 39

Learn a New Sport – Physical activity is simpler and easier to continue if it doesn't feel like exercise. Taking a class in a new sport or physical activity such as tennis or golf can help turn exercise into a hobby.

How did it go this week? What new things did you learn? _____

Week 40

Spend Some Time Alone -- Make time to spend with yourself and learn to cherish your own company. You don't need other people to entertain you constantly. Read an educational or uplifting book, or daydream and plan your future.

How did it go this week? What did you learn about yourself? _____

Week 41

Learn Good Posture -- Most of our moms tried to help us with our posture, but even sometimes their directions of “shoulders back” might be incorrect and cause back pain. If you’re not sure your posture is correct, go to a trained physical therapist for an evaluation.

How did it go this week? What part of this challenge did you find difficult or easy?

Week 42

Get a Massage – In addition to stress reduction, massage has many health benefits. Manually stimulating the body can improve blood flow, increase metabolism, and speed muscle repair after working out or working hard.

How did it go this week? Did you choose to take the challenge, if not why?

Week 43

Go to The Dentist -- You should be getting professional cleanings twice a year to avoid health issues related to dental disease. Poor dental health and hygiene can lead to more problems than just mouth pain, including heart issues.

How did it go this week? What changes can you make to increase your commitment to keeping regular dental appointments in the future? _____

Week 44

Take Vitamins -- If you are a vegetarian, you will almost certainly need to take additional vitamin B12. Many people are unknowingly deficient in vitamin D and magnesium. You can get a blood test to be sure. But, if you're tired, or you have muscle cramps these two supplements along with vitamin K can help.

How did it go this week? What new vitamins/supplements did you add this week?

Week 45

Take Care of Your Skin -- It is important to care for your skin. Make sure you get plenty of sunlight but do so without damaging your skin. Ensure that whatever you put on your skin is natural and safe. Check your products with the Environmental Working Group - <https://www.ewg.org/skindeep/>

How did it go this week? What did you learn about your skincare products?

Week 46

Don't Box Yourself In -- There are a lot of "shoulds" in life. Try to eliminate as many as you can, especially those chosen by others for you. For example, you should exercise every single day, but what if instead of exercising you played and had fun? You may need to set boundaries to tame the "shoulds" in life.

How did it go this week? What did you learn about yourself and your boundaries?

Week 47

Don't Judge Others -- This is for your own emotional well-being. When you find yourself judging others based on arbitrary traits, you're really judging yourself. If you can't offer empathy, offer grace instead.

How did it go this week? What part of this challenge did you find difficult or easy?

Week 48

Make Work Fun -- When you need to clean the house, or do chores you don't want to do, find a way to make it more fun. Ask someone to help you, turn on the music, and enjoy the fact that you're alive and able do the tasks.

How did it go this week? What did you learn about yourself? _____

Week 49

Remember Your Goals -- Each day when you get up, take the time to look at your goals so that you know what you need to do that day to get closer to succeeding. Every goal is met by taking action - one day at a time.

How did it go this week? What new things did you learn? _____

Week 50

Quit Bad Habits -- If you smoke, drink more than three drinks a week, or eat more junk food than you'd like, it's time to stop those habits. The best way to start is to attack one bad habit at a time by replacing it with a healthier habit.

How did it go this week? What healthy habits did you adopt?

Week 51

Add Some Weight to Your Workouts -- Now that you've been walking more all year long, it's time to up your game. Get some ankle weights which will add some challenge to your walk and help you gain more results in less time.

How did it go this week? What part of this challenge did you find difficult or easy?

Week 52

Avoid Processed Food -- Even when the label says it's healthy, if it's processed you can choose better. Shop the perimeter of the grocery store, staying clear of the center aisles and you'll find it easier to find whole, healthy, and natural foods.

How did it go this week? What changes can you make to increase your commitment to eating less processed foods in the future? _____

You did it, well done! What have you learned about yourself over this past year of developing healthy habits and wellness practices? Don't just do these challenges once and forget about them, what healthy behaviors and habits from this past year will you continue into 2023? Share your challenges and successes with me at wendy@dupagewellness.com.

2022 - a year of wellness is lovingly dedicated to my mother Edieth A. Thorup