

“Each morning, when you open your eyes, think only three things: Thank you, thank you, and thank you. Then, set out to make the best use of the gift of this day that you can.”

- Dr. Wayne Dyer

For those of you who know me and my work, I'm sure you're aware I'm a huge fan of Dr. Wayne Dyer. One of the many reasons I like and respect him so much is because he reminds me of my dad. When I was growing up, the two of them could say the exact same thing and I would think Dr. Dyer was brilliant, yet I'd roll my eyes at my dad. But as I got older, I finally realized the similarities between these two amazing men were undeniable. Great minds think alike. This particular quote from Dr. Dyer really touches me because it's an important reminder that we all need to be thankful every single day. I tend to feel my most thankful when I'm hiking, which is when I feel God's presence everywhere and see and appreciate the beauty all around me. I've written about the importance of gratitude and being thankful, but I do think we all need an occasional reminder to do so. Honestly, being thankful should be the number one priority on our daily to-do list. I tend to be more thankful right before I go to bed, when I thank God for my day and all He's given me. But I really need to do a much better job of being thankful as soon as I wake up, before I start my day. None of us is promised tomorrow, so it's especially important to be thankful for TODAY. As I close this section, I'll leave you with another wonderful quote from Dr. Dyer: *“Rather than looking for miracles, shift to seeing everything as miraculous.”* This certainly goes hand-in-hand with being thankful.

Yours in health,

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Finish Your Year Healthy



We're a little over halfway through the year and I don't think people focus on their health as much as they do in the beginning of the year, when resolutions are the focus. But as you know, those resolutions tend to fall by the wayside by the end of January....maybe February, and then life goes back to status quo. Because I'm always thinking about health and ways to improve it, it seemed to be a good time to put some simple ideas back in the forefront to help make the back-half of 2026 healthier than the first half. These suggestions are not only simple, but certainly easily achievable and hopefully long-lasting. Let me know if there are any I've missed.

Don't Sit Still: Get up and move as much as possible. Moving doesn't just burn calories, it also helps stimulate the brain, preserve muscles, increase metabolism and improve your overall emotional outlook. I use a stand-up desk and along with it, try to move as much as possible. Sometimes, I have to remind myself to sit for a few minutes to “take a load off.” For the rest of the year, try to move your body at least a little bit every day in a way you can easily maintain. Take a walk before or after lunch, do some stretches after that walk or even before you head to bed. Take the stairs rather than the elevator, park a distance from your ultimate destination and lift weights a couple times a week. Remember, the best exercise program is the one you can maintain. Be consistent. Even a little bit of movement is better than none. Aim to do a little more each week.

Make Sleep a Priority. Let's face it. Most of us don't get enough sleep because life tends to get in the way. When there's not enough time in the day to get things done, sleep is often the first thing to go. But the problem is, sleep is critical to nearly every system in the body. Lack of sleep can disrupt metabolism, increase inflammation, and put you in a bad mood. In order to get enough sleep, which truly helps rejuvenate the body, be intentional about it. That means doing things like winding down at the end of the day, limiting or even restricting caffeine after noon, reducing screen exposure a few hours before bed and settling down at close to the same time every night. Getting a good night's sleep is an investment in your whole self....physical, emotional, spiritual and mental. For the rest of the year, be intentional about getting enough sleep.

Spend Time with Friends. These days, many people are lonely and it's both unfortunate and unsurprising. Spending time with others takes effort. But the reality is that often, at the end of a long day or a long week, it's probably the last thing anyone wants to do. Friendships are an important part of maintaining health. Spending time with people you care about can do wonders for both your emotional and physical wellbeing. Friendships are not only important for kids, they're probably even more important as we age. Having people to spend time with and to talk to can be a powerful "drug". I truly believe friendships help sustain people in their later years. They provide not only a sense of belonging, but also an important emotional connection. For the rest of the year, make the effort to regularly get together with friends, join groups that share your interests, volunteer for a cause that's important to you, or just call a friend to say hi and check in.

Seek/Give Physical Touch. This is such an important part of life that's often neglected. Hugs are healing. They can actually lower blood pressure, help relieve the stress of a tough day and help improve mood. Everyone needs touch. Before I found the love of my life, I used to joke with friends that I paid for a monthly massage just to get someone to touch me. Touch definitely improves both mental and physical health. Even something as simple as putting a hand on someone's knee while you sit next to each other, or taking someone's hand in yours as you walk can make a tremendous difference. Both humans and animals need touch because it nourishes the soul. Just think about how much better you feel after a hug or any other kind of touch. Give that gift to someone else and find out how much better you both feel. For the rest of the year, make it a point to hug and/or touch people you care about.

Choose Joy. This is such an important emotion I wrote about it twice: Once in April 2020 and again in December 2023. You can read them here: [April 2020](#) and [Dec 2023](#). Joy isn't trivial. It's internal to each person, so it can't be impacted by exterior forces. Being joyful can help reduce stress, improve the immune system and help boost the feel-good chemicals in the body. Many people wait for joy to arrive, but you actually have the ability to choose it. Joy is everywhere. You just have to open your eyes to see it. Unfortunately, these days, it's way too easy to get so bogged down in negativity that you don't see the good things all around you. For the rest of the year, take a few moments each day to think about or write down the things that bring you joy. Then go do them. Joy truly goes hand-in-hand with gratitude and thankfulness. Find your own joy and then spread it out to others.

Find Purpose. I think finding a purpose is a good predictor of happiness and longevity. People with a purpose tend to not only live longer, but they also WANT to live longer. I'm learning Italian and to have a purpose is "*Avere uno scopo*". Having a reason to get up every day can help us weather the storms life throws our way. It gives us incentive to not give up when times seem tough. Having a purpose helps give life meaning and can truly help when we're called to navigate turbulent waters. For the rest of the year, find a passion, set some goals, create a new tradition, walk a new path or do something completely unexpected. Finding purpose isn't just a one-time thing. It should be a lifestyle.

Turn Off Screens. Being on your phone or watching TV isn't necessary harmful, but like anything in life, too much of it is not a good thing. The problem comes when it replaces important connections or activities in life. Excessive screen time can also disrupt sleep and create anxiety. I'm sure you've heard about the perils of "*blue light*". That's why it's important to turn off screens a couple of hours before bed to give your brain time to unwind. Take an occasional break during meals or some other time during the day. Personally, I try to avoid social media on Sundays. It gives me a much-needed mental break. Reduce the overall "*noise*" in your life. For the rest of the year, find some "*screen-free*" and "*noise-free*" time at least once a week. Then notice how the silence creates calm.

Watch What Goes in Your Mouth. I saved the best, the most important and probably the easiest idea for last. Choose wisely what you put in your mouth. This should go without saying, but I'll say it anyway. You must eliminate tobacco and avoid excessive alcohol. If you're doing recreational drugs, please stop. Tobacco and drugs profoundly and negatively impact long-term health. I certainly love my wine, but in older adults especially, excessive alcohol can accelerate cognitive decline, increase the risk of falling and can interfere with sound sleep. With regard to food, we have the new and improved food pyramid, which is much better for your health. Choose to eat foods based on the new pyramid. You can get a reminder here: [Jan 26 - The New Food Pyramid](#). While you're at it, eliminate seed oils, reduce the consumption of junk foods and sugary snacks/drinks (including diet sodas). For the rest of the year, do an honest audit of your daily consumption habits. Even modest reductions and better choices can yield rapid improvements in health, energy levels, sleep quality, and even mood.

Before I close out, I'll leave you with this: As we get older and refocus on new priorities and what's really important, understand that life is short and none of us is promised tomorrow. Therefore, remember that it's more important to add life to your years, not just years to your life. For the rest of 2026 and beyond, get out and do things. Don't be a couch potato. Don't live with the regrets of wishing you had done more, experienced more, laughed more or loved more. Make new friends. Take up a new hobby. Enjoy nature. Spend time with people you love. Choose to be joyful. Learn to eat healthier. Most importantly, have fun! Finish out the year caring even more about your body and your soul and make it a point to live an extraordinary life!

Have a wonderful month!