

# WILD 5 Wellness™

*Wellness Interventions for Life's Demands*



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## WELCOME TO THE WILD 5 WELLNESS PROGRAM

Welcome to the next phase of the *WILD 5 Wellness Program*! The first phase of WILD 5 Wellness, involving 36 participants, resulted in significant improvement for a lot of people. As an example, each of the wellness interventions we utilized showed clinical and statistical significance. Please review the two research posters to learn more about the findings ([www.JainTexasInfo.com](http://www.JainTexasInfo.com)). We are very excited you're going to spend 30 days focusing intensively on your wellness. Our program has truly been helpful to a number of people.

We know that each of the five wellness interventions, practiced individually, leads to overall improvements in wellness. The question we asked ourselves is whether or not combining these five elements (exercise, mindfulness, sleep, social connectedness and nutrition) into a single wellness program will lead to even better results? The answer is – YES! When combined, all five wellness elements definitely lead to the best results.

Below are directions on how to get started along with some helpful tips and general information about the WILD 5 Wellness Program:

1. Review the WILD 5 Wellness materials in your packet to familiarize yourself with the program. Each of the WILD 5 Wellness elements describes what each element requires you to do each day. Please don't hesitate to consult with your healthcare provider if you have any questions about the program.
2. Before beginning the program, take some time to think about how you will incorporate these wellness practices into your daily routine. A little pre-planning goes a long way.
3. Perfection is not the goal. However, we recommend you do your best to practice the five wellness interventions on a daily basis. Those that practice daily achieve the greatest results. However, if you struggle along the way and miss a day or two, don't throw in the towel. Resume your wellness practices and don't be too hard on yourself. Change is never easy. Just do your best.
4. Once you begin the WILD 5 Wellness Program, you will complete all five of the wellness interventions each day for 30 days.
5. Document your progress each day using the Participant Tracking Form, which is part of your wellness packet. Daily tracking is critical to the program as this information allows us to collect important data and identify any areas needing attention.
6. Remember, this is a 30-Day commitment. Do your best to identify your barriers and create solutions proactively.

**Practice All 5 Wellness Elements Daily!**



## THE HISTORY OF WILD 5 WELLNESS



WILD in WILD 5 Wellness is an acronym for *Wellness Interventions for Life's Demands*. The 5 in WILD 5 Wellness are the five wellness modules that include exercise, mindfulness, sleep, social connectedness, and nutrition.

We all know that life can certainly be stressful and negatively impact our overall well-being. Our goal is to develop an intervention to help combat these daily challenges not only for a mental health population but also for the community at large. Our belief is that these five wellness interventions, when practiced together, will prove beneficial to both groups.

WILD practices date back to our ancestors. We must be honest, these wellness interventions are nothing new as they have been around for many moons. Each of the WILD 5 Wellness elements was part of our ancestors' daily way of life.

Below are a few examples of how ancient civilizations practiced WILD 5 Wellness:

1. **Exercise:** One had to expend energy to hunt and forage for food. It wasn't as simple as hopping into a car and hitting a local drive-through or swinging by a grocery store. Exercise was part of their daily routine and a necessary component of survival.
2. **Mindfulness:** Hunter-gathers engaged in ritual fire and rain dances resulting in altered states of consciousness – a way to connect with the spirits. Through this tradition, ancient civilizations engaged in a type of mindfulness practice.
3. **Sleep:** When the sun disappeared beyond the horizon and darkness fell, sleep was a natural response. There were no distractions like television, Internet gaming, Facebook, and smartphones saturating their eyes with unnatural light and disrupting their circadian rhythms.
4. **Social Connectedness:** Family units equaled more people to hunt and forage resulting in a better chance of survival. There was safety and power in numbers. Families stayed together in order to survive and prosper.
5. **Nutrition:** Food wasn't always readily available. Most likely their meals resembled a Paleo diet, one high in protein and green vegetables. Processed foods or foods high in carbohydrates obviously weren't a concern.

**Participant Tracking Form**

Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>Exercise:</b> <i>Did I exercise today?</i>		<b>Mindfulness:</b> <i>Did I mindfully meditate today?</i>		<b>Sleep:</b> <i>Did I implement 4 of the 6 pro sleep hygiene techniques last night?</i>		<b>Connectedness:</b> <i>Did I socialize today?</i>		<b>Nutrition:</b> <i>Did I log all meals/snacks/beverages/alcohol today?</i>	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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30	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO

## WILD 5 Wellness Elements

- Exercise
- Mindfulness
- Sleep
- Social Connectedness
- Nutrition



**Practice All 5 Wellness Elements Daily**



# EXERCISE

## Program Expectation

Exercise 30 minutes each day for 30 days, at least moderate intensity\*  
(If for physical reasons, you're unable to do 30 minutes per day, less time and intensity is acceptable but daily exercise is a requirement.)

*\*Base the amount of time you exercise and the intensity of your exercise on your physical capabilities. Certainly increase the duration and intensity of your exercise, as you're able. If you're unable to reach 30 minutes of exercise per day or reach moderate intensity as you begin the program that is fine. Do whatever you're capable of doing. Prior to beginning the program, participants are encouraged to get a medical release.*

We know from data that regular exercise improves mental and physical health. However, unless we exercise a "certain" way, we simply won't get the best results. We'd like to introduce you to the **FID** model of exercise, which data tells us is an effective form of exercise.

Let's briefly explore the FID principles. Science tells us that brain and mental health benefits occur only when we use a combination of these three strategies: 1. We have to exercise **F**requently. This means, aim for seven days a week, 2. The **I**ntensity of exercise must be ranked as at least moderately intense, otherwise brain benefits are diminished, and 3. **D**uration of exercise requires that we exercise 30-minutes per day. You may be wondering what qualifies as moderately intense exercise. The easiest way to know you've hit the mark of moderately intense exercise is when having a conversation with your workout buddy is difficult because you're winded.

Please remember to adjust your exercise based on your physical capabilities. First and foremost, consult with your healthcare provider before starting any exercise program and secondly, base the amount of time you exercise and the intensity of your exercise on your physical capabilities. During the 30-day wellness program, we encourage you to increase the duration and intensity of your exercise, as you're able. If you're unable to reach 30 minutes of exercise per day or reach moderate intensity as you begin the program that is fine. Do whatever you're capable of doing.

Participant Tracking Form: You may mark "Yes" to the question about exercise on your daily participant tracking form as long as you've made an effort to exercise. We realize that on some days pain may prevent you from exercising – that is OK. Be kind to yourself along the way and do whatever you're capable of doing.

This is the FID principle of exercise:

**TO BE FIT, YOU MUST FID!**

## FID

**Frequency:**

7 out of 7 days

**Intensity:**

At least moderate intensity (*see \* above*)

**Duration:**

30 minutes (at least)\*\*

*\*\*You may break this down into two 15-minute sections or three 10-minute sections. If unable to exercise the full 30-minutes at moderate intensity, simply make an effort and do your best.*

## FAQ's:

### 1. Why is exercise part of the WILD 5 Wellness Program?

We know exercise, if done "correctly" leads to positive body and brain changes and is good for a person's mental health. There is ample data supporting each of these exercise related changes. Including exercise in the WILD 5 Wellness Program makes sense and offers all participants a chance to reap the many benefits associated with exercise.

### 2. What type of exercise is recommended?

Before deciding on the type of exercise, be sure to make any necessary modifications based on your health or physical restrictions. Given your physical capabilities, any of the following types of exercise are acceptable: walking, jogging, biking, swimming, weight lifting, aerobics, water aerobics, etc. You may want to mix things up a bit and do more than one type of exercise per week.

### 3. What if I'm already exercising and meeting the program's criteria for FID? Do I need to make any changes?

No, you do not need to make any changes. Just make sure you're meeting the principles of FID and keep up the good work!

### 4. What if I don't have time to exercise for 30-minutes?

You can break down your 30-minutes of exercise into two 15-minute sections or three 10-minute sections.

## Barriers To Success

Below are a few potential barriers along with suggested solutions:

**Time** – We suggest adding your exercise plan to your calendar and set phone reminders to increase your chances of meeting your goals.

**Physical Limitations** – We encourage you to speak with your healthcare provider regarding your exercise routine. You may have to make adjustments based on your physical capabilities.

**Weather** – Always have a backup plan in place in case the weather turns ugly. If it's raining, too cold or too hot, drive to your nearest mall and get moving!

**Low Motivation** – Acknowledge your lack of drive/motivation as a common feeling when starting a new exercise routine. When you don't feel like exercising, do your best to make it happen - no matter what!

## WILD 5 Wellness Words of Advice

*Perfection is not the goal! Set your goals high and do your best each and every day. Be kind to yourself as you begin making these changes. Change is never easy. If you miss a day or two, shake it off, regroup and begin again. Do not throw in the towel. Remember to track your daily exercise practices using the Participant Tracking Form.*

# MINDFULNESS



## Program Expectation

Practice mindfulness 8 minutes each day for 30 days

Please download the free smartphone or computer app from [StopBreatheThink.org](https://www.stopbreatheandthink.org).



iOS



ANDROID



WEB

While Mindfulness may seem like a 'new age mystical' practice, it actually has extremely solid scientific data behind its validity as a top-notch wellness intervention. We know from data that regular Mindfulness practice improves mental and physical health. If you have never truly practiced Mindfulness on a regular basis, you're in for a treat! Even with 30 days of regular practice, expect significant positive impact on your entire being - scientific data supporting this is quite solid and convincing.

We have addressed some of the more frequently asked questions regarding Mindfulness in the FAQ section below. Please take a moment to review and be sure to download the free Mindfulness app to your smartphone and get comfortable with the app before you begin the program.

## Recommended Mindfulness Practices:

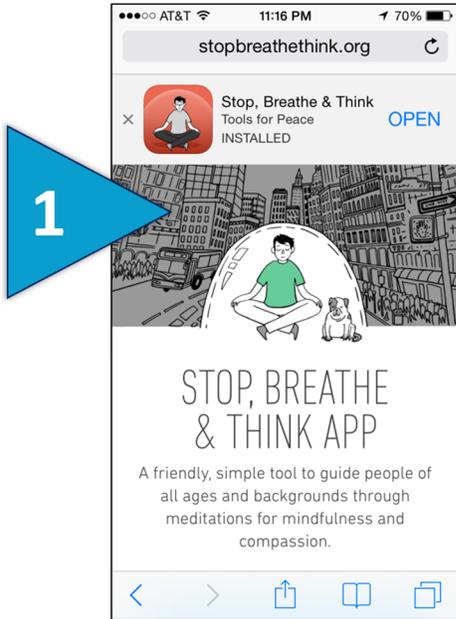
You have a few choices regarding which meditations you'd like to use. We suggest you listen to the recommended guided meditations prior to starting the 30-day program to become familiar with each. Your options include: 1. **Body Scan** meditation or 2. **Be Present** and **Gratitude** meditations. During the 30-day program, you can use just the **Body Scan** meditation (8 minutes) or both of these meditations: **Be Present** (3 minutes) plus **Gratitude** (5 minutes). You can also alternate or use a combination of these three meditations. The goal is to mindfully meditate a total of 8 minutes each day.

If you use the **Body Scan** meditation, you'll only meditate once per day as this meditation is 8 minutes. However, if you decide to use a combination of **Be Present** and **Gratitude** meditations, you'll need to complete both meditations (3 + 5 minutes) to meet your daily goal of 8 minutes. You're welcome to do these two meditations at the same time or you can break them up throughout the day doing one in the morning and the other in the evening. We encourage you to find a routine that meets your schedule needs.

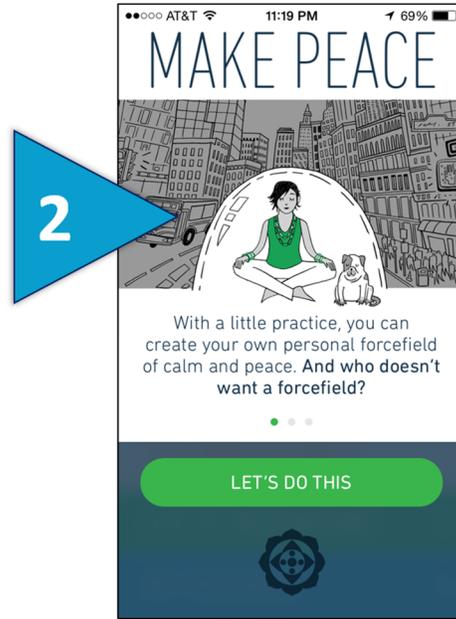
Feel free to listen to all the meditations on this app as it has a lot to offer but for our purposes, we ask that you use the features outlined on the next page:

# Stop, Breathe, Think App

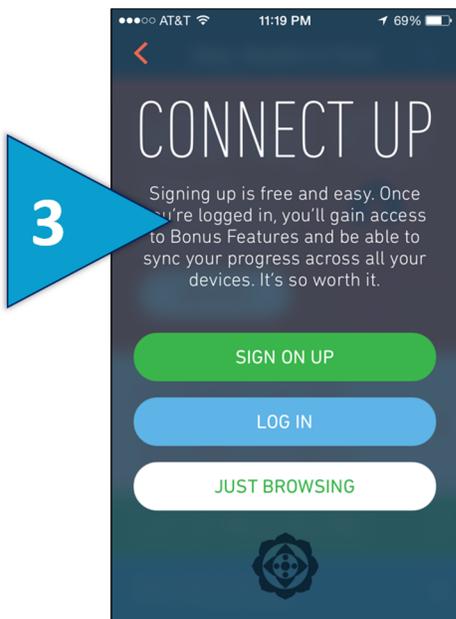
FIRST TIME SET UP ONLY: *Follow these 4 Steps*



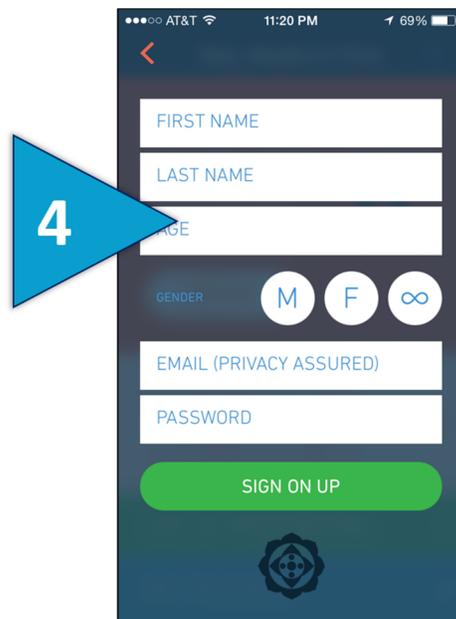
*Download the app, this image appears – click **OPEN** button (top right)*



*Click green button: **Let's Do This***



*Click green button: **Sign On Up***

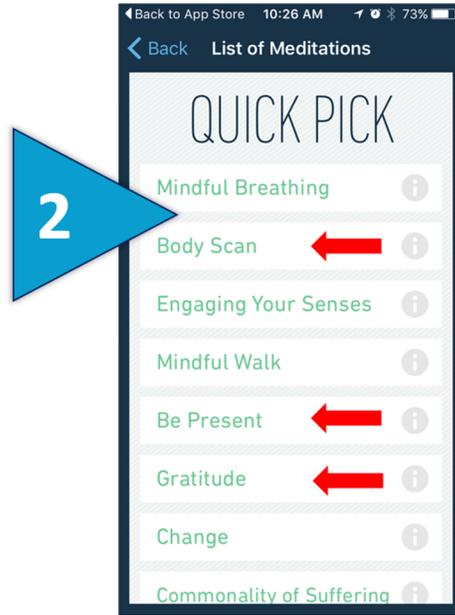


*Complete the registration and click green button: **Sign On Up***

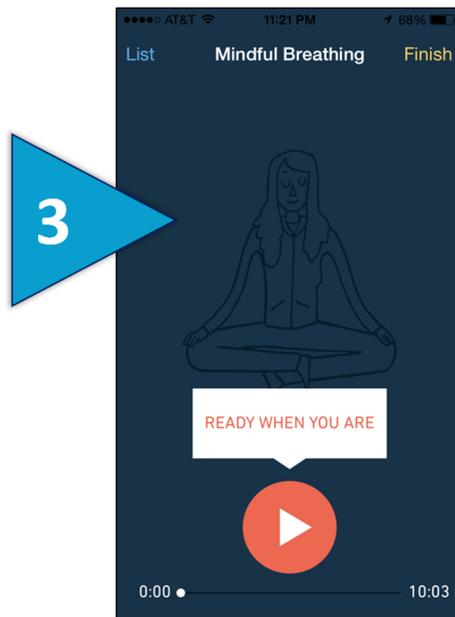
**EVERY DAY USE:** *Follow these 3 Steps*



*Click green bar:  
List of Meditations*



*Click either **Body Scan** or  
**Be Present** plus **Gratitude***



*Click red button:  
Ready When You Are*

## Mindfulness Recommendations:

1. Find a place to meditate: Select a quiet and comfortable place to ensure no interruptions. You may want to notify your family and friends that you'll be unavailable during this time. A phone is a common barrier so leaving it in another room or on silent may be an effective option.
2. Select your sitting equipment: There are three options – chair, firm cushion on the floor or a meditation bench. You may want to investigate each of these options and select your favorite.
3. Decide when you will meditate: You may want to meditate at the same time each day. Time is the most common barrier so setting aside a specific time may be helpful.

Teasdale J., Williams M. and Segal Z. (2014) *The Mindful Workbook*. New York, New York: Guilford Publications, Inc.

## FAQ's:

### **1. Why is Mindfulness part of the WILD 5 Wellness Program?**

Mindfulness is in the news everywhere these days but there is exceptionally solid evidence for its effectiveness in improving overall mental fitness. There is now convincing evidence that those who practice mindfulness can change the size and functioning of their brains with regular practice! Mindfulness also alters and improves our immune functioning. Best of all, regular mindfulness practice makes us more resilient and improves our wellbeing. It's a star member of the WILD 5 Wellness Program!

### **2. I have never practiced Mindfulness. I'm too intimidated to start! How do I get started?**

You're not alone - we completely understand! Please understand that in spite of these hesitations, anyone can begin and grow a mindfulness based practice. That is why we have included the link to the free mindfulness app to help you get started. The app is very user friendly, not intimidating, and truly easy to set up and use. Trust us - download the app and get started. Remember to practice daily and you will have brought mindfulness into your daily life.

### **3. Is there a 'right' or 'wrong' way to practice Mindfulness?**

Absolutely not! One cannot practice mindfulness the 'wrong way'. Your mind may wander a lot during some mindfulness practices and less during others - this doesn't make one practice better than another. They simply are what they are and remember, one element of mindfulness is being non-judgmental. The mind wandering is in fact what the mind

does quite naturally. It is not a sign of doing the practice incorrectly. As you begin your mindfulness practice, be kind to yourself and simply keep up your daily practice.

#### **4. Why is daily practice important?**

There are a couple of reasons why daily practice is important. First, developing a new habit requires daily practice. Secondly, it's regular daily practice that creates lasting positive changes not only in our bodies and brains but also changes in our mental health. So, daily practice is vitally important - let's make a commitment to daily practice!

### **WILD 5 Wellness Words of Advice**

*Perfection is not the goal! Set your goals high and do your best each and every day. Be kind to yourself as you begin making these changes. Change is never easy. If you miss a day or two, shake it off, regroup and begin again. Do not throw in the towel. Remember to track your daily mindfulness practices using the Participant Tracking Form.*



# SLEEP

## Program Expectation

Implement at least 4 of the 6 pro sleep hygiene practices each day for 30 days

The data tells us that sleep is crucial for overall good health and we do mean *CRUCIAL!* Lack of sleep or poor quality sleep is connected to increased inflammation, which is associated with a host of health problems including poor daytime concentration and productivity, weight gain, and the list goes on.

You may not be successful in implementing all 6 strategies each day/night but don't give up. Implement as many as you can each day/evening. You must implement *4 of the 6* pro sleep hygiene practices each day in order to answer the sleep question on the Participant Tracking form as YES. We encourage you to practice as many of the recommendations as you can per day. Please don't avoid the ones you think you can't master. Give it a try and you may be pleasantly surprised.

The list below recommends 6 pro sleep hygiene practices that are known to improve a person's overall quality of sleep.

## 6 Recommended Pro Sleep Hygiene Practices:

1. Avoid all electronic activities (i.e. television, iPhones, online games, iPads) 90-minutes prior to bedtime. Yes, you may read but please avoid e-readers due to the light they emit. Stick to books and/or magazines and select happy stories rather than activating crime or murder mysteries.
2. Avoid napping during the day. No matter how tired you are during the day resist the temptation of a quick nap as this only results in poor nighttime sleep.
3. Eliminate ambient light in your bedroom (light from clock radio, cell phone, windows). Try blackout shades or a night mask to block out excess light.
4. Enjoy a warm relaxing bath or shower prior to bedtime.
5. Establish and stick to a regular bedtime each night including weekends.
6. Avoid caffeinated drinks after 12:00 noon.

## FAQ's:

### **1. I'm confused about logging my daily sleep practices on my Participant Tracking Form? What if I only implemented 2 of the 6 pro sleep hygiene practices?**

We're recommending 6 pro sleep hygiene practices but in order to answer yes on your Participant Tracking Form, you have to implement at least 4 of the 6 recommended practices.

### **2. There's no way I can avoid caffeinated drinks after 12:00 noon. What should I do?**

We understand this is one of the more challenging pro sleep recommendations. It's important not to avoid the recommendations that present the biggest barrier for you. Accept the fact that avoiding caffeinated drinks after 12:00 noon won't be easy but do it anyway.

### **3. Is lack of sleep really associated with weight gain?**

Absolutely! Not only is lack of sleep associated with weight gain but also attempts to lose weight are less effective in those that don't sleep well. Now you can see the value of a wellness intervention that combines several elements. If you're working hard to lose weight but not sleeping well, you simply won't get the results you're hoping to achieve. So even though these pro sleep recommendations aren't all easy to implement and maintain, please do your best.

### **4. Why is napping a bad idea?**

Breaking the habit of napping isn't an easy proposition. However, if you continue your practice of napping, you're guaranteed disrupted and fragmented sleep. In order to ensure quality sleep, you must stop napping. As you begin breaking this habit, you will certainly feel extreme exhaustion but push through it, stay awake and experience the joys of restful sleep. This is a process so please don't expect immediate changes in the quality of your sleep, simply keep up the practice of not napping throughout the 30-day program and you'll have established a new pro sleep habit.

### **5. Why is ambient light a problem?**

Melatonin is a sleep promoting chemical in our brain whose production only starts after we close our eyes optimally in a completely dark environment. This is why we're recommending no ambient light - light from iPhones, bedside clocks, charging computers - in your bedroom. Don't forget you can eliminate ambient light by using blackout shades and/or a sleep mask. Don't underestimate the power of ambient light and its role in disrupting your sleep.

## WILD 5 Wellness Words of Advice

*Perfection is not the goal! Set your goals high and do your best each and every day. Be kind to yourself as you begin making these changes. Change is never easy. If you miss a day or two, shake it off, regroup and begin again. Do not throw in the towel. Remember to track your daily sleep practices using the Participant Tracking Form.*

## SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS



### Program Expectation

Text or call a family member or friend each day for 30 days

We humans are social animals but the hectic pace of modern day life often gets in the way of our efforts to connect with others. So what? Why does that matter? Here's why: Socialization is important to both mental and physical health. Data tells us that people who socialize more frequently live longer, have fewer health problems and are happier. Given the power of socialization, it is one of the five wellness elements.

Socialization comes in many forms. We've listed a few of these activities below, which may include inviting friends or family to:

- Dinner
- See a movie
- Have coffee
- Take a walk
- Join a book club
- Play a group sport, i.e. tennis, basketball, racquetball
- Take a cooking class or a dance class

As noted above, for social connectedness we ask that you text or call a family member or friend (should not be work-related) daily for the 30-day program. You do not have to record any details about the calls and/or texts - simply do one or the other each day. In addition to texting or calling someone each day, we encourage you to connect with others via the list above or in other ways you've identified.

### FAQ's:

#### 1. I don't like texting. Can I just call family members or friends?

Of course, you can decide to just text or just call during the program or you can mix it up and do both. If you lean more towards texting, we encourage you to break out of your comfort zone and make a few phone calls and vice versa. Don't always do what's easy – push yourself a little to try something new or something that isn't all that easy.

#### 2. This seems too easy. How can it really be helpful?

Great point – check out a couple of participants' feedback, from version 1 of the program. Their comments opened our eyes to the power of this intervention...see what you think.

Before starting the program, this participant said they considered themselves to be very connected. However, once they started tracking/logging their daily practice, they realized they weren't connecting with others as often as they thought. So tracking increased their awareness and offered an opportunity to change their behavior. Another participant was extremely isolated and something as simple as calling/texting allowed them to engage in behavior that increased their level of social connectedness. So let's not undervalue this intervention because of its simplicity.

### **3. I don't want to call or text others. I don't like being on the phone and I don't like texting because it's too easy for others to misinterpret my texts. What should I do?**

We realize not everyone likes talking on the phone or likes to text. Some of this depends upon age and some of it is just personal preference. However, for the purposes of this program, it's important that you select texting or phone calls or a combination of the two as a daily practice to increase your sense of social connectedness. Remember, these changes aren't going to be easy – some more difficult than others. The goal is to push through those barriers and do the best you can to make it happen. The power of these elements is in practicing all five together.

### **4. Do I need to keep track of the people I call/text as well as the content of those communications?**

You do not need to keep those types of records. Simply log your practices daily using the Participant Tracking Form.

## **Barriers To Success**

Below are a few potential barriers along with suggested solutions:

**Time** – We suggest adding your social connectedness activities to your calendar and set phone reminders to increase your chances of meeting your goals.

**Low Motivation** – Acknowledge your lack of drive/motivation as a common feeling when making a decision to socialize. When you feel avoidant or less than social, do your best to make it happen - no matter what!

## **WILD 5 Wellness Words of Advice**

*Perfection is not the goal! Set your goals high and do your best each and every day. Be kind to yourself as you begin making these changes. Change is never easy. If you miss a day or two, shake it off, regroup and begin again. Do not throw in the towel. Remember to track your daily social connectedness practices using the Participant Tracking Form.*



## NUTRITION

### Program Expectation

Log your daily meals/snacks/beverages/  
alcohol each day for 30 days\*

*\*We highly recommend you follow the MIND Diet during the program as it's shown pro-brain and pro-health benefits.*

We ask that you implement the following two things as part of the nutrition module (details below):

1. **Log Your Daily Meals/Snacks/Beverages/Alcohol**
2. **We highly recommend you follow the MIND Diet during the program as it's shown pro-brain and pro-mental health benefits**

### 1. Log Your Daily Meals/Snacks/Beverages/Alcohol

Please download the free smartphone app to document your daily intake from [www.MyFitnessPal.com](http://www.MyFitnessPal.com). If you're using a different app to log your food, please continue using that app rather than changing to a new system.

As you review the recommended app, familiarize yourself with how to log your food/snacks/beverages/alcohol. You're welcome to set a certain caloric intake and set a weight loss goal but to satisfy the expectations of this wellness intervention, we only ask that you log your meals/snacks/beverages/alcohol on a daily basis. The goal of this wellness intervention is to increase your mindful awareness of your daily intake.

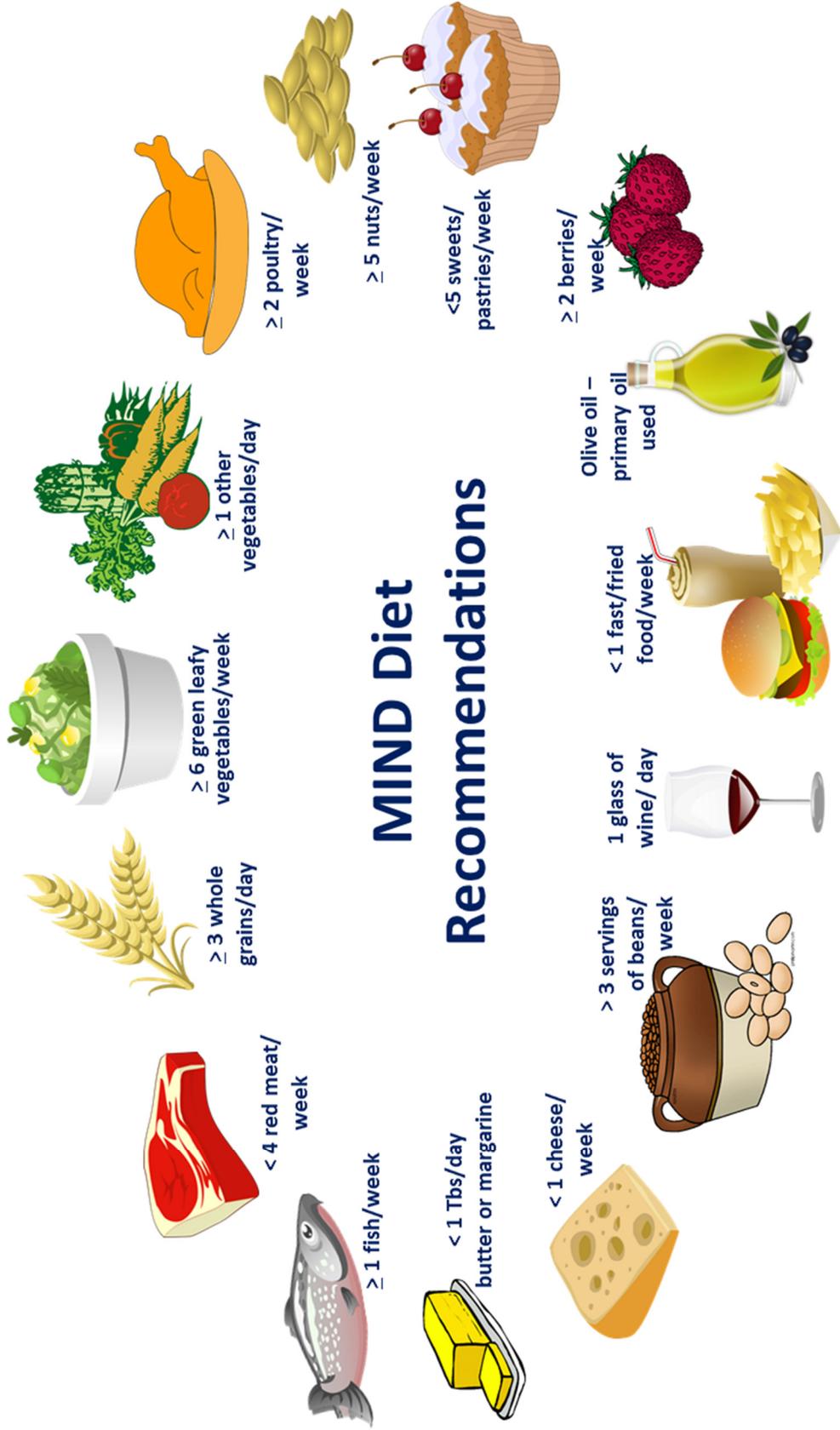
When logging your daily wellness practices using the Participant Tracking Form, the only thing you are documenting for nutrition is whether or not you logged your daily meals/snacks/beverages/alcohol using MyFitnessPal or a different food log app.

We know from data and clinical experience that logging food leads to success. So it's important to log all meals/snacks/beverages/alcohol each day. We recommend that you log throughout the day versus waiting till bedtime.

### 2. Follow the MIND Diet

The MIND diet is similar to the Mediterranean diet that promotes high consumption of vegetables and olive oil and moderate consumption of protein. Please review the chart as it outlines the MIND diet recommendations. You'll notice this is not a strict diet. Studies followed participants for multiple years and documented a 35% risk reduction for developing Alzheimer's Disease. Given the cognitive benefits and general ease of putting this plan into action, we believe the MIND diet is an excellent choice for the WILD 5 Wellness Program.

Remember, we are not asking you to log anything about the MIND diet. We are simply recommending you follow this diet during the 30-day wellness program given its pro-brain and pro-mental health benefits.



The infographic displays 14 food items with their corresponding MIND diet recommendations. The items are arranged in two columns. The left column includes: a piece of red meat, a fish, a bowl of green leafy vegetables, a bowl of other vegetables, a bunch of whole grains, a roasted chicken, a pile of nuts, a block of butter/margarine, a slice of cheese, a glass of wine, a cup of beans, and a bottle of olive oil. The right column includes: a salmon, a bowl of green leafy vegetables, a bowl of other vegetables, a bunch of whole grains, a roasted chicken, a pile of nuts, a cup of fast/fried food, a burger, a glass of wine, a cup of beans, a cup of berries, and a cupcake.

**MIND Diet Recommendations**

- < 4 red meat/week
- ≥ 1 fish/week
- < 1 Tbs/day butter or margarine
- < 1 cheese/week
- > 3 servings of beans/week
- 1 glass of wine/day
- < 1 fast/fried food/week
- Olive oil – primary oil used
- ≥ 2 poultry/week
- ≥ 5 nuts/week
- < 5 sweets/pastries/week
- ≥ 2 berries/week
- ≥ 6 green leafy vegetables/week
- ≥ 1 other vegetables/day
- ≥ 3 whole grains/day

Adapted from Morris MC, Tangney CC, Wang Y, Sacks FM, Barnes LL, Bennett DA, Aggarwal NT, MIND diet slows cognitive decline with aging, *Alzheimer's & Dementia: The Journal of the Alzheimer's Association*, 2015. doi:10.1016/j.jalz.2015.04.011

Image credits: [Clipart Hut](#) and [Wikipedia Images](#).

## MIND Diet Self-Assessment + Understanding Your Score

Place a check mark after the entry that best describes your normal eating habits.			
	0	0.5	1
Green Leafy Vegetables <sup>a</sup>	≤2 servings/wk	> 2 to <6/wk	≥6 servings/wk
Other Vegetables <sup>b</sup>	<5 serving/wk	5 - <7 wk	≥1 serving/day
Berries <sup>c</sup>	<1 serving/wk	1 /wk	≥2 servings/wk
Nuts	<1/mo	1/mo - <5/wk	≥5 servings/wk
Olive Oil	Not primary oil		Primary oil used
Butter, Margarine	>2 T/d	1-2 /d	<1 T/d
Cheese	7+ servings/wk	1-6 /wk	< 1 serving/wk
Whole Grains	<1 serving/d	1-2 /d	≥3 servings/d
Fish (not fried) <sup>d</sup>	Rarely	1-3 /mo	≥1 meals/wk
Beans <sup>e</sup>	<1 meal/wk	1-3 /wk	>3 meals/wk
Poultry (not fried) <sup>f</sup>	<1 meal/wk	1 /wk	≥2 meals/wk
Red Meat and products <sup>g</sup>	7+ meals/wk	4-6 /wk	< 4 meals/wk
Fast Fried Foods <sup>h</sup>	4+ times/wk	1-3 /wk	<1 time/wk
Pastries & Sweets <sup>i</sup>	7+ servings/wk	5 -6 /wk	<5 servings/wk
Wine	>1 glass/mo or never	1/mo – 6/wk	1 glass/d
(A) check marks x 0 =		(B) check marks x 0.5 =	(C) check marks x 1 =
(A) <u>0</u> + (B) <u>    </u> + (C) <u>    </u> = <u>    </u>			

**d = day      wk = week      mo = month**

- a kale, collards, greens; spinach; lettuce/tossed salad
- b green/red peppers, squash, cooked carrots, raw carrots, broccoli, celery, potatoes, peas or lima beans, potatoes, tomatoes, tomato sauce, string beans, beets, corn, zucchini, summer squash, eggplant, coleslaw, potato salad
- c strawberries
- d tuna sandwich, fresh fish as main dish; not-fried fish cakes, sticks, or sandwiches
- e beans, lentils, soybeans
- f chicken or turkey sandwich, chicken or turkey as main dish and never eat fried
- g cheeseburger, hamburger, beef tacos/burritos, hot dogs/sausages, roast beef or ham sandwich, salami, bologna, or other deli meat sandwich, beef (steak, roast) or lamb as main dish, pork or ham as main dish, meatballs or meatloaf
- h french fries, chicken nuggets, etc
- i biscuit/roll, pop tarts, cake, snack cakes, Twinkies, Danish, sweet rolls, pastry, donuts, cookies, brownies, pie, candy bars, other candy, ice cream, pudding, milkshakes, frappes

**Lowest Tertile  
Score 2.5 to 6.5**

Are you interested in eating to promote a healthy mind and body? Of course you are. Well, let's see what your MIND diet score really means.

**Middle Tertile  
Score 7.0 to 8.0**

The MIND diet is an excellent choice for those of us wanting to achieve peak wellness. Just to show you the power of this diet, we want to share some interesting findings related to the MIND diet and Alzheimer's Disease. Certainly not a fun topic but the data will show you the power of eating well.

**Highest Tertile  
Score 8.5 to 12.5**

**What Your Scores Mean:**

**Lowest Tertile = 1.0  
Middle Tertile = 0.75  
Highest Tertile = 0.47**

**Study Findings** *(please see the chart to the left):*

Compared to people who ate the least nutritious food (MIND score 2.5 to 6.5), people who ate moderately nutritious food (MIND score 7 to 8) their risk of developing Alzheimer's Disease was decreased by 25%.

Are you ready for even better news? People who ate truly nutritious food (MIND score 8.5 and higher), their risk of developing Alzheimer's Disease was decreased by a whopping 53%!

We are what we eat and eating well is truly in our best interest.

**Be Mindful Of What You're Eating And How Much You're Eating.  
Mindful Awareness Is At The Heart Of This Module.**

**FAQ's:**

**1. Why is logging my food on a daily basis so important to my mental wellness?**

Please remember that every single chemical and neurotransmitter in our brain is created from FOOD! Yes we are indeed what we eat! If we eat poorly, both our body and our minds suffer. One more thing to remember, excess calories lead to poor brain health. By logging your food on a daily basis using MyFitnessPal (either on an app or on your computer), you will become more aware of what you eat, what it contains, and hopefully based on this increased mindful awareness, you'll make changes that ultimately help your body, brain and mental wellness. Logging is crucial!

## 2. What is the MIND diet? And why is it being recommended for the WILD 5 Wellness Program?

The MIND diet is truly the best way we can eat to protect our brain and body. The diet is scientifically studied and is an easy to follow diet that emphasizes plant-based nutrition with limited amounts of animal proteins. This is a simple and effective way to improve your global health and wellbeing without too much effort.

## 3. Is MyFitnessPal an easy app or website to use?

Yes it is! The first WILD 5 Wellness Program taught us that participants very quickly became familiar with this app and put it to good use. The app is highly educational and motivational in nature and does a great job of increasing your overall mindful awareness of what you're consuming. When you first log in, the app (and using this program on a computer is as easy as the app) will help you set your daily calorie limits. Do your best to follow it. Plus, you can earn calories back by exercising! The app truly motivates one to eat better and exercise regularly.

## 4. Can I follow the MIND diet for a lifetime?

Absolutely! This diet should actually be followed for years to gain maximum benefit. It's rich in good fats and limits bad fats (from animal sources), plus it encourages one to eat nuts, vegetables and fruits. It's a win-win lifestyle modification that pays off very handsomely in many ways.

### Barriers To Success:

Below are a few potential barriers along with suggested solutions:

**Time** – Take the time to log your meals/snacks/beverages/alcohol throughout the day. Try your best to avoid waiting till bedtime. Keep up the practice - it will get easier as you go along.

**Low Motivation** – Acknowledge your lack of drive/motivation as a common feeling when starting the practice of keeping a food log, implementing a new meal plan and practicing mindful eating. When you don't feel up to these behavior changes, do your best to make it happen - no matter what!

### WILD 5 Wellness Words of Advice

*Perfection is not the goal! Set your goals high and do your best each and every day. Be kind to yourself as you begin making these changes. Change is never easy. If you miss a day or two, shake it off, regroup and begin again. Do not throw in the towel. Remember to track your daily nutrition practices using the Participant Tracking Form.*