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GET FIT WITH YOUR FAMILY

May is National Physical Fitness and Sports Month. As a parent, you probably know exercise is important for your children's physical development. It helps build healthy bones, muscles, and joints and reduces the risk of developing diabetes and other diseases later in life.

But did you know that physical activity also has many mental and behavioral health benefits? It's been shown to improve children's cognitive skills and concentration, boost their self-esteem, and reduce symptoms of stress, anxiety, and depression.

One of the best ways to encourage healthy behaviors in your children is by modeling them yourself. Studies have found that more than 80% of adolescents and adults are not getting enough aerobic activity, showing that children often follow in their parents' footsteps and that exercising together can benefit everyone.

You may be thinking it's hard enough just to get yourself to the gym, but Stephen Virgilio, author of "Active Start for Healthy Kids," encourages parents not to limit themselves to traditional forms of exercise. Instead, think of exercise more broadly as "leading an active lifestyle." And remember that exercise can be fun and a great way to get in more family time.

Here are five easy ways to incorporate more movement into your family's day.

- 1. Create a walking ritual.** Start walking around the neighborhood before or after dinner each night. Aim for a 20-minute stroll.
- 2. Have a dance party.** Clear some space in the living room, make a playlist with everyone's favorite tunes, and boogie down for as long as you have the energy.
- 3. Turn chores into games.** Dirt has invaded from outer space and must be eliminated. Set the scene with your kids, grab your tools, and get to work removing the enemy while having fun.
- 4. Incorporate simple exercises into screen time.** Start by making up fun names for exercises like situps or jumping jacks. Then, challenge each other to see who can do the most during your favorite show's commercial breaks.
- 5. Get fit in the great outdoors.** Cleaning up the yard, planting and maintaining a garden, or just running around outside are all great ways to get in more movement.



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HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY! THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO BE A GREAT MOM

I've spoken before about the influence my mother had on me growing up. She was a huge figure in my life and played a big part in how I ended up going into medicine in the first place — after all, she was a registered nurse before my sister and I came along. Mom had stories about working in the operating room, and I knew that was an experience I wanted as well — and I had a strange feeling I might be pretty good at it. Mom always encouraged us kids, and when she saw my interest in medicine, she answered any questions she could and did a lot of other things to put me on the right track.

When I had my own chance in the OR, I discovered the close relationships among the people who work there, almost like a family. Of course, as the circulating nurse, my mom would have been the "mother" of the operating room team in her own time in medicine!

Mom gave that up to raise us kids, and I have never wanted her to think we don't understand or appreciate the value of it. That's why I try to do things like sneak up to her place in New Jersey for a Valentine's Day surprise! When it comes to my daily schedule, I always remember how she'd drive me to high school a half-hour away from home every day. I try to spend a similar amount of time with my own kids — Mom and I had a lot of good conversations and a lot of good memories from that drive.

My wife is another model of how to be a great mom; like I did with my own mom, my kids see her split her time between family and a medical career she's passionate about. It's a good lesson for them, and while they get plenty of time with their parents, they also see

how part of a balanced and happy life is pursuing your interests and doing something you enjoy for a living! She's a phenomenal model of a working woman.

Something that impresses me every day, though, is that it never stops my wife from coming home and just being Mom to them. And that's another lesson: Wherever you are, be there 100%. When you're with family, you're with family, and that time is really important. It's something we both strive for, and I think it's something my wife learned from her mother, who worked until retirement but still managed to be around for her own family. Children learn by seeing, after all, and I'm pretty happy when I think about the models my kids have in their own family for how to balance parenthood and careers, even if those models are very different from each other.

No matter what a mom does, or how much time she has to spend at work, she can still be a great mom for her kids. That's the message I've always taken away from Mother's Day, and I think it's one our society should focus on more often. We're sold the sitcom picture of what a mom should look like, at home with the kids all the time. Well, that's one way to do it right. But not everyone can make that happen, and not every mom wants that. What matters is that you love your kids and make the most of your time together.

Even if it's only the drive to school and back.

-Dr. Mike

HOW TO LIVE TO 99

Beloved “Golden Girls” actress Betty White is still enjoying her golden years. The famed actress celebrated her 99th birthday this January. While she told People magazine that she’s “blessed with good health, so turning 99 is no different than turning 98,” she also had a few tips for folks looking to make it to their centennial birthday.

KEEP LAUGHING

“Don’t take yourself too seriously,” White says. “You can lie to others — not that I would — but you cannot lie to yourself.” White has undoubtedly provided many laughs to viewers over the years, but she’s not just playing it up for the camera. Laughter is part of what keeps her young.

BE OPTIMISTIC

White says a good sense of humor also helps her keep a good attitude and look for the positive rather than “dwelling on the downside.” Avoiding negativity also gives her energy. “It takes up too much energy being negative,” she told People magazine.

STAY BUSY

With nearly eight decades of acting under her belt, six Emmys on her shelf, and over 120 screen credits to her name, White is no stranger to hard work. As she told Parade in 2018, “I just love to work, so I’ll keep working until they stop asking.”

EXERCISE YOUR MIND

In addition to her busy work schedule, what keeps Betty White sharp? Crossword puzzles! She told Katie Couric in an interview, “I’m addicted. An admitted addict. I just can’t put ‘em down.”



FIND A CAUSE

White is a lifelong animal lover. She calls her golden retriever, Pontiac, “the star of the house.” While pet ownership itself comes with proven health benefits, White has channeled her love for animals in bigger causes. She’s been a trustee and board member of the Greater Los Angeles Zoo Association for over 40 years and has done work to help protect endangered species in the wild. Funds raised from White’s official fan club, Bet’s Pets, all go to support animal charities.

EMBRACE YOUR VICES

White told Parade she loves vodka and hot dogs “probably in that order,” which just goes to show that you don’t have to forgo your treats to live to 99.

ENTER SUMMER WITH AN ‘ABUNDANCE’ MINDSET IT’S NEVER WRONG TO SPEND MONEY ON WHAT MATTERS

It can be easy, especially after the past year, to look at the world with a “lacking” mindset. When you’re thinking like this, you’re down in the dumps. You won’t have enough money to do this, or you shouldn’t waste money on that. If everything isn’t carefully conserved, you’re doing something wrong.

Hold on a minute! I can certainly appreciate a little fiscal conservatism. But *doing something wrong*? What’s that about?

Well, it’s a symptom of the “lacking” mindset, where people are assigning moral weight to the spending of money. Usually, they don’t apply this to others, only to themselves: If they spend money, it’s a “bad” thing to do. If they don’t, then they’re being “good.” I have seen this more than once recently, and often these people feel like the only way to succeed or be happy is through the “not enough to go around” worldview.

The funny thing is that I’m blessed to know many successful and happy people, and they couldn’t be more different! Most of them look at the world through what I’d call an “abundance” mindset. They know you have to spend money sometimes, and you shouldn’t feel bad about it, especially if you can justify that expense with good, solid reasoning. Whether you’re “spending money to make money” or making a financial choice based on happiness or something less tangible, the “abundance” mindset is motivated to acquire or earn money, but it does not assign moral weight when that money has to be spent.

Our clinic is a great example. We want to provide the best possible patient experience, and that means equipment, training, and well-paid staff. It also means amenities like patient robes and slippers and the care packages we give. All of that takes money, and we spend that money without thinking twice. That’s the abundance mindset at work.



When you have that abundance way of looking at the world, you’re not going to always do the thing that costs less. Sometimes you’ll have to spend money — maybe even on yourself once in a while! As long as it’s money well spent, you should do it gladly and without remorse. More will come, after all — in this world, there’s an abundance for those who look at things the right way.

‘BY MOMS, FOR MOMS’ THE ORIGINS OF OUR ‘MOMMY MAKEOVER’

One of the most important things you can do as a physician is *listen to your patients*. And yet, I hear stories all the time — especially from women — who feel unheard by their doctors. It always makes me think of “The Mommy Makeover” book, which came from our female patients describing what services they felt they needed after having had kids and being a little unhappy with the result on their bodies.

The first lesson? It’s okay to want to look good! Most women said they felt they needed permission to want *any* work done and had anxiety when it came to talking to their husbands or kids. Ideally, it’s a conversation that goes something like, “I’ve done a lot for you guys, and now I need to do something for me.”

Because let’s face it, moms go through a lot for kids. It’s a big sacrifice, and while some women seem to bounce right back, I can tell you two things: First, that is incredibly uncommon. Second, in private, many of those women have the same doubts and concerns as every other mother does. In reality, it’s just not that easy to “bounce back” from the ordeal of childbirth, and diet and exercise are only going to do so much.

Instead of feeling anxious when you go to the pool every summer, you should be enjoying the time with your kids. It’s okay not to wonder if everyone is staring at you for the wrong reasons. It’s okay to want to look good, and the services we offer in our “Mommy Makeover” suite of options (as outlined in my book) all came from moms telling us what they needed to look their best.

Interested in a copy of my book or learning more about “The Mommy Makeover” procedure? It’s the first step toward getting what you deserve after all that hard work, and you can take it by calling me at 615.567.5716.



THIS MONTH, LET’S DRINK WINE’S ‘BASE’

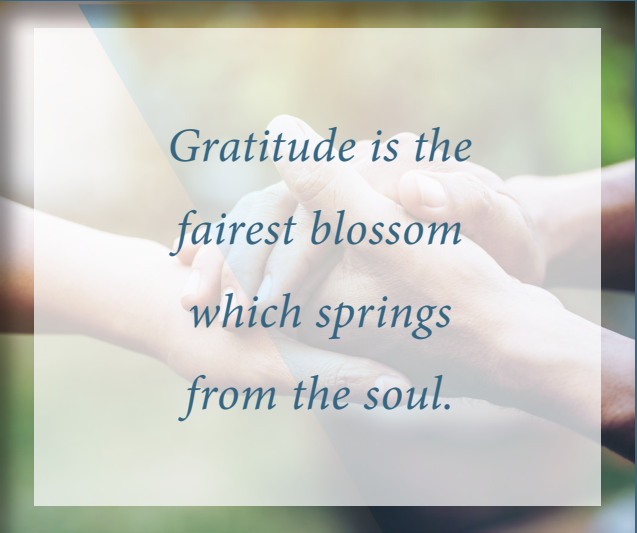
THE MANY BENEFITS OF WATER CONSUMPTION

Wines are wonderful, but there’s nothing wrong — and a whole lot right — with drinking a tall glass of water every now and then. Or, for that matter, every day!

Our cells, which are at the root of the work we do here, are two-thirds water. That means drinking water improves every cell function. It’s noticeable, too — people who stay hydrated are more likely to have fresh, buoyant skin, lending a youthful aspect to their appearance. Water flushes out toxins as well.

I have a glass of water first thing every morning, which is a great way to start getting the recommended 1/2-1 gallon of water I’ll need that day. In practical terms, that looks like at least eight 8-ounce glasses of water a day. Keep a bottle with you this month and drink when you get hungry. I challenge everyone to drink more water!

INSPIRATION



*Gratitude is the
fairest blossom
which springs
from the soul.*