



# Giving Thanks WELLNESS

LiveWELL  
November 2023



As we approach the giving season, we share tips and practices on how to connect with others and form fulfilling relationships.



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National Gratitude Month

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November is National Gratitude Month, serving as a reminder to reflect, appreciate, and be thankful for life.

Brains are naturally designed to problem solve rather than appreciate, which can cause stress to pile up, leaving you overwhelmed. However, practicing gratitude helps override this habit, allowing your brain to focus on positive things happening in your life.

Practicing gratitude does not have to take a long time, it is more about taking a few moments to pause and truly feel the appreciation. The best way to form a mindset of gratitude is to slip it in throughout the day. You can incorporate more gratitude in your life by writing it down, taking pauses to reflect throughout the day, and sharing your gratitude with others

Research shows that “practicing gratitude — 15 minutes a day, five days a week — for at least six weeks can enhance mental wellness and possibly promote a lasting change in perspective. Gratitude improves depression symptoms, anxiety, stress, sleep, diet, exercise, and reduces the risk of heart disease. “

*Quote from [UCLA Health](#)*



Human connection is very important as it has many benefits for physical and mental health. Humans are social species, wired to connect and have deep bonds where we feel seen and valued. Without deep meaningful bonds, humans can experience loneliness which is also linked to early death.

Here are five ways you can meet people and create meaningful relationships that will leave you feeling fulfilled and positive.

1. Surround yourself with people who have similar interests by joining clubs, groups, or associations.
2. Overcome your resistance to change and embrace situations outside of your comfort zone.
3. Open up to others and allow vulnerability.
4. Be present and engaged with those around you.
5. Stay in touch by maintaining regular contact.

The key to overcoming loneliness and living a more fulfilling, happier life is to challenge yourself and look for opportunities to build genuine connections with those around you.

Information derived from [BetterUp](#).



For some, the holidays can be a stressful time of year whether that be for personal or work-related reasons. Employees are often contending with shortened deadlines, meeting expectations for the end of the fiscal year, and coping with stressed-out customers, which are just a few of the reasons for their increased anxiety.

The cost of stress for employers can be quite significant resulting in decreased productivity. So how can managers help combat stress and keep both productivity and spirits up during the holiday season? Here are just a few ways:

1. Reach out and check in with your staff.
2. Rebalance workloads as deadlines shorten.
3. Incorporate wellness breaks throughout the day.

Source: [Harvard Business Review](#)



# EatWELL

A savory twist on a traditional Thanksgiving recipe

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## TWICE-BAKED SWEET POTATOES

*Recipe and photo from  
[eatingwell.com](http://eatingwell.com)*

This healthy recipe is a savory twist on the traditional brown-sugar-and-pecan-topped sweet potato casserole found on Thanksgiving tables.

### INGREDIENTS:

- 8 medium sweet potatoes (10-12 ounces each)
- 1 tablespoon canola or sunflower oil
- 1/2 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese, divided
- 1/3 cup sour cream
- 2 tablespoons pure maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly grated or ground nutmeg
- Fried baby kale leaves for garnish (see Tip)

### NUTRITION:

Calories: 113 | Carbohydrates: 19g | Protein: 3g | Fat: 3g

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Line a large rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Prick sweet potatoes in 3 to 4 spots with a fork. Rub with oil and place on the prepared baking sheet. Roast until tender, 45 minutes to 1 hour. Let stand until cool enough to handle.
3. Increase oven temperature to 450 degrees.
4. Slice each sweet potato in half horizontally and scoop the flesh into a large bowl, leaving a generous 1/4-inch border in the skins.
5. Add 1/4 cup cheese, sour cream, syrup, salt, pepper and nutmeg to the sweet potato flesh and mash with a potato masher until smooth. Divide the filling among the skins. Top each with a little of the remaining cheese.
6. Bake until the filling is bubbling, 20 to 25 minutes. Garnish with fried baby kale leaves, if desired.

### TIPS:

- To make ahead: Prepare through Step 5 and refrigerate for up to 4 hours; let stand at room temperature while the oven preheats.
- To turn baby kale into a cool garnish, make sure the leaves are dry, then fry them in hot oil until crisp, about 30 seconds. Drain on paper towels. This also works for herbs like sage or other soft greens like carrot tops.



## WELL Community

'Tis the season of giving back

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Giving Tuesday takes place in November, marking the start of the giving season. Studies show charities receive an average of 41% of their contributions in the last few weeks of the year.

To recognize Giving Tuesday, we encourage you to donate to a nonprofit, charity, or organization that resonates with you. A donation to the Greater Phoenix Chamber Foundation helps us provide job opportunities, training, and information to Phoenix's most underserved communities.

As a loyal reader, we would be grateful to receive a donation that will help us continue to serve our community. **All gifts made to the Greater Phoenix Chamber Foundation on November 28<sup>th</sup>, Midnight to Midnight will be matched up to \$5,000 by generous donors.**

[Donate Here!](#)



[www.WellnessAtoZ.org](http://www.WellnessAtoZ.org)  
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