

5-DAY WELLNESS KICKSTART

2024



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ABOUT STEPHANIE



Stephanie C. Hodges, Health & Wellness Coach

Thanks for downloading this 5-Day Wellness Kickstart workbook.

It's easy to read and listen to health and wellness advice, and more difficult to apply it...but this workbook is designed to help you do just that.

Start with one small step a day, consistency is your greatest key to success — even tiny steps will add up over time.

Visit www.stephaniechodges.com to learn more about coaching and view blogs and resources.

I'm not "perfect" when it comes to health and wellness. People are often surprised to see me eating a cookie or having a drink. But the key is making healthy choices over time.

Well-being is about your body, soul, and spirit.

I've worked in gyms, campus recreation, and corporate wellness. I also have a Master's in Nutrition & Exercise Science and I'm a Duke-trained Health & Well-being coach.

One-size programs don't work. We're all unique and need to create a plan that works with our pace and lifestyle.

Be honest with the following exercises.

READY TO KICKSTART YOUR GOALS?



Sometimes we need a little kickstart to get going in the right direction – and that's exactly what this 5-day email series and workbook is designed to help you with!

Your health and wellness are top priority in life. Without optimal health, everything else suffers.

Here are 4 big ideas before we dive in.

1. All parts of your health and well-being are connected and influence each other; this includes your body, soul, and spirit.
2. It's not just about what you do, it's how you do it! Your attitude and mindset are a priority. Most people try to force change from the outside in, but you can't sustain behavior change and healthy habits unless you work from the inside out.
3. Wellness isn't just about achieving a goal, it's about thriving every day.
4. The cumulative effect of tiny consistent steps is exponential long-term.

Over the next 5 days, you'll receive practical advice with powerful strategies and mindset shifts to help you develop healthy habits and make substantial progress toward your goals.

Take 15 minutes each day to think, reflect, and work through the exercises and journal on the following pages!



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OVERVIEW



01

MINDFUL AWARENESS

Mindful awareness, or mindfulness, simply means focusing on the present moment and being aware of what is happening within you and around you.



02

ENVIRONMENT

Your environment can derail or strengthen all of your hard work. Let's look at how to create an environment that supports healthy changes.



03

NUTRITION & EATING HABITS

What you eat and how you eat impacts your energy, health, and more. Making peace with food and nourishing your body are crucial for wellness.



04

SLEEP & REST

Quality sleep is essential for overall well-being, strong immunity, and improved mental health. Restful activities not only help your body recover, but they help your soul recharge.



05

DEFINING HOLISTIC HEALTH

Only you can define what health and wellness mean for your life. A holistic approach to health and well-being is an all-encompassing view that takes into account physical, mental, spiritual, emotional, and social health.



DAY 1

MINDFUL AWARENESS

Today we're going to talk about the most foundational yet often neglected key to making lasting health changes: MINDFUL AWARENESS.

Why are healthy habits so difficult to maintain long-term? Part of the issue is that most of our days are spent on autopilot as we act out of habit, react to our environment, and multitask.

And it's nearly impossible to create new healthy habits when you're in auto/reactive mode! A crucial first step to transforming your health is paying attention to what you're doing and why you're doing it.

DEFINITION

Mindful awareness, or mindfulness, simply means focusing on the present moment and being aware of what is happening within you and around you. It's about paying attention to your thoughts, emotions, body sensations, and environment – without judgment.

ROADBLOCKS

Here are the top ways people get stuck:

- (1) They don't realize they have the power to change their internal dialogue and beliefs
- (2) They don't know how to do so
- (3) They don't invest the time in working to build new mindsets and habits

HEALTHY PRACTICE IDEAS

The good news is, mindful awareness isn't about adding more activity to your plate. By definition, practicing mindfulness is simply awareness, not judgment.

As you find yourself feeling agitated and stressed – maybe even reaching for food, cigarettes, alcohol, or scrolling your phone – you can bring attention and awareness in three simple steps.

Simple Mindfulness Steps

- Pause: simply stop and take a break; pause and breathe.
- Identify: observe what you're doing, how you're feeling, and what's happening around you.
- Understand: think about why you're reacting or acting in the way you are; what led up to this moment?

Other Mindfulness Ideas:

- Deep breathing
- Meditation
- Progressive relaxation
- Journaling
- Prayer
- Walking



DAY 1

MINDFUL AWARENESS

TAKE A FEW QUIET MINUTES TO BREATHE, FOCUS, AND REFLECT ON THIS TOPIC.

ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THE CONCEPT OF MINDFUL AWARENESS?

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NOT VERY

EXTREMELY

HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU ABOUT APPLYING MINDFUL AWARENESS?

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ARE YOU INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT THIS TOPIC?

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NOT VERY

EXTREMELY

WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST ROADBLOCK IN THIS AREA?

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WHAT STEP WILL YOU TAKE TODAY TO IMPLEMENT MINDFUL AWARENESS?

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DAY 2

ENVIRONMENT

Here's the truth: discipline, self-control, and willpower are all necessary, but they're only a piece of the puzzle.

Research has shown time and again that willpower is a limited resource (it depletes as time goes on, and is renewed after a break). Also, discipline and willpower are heavily influenced by social pressures and your environment.

Your environment can derail or strengthen all of your hard work. So, as we kickstart this health and wellness journey, let's look at how to create an environment that supports healthy changes.

DEFINITION

Your environment includes everything around you: your home, workspace, and people you interact with. It's the place where habits are formed and an external reflection of our inner states. Having a healthy environment also means safety and basic well-living, such as having good air quality, access to green space, healthy meals, a good sleep environment, etc.

ROADBLOCKS

Your physical and social environments and schedule can all pose challenges. Do you live near lots of fast food options, but far away from a gym or park? Do your co-workers constantly order in food and keep bowls of candy on their desks? Think about the triggers and temptations surrounding you.

HEALTHY PRACTICE IDEAS

Walk through a typical day and do a simple inventory of your environment.

When are you falling into healthy and unhealthy patterns? For each scenario think about:

- Where you are and what's around you
- Who you are with
- What is it about the environment that triggers you?

Other Ideas to Create a Healthy Environment:

- Clean out your pantry
- Drive a different route to or from work
- Prepare healthy meals and snacks and store them in your fridge
- Remove your TV, phone, and other electronics from the bedroom
- Meet friends for a walk instead of Happy Hour



DAY 2

ENVIRONMENT

TAKE A FEW QUIET MINUTES TO BREATHE, FOCUS, AND REFLECT ON THIS TOPIC.

ARE YOU AWARE OF HOW YOUR ENVIRONMENT IS INFLUENCING YOUR HEALTH AND WELLNESS HABITS?

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NOT VERY

EXTREMELY

HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU ABOUT CREATING A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT TO SUPPORT WELLNESS HABITS?

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ARE YOU INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT THIS TOPIC?

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NOT VERY

EXTREMELY

WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST ROADBLOCK IN THIS AREA?

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WHAT STEP WILL YOU TAKE TODAY TO CREATE A HEALTHIER ENVIRONMENT?

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DAY 3

NUTRITION & EATING

Nutrition and healthy eating habits aren't just about losing weight; eating nutritious foods helps you feel energized, sleep well, and have a positive body image. Conversely, eating junk food will make you feel sick, sluggish, and lead to a host of secondary health issues.

Enjoying a fantastic meal CAN and SHOULD be a source of great joy! Food is a big part of celebrations, family gatherings, and social environments.

We need to understand nutrition, but also cultivate healthy eating habits and make peace in our relationship with food. Let's take a look at how you can create healthy eating habits that work for you.

DEFINITION

Nutrition is the science of understanding the nutrients in food and how they affect our bodies. Eating habits are the behaviors and thoughts associated with meals, such as what we eat, when we eat, and where we eat.

ROADBLOCKS

The primary roadblocks to healthy eating could be summarized this way:

- Not having time to prepare to eat well
- Overeating
- Confusion about what to eat because of all the conflicting advice
- Emotional distress and discouragement due to a history of unsuccessful dieting, etc.

HEALTHY PRACTICE IDEAS

Don't be underwhelmed by the following advice; you've heard it before because it works if you apply it!

1. **Practice mindful eating:** slow down and focus solely on your food when you're eating; this also helps you recognize when you are full and avoid overeating.
2. **Eat primarily whole plant-based foods:** if it comes in a box or package, think twice. Choose whole grains, vegetables, fruits, beans, legumes, nuts and seeds that come straight from the ground.
3. **Drink more water:** water helps you stay hydrated; avoid sugary beverages like soda and juice, which can add empty calories to your diet. Also, limit your intake of caffeine, energy drinks, and alcohol to reduce anxiety, sleep better, and avoid empty calories.
4. **Consume lean protein at every meal:** protein helps build and maintain lean muscle mass and can help you feel full for a longer period of time. Great sources of lean protein include poultry, fish, eggs, lentils, legumes, nuts and seeds. Plant-based protein is encouraged!
5. **Enjoy your food:** learn to love nutritious foods, adding herbs and spices as needed. Also, avoid labeling foods as good or bad. Everything can be enjoyed in the right amount.



DAY 3

NUTRITION & EATING

TAKE A FEW QUIET MINUTES TO BREATHE, FOCUS, AND REFLECT ON THIS TOPIC.

HOW HEALTHY DO YOU THINK YOUR CURRENT NUTRITION AND EATING HABITS ARE?

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NOT VERY

EXTREMELY

HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU ABOUT CREATING HEALTHY NUTRITION AND EATING HABITS?

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NOT VERY

EXTREMELY

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT THIS TOPIC?

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NOT VERY

EXTREMELY

WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST ROADBLOCK IN THIS AREA?

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WHAT STEP WILL YOU TAKE TODAY TO CREATE EAT MORE NUTRITIOUS FOODS AND CREATE HEALTHIER EATING HABITS?

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DAY 4

SLEEP & REST

One of the top predictors of your ability to stick to an exercise and healthy eating plan is being well-rested!

Think about it...when you're fatigued and lacking energy, how likely are you to collapse on the couch instead of going to the gym? Or grab the easiest meal option on the drive home?

Plus, quality sleep is essential for overall wellbeing, strong immunity, and improved mental health. Not only does it help your body recover, but it helps your soul recharge. Don't underestimate the power of a good night's sleep, and engaging in restful, refreshing activities while you're awake.

DEFINITION

According to experts, you need 7-9 hours of sleep per night. Quality sleep includes:

- Falling asleep and staying asleep
- Going to bed and waking up at the same time each day
- Feeling rested when you wake up in the morning
- Not having to use an alarm clock to wake up on time

ROADBLOCKS

According to the National Institutes of Health, over 40 million Americans have a sleep disorder. In the case of a serious sleep disorder, help from a medical professional is necessary.

For those who struggle with occasional sleeplessness, some of the main roadblocks to getting quality sleep are stress, technology, and poor sleep hygiene habits.

HEALTHY PRACTICE IDEAS

Here are a few tips to help you get the right quality and quantity (7-9 hours per night for adults) of sleep:

- Set a regular sleep schedule; go to bed and wake up at the same time
- Avoid screens 30 minutes to 2 hours before bed
- Sleep in a cool, dark room with minimal distractions
- Get bright light during the day and keep your environment dark at night, using light to help set your body clock
- Exercise regularly (avoid vigorous exercise close to bedtime)
- Go to bed when you're sleepy, and if you can't fall asleep within 20 minutes get up and go to another room for a relaxing (non-electronic) activity
- Find healthy ways to relieve stress before bed like journaling, meditation, taking a bath, or another soothing nighttime routine
- Cut down on caffeine and alcohol consumption before bedtime; some people may need to avoid it entirely or past a certain point in the day

Other Ideas for REST:

Brainstorm ways to relax, recharge, and refuel your soul. This might include hobbies, fun activities, self-care, and time alone or in social settings.



DAY 4

SLEEP & REST

TAKE A FEW QUIET MINUTES TO BREATHE, FOCUS, AND REFLECT ON THIS TOPIC.

DO YOU FEEL RESTED AND REFRESHED MOST DAYS OF THE WEEK?

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NOT VERY

EXTREMELY

HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU ABOUT CREATING HEALTHY SLEEP AND REST HABITS?

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NOT VERY

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ARE YOU INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT THIS TOPIC?

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NOT VERY

EXTREMELY

WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST ROADBLOCK IN THIS AREA?

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WHAT STEP WILL YOU TAKE TODAY TO FOSTER HEALTHIER SLEEP HABITS OR MAKE TIME FOR RESTFUL ACTIVITIES?

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DAY 5

DEFINING HOLISTIC HEALTH

Let's wrap up this series with the big picture: what does holistic health and wellness actually mean? As we've talked about the past five days, it's more than diet and exercise. Also, your end goal isn't to complete a long wellness or self-care checklist – it's to be a vibrant, healthy, happy person!

The Duke Wheel of Health includes mindful awareness, community, physical environment, nutrition and lifestyle, mental & emotional well-being, fulfillment & purpose, physical activity & fitness, and sleep & rest. (This is the model we use in our Health & Wellness Coaching.)

Take a few minutes to dream about your ideal state of health and well-being. Also, question your current definitions and goals, and see if they are really what you want deep down.

DEFINITION

Only you can define what health and wellness mean for your life. A holistic approach to health and well-being is an all-encompassing view that takes into account physical, mental, spiritual, emotional, and social health.

ROADBLOCKS

When it comes to fitness and wellness, we're heavily influenced by society and our family of origin. Achieving true well-being often requires breaking out of stereotypes and expectations! Diet culture, marketing, and painful experiences and memories can build a prison of poor self-esteem, disappointment, and fear blocking your way to wellness that works.

HEALTHY PRACTICE IDEAS

Here are some basic steps to breaking free from a toxic mindset about dieting, exercising, and controlling your health. Although the steps are simple, they are not easy. You'll need to be willing to invest time, face some fears, and shift long-held (false and unnecessary) beliefs.

1. **Recognize your current thoughts and expectations about health and fitness.** Get vigilant about pausing when "I should" thoughts pop into your head. Evaluate whether these are driven by good motives, or whether they are rooted in guilt, people-pleasing, and unrealistic expectations.
2. **Define your why.** What does true health mean to you? How do you want to feel in your body? Why is this important, and what are the benefits of cultivating whole-body wellness?
3. **Focus on nourishing self-care activities and routines.** This could take the form of evening walks, journaling, breathing exercises, or other calming practices.
4. **Embrace the tension of change.** Change can be exciting, but also uncomfortable and scary. *Something can be difficult or awkward and still be the right thing to do.* Give yourself grace and compassion as you change your mindset, thoughts, and habits.
5. **Win or learn.** You won't get it all right the first time. Give yourself room to experiment, iterate, learn, and grow. Maybe you try something that works and it's a win! Maybe it doesn't...but it's not a failure; you can take something from the experience and grow.



DAY 5

DEFINING HOLISTIC HEALTH

TAKE A FEW QUIET MINUTES TO BREATHE, FOCUS, AND REFLECT ON THIS TOPIC.

HOW CLEAR IS YOUR PERSONAL DEFINITION OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE HEALTHY AND WELL?

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NOT VERY

EXTREMELY

HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU ABOUT ACHIEVING HOLISTIC HEALTH?

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ARE YOU INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT THIS TOPIC?

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EXTREMELY

WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST ROADBLOCK IN THIS AREA?

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WHAT STEP WILL YOU TAKE TODAY TO DEVELOP (AND LIVE) YOUR PERSONAL DEFINITION OF HOLISTIC HEALTH?

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YOU DID IT CONGRATS!



Take a deep breath and give yourself a big pat on the back!

Completing this 5-day Wellness Kickstart is only the beginning. As we said in the intro, consistency is your secret to success.

These past five days were packed with a LOT of information. In fact, too much to digest and implement in just a week.

So now, think about the area that's resonating the most and go back to it for an entire week. Then, move on to another. You can print copies of the Weekly Progress sheet on the last page to keep you on track.

What's Next?

Support and accountability can make all the difference in turning your kickstart into a breakthrough.

I hope you'll consider Health & Wellness Coaching to help you reach your ultimate goals and thrive every day.

Book a Discovery Call and learn more about how coaching can help you at

www.stephaniechodges.com

KICKSTART

WEEKLY PROGRESS

CONTINUE YOUR WELLNESS JOURNEY WITH A WEEKLY CHECK-IN.

I'M GRATEFUL FOR

MY BIGGEST WINS THIS WEEK

MY WELLNESS GOAL THIS WEEK

HABITS

01

02

03

04

05

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