

A man and a woman are shown from the chest up, laughing heartily. The woman, on the left, has her mouth wide open in a laugh. The man, on the right, wears glasses and has a beard, also laughing with his mouth open. They are both holding a large metal bowl filled with popcorn. The background is a blurred indoor setting.

Wellness @ Work NOVEMBER 2025

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A circular icon containing a white megaphone symbol with sound waves, set against a blue background.

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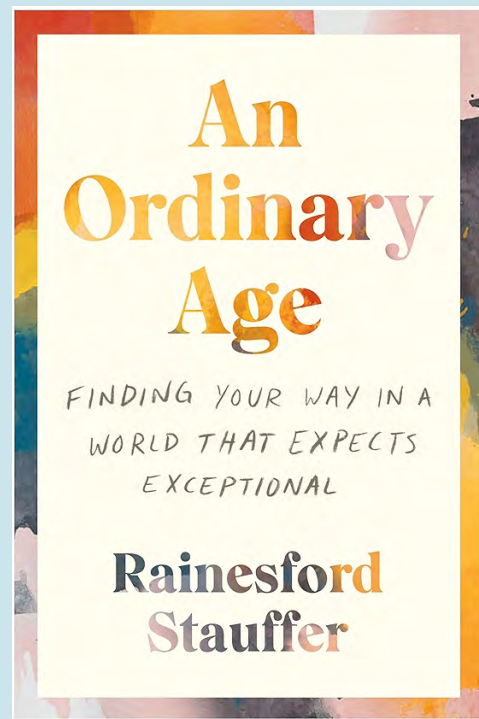
Preventing Burnout Starts with Balance

Burnout doesn't happen overnight – it builds gradually when stress outpaces rest and meaning. To prevent burnout, prioritize balance. Start by setting clear boundaries between work and personal time. Regular breaks, even short ones, can restore energy and focus. Nourish your body with sleep, movement, hydration, and healthy food – these basics support both physical and mental resilience.

Make space for activities that bring joy and purpose – whether it's creative hobbies, volunteering or simply spending time with loved ones. Don't wait until you're exhausted to ask for help; seek support early from trusted friends, mentors or professionals.

Practicing mindfulness or gratitude daily helps shift focus from pressure to presence. Finally, check in with yourself regularly. Are your responsibilities aligned with your values? Is your pace sustainable?

Preventing burnout is not about doing less – it's about doing what matters most, with intention and care. Your well-being isn't a luxury – it's a foundation for everything else.



Book Club

***An Ordinary Age: Finding Your Way In a World That Expects Exceptional* by Rainesford Stauffer**

Rainesford Stauffer's *An Ordinary Age* explores how young adults today face unimaginable pressure to live "extraordinary" lives. Through interviews, expert insights and personal stories, she examines how structural forces – student debt, unpaid internships, wage stagnation, social media, perfectionism and loneliness – create the sense that nothing we do is ever enough. Instead, Stauffer argues fulfillment emerges not from exceptional achievements but from ordinary human connection: finding community, caring for ourselves on our own terms and embracing certainty in identity beyond grades, filters and resumes. Her call is simple: we are enough – right now.

Discussion questions

- How do societal pressures to be "exceptional" impact the mental health and self-worth of young adults, especially during transitional periods like college or early careers?
- Stauffer emphasizes the value of ordinary moments and human connection. How can we reframe our goals to prioritize fulfillment over achievement?
- What role do institutions – like schools, workplaces, or social media – play in shaping unrealistic expectations, and how might they be reimagined to support a more balanced, authentic life?

Ask the Expert:

How can I get my kids off the couch and get them up and moving?

Getting kids off the couch and moving can be fun and rewarding! Start by making physical activity a game – try family dance-offs, scavenger hunts or bike rides. Limit screen time and set clear, consistent rules around it. Encourage outdoor play by providing easy access to sports equipment or nature walks. Be a role model by staying active yourself and inviting kids to join. Schedule active breaks during the day, like stretching or jumping jacks. Praise their efforts to build confidence and motivation. Most importantly, keep activities enjoyable and varied to spark their natural curiosity and energy.



What are Probiotics?

Probiotics are live, beneficial bacteria that support a healthy balance in the gut microbiome. Found naturally in fermented foods like yogurt, kefir and sauerkraut, they help improve digestion, boost immunity and may reduce inflammation. By replenishing good bacteria, probiotics can aid in preventing digestive issues such as diarrhea, irritable bowel syndrome and some infections. They also influence mental health through the gut-brain axis, potentially improving mood and cognitive function. While generally safe, it's important to choose strains supported by research and consult a health care provider, especially for those with weakened immune systems or serious health conditions.



Exercise is Medicine (EIM)

Exercise is Medicine (EIM) is a 12-week program that empowers you to make exercise a habit and gives you the tools you need to decrease your health risks. It's ONLY offered virtually at this time. To qualify, you must be 18 years old or older.

EIM Price Guide

Virtual EIM program over Webex, which includes a fitness box: \$99
Non-Sanford Health Plan member virtual EIM program: \$199

A one-time fee unlocks:

- Group fitness classes
- Access to a personal trainer
- A fitness box will be mailed to your home, which includes:
 - EIM workbook
 - Recipe book
 - Pilates ball
 - Mini loop resistance band
 - Handled resistance band
 - Yoga mat

Virtual Class Options

Virtual EIM offers four weekly live virtual classes. Participants are encouraged to attend 3 live classes every week. New cohorts start in December.

- Afternoon Workout Session: Mon. and Wed. 6 to 7 p.m.
- Morning Workout Session: Tues. and Thurs. 5:30 to 6:30 a.m.
- Workbook Overview: Fri. 12:15 to 12:45 p.m.

Learn more and register at sanfordhealthplan.com/exercise-is-medicine.

Oral Health

Good oral health is essential to overall well-being. The mouth is the gateway to the body, connecting to both the respiratory and digestive tracts. Poor oral hygiene can allow harmful bacteria to grow, leading to tooth decay, gum disease and other health problems.

Ways to protect your oral health:

- **Brush twice daily with fluoride toothpaste** to strengthen enamel and remove plaque
- **Floss every day** to clean between teeth where brushing alone misses – reaching up to 40% more surfaces
- **Use mouthwash** in addition to brushing and flossing to help keep teeth and gums healthy
- **Choose a healthy diet** and limit sugary drinks and snacks, which break down enamel and cause decay
- **Replace your toothbrush every 3 months** (or sooner if bristles are frayed)
- **Chew sugar-free gum** to stimulate saliva, help wash away plaque and keep your mouth hydrated
- **Avoid tobacco use**, which increases the risk of gum disease, tooth loss and oral cancer
- **See your dentist regularly** for professional cleanings and early detection of any concerns

Ground Beef Cottage Cheese Bowl

Ingredients for the sweet potatoes:

2 medium sweet potatoes
cut into 1/2-inch cubes
1 ½ tbsp olive oil
½ tsp kosher salt
¼ tsp ground black pepper

Ingredients for serving:

¾ cup cottage cheese
Hot honey
Avocado
Red pepper flakes

Ingredients for the beef:

1 tbsp olive oil
1 pound lean ground beef
1 red onion diced
1 tbsp tomato paste
1 tbsp chili powder
1 tsp ground cumin
½ tsp garlic powder
½ tsp kosher salt
¼ tsp ground black pepper

Instructions:

Roast or air fry the sweet potatoes: If roasting in the oven, preheat to 400°F (if using an air fryer, no need to preheat). In a medium bowl, toss the sweet potatoes with the oil, salt and pepper. Transfer to the air fryer basket or spread onto a rimmed baking sheet in an even layer. Air fry at 400°F for 12 min., shaking the basket a few times throughout, until the potatoes are tender and darkening at the edges (or roast in the oven for 15 to 20 min., flipping halfway through). **Brown the beef:** Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the oil. Once the oil is hot, add the beef, onion, tomato paste, chili powder, cumin, garlic powder, salt and black pepper. Cook, using a sturdy wooden spoon or heatproof spatula to break up the beef. Continue browning until the beef is cooked through, about 7 minutes. **Assemble the bowls:** Make a bed of sweet potatoes on your plate. Top with a scoop of the beef, a generous scoop of cottage cheese, sliced avocado, a big drizzle of hot honey and sprinkle of red pepper flakes. Enjoy immediately. **To store:** Refrigerate the ground beef and sweet potatoes in one container and the rest of the components in a separate container. The beef and potatoes will last up to 3 days in the refrigerator. One serving is one bowl with 1/3 cup of cottage cheese.

Nutrition Facts: Serves 3 | Calories per serving: 559 | Protein: 46g
Sugar: 12g | Carbohydrates: 47g | Fiber: 8g | Fat: 21g | Saturated Fat: 6g
Polyunsaturated Fat: 2g | Monounsaturated Fat: 12g | Iron 6mg



Monthly Observances

American Diabetes

COPD Awareness

Lung Cancer Awareness

National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness

National Pancreatic Cancer Awareness

Stomach Cancer Awareness

Great American Smokeout November 21

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ONLINE ACCOUNT

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