

Dakota Wellness Program

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Wellness team members for
our monthly 15-minute
wellness webinar.

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From Critic to Caretaker: The Case for Self-Compassion

How often do you speak to yourself in ways you'd never speak to a friend? Many of us wake up already judging ourselves—our appearance, our productivity, our worth. But what if we flipped that?

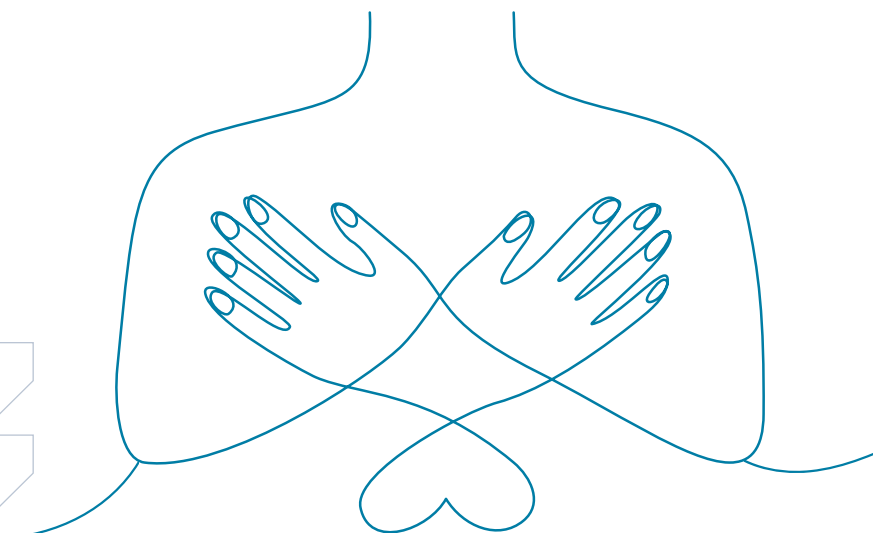
Self-compassion means treating yourself with the same kindness and grace you'd offer someone you love. It's not about avoiding responsibility; it's about recognizing that being human means being imperfect. Research shows that people who practice self-compassion have lower anxiety, greater resilience, and even healthier habits—not because they're pressured, but because they feel supported.

Next time your inner critic chimes in, pause. Ask: Would I say this to a friend? Then shift the tone: "I'm doing the best I can right now—and that's enough."

Choosing self-compassion isn't weakness. It's strength. It's the foundation for better mental health, deeper relationships, and true well-being.

You deserve that kind of care—especially from yourself.

With a little dedication, you can transform your life into a more meaningful and happier one.



Book Club

The High 5 Habit **by Mel Robbins**

In *The High 5 Habit*, Mel Robbins introduces a simple but powerful daily practice: giving yourself a high five in the mirror each morning. This small gesture shifts your mindset from self-criticism to self-celebration. Robbins explains the science behind why it works—linking it to habit formation, neuroplasticity, and emotional reinforcement. By combining eye contact, physical movement, and a positive trigger, the high five builds self-trust and boosts motivation. The book emphasizes that real change starts with how you treat yourself, and that encouragement shouldn't be reserved only for others. With relatable stories and practical tools, Robbins helps readers silence their inner critic and build a healthier, more empowering relationship with themselves—starting with just one high five a day.

Discussion questions

- What limiting beliefs or inner criticism do you notice most often in yourself?
- How did you feel when trying the High 5 Habit for the first time?
- What other small daily actions could reinforce self-worth?

Ask the Expert: **Do I really have to warm up and cool down when I exercise?**

Yes, warming up and cooling down are important parts of any workout. Warming up gradually increases your heart rate and blood flow to muscles, which helps prevent injury and improves performance. It also prepares your body mentally and physically for the exercise ahead. Cooling down, on the other hand, helps your heart rate and breathing return to normal slowly, reducing dizziness or fainting. It also aids in muscle recovery and reduces soreness by helping remove lactic acid. Skipping either can increase your risk of injury or discomfort, so it's best to include both in your routine.



Wellness on the Go: Staying Healthy While You Travel

Staying healthy during travel—whether for work or pleasure—means prioritizing your well-being amidst changing routines. Stay hydrated, especially on flights, and aim for balanced meals over convenience snacks. Incorporate movement: stretch on planes, walk between meetings, or explore on foot. Prioritize sleep by maintaining a regular bedtime and using tools like eye masks or white noise. Manage stress with mindfulness practices like deep breathing or journaling. Limit alcohol and caffeine, which can disrupt rest and energy levels. Finally, listen to your body—rest when needed, and stay present to enjoy the experience while supporting your overall wellness, engagement and connection with nature.



Exercise is Medicine:

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

- Sanford Health Plan member virtual EIM program: \$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

Learn more and register at:

sanfordhealthplan.com/exercise-is-medicine

Preventive Health

Dehydration

Summer is a season when many of us spend a lot of time outdoors in the heat and sun. While this has many benefits for our health and well-being, it can also put us at risk of becoming dehydrated if we aren't taking proper care to hydrate. Dehydration can occur when we don't drink enough water or when we lose water rapidly through sweating. When we experience thirst, our body sends the message that we aren't properly hydrated. The good news is that we can prevent dehydration!

Here are a few ideas:

- Drink water before you experience thirst, throughout the day and with meals
- Monitor your urine output. It should be pale or straw-colored. If it is darker than that, you need to drink more water.
- Keep a water bottle with you and keep refilling it
- Keep your water interesting by adding a slice of lemon, lime, or cucumber
- Avoid alcohol, soda, and other caffeinated beverages which can cause dehydration
- Eat foods like fruits and vegetables that have a high-water content

Berry Nourish Bowl

Total Time: 20 minutes | Servings: 4

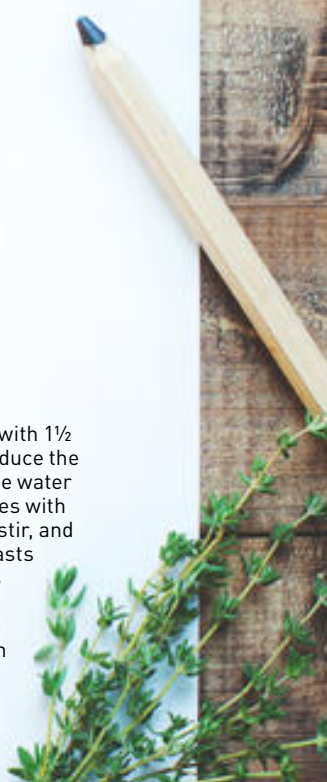
Blueberries bring additional nutrition and color to this already superfood packed Berry Nourish Bowl. Chickpeas and chicken pack this recipe with protein and pumpkin seeds, add-in some healthy fats.

Ingredients:

2 sweet potatoes, diced
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon curry powder
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1/3 cup toasted and salted pumpkin seeds
1 cup red quinoa
1 1/2 cup water or chicken broth
1/3 cup chopped parsley
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 cup canned chickpeas, drained and rinsed
1/2 tablespoon kosher salt
2 avocados, cut in half, peel, and slice
(drizzle with olive oil and salt and pepper)
1 cup blueberries
2 chicken breasts
salt and pepper, to taste

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Rinse quinoa and add to a small pot with 1 1/2 cups of water or chicken broth. Bring the quinoa to a boil, cover, reduce the heat to medium low and simmer for 16-18 minutes or until all of the water is absorbed and the quinoa is fluffy. Meanwhile, toss sweet potatoes with olive oil, curry powder, and salt. Roast in the oven for 15 minutes, stir, and then for 10 minutes more or until tender. Season both chicken breasts generously with salt and pepper. Grill chicken breast on both sides for 2-3 minutes each. Add the chicken to a sheet tray and finish in the oven for 10 minutes or until slightly firm. Let rest for 5 minutes before slicing. Once the quinoa is finished, toss with parsley, lemon juice, chickpeas, and salt. Divide the quinoa among the bowls and top with sliced avocado, sliced chicken, pumpkin seeds, sweet potato and blueberries.



Monthly Observances

Healthy Vision

Juvenile Arthritis Awareness

UV Safety

Park and Recreation

QUICK LINKS

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ONLINE ACCOUNT

sanfordhealthplan.com/memberlogin

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