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Inside

Preparing for the Seasons and Embracing the Change	pg. 1
Clear Your Mind in a Different Way	pg. 2
Building a Blanket Fort 101	pg. 2
Paleo Gravy	pg. 3
How to Eat Healthy During the Holidays	pg. 3
Reiki	pg.4

SEASONS OF CHANGE

And Their Powerful Reminders

Fall is a big change of the seasons. For us in Chicago, it marks the end of a warm summer and the beginning of colder temperatures. We go from 90 to 60 degrees practically overnight, but I don't mind. I like watching the leaves change and the breezes blowing through the trees. I like to wear light vests, long-sleeve shirts, and a light jacket. I think it's a great time of the year.

Fall often reminds me to embrace change. We welcome the color on leaves, we brace for the wind as it blows those leaves to the ground, and we prepare for a harsh, cold winter. Change isn't anything new to us, especially this year. As parents to a 4-year-old and 1-year-old, my husband and I have had to monitor how much we let this change impact our daughters. Of course, Maya has no idea what's happening, but Sonya asks a lot of questions.

"Why is that park closed?"

"Is Grandma sick? Are you sick? Is Maya sick?"

"Why is that man wearing a spacesuit?" (Note: It was a hazmat suit.)

Sometimes, all I can do is shrug. I have no idea why someone felt the need to wear an entire PPE outfit to the grocery store, but as they learn about their world, kids absorb so much. We try to stimulate that learning capacity in her for positive growth during this time of strange rules and changing regulations. Just before writing this cover article, we had been outside collecting leaves, and then we pasted them onto paper for their grandmother. It was an opportunity for us to get out of the house safely while still learning about our world. (Plus, Grandma will love the craft.)

The biggest challenge has been explaining why we wear our masks everywhere we go. We tried to explain that we were trying to not get anyone sick, but that just brought about a litany of questions about everyone in Sonya's life and if they were sick. To Sonya, if no one in her life is sick, why do we have to wear the masks? It wasn't easy to explain this to a 4-year-old, but it may have taught her just how big the world really is.

Embracing change seems to be a central theme of this year. My sister has quickly learned that. Just over a year ago, she and her husband quit their jobs and began traveling the world! It was a dream come true for each of them, but it quickly turned into a nightmare when COVID-19 began and they had to quarantine in Argentina for an unforeseeable future. Thankfully, they were able to evacuate to Chicago, and we've loved having them in town for the whole summer, something we never had in the recent past. (They previously lived in California.) I'm very close with my sister, and while I'm sad to see their hiatus from work cut short, I'm grateful for this time together.

Of course, this pandemic has also changed the way we interact with our parents, whom we avoid hugging and kissing for fear of making them sick. We haven't been able to see my brother in person for the very same reason. (He and his family live in Florida.)

And yet, we're still very lucky. What a time for this pandemic to occur! We video chat with my brother on a regular basis, and I chat with my mom about the girls nearly every day. We can see and hear one another despite the distance. It's the magic of modern technology, a tremendous gift during an otherwise uncertain time.

As we make our way through another season, I want to encourage you to think about the next. Change happens so rapidly, as any Midwesterner can tell you. Just weeks ago we were leaving the house in T-shirts, flip-flops, and masks, and now we have to spend time bundling up before heading out the door. Each season brings about new changes and new challenges, and as the days get shorter, finding that balance to achieve what we need to do can be difficult. (By the way, I was recently a guest on a podcast about balance! Let me know if you'd like to give it a listen.)

This fall, as you embrace the change of the leaves and the bitter cold to come, think about what you can do to prepare for the next change. As they say, you plant your seeds in the spring, watch them grow in the summer, harvest the bounty in the fall, and contemplate in the winter. We're getting closer to that time of contemplation.

Each day, with every layer we add to our bodies before heading outside, we're given a powerful reminder of what we can do to make 2021 better than this year.

Happy Thanksgiving to you and your family.

-Dr. Bernice Teplitzky

REIKI

Reiki is a form of alternative therapy, also known as energy healing. It emerged in Japan almost 200 years ago and involves the transfer of universal energy from the practitioner to their patient. It has been shown to improve overall well-being by stimulating deep relaxation and relieving emotional stress, pain, and fatigue. In the U.S. alone, over 1.2 million adults have tried Reiki at least once in their life to manage their symptoms.

Some hospitals now offer Reiki to their patients as a supplemental form of treatment and offer it to patients in all types of situations, such as being treated for cancer, having a herniated disk, or after a caesarean delivery, to name just a few. A study performed in 2015 found that when Reiki was used in addition to regular medical care, the patients reported less pain, anxiety, and fatigue and had a quicker recovery.

At Wrigleyville Dental, we are always looking for ways to increase comfort and decrease anxiety and pain or discomfort during treatment and after. We recognize the level of anxiety linked to dental matters and are now offering remote Reiki sessions for our patients while they are being treated. Together with intuitive healer Regyna Curtis of Atmaitri, who offers affordable and effective assistance, you can be sure all your dental visits will be positive and calm experiences.

So, if you or someone you know is anxious about dental treatment, try Reiki. It's a great alternative to medication or a stress ball.



MEDITATION ALTERNATIVES

For People Who Don't Like to Meditate

Meditation is lauded for its health benefits and is often suggested for the purpose of clearing the mind, organizing thoughts, and in turn reducing stress. It's not for everyone though as some people find it hard to bring themselves into a meditation state. A recent study, published in *New Scientist*, about the effectiveness of meditation, showed that 8% of people trying meditation as a means to reduce stress were unsuccessful.

If you're not interested in meditation, or it just doesn't work for you, here are some alternative ways to clear your mind and reduce stress.

Get serious about physical activity. Aerobic exercises — like walking, jogging, running, cycling, and swimming — are great for clearing your mind and getting your body moving. Really, any exercise that gets the heart pumping and increases your respiratory rate will do. Research supports that aerobic exercise is a great alternative to meditation that yields many of the same benefits.

Exercising outdoors or in nature — especially in new places — enhances these benefits. Because your surroundings are going to be unfamiliar, your mind is more focused, which can help if you're searching for clarity.

Stay mentally engaged. Many people achieve clarity, focus, and stress reduction through simple but engaging tasks, such as



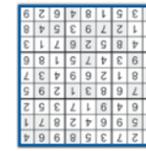
immersing themselves in an adult coloring book, doing brain teasers, or assembling LEGO sets, which proves they can be effective therapeutic tools or alternatives to meditation. The LEGO Company has actually been developing more products for adults with this sort of research in mind.

But why LEGO products specifically? In addition to being objects you touch and push together, LEGO products come with clear, step-by-step instructions, which make them easy to put together and allow you to focus more on the task at hand. Even if you don't complete the piece in one sitting, working on a project a few minutes a day can be a beneficial way to find a little clarity.

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THE COOKIE MINEFIELD

Navigating Healthy Eating During the Holidays

There's no time quite like the holidays. From gift-giving to family togetherness, it's hard to not indulge in the magic of the season. For many, that may mean scarfing down cookies, cakes, and big dinners in celebration, but you don't have to let the holidays ruin your pursuit of healthy eating. Here are three tips to conquer bad eating habits this holiday season!

TRY SIMPLE SWAPS

Did you know you can substitute unsweetened applesauce for butter? Have you ever tried local raw honey in place of sugar? Would you believe that avocados actually make chocolate creamier? These three simple swaps for oily fats, sugar, and harmful nutrients can offer a healthy alternative to sugary treats. Swaps like honey, avocados, real maple syrup, whole wheat flour, and other ingredients pack more nutrients than their full-sugar or processed counterparts. (Plus, they taste just as great!)

AVOID SNEAKY INGREDIENTS

Don't let your drinks ruin your good choices! From alcohol to hot cocoa, holiday drinks pack a calorie and sugary punch, and filling up on these empty calories can be detrimental to your body. (Not to mention your teeth!) In fact, just one cup of eggnog has 233 calories and 20 grams of sugar! Instead, opt for water, drinking through a straw, or low-calorie alcoholic drinks. Whenever possible, alternate between sugary drinks and water. This will rinse your mouth of cavity-causing sugars and fill you up faster. (Note: It's okay to have eggnog! Just limit how much you indulge in this treat.)

MAKE A PLAN

The best way to tackle holiday eating is to change your mindset! Don't force yourself to avoid your favorites. You can still enjoy the yummy treats and make wise choices by making a plan. Allow yourself to enjoy treats at each holiday party (virtual or otherwise) you attend, and don't make anything off limits. (This only makes you want it more!) Just keep your indulgences to the proper portions and swap items you're not dying to have. If cinnamon isn't your thing, then don't swipe a snickerdoodle. Save your sweet fix for treats you want!



BUILD HOURS OF ENTERTAINMENT

WITH THE PERFECT BLANKET FORT



After months spent stuck at home, it's no surprise your kids are going stir crazy. Old toys get stale, new toys are expensive, and there's only so much

backyard-adventuring they can do as colder weather moves in. So, how can you keep your kids freshly entertained? Build an excellent blanket fort!

CHOOSE THE SPACE WISELY.

A smart fort-building space isn't always what's easy or predictable. Living rooms and bedrooms are go-to spots, but take a look around your different rooms and consider how they might provide better building opportunities. For example, your dining room table can provide the support you need to build a massive fort. The long hallway leading to the bedrooms means the fort can have tunnels attached to it. You can even build in the attic, where the fort might not have to be temporary. Go for a space that's fun and unique, even if it means it's in your way for just a little while.

BUILD IT RIGHT.

A fort ceiling needs to stay above your kids' heads where it belongs. They don't need standing room,

but they do need something they can move through freely. Always remember to counterbalance by using lighter sheets on top and heavier blankets on the bottom to weigh everything down. If you add a blanket to one side, add a similar blanket to the opposite side. Also attach blankets to stationary items like doorknobs or furniture legs. If you're stumped, string up a line of rope to serve as the stable center of your fort.

MAKE IT COMFORTABLE.

If you take the time to construct a fort that has multiple purposes, your kids are less likely to get bored with it. When they're all played out, encourage some quiet time in the fort with tablets and laptops for cordless entertainment. String up lights on the ceiling of the fort to provide hands-free light for reading. When it comes to comfort, spare no expense. Couch cushions, pillows, blankets, and sleeping bags are all fair game. You may even get an impromptu nap out of your kids if you do it right.

Forts can be magical places for imagination and hours of entertainment. Forts are not just a kid thing! It's totally fun for some adult time making and being in a fort, too!

Paleo Gravy

Source: CookEatPaleo.com/easy-paleo-gravy/



INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp turkey fat from pan drippings, or ghee
- 1/2 cup onions, chopped
- 2 cups cauliflower, chopped
- Several sprigs fresh thyme or other herbs
- Pan drippings
- 1-2 cups chicken or turkey stock
- Sea salt and fresh ground pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. In a saucepan, heat fat over medium heat. Add onions and cook until onions start to brown. Stir in cauliflower and thyme sprigs (and/or other herbs).
2. Into a measuring cup, pour pan drippings and add enough stock to equal 2 cups of liquid. Add pan drippings/stock mixture to saucepan with vegetables. Simmer until cauliflower is fork tender, about 10 minutes. Remove herb stems.
3. Carefully transfer mixture to blender. Blend on high until smooth and creamy.
4. Return gravy to pan to reheat. If needed, add more stock to thin the gravy to desired consistency. Season with salt and pepper to taste.