

Culture COUNTS

OCM BOCES

ocmboces.org

March 2022

Mindful March: Let's pause, breathe and really take in what's all around us each day

A non-profit group called [Action for Happiness](https://www.dayofhappiness.net/) promotes well-being by "helping people get together regularly so they can learn evidence-based skills for happier living, feel a sense of belonging and commit to personal action to create more happiness for themselves and others." [They are also known for a "Mindful March" calendar](#) that you can download, share and use to develop a regular habit of mindfulness. Check out March 21: "Listen to a piece of music without doing anything else." Or March 25: "Focus your attention on the good things you take for granted." *Although March is partially over, you can still use these mindful practices any day or month.*

“THE BEST WAY TO TAKE CARE OF THE FUTURE IS TO TAKE CARE OF THE PRESENT MOMENT.”

- TICH NHAT HANH

Mindful March 2022

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
 <p>1 Set an intention to live with awareness and kindness</p>	<p>2 Notice three things you find beautiful in the outside world</p>	<p>3 Start today by appreciating your body and that you're alive</p>	<p>4 Notice how you speak to yourself and choose to use kind words</p>	<p>5 Bring to mind people you care about and send love to them</p>	<p>6 Have a 'no plans' day and notice how that feels</p>	
<p>7 Take three calm breaths at regular intervals during your day</p>	<p>8 Eat mindfully. Appreciate the taste, texture and smell of your food</p>	<p>9 Take a full breath in and out before you reply to others</p>	<p>10 Get outside and notice how the weather feels on your face</p>	<p>11 Stay fully present while drinking your cup of tea or coffee</p>	<p>12 Listen deeply to someone and really hear what they are saying</p>	
<p>14 Find ways to enjoy any chores or tasks that you do</p>	<p>15 Stop. Breathe. Notice. Repeat regularly</p>	<p>16 Get really absorbed with an interesting or creative activity</p>	<p>17 Look around and spot three things you find unusual or pleasant</p>	<p>18 If you find yourself rushing, make an effort to slow down</p>	<p>19 Appreciate nature around you, wherever you are</p>	
<p>21 Listen to a piece of music without doing anything else</p>	<p>22 Notice something that is going well, even if today feels difficult</p>	<p>23 Tune into your feelings, without judging or trying to change them</p>	<p>24 Appreciate your hands and all the things they enable you to do</p>	<p>25 Focus your attention on the good things you take for granted</p>	<p>26 Choose to spend less time looking at screens today</p>	
<p>28 Notice when you're tired and take a break as soon as possible</p>	<p>29 Choose a different route today and see what you notice</p>	<p>30 Mentally scan your body and notice what it is feeling</p>	<p>31 Discover the joy in the simple things of life</p>			

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

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WELLNESS COUNTS

Physical activity — simple ways to warm up and cool down

Warming up before exercising is a great way to prevent injury and make your workouts more effective. A warmup gradually revs up your cardiovascular system by raising your body temperature and increasing blood flow to your muscles. This warmup routine should take 6 minutes. Warm up for longer if you feel the need.



March on the Spot

Keep going for 3 minutes. Start off marching on the spot and then march forwards and backwards. Pump your arms up and down in rhythm with your steps, keeping the elbows bent and the fists soft.



Heel Digs

Aim for 60 heel digs in 60 seconds. For heel digs, place alternate heels to the front, keeping the front foot pointing up, and punch out with each heel dig. Keep a slight bend in the supporting leg.



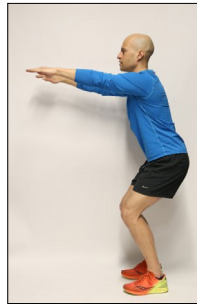
Knee Lifts

Aim for 30 knee lifts in 30 seconds. Simply start by lifting your right knee up towards your chest and touch your knee with your opposite hand. Slowly lower it back down and alternate with your left leg.



Shoulder Rolls

Do 2 sets of 10 repetitions. For shoulder rolls, keep marching on the spot. Roll your shoulders forwards 5 times and backwards 5 times. Let your arms hang loose by your sides. This is a good activity to do during your work day as well.



Knee Bends

10 repetitions. To do knee bends, stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and your hands stretched out. Lower yourself no more than 10 cm by bending your knees. Come up and repeat.

How to cool down

Cooling down is similar to warming up. You generally continue your workout session for five minutes or so, but at a slower pace and reduced intensity. Cooling down after your workout allows for a gradual recovery of pre-exercise heart rate and blood pressure.

Here are some examples of cool-down activities:

- To cool down after a brisk walk, walk slowly for five to 10 minutes.
- To cool down after a run, walk briskly for five to 10 minutes.
- To cool down after swimming, swim laps leisurely for five to 10 minutes.

A word about stretching

If stretching exercises are part of your workout routine, it's best to do them after the warmup or cool-down phase, when your muscles are already warm and not susceptible to injury.

Stretching can improve flexibility and range of motion around a joint. Stretching may also help improve your performance in some activities by allowing your joints to move through their full range of motion. However, studies haven't consistently shown that stretching helps prevent muscle soreness or injury before exercising.

Source: Mayo Clinic

WELLNESS COUNTS

Key lime pie cookies from the Cookies & Cups cookbook

Course: Dessert
Cuisine: American
Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 10 minutes
Total Time: 20 minutes
Servings: 36 cookies
Calories: 122
Author: Shelly Jaronsky

Ingredients

- 1 cup salted butter, at room temperature (2 sticks)
- 1 1/4 cups granulated sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 tablespoons key lime juice
- 2 teaspoons grated lime zest
- 1/2 teaspoon Kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup finely crushed graham cracker crumbs
- 1/2 cup white chocolate

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attach-

ment, mix the butter and sugar on medium speed for 2 minutes until light and fluffy.

3. Add the egg, vanilla, key lime juice and lime zest and continue mixing for 1 more minute, scraping the sides of the bowl as necessary. Mix in the salt and baking soda until incorporated.

4. Turn the speed to low and add the flour and graham cracker crumbs until the dough comes together.

5. Roll the dough into 1-inch balls and place 2 inches apart on the baking sheet. Bake for 9 to 10 minutes, until the edges are lightly golden.

6. Transfer the cookies to a wire rack to cool.

7. Place the white chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl. Heat on full power for 25 seconds. Remove the bowl from the microwave and stir the chocolate. Repeat this process until the white chocolate is melted and smooth. Transfer the melted chocolate to a small ziptop



bag. Snip one corner of the bag off with scissors and drizzle the white chocolate on top of the cookies. Allow the white chocolate to set completely.

8. Store the cookies airtight at room temperature up to 3 days.

Nutrition

Calories: 122kcal
Carbohydrates: 15g | Protein: 1g
Fat: 6g | Saturated Fat: 3g |
Cholesterol: 19mg | Sodium:
111mg | Potassium: 22mg |
Sugar: 8g | Vitamin A: 165IU |
Vitamin C: 0.4mg | Calcium: 9mg
Iron: 0.5mg

Wellness Committee Updates

'Lunch and Learn' at Main Campus - All Welcome

This month's "Lunch & Learn" at Main Campus will focus on Better Nutrition and is presented by Deborah Farrand-Thrall and Wendy Swift from OCM BOCES Food Management Services. Join us from noon to 1 p.m. on Thursday, March 24, in Seneca Large. [Click here to sign up.](#)

'Reset Bingo' at Crown Road

After winter break, staff at Crown Road Campus had another shot at winning prizes through self-care "Reset Bingo."



CULTURE COUNTS

Circle prompts you can use now to build classroom connections

By Randi Downs

Instructional Coach

It's hard to believe we are already into March and spring is just around the corner! This might be a good time to remind ourselves that community building and connection in our classrooms is more important than ever. We are busy, we may be tired, but we need to keep supporting each other and our students.

With that in mind, I'd like to share [some circle prompts](#) that you can begin using with your students today. That way, the work has been done for you. All you need to do is check out these ideas, think about your intention, and plan for the student voice that these prompts will provide. Be careful to think about how these questions will land on your students. How might they react? How might they respond? What is your goal for the circle conversation? If you can answer these questions before implementing, you can ensure that all students will benefit from the conversation.

Have fun connecting with your students throughout the days ahead!

Circle Prompts: Getting Acquainted

- Share a happy childhood memory.
- If you could be a superhero, what super powers would you choose and why?
- How would your best friend describe you?
- What would you not want to change about your life?
- If you could talk to someone from your family who is no longer alive, who would it be and why?
- If you had an unexpected free day, what would you like to do?
- If you were an animal, what animal would you be and why?
- Name two things or people who always make you laugh.
- I like to collect ...
- If you could have a face-to-face conversation with anyone, who would it be and why?

[Click here for many more prompts to consider.](#)

Meet Gunny, a 'circle centerpiece'

After attending a Circle training session in early March, OCM BOCES Reach teacher Tanja Cosentino shared this picture the very next day. We think that Tanja's service dog, "Gunny," makes a perfect circle centerpiece as her 7th-grade students from the Reach program gather to build connection and community.

Tanja shared: "Thank you both for a wonderful workshop yesterday! I was so excited to bring the practices to our program today :)"

Communities thrive when Circles are part of how we gather each day! Please continue to share with each other how you are incorporating Restorative Practices into your daily routines.

As Carolyn Boyes and Kay Pranis also share in their book: "The Circle space is designed to help us move in the direction of our best self."

- Randi Downs and Dan Hesler

"Circle keepers often use a centerpiece to create a focal point that supports speaking from the heart and listening from the heart."

- *Circle Forward: Building a Restorative School Community*, by Carolyn Boyes-Watson and Kay Pranis

