



January Recap:

- ♦ The Monthly DSFIT2RUN PRAYER LINE was Tuesday, January 10th with Elder Gloria Roberts. Each month we are able to request specific readings and ask Gloria to pray for someone in your life or even yourself. Please visit our site www.dsfit2run.com on the homepage and click "Balance Your Spirituality" to submit prayer requests.
- ♦ January 14th was our second annual F.R.E.S.H. Conference. Check out the last page of this newsletter for a brief recap!
- ♦ January 28th Deana Patterson held a Vision Board workshop where every participant brought a healthy dish to share and plan on their upcoming year with goals and positivity.
- ♦ We are almost halfway through with our shoe drive and teaming up with Funds2Orgs! Please contact Rebecca Peck at dsfit2runbp@gmail.com if you have shoes you wish to give.



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DO YOU KNOW H₂O?

We have all been told that we need to drink water. Some of us are told to drink a certain amount based on weight or activity level but we all know the importance of H₂O! Did you know that the type of water you drink is extremely important too? Some think that just the drinking any type of expensive bottled water is good enough. Surprisingly, there is one type of bottled water that beats the rest. Alkaline water is the least acidic type out there and helps our bodies in many ways.

Alkaline water doesn't necessarily reduce acid in the body but it does provide high pH levels, calcium, potassium, and magnesium- all of which our bodies need. According to the Huffington Post, alkaline water can improve your gut health as it has the ability to protect your gut from dangerous microorganisms. If you are an athlete or work out consistently, alkaline water is even better for you. The more you exercise, the more hydrogen ions and lactic acid is built up. The additional minerals found in alkaline water helps counteract these effects that can lead to fatigue and muscle pain.

Here is a list of some of the most commonly purchased bottled waters so you can see their pH levels.:

- Essentia guarantees a pH of 9.5 (which is more alkaline).
- Dasani ranges between 5.0-7.0 (which is neutral or more acidic).
- Aquafina ranges between 5.5-7.0 (which is neutral or more acidic).
- Smartwater has a pH of about 7.0 (which is neutral).
- Evian has a pH of 7.2 (which is more alkaline).

The “best” alkaline bottled water can be quite pricey and go as high as \$3.00 per bottle. If you don't want to empty your pockets for that, then take a look at that shiny faucet in your kitchen. That's right, everyday tap water is less acidic than some bottled waters. Do your research next time you're ready to stock up on H₂O!



SUGAR HIGH

If you are not one for counting calories, we urge you to at least manage your sugar intake. We all know how temptingly delicious anything with sugar is. Whether it's the donuts sitting in the office kitchen or the white chocolate caramel coffee creamer, sugar is everywhere. A recent article from SELF Magazine shared eight signs for recognizing if you are consuming too much sugar.

You are constantly craving sweets: It may be hard to admit that sugar basically can be considered a drug. It is addictive and keeps us wanting more. The more sugar you consume, the more you will crave it. Check out Brooke Alpert, MS., R.D. and her book *The Sugar Detox: Lose Weight, Feel Great and Look Years Younger* to learn more.

You are consistently tired or sluggish throughout the day: With sugar being similar to a drug, you will experience a quick “high” that will eventually bring you down. Energy will maintain strong throughout the day if your blood sugar levels are stable. The highs and lows of your blood sugar levels will make your energy levels jump up and down just as much.

Your skin is continually breaking out: An insulin spike from sugar intake can cause excessive break outs by messing with your hormones. Many dermatologists will recommend that if your skin is freaking out, you should look at your diet first. If not, you may be trying to treat your skin for all these other reasons instead of getting to the root of the issue.

You're extremely moody: Similar to losing energy throughout the day, the crash coming off a sugar high can greatly affect your mood.

You're gaining weight: Excess sugar is essentially excess calories. Not only will eating a lot of sugar not fill you up, it also increases the body's release of insulin. An increase of insulin will play a large part in weight gain.

Your dental bill is rising: Just like you heard when you were a kid, too much candy will cause many unwanted cavities.

Your brain seems foggy: This is another symptom of low blood sugar. When your blood sugar levels go up and down, you are effecting your cognitive thinking skills.

Your taste buds are suffering: Excess sugar intake basically tricks your taste buds. Nothing tastes as sweet anymore so you will be eating even more sugar just to get the taste back.

If you can relate to any or many of these signs, take a better look at what you are eating every day. If you are going to need sugar to get through your day, opt for some fruit over the sweet roll. Cutting it all out may be tough at first but it can be done. Keep the intake to be a once in a while sweet treat.

MARRIAGE AND YOUR HEALTH

We at DSFIT2RUN often share ways to achieve physical fitness and nutritional health. However, it's important we focus on EVERY aspect of what ultimately makes up a healthy lifestyle. One of those that we touched base on at our second annual F.R.E.S.H. Conference was the significance of the relationships in our lives. Although all relationships, whether with friends, family, or spouses all play a vital role in our lives, we want to focus on marriage in particular.

According to Harvard Health, there is a plethora of research that suggests married people “enjoy better health than single people.” Research shows that couples tend to live longer, have fewer strokes, are less likely to become depressed, and even have a higher chance of surviving a life changing or major operation. This list may seem surprising but it doesn't mean that being married makes anyone better than the other. Clearly not every marriage is sunshine and rainbows. Many couples endure high levels of stress and can often be worse than what a single person may go through on a day to day basis. Interestingly enough, that list of health benefits from marriage pertains mainly to men!

Let's dig a little deeper into some of the upsides of being in a healthy marriage. Harvard Health admits that much more research needs to be done, however, it is possible to link marriage and well being. For one, Harvard studies found that people in happy relationships have a stronger immune system and are sick less often. A different study showed that a married person's behavior improves as well. For instance, you are more likely to eat better, keep regular doctor's appointments, and listen to your doctor's recommendations by having someone to hold you accountable. Lastly, studies indicated that mental health is improved when married. Bouts of depression, loneliness, and social isolation due to lack of strong outside support systems often effect single people. Again, it is important to mention that Harvard Health is naming these as simple links or theories between a healthy marriage and health benefits.



VITAMIN D: HOW MUCH DO WE NEED?



With the sun hiding during the gloomy winter days, it's hard for us to soak in those rays and get our daily dose of vitamin D. Vitamin D is essential helps keep our immune systems tough, aids in normal growth of our bones and teeth, and keeps our bones nice and strong. Those benefits are just a few to name. But, have you ever wondered what the “right” level of Vitamin D is? According to Harvard Medical School, an individual who is Vitamin D deficient can suffer from bone thinning, cardiovascular diseases, and even cancer. So how do we know if we are getting enough? What levels should we aim for?

The common range for optimal vitamin D can be from 30-100 ng/ml, although all laboratories and doctor's opinions vary. Contrary to what doctors have thought before, it is much more common for your physician to routinely check your levels when taking blood tests. What is the reason for this, you ask? At one time, vitamin D was simply known for just keeping our bones strong. After all these years, doctors have come to find that it can be used to help battle over 100 disorders that range from cancer and diabetes to multiple sclerosis and depression.

Vitamin D is produced in our bodies when we are exposed to the sun's ultraviolet rays. However, if you live in the dark shadows of a Chicago winter, you are clearly going to be lacking versus a local Floridian. So, what can we do to get on their levels? Should we just take a vitamin D pill each day? What are the next steps? First, make sure to talk to your doctor before changing any intake of vitamins and get your blood checked prior to taking matters into your own hands. If you want to be sure that you're getting enough from your daily diet, you can reach for the following foods: fish, soy milk, orange juice, cheese, and egg yolks. If you are feeling any of the following symptoms you may want to be checked for vitamin D deficiency: bone pain, muscle weakness, excessive sweating, and bouts of depression.

January 21st was our second annual F.R.E.S.H. Conference. Attendees listened to five amazing speakers share their knowledge on various topics, enjoyed two delicious meals, and even got to shop around to some great and unique vendors! Here is a quick recap incase you sadly missed out!

- Pavla Haluskova started the day off with the importance of meditation and balancing our chakras. She put emphasis on not enabling stress to debilitate us and even brought everyone through a brief meditation.
- Dr. Abdul Hamid Sankari stressed the importance of being active and the need to exercise in order to achieve optimal health benefits. He stated the major difference between actually working out and just doing something to be active.
- Deana Patterson, founder of DSFIT2RUN, led her segment on finances and taught everyone the ins and outs of some great tools that are out there to help manage your budget. She even went into depth about credit scores and tips on how to pay off debt the right way.
- Min. Terry Roberts discussed the ability to be single and happy. Being single allows you time to make improvements mentally, spiritually, financially and physically. Consider this your hiatus time before your mate walks into your life. The bottom line don't rush into a relationship enjoy your single time and most of all stay healthy and happy.
- Mr. Pugh shared the ability to maintain a happy and healthy marriage based on his 53 years of marriage experience. He explained how to select a mate and keep happiness consistent with understanding and love. He believes the key to everything is keeping spirituality at the center of your relationship.
- Gloria Roberts ended the sessions with a dynamic spiritual awakening. Her session allowed attendees to evaluate and determine their spiritual desires to improve their walk in life. This was a time to dig deep within and understand your level of spirituality with extreme focus on the improvements you need based on prayer and staying consistent.
- Pavla closed the FRESH Conference with a phenomenal 45 minute yoga class. She taught us several yoga positions, but most of all how to breathe, relax and meditate allowing you to release stress.

Pictures from Vision Board Workshop & F.R.E.S.H. Conference

