

THE TIGER TABLE

CAPE GIRARDEAU D63
WELLNESS NEWSLETTER!



CHEERS TO NEW BEGINNINGS! 🍷

By Kayla Johnson, MS, RD, LDN

What I love about the new year is that it seems like lots of people are willing (and even motivated!) to try something new! It's exciting for someone like me because several parts of my job - and really my passions in general - center on habits and routines... things that take time to develop. In the first few months of the year, it's like people want to find something different and possibly out of the ordinary and will put forth the effort to stick to whatever they have chosen.

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DECEMBER RECAP

The beautiful December newsletter was written by a SEMO graduate student named Destiny. It focused on local, winter harvest and featured a beautiful, warming plant-strong soup! 🍲

Did anyone try it out?!

SELF-REFLECTION: LOOKING BACK

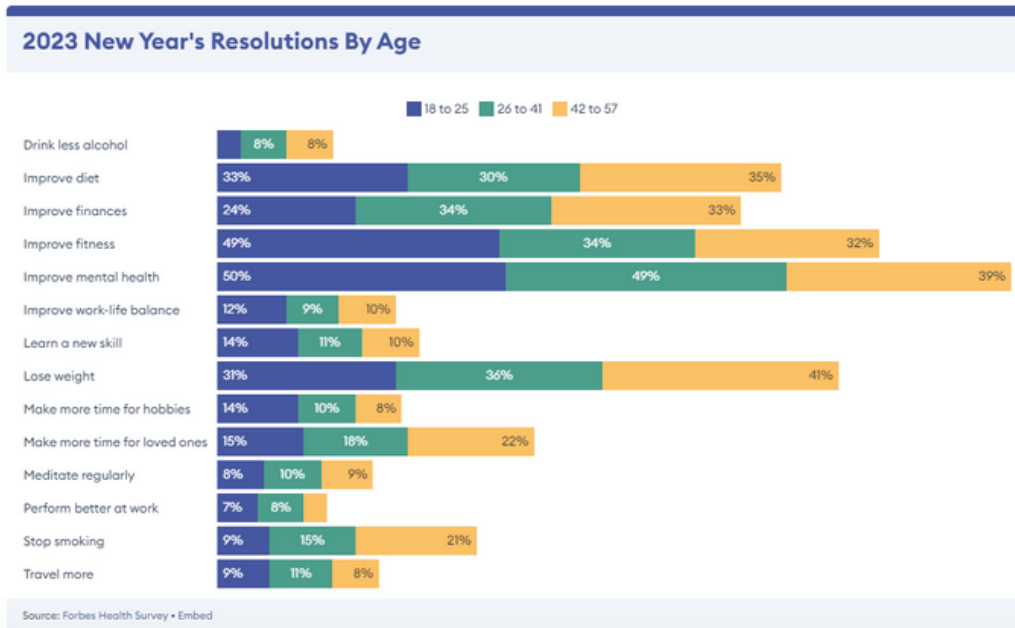
Before jumping into something new, I find it helpful to examine where we've been and we are in this season of life. Feel free to use these questions as a guide.

NEW BEGINNINGS

Statistically speaking, for 2023, the [Forbes Health/OnePoll survey](#) found some resolutions to be more common than others, with the [most popular goals including](#):

- ✓ Improved mental health (45%)
- ✓ Lose weight (37%)
- ✓ Improved diet (33%)
- ✓ Improved fitness (39%)
- ✓ Improved finances (30%)

Interestingly, Gen Z (ages 11-26 years old) is more likely to prioritize improved mental health as a 2023 resolution than any other generation (50%).



What a lot of us don't acknowledge - or maybe didn't even know - is that mental and physical health are [equally important components of overall health](#). For example, depression increases the risk for many types of physical health problems, particularly long-lasting conditions like diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. Similarly, the presence of these chronic conditions can increase the risk for mental illness. It's a vicious cycle! Additionally, these long-lasting conditions are [strongly related](#) to our diet. Improve your diet and you can improve your physical health. Improve your physical health and you can improve your mental health. Or start with the brain - positive mental health → positive dietary health (because you have headspace) → positive physical health.

I am here for all of it. I am a big fan of pouring into all parts of your personal wellbeing. In some seasons, you may need to prioritize one over the other, but in the end they will all benefit. You are a whole person. Improvement in one area will have a ripple effect.

FUN FACT: When you switch to a plant-based diet (aka making plants the star of your plate as opposed to meat and other animal products) your risk for chronic diseases drastically decreases. You may even be able to minimize or eliminate medications! Read more about it [HERE](#) and feel free to [reach out](#) with questions!


SEASONS

What season are you in right now? Are you happily running your kids to basketball practice and taekwondo but that makes evenings chaotic and dinner becomes garbage drive through food? If so, it might be time for you to prioritize your food so that everyone is fueled well for all of the activities.

Do you have a more relaxed evening schedule but find yourself up late watching Netflix nonsense? Maybe consider prioritizing physical health in regards to getting appropriate sleep.

Were the holidays good but a harsh reminder of how much unaddressed pain that you have carried from your past? Maybe it's time for some professional mental health assistance from a counselor.

There is **no shame** in seeing a personal area of need and addressing it. We do this every day in other areas: *Our car needs gas - we fill it up. Our clothes need washing - we do laundry. Our dog needs to be fed - we feed him.*


YOUR needs are equally important. As the saying goes, *you cannot fill a glass from an empty pitcher.* Personal goals and New Year's Resolutions are great, wonderful even, but we might need to slow down and get to the root of ourselves and see where we actually need some help and healing and start there as opposed to goal chasing to avoid the uncomfortable work of the soul. 

UP AHEAD: FUN JANUARY CELEBRATIONS



14 - National Sunday Supper Day - At my house this is about to be Sunday SOUPer Day - making a big pot of soup and inviting friends to enjoy a meal with us before the week gets crazy. Starting your week with intentional connection with your people is HUGE.

11 - National Human Trafficking Awareness Day - It is a huge problem that needs attention. Check out StopSIS or the US Department of State for more info.

16 - National without a Scalpel Day - Ideally, the first line of defense in treating diseases are diet and lifestyle changes. Obviously this is very case and person specific, but we can cause a lot bodily of harm or healing with our forks 

24 - National Compliment Day - When you see something good about someone, tell them!

**** Please check out underlined text for some fantastic additional information !****

Tiger Taste Buds 😊

Stuffed Pepper Soup

I get the feeling that most people don't think about food as much as I do... or watch food videos.. or have winter goals like "I would love for my kids to accept oatmeal this winter." 🧑 But I do... Welcome to my brain! All that to say, I put a lot of thought into which recipes to even bother sharing here because I want them to be worthwhile, tasty, and good for you!

Enter the [Stuffed Pepper Soup](#). This one's a winner, folks. Perfect for these freezing wintery evenings when you're cold to your BONES and you need to be heated from all the way on the inside.

* Please check out [the video](#) for time saving tips!

Yield: 1 large pot of food 🧑

Total Time: 30 minutes or something

Ingredients

- 2 cups cooked lentils
- 2 cups cooked brown rice
- 2 bell peppers (red, green, etc.), diced
- 1 yellow onion, diced
- 1 (15 oz.) can diced tomatoes, no salt added
- 2 cans tomato sauce, no salt added
- 1-2 tablespoons Italian seasoning
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder (or minced garlic)
- 2 cups veggie stock
- 1 tablespoon nutritional yeast (optional)
- crushed red pepper (optional)



Instructions:

1. Batch prep your lentils and brown rice anytime during the week. I like to cook lentils and brown rice just like pasta. I boil the rice for about 30-35 minutes and the lentils for about 15 minutes. An overcooked lentil is nice to thicken up this soup, so you could cook them for 20 minutes.
2. Next, I like to use a dutch oven on the stove for this soup. Preheat the pot for a few minutes and then dump in the bell peppers and onions. Now you can sauté for a few minutes for a bit of added flavor, or you can just keep on dumping all of the remaining ingredients into the pot and give it a good stir.
3. Bring the pot to a boil, reduce the heat, and let simmer for about 15 minutes or more. Be sure to stir it once in a while to ensure it's not burning.

Serve and enjoy!!

* For a pressure cooker version, just throw everything into the pot and cook on high pressure for 3-5 minutes, manual release.