

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of May 18th

The Science Behind Changing Our Mindset

Here's an experiment whose results may interest you, especially if you're trying to make healthy choices as you age.

Researchers at Stanford University's Mind and Body Lab (mbl.stanford.edu) had study participants drink identical 380-calorie milkshakes, but study participants were given different information on what they were drinking. Half the participants were told they were enjoying an "indulgent" 620-calorie shake, while the others were told that they were drinking a "sensible" drink that only came with 140 calories.

The participants who drank the "indulgent" shakes reported feeling more satiated than the ones who were told their beverage was "sensible," even though the drinks were identical.

The findings of this study match up with many others on the relationship between mindset and successful aging: namely, that healthy choices become easier to make if they're seen not only as healthy, but enjoyable.

How Popeye Changed Mindsets

Long before studies made the connection between a positive mindset and better health, and long before product marketing in entertainment became a phenomenon, the cartoon character Popeye the Sailor discovered the capacity for superhuman feats of strength, powered by his consumption of spinach.

When it came to spinach, children who ordinarily were averse to eating their vegetables followed Popeye's lead - and maybe you were one of them. During the worst of the Great Depression, when the average American diet lacked the kind of vitamins and minerals found in spinach, sales of the leafy vegetable increased by 33% and have remained strong ever since - because we saw spinach not as a health food, but a source of strength and self-reliance.

Good Choices + Fun = Successful Aging

If you're self-motivated enough to keep up a regular gym routine, keep up the good work - but it's far from the only way to stay physically active as we age.

When it comes to physical activity, everything counts. Anything beats being sedentary. If you're opening a can of soup and you do a dozen curls with it beforehand, that counts. If you walked to the mailbox and back, that counts. So does getting chores done while listening to the baseball game instead of watching it on TV. Mobile devices have a wide range of health-measurement

features available for free. With a device in your pocket, you could get in 5,000 steps without even noticing.

There are plenty of other options to incorporate fun into physical activity.

Pickleball

Pickleball combines elements of tennis, badminton, and ping-pong. It's played on a smaller court with lightweight paddles, offering a great cardiovascular workout and enhancing balance, agility, and coordination.

OFA is planning another series of introductory pickleball lessons for later this year. When we schedule the lessons, we'll let you know in this newsletter when you can sign up.

Lawn Bowling or Bocce

If you grew up in a European household, you would likely know bocce, or its related games like bowls and pétanque. There are as many variants on the sport as there are cultures. These games offer light movement and hand-eye

coordination while encouraging participants to enjoy the fresh air. They're perfect for small group gatherings and can be played at any pace.

Bean Bag Toss (Cornhole)

Whether seated or standing, tossing bean bags onto a target supports balance, arm movement, and motor skills. Plus, it's an easy game to learn and perfect for friendly competition. If you've got the space and the equipment, horseshoes is also a great option - and nothing beats the satisfying "clank" of a ringer.

Do A Little Dance

Dance engages the whole body and improves cardiovascular health, balance, and cognitive function. It's another activity you can incorporate into your daily activities. No partner? No problem. You can take the advice of Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame 2026 inductee Billy Idol and dance with yourself.

OFA Exercise Classes

If an exercise class setting works best for you, OFA offers plenty of in-person and remote class variety, backed by sound science. OFA Senior Exercise classes are based on the Tufts University Strong Living Program, an evidence based program for which our coordinator has received training in the curriculum. Participants start with one pound weights and gradually increase the weight when they feel they are able.

There's also our Tai Chi program for fall prevention and arthritis, which is adaptable to all levels of physical activity including wheelchair users.

The Office for the Aging has a remote exercise option available to any Dutchess County older adult with an internet connection. It's called SAIL: Stay Active and Independent for Life. SAIL has been approved by the federal Administration for Community Living (ACL) as an evidence-based program. SAIL classes are typically held on Wednesdays at 10 am and Fridays at 2:30 pm.

If you have an internet connection and want to know more about how SAIL works, contact OFA at 845-486-2555 or email ofa@dutchessny.gov.

Busy Weekend for OFA

We'll be represented at three events in Dutchess County on Saturday, May 16th. There's Facebook links with information on all three below:

[Millbrook Library Volunteer Fair](#), 3 Friendly Lane, Millbrook, 11a-1p

[Wappingers Community Day](#), Schlathaus Park, 11a-4p (festival continues until 9p)

[Beacon Neighborhood Vitality Day](#), Long Dock Park, 1-5p

OFA Summer Holiday Schedule

Making plans for the summer? Keep in mind that the Office for the Aging main office and OFA Friendship Centers are closed in observance of the following national holidays:

Monday, May 25th – Memorial Day

Friday, June 19th – Juneteenth

Friday, July 3rd – Independence Day

Monday, September 7th – Labor Day

Clients of OFA's Home Delivered Meals program receive shelf-stable meals in advance of all holidays.

Volunteer Exercise Instructors and Home Delivered Meals Drivers

Wanted

OFA's Senior Exercise Program (www.dutchessny.gov/seniorexercise) is looking for volunteer exercise instructors. No experience is necessary. OFA provides all training. If you'd like to combine volunteering with meeting your own goals of staying physically active, reach out to us at ofa@dutchessny.gov, or 845-486-2555 during business hours.

We're also looking for volunteer drivers in our Home Delivered Meals program, especially in the City of Beacon and City of Poughkeepsie. If you can

help, contact OFA. Reimbursement for fuel costs is available for drivers who make deliveries in their own vehicles.

Visit www.dutchessny.gov/ofavolunteer for a look at all our volunteering options. We work with whatever time you have available for volunteering.

OFA Ambassador Hours for June-August (Check Back for Updates)

We're moving into the (even more) busy time of year at OFA. Here's the May-August list of OFA Ambassador Mary Reedy's mobile office hours...thus far. There'll be more such office hours scheduled, where you can get your aging services questions answered from a location closer to home.

To book your half-hour spot, call OFA during business hours at 845-486-2555:

Tuesday, June 23rd, noon-1:30pm – Clinton Library, 1215 Centre Rd.,
Rhinebeck

Thursday, June 25th, noon-3pm – Amenia Library, 3309 NY 343, Amenia

Tuesday, June 30th, 10am-noon – Millbrook Library, 3 Friendly Ln.,
Millbrook

Tuesday, July 28th, 1-3pm – Millbrook Library

Thursday, August 27th, noon-3pm – Amenia Library

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is Monday, June 15th

OFA is noting the date of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day with another SilverShield scam prevention event, at our Poughkeepsie Friendship Center (114 Delafield St.) on Monday, June 15th at 3:00pm. Registrants must own a mobile device or a laptop with an internet connection.

SilverShield and the New York State Office for the Aging have made 300 free SilverShield subscriptions available to Dutchess County older adults. SilverShield can help you both prevent scam messages, calls and emails, and can help you report them to the FBI and Federal Trade Commission.

To register, call OFA during business hours at 845-486-2555. We cannot accept registration requests made by email or voice mail.

[Visit this United Nations link](#) for more information on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

Other news:

[Engaging with the arts can slow biological aging](#), according to one study.

[A rebuttal to a recent New York Times guest essay](#) entitled “Older Americans Are Hoarding America’s Potential.” With a title like that, well...some pushback is to be expected.

[Too little sleep AND too much sleep](#) are both associated with unhealthy aging.

75-year-old Doug Whitney’s genetics indicated he should have developed Alzheimer’s disease, as many members of his family did – [but he didn’t, and scientists are trying to figure out why](#).

Add a few hundred more names to the 560 million medical identities that have been stolen in data breaches: [the medical office that serves the 535 members of Congress](#).

Coffee: [This week, a Texas A&M University study says it can slow aging](#). Next week, a study may say just the opposite. We need a lot of coffee just to keep up with it all.

After a 60+ year career, [it's biography time for the Rolling Stones](#).

The Bad Joke is here!

What do you call a man in a pile of leaves?

Russell.