October is National Family Health Month, and with the cooler temperatures of fall, it is the perfect time of year for doing things inside and outside. Studies have shown that when family members do things together, everyone benefits. When everyone gets involved in moving around and having fun or getting creative with food, doing what’s healthy feels less like “exercise and diet.” So, try some of these ideas and feel free to come up with your own. The idea is to be healthy and happy together.

**Garden.** Doing yard work may seem like a chore, but if you can throw in a little digging and planting, your family can enjoy the fruits of your labor for quite a while. If you don’t actually have the time or space to work on the yard, try using different sized containers and arrange them in an interesting formation.

**Kid Games.** As we age, we tend to get stuffy and boring. We forget how much fun we used to have playing silly games like Simon Says or Duck-Duck Goose. It may be time to bring some of those games back and just spend some time having fun. If you have younger children, you can “blame” your fun on them.

**Walk.** Take a family walk before or after dinner. Walk to and from the store or other establishment instead of driving the car. Walk the dog. This cheap and easy form of activity is good for you, and it’s even more fun when the whole family goes together. If you’re feeling competitive, try wearing pedometers and have a contest to see who walks the most steps every day or week.

**Food.** Go on a family trip to the grocery store. Let each member of the family select at least one brightly-colored fruit or vegetable. Trying new foods may seem less scary if the kids get to participate in the selection process.

**Board Games.** Back before Wii and other electronic gadgets, families sat down together to play cards or Monopoly or other board games. These can provide hours of entertainment and strengthen the bonds within the family.

**Dance.** Turn up the music, close the blinds, and dance the night away. You’ll have fun, relieve stress, and make yourself healthier.
All our lives, we are very aware of what a physical injury is. As a child, we fell off our bikes and scraped our knees. Then we witnessed the physical healing as each day passed. What we didn’t witness, or even talk about very often is emotional healing. Emotional wounds may not leave visible scars, but in many cases they leave a greater abrasion than physical injuries do. It is vital that we don’t let emotional injuries manifest and spread because they can cause us great distress.

Emotional pain can be escalated through our need for rehearsal and repetition. As humans, we tend to replay situations in our mind over and over again. This is especially true of negative experiences. Therefore, we have to catch ourselves and try not to continue the cycle of hitting “replay” in our minds. Our natural instinct is to try to understand and make sense out of a situation. Most people will try to understand why an emotional injury has occurred. We want to know how someone could do something to us that we feel is wrong. Sometimes, this leads to a favorable outcome because we analyze the situation and see it from the other person’s point of view. Unfortunately, what tends to happen is that we try to understand, but can’t. It is okay not to understand. If it helps, tell that to yourself over and over again.

The truth is that people hurt us emotionally for a variety of reasons. Sometimes it is truly unintentional and the person never meant to cause us pain. Other times, the wounds may be inflicted due to the jealousy, pain, abuse, or neglect that the offending person has experienced. Regardless of the reason, for our own emotional health, we must seek emotional healing.

Emotional healing is rooted in forgiveness. We must learn to accept situations for what they are and move on. This doesn’t mean you should let people continue to abuse you emotionally. It means that you take up for yourself, keep yourself away from negative people, and allow yourself to forgive those who have hurt you.

Suggested books:
- Learning to Forgive by Fred Luskin
- Wounds not Healed by Time by Solomon Schimmel
- The Language of Letting Go by Melody Beattie

Unconditional positive regard is one of the cornerstones of Humanistic psychology and philosophy. While it’s easy for people to profess to be humanistic in their world view, the practice is much more difficult. How many times have you “punished” someone for not living up to your standards? For making choices that you wouldn’t make? For doing things “all wrong”? When we do this, what we communicate is that we love the person as long as he or she does what we want. Unconditional love means that we love the person no matter what. We may not like the behavior, but we can separate the two from each other. Often, when we harshly judge others, we judge ourselves in the same way. If we only love ourselves and others when they “make us proud,” we spend most of our time feeling hurt and disappointed. Remember that life is short. Love while you have the chance to love, and do it with all your heart.
Being the Best You!

With all forms of media bombarding us with images and messages that may make us question whether we are close enough to an impossible arbitrary standard to be okay, it’s important for us to step back and consider what is really important. Are you a good (friend, parent, spouse, student, etc.), and are you comfortable with yourself? Here are some tips for being the best “you” in the world, however you might define that.

1. Be genuine. Few people are ever really fooled by the imaginary personas we create for ourselves. If you’re pretending to be someone you’re not in order to get into a certain group or to have other opportunities, note that at some point you’ll find that being a phony inside the group will feel much worse than being yourself outside of it. And the friends you’ll attract by being who you are will truly be your friends.

2. Be honest. Understand that this does NOT give you an excuse to be rude and uncivil. “I’m just telling it like it is,” is a copout. Honesty respects everyone involved and offers an chance for correction and renewal. Think of your words as if they’re your next meal. If you have to eat them later, would you rather they be soft and palatable or so tough that you choke on them?

3. Seek to understand. We often go through life trying so hard to explain ourselves and to get others to understand us, that we find ourselves in constant conflict with them. It’s important to have a complete and accurate picture of things. Take a moment to pause and understand the situation. It’s easier to present your case when you know what the issue is.

4. Listen. It’s been said that we have two ears but only one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak. The reality, however, is that we are often so caught up in planning what we’re going to say, or in continuing some other activity, that we never hear what anyone says to us. Being our best self involves taking the time to show an interest in what others have to say. Even if we have your undivided attention for five minutes, you’ve let us know that we mean something to you. Set aside some time each day just to listen to what the important people in your life have to say.

5. Avoid being a rescuer. We love our friends and family, so we don’t want to see them make mistakes or bring harm to themselves. However, in order to give them a chance to live and grow, we also have to let them feel the consequences of their behaviors. If we constantly intervene for the spouse with a drinking problem or a friend who can’t seem to handle money, we protect them from their own reality and make them dependent on us. Eventually, we feel bitter and angry because they won’t change and they may hold us responsible when things don’t go well for them.

6. Accept compliments. A compliment is a way of offering praise and letting us know that others appreciate us. If you find yourself saying things such as, “Oh, this old dress,” or “It was an easy project,” make a decision to change. A smile and a “thank you” is all that’s necessary. Taking exception to a compliment is comparable to telling the other person that his or her opinion is faulty.

7. Discover your strengths. Synthetic gem stones are created in a laboratory. They are lovely, but they are also fake. Real diamonds are created over millions of years under intense pressure. Like people, they are flawed, but precious. A discerning eye and skilled hand can turn something barely recognizable into something brilliant. Instead of focusing on all the things you think are wrong with you, identify all the things that are right. You may be amazed by all the things you know and all that you can do once you take stock of them. Find a way to shine, and your flaws will dim in comparison.

Do you have ideas for articles or recipes? Send them to Mary Turner at mturner@occc.edu or to Alta Price at aprice@occc.edu.
Student Support Services houses a variety of services designed to enhance the performance and well-being of students at Oklahoma City Community College.

- Services to Students with Disabilities, including providing accommodations for documented disabilities, interpreting and captioning services for deaf and hard of hearing students, and assistive technology.
- Professional counseling by licensed providers.
- Learning support specialists to assist with academic needs such as learning styles, study skills, test-taking, and general health and wellness issues.
- TRIO Grant Programs (Upward Bound and Trio Student Support Services) designed to help first generation college students learn more about college before they arrive and how to be more successful once they are here.

For more information about our services and how to access them, please visit our website at http://www.occc.edu/support/ or call us at 682-7520. We are located on the first floor of the Main Building near SEM Entry 3.

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Weight Watchers Low Fat Taco Soup

1 lb ground turkey breast
1 large onion, chopped
1 (1 1/4 ounce) package hidden valley ranch dressing mix
1 (1 1/4 ounce) package taco seasoning mix
1 15 ounce can pinto beans
1 15 ounce can hot chili beans
1 15 ounce can whole kernel corn
1 15 ounce can stewed tomatoes (Mexican flavor)
1 15 ounce can stewed tomatoes (any flavor)

Brown the meat and onions and drain.
Mix ranch dressing and taco seasoning into the meat.
Without draining, add all of the other ingredients.
Simmer for 1 hours. Makes 10 servings.

Per Serving:
239 calories
28.1 mg cholesterol
470 mg sodium
38.2 g total carbohydrates
8.1 g dietary fiber
20.9 g protein