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Understanding the Essentials: A "Serenity House" Health Program

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Understanding the Essentials:

A Serenity House Health Program

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Leadership Studies Capstone Project/Chancellor's Honors Program Thesis

December 2018

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ABSTRACT

Throughout the last three and a half years, I have participated in both the Leadership Studies Minor and Chancellor's Honors Program. Both of these programs provide students with an opportunity to do an independent project in an area that they are passionate about. My major, extracurricular activities, and career interests gave me my first glimpse of what I wanted to create. My life vision is to make the world a happier and healthier place. This led to my collaboration with another member of my leadership studies cohort- Jasmine Jones. She was volunteering with *Serenity House* when I first spoke to her about project ideas and indicated to me that they were in need of a health program. After discussing our values and visions, we decided that collaborating would be an effective plan. My piece of the project is to create a health program for *Serenity House* based on scholarship. Jasmine will then take this information and implement the program next semester.

Keywords: health, leadership, vision, program

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Unhealthy Populations

Government bodies, insurance companies, and researchers have used BMI as a general test for health since its creation. BMI, or body mass index, is a measurement that uses weight in kilograms and height in meters to divide the population into 6 major categories. These are underweight (<18.5), normal weight (18.5 to <25), overweight (25 to <30), class 1 obese (30 to <35), class 2 obese (35 to <40), and class 3 obese (40 or higher). (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2016) This index is generally used as a screening tool and should not be considered a diagnostic tool due to its inability to differentiate between muscle and fat, take sex and age into consideration, and pinpoint localized body fat. That being said, these inaccuracies likely impact the United States equally. This means that obesity comparisons between different regions or states are still accurate ways of viewing what areas struggle most with this epidemic.

The Center for Disease and Control prides itself on saving lives and protecting people. One way they do this is by documenting prevalence rates of various illnesses. In 2017, they published the obesity prevalence in the United States. They organized this data by education, age, and location. For the purpose of this program, location and education are the most applicable. The south was named the region with the highest percent of adult obesity at 32.4%. Tennessee and 21 other states fell in the second highest category of obesity with rates varying from 30% to less than 35%. Only 7 states had a higher prevalence of obesity. It is clear that obesity is an issue for the state of Tennessee, and obesity can be an indicator of poor health practices. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention also found that obesity decreased with

increased level of education. This implies that the health problem plaguing the United States is a result of people being uneducated and unaware of appropriate health practices. (CDC, 2018)

Information from the CDC shows that region and level of education can be risk factors for poor health, but there are other factors at play. One of these is socioeconomic status. It has been proven that poverty leads to major health issues such as anemia, malnutrition, increased susceptibility to infections, and severe fatigue. Poverty strikes families in many ways, but one way that has become more prevalent over the last half of the century involves single parent families. In a study of the Canadian population, it was found that 13% of all Canadian families are single parent families. 82% of these families are led by a female. 62% of these single parent families led by women lived below the poverty line. (Cohen, 1994) Single mothers are not the only women suffering from poverty. Poverty rates are higher for women in general, across all races/ethnicities and age groups in America. (Cawthorne, 2008) There are several reasons for this gap in poverty, including the wage gap, childcare, and family planning. Regardless of the reasons that poverty strikes women, those affected by poverty often experience negative health as well.

Health and wellness may be a priority for all, but some populations are faced with more challenges when it comes to achieving wellness. Southern culture and food practices are leading to higher obesity rates. On the other side of the spectrum, single mothers are faced with poverty and decreased health due to poverty. This is where the target group for our health program meets our research. *Serenity House* is a women's shelter for women in any stage of homelessness. Some of the problems that *Serenity House* addresses for its members include case management, assistance with benefits, healthcare coordination, employment training, and access to education. Overall, *Serenity House* is aimed at creating a better quality of life for women in need. (Serenity

House Women's Shelter Inc., 2017) This organization is in search of a health program that will improve the health of women in the Knoxville community. Before creating this program, it is necessary to look at the norms for health awareness.

Health Awareness

Health awareness has become a larger focus for the United States over the last decade. There are several examples of this in federal programming, work from private organizations, and state programs. For example, the 2013 Congressional Budget included an entire act focused on mental health awareness and improvement (Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions [HELP], 2013). The 2015 Congressional Budget also included a mental health awareness and improvement act, but this one focused more on initiatives, interventions, treatments, and practices in addition to educational/awareness programs (HELP, 2015).

Private organizations have also added strength to this health awareness wave. One example of this is *Healthline Media, Inc.*'s publications. *Healthline* is a privately-owned provider of health information. One article that *Healthline* posted this year was titled "2018 Health Awareness Calendar". This article included over 200 health awareness celebrations to make note of for the year 2018. These varied from well-known holidays like National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (October) and World Suicide Prevention Day (September 10) to lesser known celebrations like PTSD Awareness Day (June 27) and Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN) Day (April 5). (Fischer, 2018)

Even state departments have been getting in on the action. This year, Governor Bill Haslam decided to make the week of October 1-7 "Child Health Week" in Tennessee. The purpose of this week was to celebrate and raise awareness of what Tennessee does to promote

health for its children. The Tennessee state website suggested that Tennesseans get involved by downloading and posting promotional material ahead of time, joining one of the planned programs for the week, and posting with the hashtag #TNChildHealthWeek2018 on social media. Some of the health programs for this week included physical activity, mental health, nutrition, and hygiene. (Dreyzehner, 2018)

These three methods of spreading health awareness not only illustrate the variety of ways awareness has increased over the last several years, but they also bring up two major points about health awareness. One of these is that health involves more components than physical activity and nutrition. Because many groups and programs focus on these two elements of health, it is easy to ignore or forget about other elements of health. The programs above mention other aspects like mental health, hygiene, and social health. Because there are so many sectors in the health and wellness field, it is necessary to explore these further before determining which sectors are important to include and feasible to incorporate into the health program for *Serenity House*. Another aspect of these awareness techniques is their progression toward more active programs. All of them showed that awareness and education is the first step to better health, while programs, interventions, and practices are the next step. This relates to the set-up of the health program. Based on these examples, it would be logical to incorporate an educational component followed by active involvement.

Defining Health

So far, the population (impoverished women in the Knoxville community) and problem (poor health) have been identified. The next step in creating a health program is to define the terms health and wellness. There are two general definitions of health. One is the state of being free of physical or psychological disease, illness, or malfunction, while the other is the general

condition of body and mind (Health, n.d.). Wellness, on the other hand, involves a holistic approach. There are eight dimensions of wellness, and all impact one's quality of life. These dimensions are physical, intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, vocational, financial, and environmental (Stoewen, 2017, p. 861-862). At the beginning of this health program, Jasmine will teach the group what each dimension includes. Throughout the program, these aspects of wellness will be discussed. At the end of the program, participants will let Jasmine know which aspects they have improved on and aim to improve further.

Dimensions of Wellness

Physical Dimension- caring for the body in order to stay healthy in the present and future

Intellectual Dimension- valuing learning, responding positively to intellectual challenges, and aiming to expand skillsets to share with others

Emotional Dimension- understanding and respecting the feelings, values, and attitudes of others and yourself

Social Dimension- maintaining healthy relationships, developing friendships and intimate relations, caring about others, and letting others care about you

Spiritual Dimension- finding purpose, value, and meaning in your life (can involve organized religion)

Vocational Dimension- participating in work that provides personal satisfaction and aligns with your values and goals

Financial Dimension- managing resources within your means and making informed financial decisions

Environmental Dimension- understanding how the environment affects your health and being aware of the effects your habits have on the environment

Project Focus

For several reasons, Jasmine and I have decided to focus on one element of wellness in our health program. One reason is time management/quality of work. I will be spending one semester completing research and creating a program. Then Jasmine will spend one semester implementing this program. With other time commitments, focusing on one element is the most feasible option. Our decision also has to do with our studies. I am a kinesiology major, while Jasmine is a nutrition major. Both of us are also minoring in leadership studies. We think our combined knowledge and curriculum relate most to the physical dimension of wellness. Other dimensions will be mentioned throughout, but our intended goal is to improve the physical health of participants in the program. With that in mind, we are planning out a seven-week program. The first week will cover wellness dimensions, a health awareness assessment, and goal-setting techniques. The next five weeks will cover sleep, nutrition, physical fitness, hygiene, and relaxation. The last week will focus on feedback, results, and future plans.

Goal Setting

Goal setting is a technique used by everybody, whether they are aware of this or not. When someone wakes up in the morning and says – “I want to get laundry done, go grocery shopping, and email this person by the end of the day,” – he/she has set a goal for him/herself. Most people naturally set goals for themselves, and research shows that goal setting can be a powerful technique in enhancing performance... as long as it is implemented correctly (Weinberg & Gould, 2015, p. 355). There are a group of principles used for effective goal

setting, and the goal setting session for week one of the program will be influenced by all of these (Weinberg & Gould, 2015, p. 357). These principles of goal setting are:

- Set specific goals
- Set both long and short-term goals
- Set moderately difficult, but realistic goals
- Record goals
- Provide goal support
- Consider motivations
- Provide evaluation of and feedback on goals

With these principles in mind, the goal setting portion will begin by the participants making a list of goals they have for this program. We will advise them to write down specific goals, both long and short-term goals, and moderately difficult but doable goals. After this, we will ask them to write down why these are their goals. It is important to understand motivations for goals. Several studies of motivation in sport have found that intrinsic motivation (reasons within us- as opposed to physical or external rewards for our behavior) works more effectively in long-term scenarios (Weinberg & Gould, 2015, p. 133-137). While external rewards like money and praise can be effective motivators, intrinsic motivation is often more effective in the long run. While participants list their reasons for having these goals, we will get a better idea of what is motivating them. We can use this information to better shape the program to benefit them.

The last goal setting piece of week one will be showing them ways to choose effective goals. We will explain two methods for setting goals. After describing these methods, we will have everyone set a goal according to one of these methods. While there are several goal setting methods they could use, we will cover the goal setting staircase and SMARTS goals. The goal

setting staircase focuses on understanding where the participant's current abilities are, where the participant wants to be, and setting a staircase of smaller goals that will help them ultimately reach the place they want to be. SMARTS goals are an updated version of the well-known SMART goal exercise. The acronym helps participants remember to make goals that are specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, timely, and self-determined (Weinberg & Gould, 2015, p. 365). Each week (at the beginning or end of the session), we will ask if anyone has made any progress with their set goal. This will allow us and other participants to provide support for their goals. This will also be a form of evaluation of the goals. The last week will focus on completely evaluating their progress and choosing future goals for them to pursue now that the program is over.

Physical Health

The very last component of week one will be telling the group our plan for the rest of the weeks. The program will be seven weeks long, and five of these weeks will be about one specific element of physical health. Through research and past coursework, I have decided to focus on five elements of physical health. These are sleep, physical activity, nutrition, hygiene, and relaxation (Hoebeke, 2015). Each week will explain why that element is important, how the participant can improve in that area, and give examples/tips/ideas for them to try.

Sleep

Everyone needs sleep. While scientists have invented shortcuts for travel, cooking, and many other life tasks over the years, they have not found a way around sleep. Not only do we need sleep, we all need a certain amount of sleep to properly function. Sleep needs vary across age groups during adolescence, but adults generally need seven to nine hours of sleep (National

Sleep Foundation, 2018)). So what happens when society fails to meet this sleep requirement? The short-term effects of sleep deprivation are poor concentration, irritability, and daytime fatigue (Barone, 2018, p. 5). When people continue this habit of getting less sleep than needed, these effects worsen. Long-term sleep deprivation can cause blood pressure to go up (increasing the risk for cardiovascular disease), a weakened immune system, poor cognitive performance, and an increased risk of car accidents (Barone, 2018, p. 5-6).

While the amount of sleep one gets is important, quality of sleep is just as significant. There are several techniques to help people fall asleep faster and feel better when they awaken. Some of these techniques are specific to pre-sleep time, while other techniques involve daily habits. One simple technique is to make your bedroom a sleep-inducing environment. This involves keeping a cool temperature and making the room as dark as possible. Another simple technique is to avoid watching tv, looking at phones, working on the computer, or reading 30-60 minutes before bed. These activities prevent production of the hormone melatonin... which is vital to the process of falling asleep. (Barone, 2018, p. 6-7).

Daily habits can also influence sleep habits. It is important to avoid caffeine, alcohol, nicotine, and other chemicals that impact sleep (Barone, 2018, p. 6). In an ideal world, people should avoid these altogether. If one is used to having caffeine or needs caffeine, he/she should cut it out after 1 pm. If one would prefer to drink, he/she is advised to have one alcoholic beverage with dinner. Nicotine should be treated the same way as caffeine... limited to daytime. Other daily habits that can influence sleep quality are eating, sleeping, and exercising. It is important to go to bed with a happy stomach. This means you should avoid being full or hungry when heading to bed (Barone, 2018, p. 7). If you find your stomach growling before bed, eat a light snack. When it comes to sleepiness throughout the day, aim for shorter and earlier naps.

Long naps closer to bedtime can interfere with the ability to fall asleep (Barone, 2018, p. 8).

Regular cardiovascular exercise also helps with sleep (Barone, 2018, p. 8). This method is more effective when used earlier in the day; try to avoid exercise just hours before bed.

Another element of life that can impact quality sleep is stress level. Worrying before bed can make it difficult to fall asleep. The impact of stress on sleep does not stop there. When combined with sleep loss, stress can increase cortisol levels, lead to dyslipidemia, and increase insulin resistance. These symptoms can ultimately lead to diabetes, heart disease, fatigue, and depression. (Kryger, Roth, & Dement, 2011, p. 736) There are several methods to relieve stress before bed. If necessary, establish a pre-sleep routine including meditation, listening to soothing music, taking a warm bath, or drinking warm milk (Barone, 2018, p. 7). Another method of relieving stress involves making a list of worries before a major event (Beilock, 2013, p. 158-162). This can also be applied to a pre-sleep routine.

Physical Activity

Physical activity is one of the most talked about components of physical health. It is obvious to the general population that exercising helps with weight loss and weight maintenance, but there are several other health benefits of exercise that often go unmentioned. Exercise has been proven to lower the risk of several diseases including cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and a variety of cancers. Physical activity has also been tied to improved cognition, bone health, physical function, and quality of life (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [HHS], 2018, p. 32). On top of physical wellness, exercise can also impact emotional and spiritual wellness. It has been documented that exercise reduces side effects of both anxiety and depression... resulting in a positive relationship between physical activity and psychological

well-being (Weinberg & Gould, 2015, p. 406-412). All in all, physical activity is good for us. So how much of it is necessary for these health benefits?

There is a set of physical activity guidelines that have been created for Americans by the United States Department of Health and Human Services. This can be referenced for information on why physical activity is important, how much of it is necessary, and what types of physical activities are available. So how much exercise do Americans need? These guidelines state that adults need 150-300 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity aerobic activity a week for substantial health benefits. In addition to this, adults should do muscle-strengthening activities at least 2 days a week for additional health benefits. One easy way of thinking about this is to participate in physical activity for 20-50 minutes a day, six days a week or 30-60 minutes a day, 5 days a week. (HHS, 2018, p. 8)

It is also important to consider the type of physical activity to participate in. There are five major types of physical activity: aerobic, muscle-strengthening, bone-strengthening, balance, and flexibility. Aerobic activity is anything that increases heart rate and breathing above normal measures. Muscle-strengthening and bone-strengthening activities often involve resistance, weight-lifting, or weight-bearing exercises. Balance activities strengthen core muscles and prevent falls. Flexibility activities focus on keeping full range of motion. (HHS, 2018, p. 29-30). It is important to mix up exercise regimens and include every type of activity.

Physical activity can sometimes feel like a chore, so staying motivated is a major step in changing physical activity habits. One simple way of keeping motivation is to vary the activity, place, and time (Healthwise Staff, 2017). This does not mean to only exercise when the time presents itself. Make time for exercise but switch up the types of exercises and timing of these activities so they do not become mundane. Other ways to follow through on physical activities

are to find activities that are truly enjoyable and finding accountability partners. Another simple way to increase physical activity is to add it into daily activities. This could be taking the stairs instead of the elevator, parking further away from store entrances, or stretching in the morning or before bed. Every little bit of exercise helps, so it is not always necessary to plan 30 minutes of exercise each day.

Nutrition

As discussed earlier, obesity is a major problem for the United States... especially the southern portion of the United States. While physical inactivity is one cause of this problem, poor nutrition is also to blame. Poor food choices have a direct tie to not only obesity, but also cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, and bone health (HHS and U.S. Department of Agriculture [USDA], 2015, p. 2-3). Similar to the physical activity guidelines, the Department of Health and Human Services and the United States Department of Agriculture teamed up to create a set of dietary guidelines. These can be referenced for questions about the impact of food choices on health, general health food guidelines, and specific tips according to sex and age group. Our health program will cover these general guidelines, provide helpful tips, and give some sample recipes.

The Dietary Guidelines provide one image to reference when creating a healthy meal. This image is called “My Plate.” My plate contains five food groups: fruits, vegetables, grains, protein, and dairy. In general, people should try to include every food group when creating a healthy meal. While this is a general reminder of what a meal should include, there are a few specific rules to take note of. The recommended amount of vegetables per day is two and a half cups. These should include some combination of the five subgroups of vegetables (dark green, red and orange, legumes, starchy, and other). The recommended amount of fruits per day is two

cups. When choosing fruits and vegetables, opt for fresh and frozen foods over canned, dried, and juices. Fruits and vegetables in their whole and fresh forms contain more nutritional value than their processed counterparts. The recommended amount of grains is six ounces, with half of that being whole grains. Similar to fruits and vegetables, the more processed the grain is, the worse it is for your health. Three cups of dairy is the recommended amount per day. When it comes to dairy products, search for low-fat and fat-free options when possible. Lastly, the recommended amount of protein is five and a half ounces per day. When it comes to protein, try to mix up what kind of protein you eat and avoid adding a lot of salt, sugar, or fat. These are the general guidelines for a healthy meal according to the HHS and USDA. (HHS and USDA, 2015, p. 21-24).

While these general guidelines are helpful, there are several tips to help people stay on track. The goal is to have a list of healthy eating tips for the participants to have. They can choose what tips apply to them and work on those details. One of these tips is to make water your drink of choice. There are many benefits to drinking water, including weight maintenance benefits, appetite reduction, and replacement of unhealthier drinks like soda or alcohol (Bjarnadottir, 2017). Another simple tip is to stay in, rather than going out for food. This not only lowers the cost of food, but also allows people to see exactly what is going into their meals (Bjarnadottir, 2017). Another simple tip is to think about balance. Sugars and desserts are allowed, as long as eaten in moderation. When making food plans, think more about balance than avoiding “unhealthy” foods.

These guidelines and tips are ultimately ineffective if there is no way to measure them. Hold yourself accountable by making a simple checklist of what food groups were eaten... and if the foods within those groups were healthy choices. Other ways of holding yourself accountable

includes phone applications or websites. One favorite tracker is called “My Fitness Pal”. This application is customizable by weight, activity level, gender, age, and weight goals. After filling out your specific information, the app provides you with a total calorie amount and a gram measurement for several sub-groups including protein, carbohydrates, and sugars. It is convenient to use... allowing consumers to log food from restaurants, packaged goods, and home recipes with ease. This application also provides health challenges, recipes, and peer interaction that can help people stay on track with their nutritional goals. (Fitness starts, 2018)

This is just one of several methods of holding oneself accountable. Another way to do this is to find a companion with similar nutrition goals to collaborate with when finding recipes, cooking, and eating.

Hygiene

Personal hygiene is another element of physical health. There are two major ways that hygiene impact health. One of these is fighting off germs and illness (Better Health Channel, 2011). Several hygiene habits like brushing your teeth or washing your hands have a direct correlation to preventing diseases. On the other hand, good hygiene often boosts self-esteem (Wood, 2017). While we will be focusing on the physical impacts of personal hygiene, it is important to remember that there are also emotional and social impacts.

The most obvious way to view personal hygiene is by daily habits. Many of these techniques are common practices, but is important to be reminded of them every so often. First and foremost, wash your hands. Wash them before making or eating food, after using the bathroom, after sneezing, and after handling trash. Basically, there is rarely a wrong time to wash your hands. Secondly, bathe on a regular basis. The body is constantly shedding skin. If this skin combines with dirt and is not cleaned off in a timely manner, illnesses are likely to occur. Next,

brush your teeth and floss often. Most dental professionals advise brushing teeth after every meal, but brushing twice a day (morning and night) will provide most health benefits. These are easy habits to form, and once they are formed, physical health is improved. (Orenstein, 2018)

Some hygiene habits that people often forget about are specific to women. To avoid bacterial infections and sexually transmitted diseases, it is important to take care of the vagina. One way to do this is to keep the vagina dry and clean. The vagina is self-cleaning, so there is no need to use harsh cleaners. There are some special ways to keep the vagina dry. One way is to wear breathable underwear. Fabrics like cotton can help you avoid unwanted moisture, while fabrics like satin can retain moisture, reduce airflow, and allow for bacteria growth. (Feintuch, 2018) Another simple, but important tip for women is to wipe properly. If bacteria from the colon makes its way to the urethra, UTIs are likely to occur. To avoid this, females should wipe front to back. (McKeever, 2017). Lastly, women and men alike should consider sexual encounters when it comes to hygiene. It is important to practice safe sex. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention states that condoms reduce the risk of any sexually transmitted disease that is transmitted by genital fluids. Condoms are less effective when it comes to STDs that are spread through skin-to-skin contact. All in all, using condoms correctly and talking openly with sexual partners should reduce any sexually transmitted diseases. (Feintuch, 2018)

The last major portion of hygiene is knowing when and where to get help with medical issues. People should check in with particular doctors as needed. This varies by person. If someone has an abundance of moles and history of skin cancer in the family, it is likely that they will check in with a dermatologist periodically. If someone has a need for glasses, he/she will need to visit an optometrist every two to five years (Prevent Blindness, 2018). In fact, whether a person has problems with eyesight or not, everyone is advised to see an eye doctor this often to

check for signs of glaucoma, diabetes, high blood pressure, and cancer (Heiting, 2018). It is also advised for all people to check in with a dentist every six months to two years (American Dental Association, 2018) and have a general physical exam every one to three years (Medline Plus, 2018). In addition to general physical exams, women should visit their gynecologists yearly (Medline Plus, 2018). If it is a concern of money or insurance, there are several websites that can help patients find doctors that accept their specific insurance or are within their budget. One example of this is <https://www.medicare.gov/physiciancompare/> (U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2018).

Relaxation

In the fast-paced environment of today, it is easy to forget about relaxation. While often overlooked, the benefits of relaxation should not be discounted. While each person's method and amount of relaxation differs, the results of relaxation are similar. Relaxation has been proven to relieve stress and anxiety. This, in turn, decreases blood pressure, improves immune systems, and relieves pain. Relaxation also results in release of "feel-good hormones" like serotonin and oxytocin and a decrease in stress hormones like cortisol. Overall, relaxation helps a person feel good... which can spill over into every other area of life. (Mental Health America, 2018)

Most relaxation methods are centered around reducing stress. These methods can be divided into two different sections: somatic and cognitive. Somatic reduction techniques focus on relaxing the body, while cognitive methods focus on relaxing the mind. A couple of popular somatic methods are progressive relaxation and breath control. Progressive relaxation uses the tensing of muscles to allow for ease in relaxing those same muscles. Breath control focuses on taking deep breaths to slow down the body. Some popular cognitive techniques are meditation and systematic desensitization. Meditation involves the use of a quiet place, comfortable

position, a mental device, and a passive attitude to quiet the mind and reduce muscle tension. Systematic desensitization is more focused on reducing stress before a big event. To do this, a person will think about consecutive scenarios that progressively become more stressful. By taking each step slow and reducing stress as you go, stressful events should become easier to think about and eventually participate in. (Weinberg & Gould, 2015, p. 276-280)

While these scientific methods of relaxation are effective, they are somewhat odd practices to put into a daily routine. There are several other techniques that can be easily done, no matter where or when they are taking place. One of these is writing it down. Making a list of worries or stressors is a helpful tool for releasing stress and finding a new way to process it (Beilock, 2013, p. 158-162). Another way to relax is listening to music. A soothing playlist can lower blood pressure, heart rate, and anxiety (Moninger, 2018). Lastly, find time to laugh. Laughing can help reduce cortisol and increase endorphins, ultimately making people happier (Moninger, 2018).

The last two paragraphs discussed common scientific practices and daily practices of relaxation; however, there are endless methods of relaxation. The most important thing to remember is to make the relaxation method work for you. Some people find peace and relaxation in exercises like dancing, swimming, or running. Other people would prefer slower or still movements like stretching, yoga, or meditation. (Help Guide, 2018) A couple of other ways people relax involve other people or animals. Petting a dog can release oxytocin and reduce cortisol levels, while hugging someone can release serotonin and reduce blood pressure (Mental Health America, 2018). As long as a person enjoys his/her method of relaxation, health benefits will follow.

Conclusion

The last day of the program will be solely dedicated to assessing the last six weeks. Feedback is an important component of both motivation and goals. (Weinberg & Gould, 2015, p. 127) If the participants give motivational feedback such as “This was a great program!” or “You should definitely continue and expand this project.”, leaders like Jasmine and I will be better motivated to continue this program for others. If participants give instructional feedback such as “I enjoyed the sleep tips.” or “I think we could use more help with nutrition.”, leaders can alter the program to fit the needs of future participants... which comes full circle to goals. People set goals to reach a desired outcome. Even in this health program, there was designated time to work on goal-setting techniques. Evaluation allows one to assess their goals and see if they are successfully met (Weinberg & Gould, 2015, p. 363). By getting feedback from participants, this allows Jasmine and I to see how effective our goals were. It also allows us to change these goals for future success. The last day will include an anonymous assessment about the program, assessment of the participant’s goals, and a final discussion. We will then use these results to decide on plans for this project in the future.

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Day 1: Introduction to the program

1. **Leader Introductions-** Tell the participants a little bit about yourself. Say your name, major, career plans, and how you got involved with this project.
2. **Participant Introductions-** Go around the room and let everyone tell you their name. You can ask for more information if you think it is beneficial. Read the room to decide if a more formal ice breaker is needed or if a general get to know you will work better.
3. **Purpose-** Explain the purpose of this program to participants. Tell them that it is a health program designed to educate and encourage them on physical health practices. Describe the layout of the seven-week program. Week one is a general introduction to the program and health, 2-6 will cover major sections of physical health, and 7 will be a wrap-up of the entire program.
4. **Key Definitions**
 - a. Health- condition of the body and mind
 - b. Wellness- holistic approach to good health and wellbeing (includes 8 major dimensions)
 - i. Physical dimension- caring for the body in order to stay healthy in the present and future
 - ii. Intellectual dimension- valuing learning, responding positively to intellectual challenged, and aiming to expand skillsets to share with others
 - iii. Emotional dimension- understanding and respecting the feelings, values, and attitudes of others and yourself
 - iv. Social dimension- maintaining healthy relationships, developing friendships and intimate relations, caring about others, and letting others care about you
 - v. Spiritual dimension- finding purpose, value, and meaning in your life (can involve organized religion)
 - vi. Vocational dimension- participating in work that provides personal satisfaction and aligns with your values and goals
 - vii. Financial dimension- managing resources within your means and making informed financial decisions
5. **Why go over those definitions?** – Explain that health has many dimensions, so the more dimensions you try to include and fulfill, the happier and healthier you will be. Our program in particular will be covering physical health because of 1) our expertise (kinesiology and nutrition majors created it) and 2) time (we want to fully and successfully cover this material, while providing enough time for participants to process it and apply it to their daily lives).
6. **Health Awareness Assessment-** We will use this tool to see where participants are at, help them start thinking about health, and provide them with material they can use for goal-setting activities. You can type these questions up and print them off as a survey, ask them the questions and tell them to write down answers on a piece of paper, put the questions on a powerpoint slide and have them write it on paper, or any other method that works for you. Here are some sample questions, but you can add or take away any that you like.

- a. On a scale of 1-10, how well do you sleep? (consider amount, ability to fall asleep, ability to stay asleep, waking up feeling rested, etc.)
 - b. Do you eat healthy? (describe the ways in which you successfully eat healthy... include the ways you fall short as well)
 - c. How would you describe your exercise habits? (consider amount, type, regularity, team or solo activities)
 - d. Do you think you have good hygiene? (wash body, clean teeth, practice safe sex)
 - e. Do you take time to relax? (how often, what do you do, how effective is it)
7. **Goal Setting-** After the assessment, we will follow up with some goal-setting. Begin by asking the participants why they are there. This “why” will influence the types of goals they will set. You will then describe 2 goal-setting techniques and ask them to choose 1 of the techniques to set a health goal for themselves. After describing the goal-setting methods and giving them time to make their own goals, ask them to share their goals. You can have them get in pairs, small groups, or allow them to discuss them all together. If it is a large group, break them into smaller groups. The smaller the group, the easier it will be for participants to share these goals, while larger groups will increase accountability among members. At the end of the goal-setting session, explain that it is okay to change or alter your goal throughout the program. They are in no way bound to sticking with this goal. Also, they can continue to add goals once they have reached a previous goal or have made substantial progress.
- a. **SMARTS Goals-** Have participants make a goal and fill out every portion of the acronym.
 - i. **S-** specific (the goal is not too broad)
 - ii. **M-** measurable (there are ways to measure success)
 - iii. **A-** action-oriented (you have plans that will help you reach the goal)
 - iv. **R-** realistic (it is not incredibly difficult or unreasonable to reach this goal)
 - v. **T-** timely (there is a time-frame or target date to guide you)
 - vi. **S-** self-determined (you chose this goal because you wanted to, not because someone told you this was your goal)
 - b. **Goal Staircase-** This is more visual and allows participants to identify where they are. Have them first draw a staircase with 5 stairs. They can add more if needed. Some people like to start at the 1st stair, while others like to work backwards from the 5th. Explain that they can approach the staircase however they like.
 - i. **1st stair-** What is your current ability?
 - ii. **2nd stair-** Describe your first short-term goal.
 - iii. **3rd stair-** Describe your second short-term goal.
 - iv. **4th stair-** Describe your third short-term goal.
 - v. **5th stair-** What is your long-term goal?
8. **Wrap-Up-** Thank them for their participation throughout the session. Tell them that we will be focusing on sleep for the next session. Ask them for any questions, comments, or concerns that they may have.

Day 2: Sleep

1. **Get a feel for the room-** Start this session by greeting everyone and seeing how they are doing. Then ask if anyone remembers anything from the week before. Try to get them to name a few facts, tips, or definitions that we covered. Then ask them what they already know about the topic of sleep. Why do they think it is important for overall physical health? By determining what they already know, you can decide what you need to dedicate more time to.
2. **How sleep impacts health-** We will begin every health session explaining why the topic is important to physical health. You can tell them that this will be the normal set-up for discussions over the next few weeks. Begin by asking them how many hours of sleep they get. They can hold it up on their fingers, speak about it, or write it down on a board... whatever is easier. Then tell them that adults require 7-9 hours of sleep a night. After that, explain what happens when people do not get that sleep.
 - a. **Short-term effects**
 - i. Poor concentration
 - ii. Irritability
 - iii. Daytime fatigue
 - b. **Long-term effects**
 - i. Increased blood pressure (which increases risk for cardiovascular disease)
 - ii. Weakened immune system
 - iii. Poor cognitive performance
 - iv. Increased risk of car accidents
3. **Improving Sleep Quality-** While getting the correct amount of sleep is important, sleep quality is also important. There are several techniques for improving sleep quality. These can be divided into three different categories. Go through the three categories and talk about the different tips. Allow for questions, comments, and conversations that arise.
 - a. **Pre-sleep Rituals**
 - i. Make your bedroom a sleep-inducing environment (keep the temperature cool and the room as dark as possible)
 - ii. Activities to avoid for 30-60 minutes before bed
 1. Watching tv
 2. Looking at phone
 3. Working on the computer
 4. Reading
 - b. **Daily Habits**
 - i. Caffeine- avoid caffeine after 1 pm
 - ii. Alcohol- only have one alcoholic drink with dinner
 - iii. Nicotine- limit to daytime
 - iv. Eating- go to bed with a happy stomach... avoid being full or hungry, appease hunger with a small snack before bed if needed
 - v. Sleeping- aim for shorter and earlier naps
 - vi. Exercising- regular cardiovascular exercise helps with sleep, is more effective when used earlier in the day, avoid exercise right before bed

- c. **Stress Reducers** (stress not only makes it hard to fall asleep, but can have various negative impacts on health when combined with lack of sleep... so basically de-stressing before bed can benefit health in more ways than one)
 - i. Listen to soothing music
 - ii. Meditate
 - iii. Take a warm bath
 - iv. Drink warm milk
 - v. Write down your worries to get them off your mind (or journal about your day, so you can move past it- whether it was good or bad)
- 4. **Sleep Challenge-** Sleep is most effective when used sufficiently and consistently. 1) Try to get 7-9 hours of sleep a night. 2) Try to go to bed and wake up around the same times each day. This week, we are going to challenge everyone to keep a sleep journal. We would like everyone to jot down 5 main components for each night between now and next week. These will help you see how well you already sleep and allow you to try out new techniques. ***Please remember that one week is not enough time to fully change sleep habits. This is more of a test to see where you are at. If certain techniques help you, continuing these methods over a long period time will better benefit your health.
 - a. **Sleep Journal Components**
 - i. Sleep techniques- jot down any pre-sleep rituals, daily habits, or stress-reducing techniques you used
 - ii. Naps- Did you take any today? What time and for how long?
 - iii. The time you fell asleep
 - iv. The time you woke up
 - v. Result- Did you feel rested when you awoke? Did you get tired throughout the day?
- 5. **Wrap-Up-** Close this week by first discussing the coverage of sleep. Did they learn something new? Do they already have effective techniques in place? Do they have any tips we didn't mention? Are they excited about trying any particular method? (Be sure to take notes on all discussions throughout the program. This will help us improve the program.) Ask them if anyone has made progress on their goal since last week. Ask if anyone wants to add a sleep goal after completing this session. Ask them if they have any questions about sleep or the program in general. (If they ever have a question that you don't know the answer to, tell them you will look into it and tell them next week. You can always text or email me to ask if my research has the answers they need.) Thank everyone for their participation, remind them to work on their sleep journal this week, and tell them that we will be talking about physical activity next week.

Day 3: Physical Activity

1. **Review-** Start this week with a review of the last session. Ask participants what they discovered after looking at their sleep journals. Poll the room to see who is getting enough sleep. Ask if any techniques were especially helpful. Let this conversation last however long it needs.
2. **Physical Activity Intro-** Tell the group that this week will focus on physical activity. Before telling them how much physical activity they need, ask them if they feel like they get enough exercise. Ask them what their favorite activities are. Ask them if they already know some health benefits of exercise.
3. **What are the health benefits?**
 - a. Helps with weight loss and maintenance
 - b. Lowers risks of many diseases
 - i. Cardiovascular disease
 - ii. Type 2 Diabetes
 - iii. Various cancers
 - c. Improves
 - i. Cognition
 - ii. Bone health
 - iii. Physical function
 - iv. Quality of life
 - d. Impacts
 - i. Physical wellness
 1. the ways listed above
 - ii. Emotional and Spiritual wellness
 1. Reduces side effects of anxiety and depression
 2. Improves psychological well-being
2. **How much exercise is needed to gain these health benefits?**
 - a. 150-300 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity aerobic activity a week for substantial health benefits
 - i. 20-50 minutes a day, 6 days a week
 - ii. 30-60 minutes a day, 5 days a week
 - iii. These are recommendations, but the minutes a day and days a week can vary from person to person.
 - b. Muscle-strengthening at least 2 days a week for additional health benefits
3. **5 Major types of exercise**
 - a. Aerobic- anything increases heart rate and breathing above normal measures
 - b. Muscle-strengthening- resistance, weight-lifting, or weight-bearing
 - c. Bone-strengthening- often similar to muscle-strengthening exercises
 - d. Balance- strengthen core muscles and prevent falls
 - e. Flexibility- keep full range of motion
 - f. ***It is important to mix up exercise regimens and include every type of activity at some point.
4. **Simple tips to increase exercise**
 - a. Vary the activity, place, and time- so you don't get bored

- b. Set aside time to exercise- don't just fit it in when you can because there is always an excuse or other responsibility that could present itself
 - c. Find exercises that you truly enjoy- it is easier to increase exercise if the activity also makes you happy
 - d. Find accountability partners- choose people who will encourage you during your exercise journey, workout with other people so you are motivated to avoid cancelling exercise plans, use a competitive spirit if that works with your personality
 - e. Take time to exercise... even when you don't have time- take the stairs instead of the elevator, park further away from store entrances, stretch in the morning or before bed
5. **Exercise Activity-** I'm going to give you some freedom with this because you will have more knowledge about the group at this point and some activities might work better than others. Basically, I want to have some sort of activity that encourages physical activity in a simple way... something they can think back to when they are trying to increase their physical activity outside of the program
- a. **Simply show them their options-** compile a list of easy exercises that they can do from the ease of their home, a list of parks in the area, a list of exercise memberships or classes that won't break the bank
 - b. **TED Talk and 30-day challenge-** I recently watched a TED Talk about how small changes are more sustainable than big changes. It also discussed that you can do anything for 30 days if you really try. One idea that I have is for you to show everyone this TED talk and ask them to create a 30-day exercise challenge for themselves. It can be as simple as taking the stairs everyday for the next 30 days. It's up to them. Then explain to them that there are 35 days left in the program. This means that they should start their challenge within the next 5 days. We will come back to their challenge on the last day to see how it has helped them and if they think they will continue with it. Here is the link:
https://www.ted.com/talks/matt_cutts_try_something_new_for_30_days#t-188011
 - c. **Lead a group fitness class or find someone to lead it-** This one is kind of risky. Not everyone enjoys the same type of fitness, and we definitely don't want to steer anyone away from exercise by showing them something that they don't enjoy. This is basically your call. If you think a group exercise class (like a shorter, 15-minute version) would be beneficial, go for it!
 - d. **Have a brainstorming session-** It is highly likely that participants have enjoyed some form of exercise at some point in their lives. Ask people what they already enjoy doing. Their answers could fuel more discussion or give new ideas to another participant. If you have your own personal advice about sticking to an exercise plan, feel free to mention it.
6. **Wrap-up-** Ask everyone about how they're feeling so far. Tell them they are almost halfway through the program. Ask if anyone has any questions about sleep, physical activity, goals, the 30-day challenge (if you choose to use this), or anything else we have discussed. Thank them for their participation, and tell them that we will be covering

nutrition the next week. Finish the session by having everyone write down any food allergies or special diets that they already follow. You will use this when compiling recipes for the next class.

Day 4: Nutrition

1. **Introduction-** Ask how everyone is doing. Use the thumb-meter (scale using thumbs down to thumbs up and every level in between) or counting fingers (1-10) to assess a few different things. Ask the following questions.
 - a. How is everyone feeling today?
 - b. How is everyone sleeping?
 - c. How is everyone doing on their exercise goals or challenges?
 - d. How successful are you when it comes to a healthy diet?

2. Why is nutrition important to health?

- a. Poor nutrition leads to
 - i. Obesity
 - ii. Cardiovascular disease
 - iii. Diabetes
 - iv. Cancer
 - v. Poor bone health
- b. Health eating leads to
 - i. Improved mood
 - ii. Higher motivation to exercise
 - iii. Better quality sleep
 - iv. Weight loss or maintenance

3. **Understanding Food Groups and Recommended Servings-** this is the list of foods and servings. You might want to add the MyPlate graphic or pictures to better explain portion sizes and examples of each group.

- a. Vegetables
 - i. 2 ½ cups per day
 - ii. Combination of the five subgroups
 - i. dark green
 - ii. red and orange
 - iii. legumes
 - iv. starchy
 - v. other
 - iii. Choose fresh and frozen over canned, dried, and juiced
- b. Fruits
 - i. 2 cups per day
 - ii. Choose fresh and frozen over canned, dried, and juiced
- c. Grains
 - i. 6 ounces per day
 - ii. Try to make half of that whole grains
 - iii. Avoid heavily processed grains
- d. Dairy
 - i. 3 cups per day

- ii. Choose low-fat and fat-free when possible
- e. Protein
 - i. 5 ½ ounces per day
 - ii. Vary your proteins
 - iii. Avoid adding a lot of salt, sugar, or fat

4. **Healthy Eating Tips**

- a. Make water your drink of choice- water helps with weight management, appetite reduction, and replaces unhealthier drinks like soda or alcohol
- b. Stay in for dinner- Eating in instead of going out reduces cost of food and allows you to see exactly what is going into your meal
- c. Think about balance- Sugars and desserts are okay... as long as they are eaten in moderation
- d. Slow down- give your body time to catch up with your eating... it takes about 20 minutes for your mind to figure out that your body is full, so pace yourself
- e. Don't shop without a list- If you only get what you plan on getting, you are less likely to pick up those unhealthy snacks or sugary treats that are on sale when you get to the store
- f. Bake or Roast instead of Grilling or Frying- try to cook your food in healthy ways... this includes baking, roasting, broiling, slow-cooking, poaching, pressure cooking, and more
- g. Choose smaller plates- the way you perceive your food affects how much you eat. If you have a large plate, you are more likely to eat more than you actually want or need. Smaller plates also trick your brain into thinking you're eating more (because the plate looks fuller)

5. Track your progress- Try to make note of what you have eaten throughout the day. If you notice you've gotten your fill of dairy, but haven't touched a vegetable, make sure your dinner is vegetable heavy. If you eat a lot of sugar at the beginning of the day, try to avoid sugar that night. Find a balance. Below are ways to track your progress.

- a. Simply write it down- make note of what you eat. Become more aware of your daily habits.
- b. Get a food tracking application- There are several phone apps or websites that help people keep track of their food and exercise habits. One of my favorites is "My Fitness Pal". Choose one of these apps and show them how simple tracking can be.
- c. Try to make every meal look like the MyPlate graphic- this is a more visual version of writing it down. It might be more helpful for people to model their meals after the epitome of health. This can also save them time and thinking when it comes to filling in gaps from earlier meals. If every meal has a fruit, vegetable, meat, dairy, and grain product, you are already on the right track.
- d. Find a buddy- Use friends, family, and coworkers as accountability partners. Share your health goals with these people, so they can call you out when you're trying to cheat.

6. Sample Recipes- This is where your judgement comes in again. If you think a health food demonstration would be beneficial, do that. If you think walking them through some sample recipes would be easier and more effective, work through some sample recipes with them. If you

think watching a chef on YouTube or The Food Network would be better, find a couple of videos for them to watch at the end of the session. Healthy, cheap, and easy recipes are what you're looking for.

7. **Wrap-Up**- Ask everyone how they feel about making a healthy meal for themselves and their families. Ask each person what piece of information or tip was the most insightful. Invite them to try one of these recipes or tips in the following week. Thank everyone for their participation, and tell them that we will be discussing hygiene next week.

Day 5: Hygiene

1. **Review-** Ask everyone how they are doing. Then ask them what they remember from last week. Ask if anybody attempted a healthy meal. Let them discuss their results. Explain to them that the last few weeks were material heavy and that this week will be a little bit of a break from that. A lot of what we will talk about is either common sense or standard practice.

2. **How does hygiene affect health?** – Most of this section will focus on daily practices that influence your health. These habits and practices can influence health in two ways.

a. Preventative medicine- Good hygiene habits involve fighting off germs and illnesses... ultimately preventing you from developing diseases

b. Self-esteem- being clean and fresh can help people in both the emotional and social wellness sectors

3. **Daily Habits-** These are the easiest ways that hygiene affects health. Try to follow these rules at all costs!

a. Wash your hands- before making or eating food, after using the bathroom, after sneezing, after handling trash... basically anytime you think you should wash your hands, just go ahead and do it.

b. Bathe on a regular basis- your skins is constantly shedding... if this skin combines with dirt and is not cleaned off often enough, illness can occur

c. Brush your teeth and floss- In a perfect world, people would brush their teeth after every meal... but in the morning and at night is often enough

4. **Specific to Women-** Women have an extra set of hygienic matters to deal with. This covers the basics.

a. Keep the vagina dry and clean- The vagina is self-cleaning, so there is no need to use harsh cleaners. There are a few ways to keep the vagina dry, though.

i. Wear breathable underwear made of fabrics like cotton

ii. Avoid fabrics like satin- they retain moisture, reduce airflow, and allow for bacterial growth

b. Wipe properly- wipe front to back to avoid bacteria from the colon making its way to the urethra... which is a leading cause of UTIs

c. Practice safe sex

i. Use condoms- condoms reduce the risk of sexually transmitted diseases that are transmitted by genital fluids

ii. Talk to your partners- speaking openly with partners can prevent being blindsided by a major medical issue

iii. Get tested- it is important to be tested for STIs and STDs if you are sexually active

5. When to go to the doctor

- a. Eye doctor- check-ups every 2-5 years, more often if you notice changes or experience problems
- b. Dentist- check-ups every 6 months-2 years
- c. General practitioner- physical exam every 1-3 years
- d. Gynecologists- once a year
- e. Specialists- If you are experiencing any specific problem or if your family is prone to a certain issue, visit a specialist sooner, rather than later. General practitioners can help guide you to a specialist based on your needs.

6. **Where to go to the doctor-** If money or insurance is an issue, you can always call an office to see what methods of payment they accept. There are also several websites to help you with this sort of thing. One example of this is <https://www.medicare.gov/physiciancompare/>. You can show them this example and/or others if they seem interested in this idea.

7. **Wrap-Up-** I could not think of any activity that I felt would really benefit them in this section of physical health. You are welcome to add a hygiene activity if you find one that you like. Do not feel like it's absolutely necessary, though. This is right over halfway through the program, so it is a great time to check up on everyone's goals. Ask them for general feedback. Tell them there will be another opportunity for more formal assessment, but we just wanted to check-in with how we are doing. Thank everyone for their participation, and tell them that we will be discussing relaxation next week.

Day 6: Relaxation

1. **Introduction-** Ask how everyone is doing. See where everyone is at on their goals. Explain that this week's topic is the easiest to understand, but the hardest to enforce. In the fast-paced world that we live in, we often forget to take time to relax.

2. **Why is relaxation important to health?** – Relaxation affects health in several ways. There are a few ways listed below.

a. Relieves stress and anxiety

- i. decreases blood pressure
- ii. improves immune systems
- iii. relieves pain

b. Affects hormones

- i. releases “feel-good hormones” like serotonin and oxytocin
- ii. decreases the production of stress hormones like cortisol

3. **Stress-reducing techniques-** Several relaxation techniques focus on reducing stress. These can be divided into 2 categories: somatic and cognitive. Somatic techniques focus on releasing stress from the body, while cognitive methods focus on releasing stress from the mind.

a. Somatic methods

- i. Progressive relaxation- uses the tensing of muscles to allow for ease in relaxing those same muscles
- ii. Breath control- focuses on taking deep breaths to slow down the body

b. Cognitive methods

- i. Meditation- use of a quiet place, comfortable position, mental device, and passive attitude to quiet the mind and reduce muscle tension
- ii. Systematic desensitization- a person thinks about consecutive scenarios that progressively become more stressful... in hopes that the progression will help make a big event less stressful

4. **Daily practices-** These are relaxation practices that can easily fit into your schedule.

a. Making a list- Writing down stressors or worries can help you process information and feelings... resulting in a reduction of stress.

b. Listen to music- Many people find an escape in music, so pick something you like and enjoy listening to it while you rest. (Also, soothing music has been proven to lower blood pressure, heart rate, and anxiety.)

c. Find time to laugh- Laughing can help reduce cortisol and increase endorphins. Whether it's a classic rom com or a goofy friend, find time to laugh.

d. Reach out to others- Find people that you can confide in when having a particularly stressful day. (Side note: Remember to celebrate moments of happiness with them as well.)

5. **Make it personal-** Much like exercise, it is difficult to set time aside for relaxing if you do not enjoy the particular method or action. Find something that you enjoy. Here are some aspects to consider.

a. Does movement or stillness relax you? – If movement relaxes you, try dancing, swimming, or running to de-stress. If stillness relaxes you, try stretching, yoga, or meditation.

b. Physical relationships- Hugging someone can release serotonin and reduce blood pressure. If you enjoy hugs or are in a close relationship with someone, take advantage of this as a stress-reliever.

c. Pets- Some people relieve stress by keeping animals. For example, petting a dog can release oxytocin and reduce cortisol levels.

6. **Progressive Relaxation Exercise-** You will now lead a progressive relaxation exercise, so they can see how it works. Some might even find this to be a technique they want to incorporate into their relaxation practices. There are a couple of progressive relaxation scripts you can use. My favorite one is https://www.law.berkeley.edu/files/Progressive_Muscle_Relaxation.pdf. Find one that works best for you.

7. **Wrap-Up-** At the end of the exercise, bring the group back to reality (wake them up if you need to). Ask them what they thought of this technique. Lead a discussion about the different techniques discussed. Ask if anyone has other methods that they enjoy. Do not bring up goals or challenges at the end of this session. Leave on a relaxing note. Thank everyone for their participation, and tell them that we will be wrapping up next week.

Day 7: Last Day

1. **Introduction-** Begin this day by thanking them for giving their best effort throughout the program. Tell them that there will be three major parts to the day: a general discussion, an assessment, and evaluation of goals.

2. **General Discussion-** This time will be for them to openly discuss the program with you. They can share positives, negatives, ask further questions, or tell how it has impacted their lives. Tell them to be open and honest in order for us to improve our program for future generations.

3. **Assessment-** This will be a written, anonymous survey about the program. While open discussion allows for general data, people are more likely to add details and answer more honestly when anonymity is involved. I don't have a set of questions for this. You will probably have a good idea of what to ask after going through the program with these participants. If you need help coming up with the survey or want my opinion on specific questions, just let me know. I'll list a couple of things I am curious about below if you want to use them. We will use these to help us improve the program.

- a. Which session was your favorite? Why?
- b. Which session was your least favorite? Why?
- c. What do you think is the most important thing you learned?
- d. What activity was your favorite? Why?
- e. Did you like the format of the program? What would you change?
- f. Is there anything that we did not cover that you think we should cover in the future?
- g. Has this program affected your mood or happiness? How so?

4. **Evaluation of Goals-** The remainder of the time will be used to discuss the participants' goals. Did they achieve the goals they set at the beginning of the program? Did they change or add to these goals? Did they make it through their 30-day fitness challenge? Will they continue habits that formed over the course of the program? Ask them for any final words. Thank them for their participation in our inaugural health program!

5. **Goodies-** If we want to give them a little something for completing the program, this would be the best opportunity. This could be cookies, cake, or candy. If we want to avoid giving out these sugary items, we could always give out other gifts for a bit more money. Some ideas are stress balls, wristbands, or water bottles. Also, we could print certificates showing that they completed the program. This is totally optional, and it will probably be easier to select a gift once you know the group. Let me know if you need any help with this!

***Thanks for helping my research come to life! I can't wait to see what you do with it!

Values, Vision, and Mission (The VVM)

A 1-2 page Final Project Vision Statement Worksheet

What passions or issues that matter to you does this project address?

There are two major aspects of this project, and I happen to be passionate about both. One of these is happiness. Throughout my entire life, I have aimed to make others happy. At some point, people might have even referred to me as a people pleaser. While I have grown out of trying to please others above myself, making people happy is something that has stuck with me. It truly brings me joy to put a smile on someone else's face. Another aspect of this project that resonates with me is health. I have known that I wanted to work in healthcare for most of my life. While I am still unsure of my future career, my fascination with the human body and healing is still driving me to pursue healthcare. Finally, my project is to create a health program for *Serenity House* based on research. I believe that improvement in health has a ripple effect on several other areas of life... resulting in a happier person. I am hoping my passion in the areas of health and happiness will help the project exceed expectations.

What are the values of this project? Are they shared? How will you share them?

The values of this project are health, happiness, and accountability. I define health as a state of fitness, nutrition, and attitude. I define happiness as a state of being happy or content. Finally, I describe accountability as holding yourself and others accountable for your/their goals. These are shared values. At the beginning of the semester, Jasmine and I sat down to discuss our plans for the project. We began our conversation by talking about values. This is what we found to be most important. By teaching this curriculum the way we are planning to, we will be showcasing these values to participants at *Serenity House*. If our values are not received well by leaders at *Serenity House*, then a discussion about altering these values must take place before presenting the program a second time.

What is your vision for this project (i.e., what, in the big picture, will be different because it was completed)?

My ultimate vision for this project is to help people live happier and healthier lives. Not only is this my vision for the project, but also for my life. I hope that my presence on this planet will have a positive impact on both the health and happiness of as many people as possible. In regard to this project, my vision is to positively influence the health of participants from *Serenity House*. I also hope that the knowledge they gain from the program will help them teach their own friends and family. If this teaching continues, this program has the potential to impact the entire community.

What is the mission of this project (i.e, Upon graduation and at interviews I will be able to say that "I worked on _____." Or What would make you proud to say "I spent my time working on _____.")

The mission of my project is to create a health program lesson plan. This involves doing extensive research on health, writing a paper that ties all of the important information together, and writing out a lesson plan in detail. Jasmine will then take this material and lead the program next semester. My mission will go hand in hand with Jasmine's... with the hopes that together, we can make our vision a reality.

How consistent are your personal leadership passions, values, mission, and vision with one another? How so?

As I said earlier, the goals of this project fit perfectly with my personal passions. My vision of making the world a happier and healthier place also aligns nicely with my personal passions. My current personal mission is to educate myself and find a career as a health professional. This will help me be more effective in my vision of making the world a healthier and happier place. When I find a profession, my mission will change. I will also likely be working on other, smaller missions while in the process of working on my professional mission. While these activities may vary, they should all help me fulfill my vision. Lastly, none of my top 5 values (faith, kindness, giving, work ethic, and respect) directly relate to these passions, vision, and mission; however, my values will likely influence how I pursue these three pieces. For example, one of my values is work ethic. This affects how I approach every activity I am involved in and will ensure that I give 110% to this project and any other I may take on.

Project Strategic Plan Assignment Format (Proposal) and Reflection (Report)

Project Abstract: My values for this project are health, happiness, and accountability. In this context, I define health as a state of fitness, nutrition, and attitude. I define happiness as a state of being happy or content. Lastly, I define accountability as holding yourself and others accountable for your/their goals. My ultimate vision for this project is to help a group of people live happier and healthier lives. My specific mission for this project is to better understand motivations that people have for staying healthy and happy. I will use this information to develop a health program for women of Serenity House.

The LSM Project Strategic Plan:

Goals	Success Criteria	Objective	Connection to Leadership Content	Strategic Activities (SA)	Resources	Target Date
Goal 1	Create a health program that can be implemented by Jasmine at Serenity House.					
	Success Criteria	There are a few different criteria for success. One of these is that the health program is created in a timely manner. We would like to implement this program within this semester, so time is of the essence. Another success criterion is that the program is approved by Jasmine's superiors. This will allow us to move onto our next goal in the project. Lastly, I would like for the program to be heavily influenced by research in both my major and minor. I would like for concepts from both kinesiology and leadership to be a part of building the program.				
		Objective 1.1	Speak with superiors about the vision for the program			
			LTP 1.1.1	Leading across, up, and down		
		Leadership concept this reflects		SA 1.1.1.1: We will be leading up to Jasmine's superiors when discussing the vision for this project. Some leaders can be too high up to understand what a group needs. We hope that our recent studies in health and Jasmine's volunteering connections will help them see that we understand what their health program needs. We are hoping to use this leading up technique when discussing the vision for the project.	- Vision, Values, and Mission -Goals for the project -Strategic Plan -Leading Up	10/2

			SA 1.1.1.2: I will be leading across to Jasmine when talking about how we will approach the project and finalizing our vision. Our varying styles of leadership could help or hurt this creation of a vision.	- MBTI/FIRO-B, other assessment results -Vision, Values, and Mission -Leading Across	10/9
			LTP 1.1.2	Inspiring a Shared Vision	
		Leadership concept this reflects	SA 1.1.2.2: Jasmine's superiors, Jasmine, and I will have to create a shared vision. I am hoping to accomplish this by painting a picture of the future that we want, show the changes needed for this picture to happen, decide on general values for the mission and vision, create a map (strategic plan), and challenge participants to change their health habits.	- Inspire a Shared Vision - Vision, Values, Mission -Strategic Plan -Creating a Vision -Conflict Resolution (Collaborative) -SLPI results	10/9
		<i>Objective 1.2</i>	<i>Complete research for the program</i>		
			LTP 1.2.1	Exhibit administrative skills	
		Leadership concept this reflects	SA 1.2.1.1: Utilize resources available to me in researching health.	-Library Sources -Speak with nutrition, kinesiology, and psychology professors -Think about past coursework, volunteering, and shadowing	10/2-10/15
			SA 1.2.1.2: Show technical competence in researching and writing up findings	-Library, Writing Center, and Career Center -Think back to all of the lab reports and	10/2-10/15

				research papers I've written	
		<i>Objective 1.3</i>	<i>Write up research findings</i>		
			LTP 1.3.1	Use Leadership Traits to my advantage	
		Leadership concept this reflects	SA 1.3.1.1: Use my top leadership trait of determination to push through any roadblocks I have in my research. Path-goal leadership may also be useful in overcoming obstacles.	-Leadership Trait Assessment -Overcoming Obstacles	10/2-10/30
			SA 1.3.1.2: Use my skill of integrity to make truthful statements about what I have found in my research.	-Leadership Trait Assessment -Socially Responsible and Ethical Leader -Top Values	10/2-10/30
<i>Goal 2</i>	Help Jasmine implement health program at Serenity House				
<i>Success Criteria</i>	<i>The main success criterion for this goal is that some sort of health program takes place at Serenity House. One success criterion that will be important later on is seeing how successful the program is and if continuation of the program is wanted.</i>				
		<i>Objective 1.1</i>	<i>Help Jasmine implement the program.</i>		
			LTP 1.1.1	<i>Use a combination of skills to make the program possible.</i>	
		Leadership concept this reflects	SA 1.1.1.1: Use conceptual skills to propose a vision that involves strategic planning and problem solving. This will help when we show our final program to Jasmine's superiors.	- Skills Assessment -Inspire a Shared Vision -Strategic Plan	10/30
			SA 1.1.1.2: Use administrative skills to show our expertise in health knowledge and layout of program.	- Skills Assessment -Knowledge and Experience from past classes -Experience as an editor of a paper	10/30

					-Sister can help with graphic design	
		<i>Objective 1.2</i>	<i>Come up with plan to test how well the program worked.</i>			
		Leadership concept this reflects	LTP 1.2.1	Establish a constructive climate to allow for continuation and improvements for the program.		
		Leadership concept this reflects		SA 1.2.1.1: Provide a program structure that will allow for continuation of the program if it is a success.	- Constructive Climate - Conflict Resolution	Throughout November
				SA 1.2.1.2: Build cohesiveness so that members conform to group norms, are more productive, and have high satisfaction.	- Constructive Climate -Outgroup/Ingroup	Throughout November
			LTP 1.3.1	Use democratic-style leadership and FIRO-B results to ensure that members' opinions are considered for future versions of program.		
		Leadership concept this reflects		SA 1.3.1.1: Work with program members and act as guides for them, rather than directors or bosses. The supportive path-goal leadership style may also come in handy.	-Democratic Leadership -Conflict Resolution -Supportive Path-Goal Leadership	Throughout November
				SA 1.3.1.2: Show the want for others to have inclusion and affection and need to have control. We want all of the members to feel included and loved throughout this program. Our need for control will be fulfilled through the needs of our participants. Their needs control our outcomes and future plans.	-FIRO-B -Socially Responsible and Ethical Leader -Democratic Leadership	Throughout November

Strategic Plan Reflection

It is honestly kind of funny to look back on this strategic plan now that I have completed my project. This plan definitely helped me understand where I wanted to go with the project, but the timeline was a bit optimistic. I also did not even make a dent in the leadership theories and techniques that I would encounter throughout the project. While this strategic plan is not a full representation of how my project turned out, I think it perfectly captured my ideas and project at that point in the semester. Now that I have seen how plans can change and can account for steps that I never knew were a part of the planning process, I am better prepared for strategic planning in the future.

There are only a couple of ways I surprised myself when it came to my leadership style, and I think the changes were mostly due to the situation. One of these was conflict-management styles. I have always been very strong in the category of avoidance. When it came to issues during this project (whether that was connecting with leaders of *Serenity House* or connecting with Jasmine), I definitely did not avoid the issue. I took on more of a compromising role. I tried to find a medium ground for the project based on the wants and needs of *Serenity House*, Jasmine, and myself. Another difference was my personality style. I normally view myself as a laissez-faire or democratic leader. When I was creating lesson plans for Jasmine, I found myself being very authoritarian in what I wanted her to do. I did leave some room for her to modify the program, but I found myself being a little bossier than I expected. While it is obvious that my leadership style change during this program, the cause is somewhat up in the air. I believe the change had to do with the context, which is interesting considering both the leadership framework for the minor and my personal leadership framework.

The most challenging part of this strategic plan was the way I approached it. The leadership practices that I referenced throughout my plan were mainly topics covered in the 201, 350, and 351 classes. As I progressed through the 450/451 class, I found several techniques that should have been part of my strategic plan. One of these was Kotter's Change Model. Beginning with step 1 of Kotter's Model, Jasmine and I struggled to establish a sense of urgency. Although Jasmine was volunteering at *Serenity House* weekly, it took a while for her to be able to meet with someone who had the authority to push our project forward. The next step involves creating a guiding coalition. Jasmine and I had support from professors, but we were lacking guidance and connection from the actual place where our program would take place. That being said, I am interested to see how the program works and what can be changed to better fit the need of *Serenity House*. I could continue to go through each step of Kotter's Model and evaluate our success with these steps, but in short, we could have used this model earlier on and can still use this model during the implementation and improvement of our program.

I am not sure how my peers viewed me as a leader during this project. There is a section of the program solely dedicated to evaluating the effectiveness of my curriculum. While this will be a great way to examine my program, I did not really include questions about my leadership ability- because the participants will not have a direct view of this. Jasmine will probably be the best person to evaluate this. Once I hand over my lesson plans to her and help her with implementation next semester, she can better judge my leadership practices.

Looking back as a leader (of this project and in other areas of my life), I find three major take-aways. 1) Leadership really is a process. There are so many varieties, theories, and examples of leadership. Every leadership journey is different, and every single leader is continually growing and changing. 2) Context is everything. Certain leadership practices can be perfect for one situation and absolutely ineffective in another scenario. This reminds me to never go into a leadership role or group activity thinking that my ideal plan will work perfectly. Feeling out a room, group, or situation is an important step in leading a successful initiative. 3) Understanding yourself as a person and leader is vital to becoming an authentic and ethical leader. ELPS 201 was a class that allowed me to learn a lot about myself, and this helped me grow as a leader. This idea also influenced my personal leadership framework- where I put "Leader" in the center to represent the need to understand yourself as a leader before forming relationships with followers. I think understanding these three concepts will help me navigate any leadership endeavor or group activity that I might encounter.



Understanding the Essentials: A Serenity House Health Program

Tory Wilder



Background

My project involves a collaboration with another member of my leadership studies cohort- Jasmine Jones. She was volunteering with *Serenity House* when I first spoke to her about project ideas and indicated to me that they were in need of a health program. After discussing our values and visions, we decided that working together would be an effective plan. My piece of the project was to **create a health program for *Serenity House*** based on scholarship (by December 2018). Jasmine will then take this information and implement the program next semester (Spring 2019).

Values

- Health**- a state of fitness, nutrition, and attitude
- Happiness**- a state of being happy or content
- Accountability**- holding yourself and others accountable for your/their goals

Mission

My mission was to do **research** on the population of *Serenity House*, health, and happiness. Then I could use what I found to **create lesson plans** for Jasmine to use for the program in the following semester.

Vision

The ultimate vision for this project is to help members of *Serenity House* live **happier and healthier** lives.

Research Results

- Several factors including the wage gap and childcare expenses have led to a high percentage of single mothers living in poverty.
- Poverty leads to major health issues like anemia, malnutrition, increased susceptibility to infections, and fatigue.
- There are eight major dimensions of wellness: physical, intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, vocational, financial, and environmental.
- Physical wellness can be broken up further into 5 categories: **sleep, physical activity, nutrition, hygiene, and relaxation.**

Key Leadership Principles

- The use of **administrative and conceptual** skills to transform our broad vision into a specific lesson plan
- **Leading up, across, and down to create a guiding coalition and communicate a vision for buy-in**
- **Establishing a constructive climate and using democratic-style leadership** to ensure that participants' opinions are considered for future versions of the program

Current Status and Future Plans

- Lesson plans for a seven-week health program have been created
- *Serenity House* has approved of a seven-week program to be held in Spring 2019
- Jasmine will be implementing this program in Spring 2019
- Depending on the reception of this program, we will make plans to keep it going or expand on it

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Project Status and Reflection

When Jasmine and I first sat down and brainstormed, we had a ton of ideas on what we wanted to create through the capstone project. We discussed components of health that we wanted to include, how long we thought the program needed to be, and laid out a time-frame for making this happen. For a while, I was hesitant to begin research until we found out exactly what *Serenity House* needed. When getting in touch with a leader became a struggle, I started doing some general research on the population and components of health. Even though I am interested in healthcare, I became a little overwhelmed with the abundance of factors that affect health. That's when I decided to narrow down what exactly we wanted to cover.

My research helped me define 8 key sections of total wellness. I decided to focus on physical wellness. There were a couple of reasons for this. One was the material included in physical wellness. This involved sleep, nutrition, physical activity, relaxation, and hygiene... all of which I have covered to some extent in my kinesiology curriculum. I had little to no expertise on the remaining sections of wellness. Another reason had to do with the general concept of health. Most people relate health to these physical aspects. At the beginning of the program, we make the participants aware that there more components to health than what we will be covering. This allows them the freedom to do more research on these topics if they think it is more important to their health but makes it easier for us to cover a few topics well rather than a lot of topics insufficiently.

Once deciding on a game plan for what was going to be covered, I completed research in these five areas. Then I compiled the data and wrote lesson plans for a seven-week program. This curriculum is designed for participants to meet 1 day a week for 7 weeks. The first day will be an introduction, the second-sixth weeks will cover five major topics in physical wellness (sleep,

physical activity, nutrition, hygiene, and relaxation), and the seventh week will be a time for wrap-up and assessment. This will help us better understand if our program is effective.

Originally, we thought we could research, design a curriculum, and implement a program in one semester. This did not happen, but we definitely made some progress. I completed my portion of the project (the research and lesson plans). Jasmine also has gotten approval to hold a seven-week program at *Serenity House*. The next step will involve Dr. Boyd and Jasmine reviewing my material. Jasmine can look closer at what I've found and see if I've covered everything we agreed on earlier in the semester. Then I can alter anything before next semester begins.

After the material is reviewed, the plan is to implement it. This is both exciting and nerve-wracking for me. In my head, I can see exactly how I want participants to react and the take-aways I want them to get from the program. When the program begins, my plans may not have the intended results. We could find that this material is not helpful to this population. The participants might like the material but find the activities or delivery lacking. As Jasmine teaches the lessons and leads the activities, she might have to alter lesson plans or come back to me for variations to fit the participants more accurately. This will most likely be as much of a learning experience for us as it is for the participants.

As I reflect on the project thus far, I am both proud and disappointed. On one hand, I have spent a lot of time creating a program that I think is really cool and informative. On another hand, I want to do so much more. There are so many more aspects to health, helpful activities, and knowledge to be gained. I could honestly continue working on this project for years and still come up short. This leaves me feeling that my job is not exactly finished... which is a bitter-

sweet feeling. I love learning and challenging myself, so maybe this will just push me to continue working on programs like this in the future.

Future Project Plans

As I said in my reflection, this project is just beginning. There is so much more to be done. First of all, the program has not been implemented yet, so the most pressing matter is for the program to actually happen. How the program is received will have a huge impact on future plans. For *Serenity House* alone, was this program appropriate and effective? We have set up a day for feedback and assessment as a part of the program. If *Serenity House* likes the program, but wants to change aspects here and there, we will begin there. If this is not a success at *Serenity House*, we could talk about reworking it for a better outcome. The program could also be tested at another place.

Serenity House is just one of many places that are in need of health programs. This program could be tested at another shelter. It could also be altered for other populations. If altered for a younger population, this could be tested at elementary schools or after-school programs. If altered for an older population, this could be tested at an assisted living home or in a retirement community. Health is important to all people, so there are so many variations to create and populations to reach.

Another aspect to consider is expanding the program material. As mentioned in other portions of my project, there are eight components of wellness (physical, intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, vocational, financial, and environmental). This program only covers physical wellness. It might be in our interest to find experts who could create a curriculum for these other components. With the help of others and time, this project could lead to an all-inclusive program about health. This would obviously affect the length of the program, so it would be important to speak with a possible site ahead of time before changing or adding to the curriculum.

The last aspect to consider is who will be doing all of this. I have been speaking in the first person, but it is unlikely that I, alone, will have a major impact on future plans of this project. I graduate in a couple of weeks. While I will be in Knoxville for the next year and a half, I will be working a job, exploring careers, and applying to a graduate program. The only way this program will continue on is if we find undergraduates to continue this work. This could happen through the Leadership Studies Minor, the Chancellor's Honors Program, or other organizations and friendships. Until we gain feedback about this program, I think it is best to let these relationships and connections grow organically. If someone hears about the program and wants to get involved, by all means, let them join. Otherwise, I would wait to see how the program is received before gathering volunteers to continue work. All in all, this program could become a legacy if it is picked up by the right people.