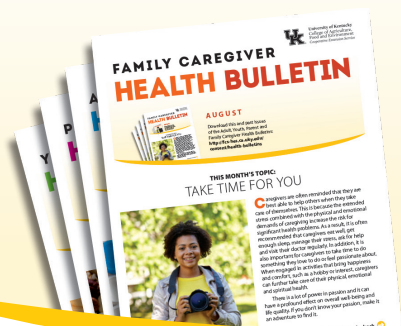




University of Kentucky
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FAMILY CAREGIVER HEALTH BULLETIN



FEBRUARY 2022

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

RESOLVE TO SELF-CARE AND SELF-PAMPER



Self-care includes keeping your physical, mental, and spiritual self healthy. According to Dr. Mathew Glowiak from the University of Southern New Hampshire, self-care can “clinically reduce and even eliminate anxiety and depression, reduce stress, improve concentration, minimize frustration and anger, increase happiness, and improve energy.” Glowiak also emphasizes that physically, proper self-care reduces cardiovascular disease, stroke, and cancer; and spiritually, it can help people discover purpose or meaning in life.

While many know to make self-care a priority, it is often pushed aside when faced with life’s challenges such as COVID-19, busy schedules (jobs, school, caregiving), poor health, financial crisis, various losses, etc.

Ignoring self-care can lead to distress. According to the CDC, common signs of distress include “feeling fear, anger, sadness, worry, numbness, or frustration; changes in appetite, energy, and activity levels; difficulty concentrating and making decisions; difficulty sleeping

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When you take time to spend time on yourself, you ultimately benefit everyone around you.

➔ Continued from page 1

or nightmares; physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems, and skin rashes; worsening of chronic health problems; and increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs.” Burnout can also lead to depression, anxiety, resentment, and many other negative consequences (Glowiak, 2020). If such negative experiences, behaviors, and feelings persist and/or prevent your ability to carry out daily responsibilities, it is important that you call a health-care provider and seek professional services (CDC).

Many self-care plans focus on various domains of wellness that strengthen, develop, and nourish who we are at our core so that we do not fall prey to distress and burnout. For example, Glowiak highlights the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA) eight dimensions of wellness that make us whole: (1) emotional; (2) environmental; (3) financial; (4) intellectual; (5) occupational; (6) physical; (7) social; and (8) spiritual. When we keep these dimensions in balance, we reach higher levels of wellness for the long-term.

Drs. Bernecker and Becker have found that the practice of self-care and self-pampering can complement each other. While self-care focuses on prevention and health maintenance over time; self-pampering is something we engage in for temporary pleasure. In terms of a car, the engine can represent self-care — it may not be visible, but the car will not run smoothly without keeping it in good shape. The exterior of the car represents pampering — washing and polishing it makes it shiny, at least temporarily (Howard, 2020).

When used in moderation, pampering yourself in healthy ways can be a form of self-care that we should not feel guilty about. According to some researchers, taking a timeout to enjoy a simple pleasure leads to a higher sense of well-being (Bernecker and Becker, 2020). This is because temporary pleasures, even when unassociated with long-term/ongoing self-care goals, can make you feel great and provide a recharge.

Self-care, including self-pampering, can provide the necessary reset that allows you to get back to a healthy point where you can maximize

daily productivity and your part in relationships. When you take time to spend time on yourself, you ultimately benefit everyone around you.

Self-pampering activities might include:

- Soak in a hot bath
- Sleep in or take a nap
- Go to a spa or create a spa day at home (dim the lights, play relaxing music, give yourself a foot massage)
- Unplug from technology
- Watch a movie in your pajamas
- Eat ice cream out of the container
- Buy something for yourself
- Explore your surroundings: take walks and tours within your own city and surrounding communities
- Play music
- Connect with nature: walk, pick fresh flowers, feel the wind, smell the smells
- Meditate
- Order a sweet treat and don’t feel guilty about it
- Take an afternoon off and do nothing
- Sign up for a class you always wanted to take
- Look in the mirror and compliment yourself
- Buy new sheets for your bed
- Declutter a closet

REFERENCES:

- Bernecker, K., & Becker, D. (2020). Beyond Self-Control: Mechanisms of Hedonic Goal Pursuit and Its Relevance for Well-Being. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 47(4). 627-642. Retrieved October 21, 2021 from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0146167220941998>
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- Howard, D. (2020). Self-care or self-pampering—what’s the difference? Retrieved October 21, 2020 from <https://www.ensolearning.com/blog/2020/6/15/self-care-self-compassion-self-pampering-or-selfish-whats-the-difference>

**FAMILY CAREGIVER
HEALTH BULLETIN**

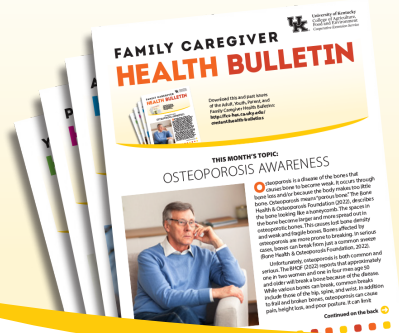
Written by: Amy F. Kostelic, Ph.D.
Edited by: Alyssa Simms
Designed by: Rusty Manseau
Stock images: 123RF.com





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APRIL 2023

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

HAPPINESS FOR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



Happiness can help you feel better and improve your health according to researchers at the Harvard Medical School. Their research demonstrates that positive emotions can help people live healthier and longer lives.

Many factors influence happiness including your genetic makeup, life circumstances, achievements, social connections, and relationships. But a lot of happiness comes down to personal control. For example, people tend to be happier when they set and meet goals, maintain meaningful relationships, find purpose, engage in challenging activities, and indulge in life's pleasures.

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It is not possible to be happy and upbeat all the time, but there are ways to boost positive emotions and mental health.

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Even if you do not consider yourself particularly happy, research suggests that most people can increase their happiness. A study, printed in the June 2019 Psychological Bulletin, reported that something as simple as smiling makes people feel happy.

Happy people may live healthier and longer lives for a list of reasons:

- Happiness improves heart health.
- Happy people are more likely to engage in better exercise, sleep, and nutrition.
- Happy people are less likely to smoke and abuse alcohol and drugs.
- Happy people have stronger immune systems.
- Happiness combats stress.
- Happiness is associated with improvements in short- and long-term disease and disability.
- Happy people have better attitudes and outlooks.
- Happy people are more productive.
- Happy people are more likely to be successful.
- Happy people have a lower risk of depression.
- Happy people smile more.

It is not possible to be happy and upbeat all the time, but there are ways to boost positive emotions and mental health. Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania found that happiness and life satisfaction come from focusing on things that make you happy, being fully engaged in activities that trigger pleasurable emotions, and by deliberate intentions to do good.

Other ways to boost happiness, according to Harvard Health include:

- Look for meaningful social connections and emotional stimulation.
- Perform acts of kindness.
- Volunteer.
- Invest in experiences.
- Pick up hobbies and activities you enjoyed as a kid.
- Be grateful for big and little things.
- Take time to smell the roses.
- Add variety to your day or break up your routine.

Blue Zones True Happiness Test

Dan Buettner, author of the book *The Blue Zones*, has worked with experts in the field of positive psychology to help evaluate true happiness. Dan believes that tracking your happiness helps you stay focused on your well-being.

To take the Blue Zones True Happiness Test, go to: <https://apps.bluezones.com/en/happiness> or follow the QR code on the right.

You will receive personalized results and learn more ways to improve your environment to maximize happiness.



- Minimize your decision-making and choice burden (limit options, set time limits for making choices, don't second guess).
- Embrace nature.
- Be with happy people.

REFERENCES:

- Harvard Health. (2012). The Happiness-Health Connection. Retrieved February 28, 2023 from <https://www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/the-happiness-health-connection>
- Harvard Health. (2021). Health and Happiness Go Hand-in-Hand. Retrieved February 28, 2023 from <https://www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/health-and-happiness-go-hand-in-hand>
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- Psychology Today. Happiness and Health. (2023). Retrieved February 28, 2023 from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/happiness/happiness-and-health>
- University of CA-Berkley. (2015). Six ways happiness is good for your health. Retrieved February 28, 2023 from https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/six_ways_happiness_is_good_for_your_health

FAMILY CAREGIVER HEALTH BULLETIN

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Adult Development and Aging

Edited by: Alyssa Simms

Designed by: Rusty Manseau

Stock images:
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Self-Care Self-Pamper

 Cooperative
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SEE CALENDAR GRID AND
INSTRUCTIONS ON THE BACK

Self-Pamper Challenge

Month

Year

**For fun, count how many times you self-pampered yourself this month.
You can include activities that were not on this calendar.**

25-31 times:

Way to go! You are taking care of yourself, and this will help you in your future.

20-24 times:

Find tools to add to your wellness arsenal.

Remember, self-care has a lasting impact on your mental and physical health.

Under 20:

Take more time for you! Self-care can be easy, accessible,
and potentially very helpful for your mind, body, and soul.

RM1123

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Self-Pamper Challenge

Directions: Choose a month. Write in the dates. Complete the following recommendations for self-pampering. You do not need to complete the activities in the order laid out below. If you choose a self-pampering activity not on this calendar, write what you did on the corresponding date below. Try to pamper yourself for at least 10 minutes a day.

Sunday		Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Saturday	
Soak in a hot bath with extra bubbles.		Eat ice cream out of the container.		Exercise outdoors.		Wear an old or meaningful accessory.		Organize your finances.		Watch a movie in your pajamas.		Go to a spa or create a spa day at home (dim the lights, play relaxing music, give yourself a foot massage).	
Unplug from technology.		Meditate.		Touch base with a past friend or colleague you have not recently seen.		Wear something flattering on your figure.		Buy something for yourself that makes you happy.		Practice yoga.		Wear your favorite color.	
Explore your surroundings: take walks and tours within your own city and surrounding community.		Buy new sheets for your bed.		Go out for tacos for dinner.		Throw a “me” party. Play your favorite music and dance around the house.		Ride a bike.		Go to a movie with a friend or family member.		Create a soul-nurturing ritual.	
Take an afternoon and do nothing.		Take a forest shower. Sit in nature and take in the sights, sounds, and fresh air.		Schedule doctor appointments and preventative care checks.		Make your favorite dish for dinner.		Order a sweet treat and do not feel guilty about it.		Go to bed early.		Visit a state park and take a hike.	
Declutter a closet.		Sign up for a class you always wanted to take.		Strength train.		Buy a bra or new pair of shoes and have someone properly measure the fit.		Get a pedicure.		Buy or pick fresh flowers.		Sleep in or take a nap.	



Self-Care Self-Pamper

Facilitator's Guide

Background

Coping with cumulative loss is distressing. These past few years have been upending for the many whose brains battled cognitive overload trying to process fear, anxiety, and uncertainty. The ongoing health and political crises have affected people's mental health around the world; the impact will be long-lasting. Many people are suffering—some worse than others, depending on gender, personality, age, health, socioeconomic status, and race. Ongoing research demonstrates that people are experiencing mental health issues at higher rates than before the pandemic. Issues include stress, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

To help the Kentucky Extension Homemakers Association (KEHA) deal with the many different types of loss individuals and families may have experienced over the past few years, the Family and Individual Development Program of Work (POW) is reaching in (versus reaching out) and addressing self-care. Specially, lessons and activities will focus on:

1. 2022-2023: Self-Care: Taking Care of Your Mental and Physical Health when Grieving Loss
2. 2023-2024: Self-Care: Self-Pamper
3. 2024-2025: Self-Care: Strengthening Connections

Program goal/Rationale

Focus Area 2. Self-Care: Self-Pamper

Self-care—the proactive or intentional act of caring for your physical, mental, and emotional or spiritual self, may sound like common sense but it is often the first thing you let go when juggling too many things on your plate or when faced with time-consuming or challenging situations like raising kids or grandchildren, job loss, divorce, change in health, pandemic, caregiving, financial stress, etc. It is important to embrace self-care practices to enhance and protect future health and wellness. Self-care has long-lasting effects on personal growth and well-being. Examples of self-care include attending preventative health-care appointments, eating and exercising regularly, meditating daily, and maintaining quality sleep routines.

Self-soothing, or pampering yourself, is also a valuable tool for enhancing wellness. Self-soothing typically addresses more in-the-moment needs according to Livestrong Social Worker Jaime Osnato. Spa days, pedicures, scented candles, comfortable sheets, massages, and cups of herbal tea can be used to cope when stress and crises

are making you feel overwhelmed. Self-soothing practices are beneficial because they provide a temporary distraction to help create a momentary level of calm. Self-pampering should not replace or sabotage proper self-care.

Self-care and self-pampering are not selfish. Taking care of yourself is not about being self-absorbed or ignoring others. Simply put, self-care is about realizing and prioritizing your own importance and well-being. It means not ignoring your own needs, including things that make you feel good and happy in the moment. Just as others will always need you, you also need you. Self-care is about extending the same time, kindness, and consideration to yourself as you do to those around you. Self-care helps you take control of your own well-being.

Lesson objectives

After this lesson, participants will be able to:

- Differentiate between self-care and self-pampering.
 - Script notes, discussion questions, publication, Self-Pamper Monthly Activity Calendar Worksheet
- Evaluate ways the environment maximizes happiness.
 - Script notes, quiz, publication
- Determine various types of self-pampering practices.
 - Choose 1 or 2 “flattering to feel good” tips
 - a) Dress to feel good
 - b) Build a strong foundation with well-fitting shoes and bras
 - c) Be unique with accessories
 - d) Show your attitude with color
 - e) Sleep well with the right sheets and pajamas
 - Each tip includes a script, discussion questions, and publication(s)

Estimated time

Leader Training: The training is designed to take approximately 60 minutes. Trainers may shorten or lengthen the training by adjusting time spent in discussion.

Club Meeting: The lesson is designed to take between 15 and 45 minutes. Leaders may shorten or lengthen the lesson by adjusting time spent in discussion or by removing activities as appropriate.

Publications

- Badgett, J. (2021). Bras: Find Your Fit. FCS Revised Publication.
https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/bras_findyourfit_feb_2021.pdf
- Badgett, J. (2023). Pamper with Pajamas. FCS Family Caregiver Health Bulletin.
<https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/0523-healthbulletin-familycaregiver.pdf>

- Badgett, J. (2023). Selecting Sheets for Restful Sleep. FCS Family Caregiver Health Bulletin. <https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/0223-healthbulletin-familycaregiver.pdf>
- Badgett, J. (2021). Selecting Shoes: How to Combine Comfort and Style. FCS Revised Publication. https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/shoes_comfortandstyle_feb_2021.pdf
- Badgett, J. (2021). Wardrobe Accessories: Eye-Catching Enhancements. FCS Revised Publication. https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/accessories_eyecatchingenhancements_march_2021.pdf
- Badgett, J. (2021). Wardrobe Strategies: Fit, Style are More Important than Size. FCS Revised Publication. https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/wardrobe-bodytype_fitandsize_jan_2021.pdf
- Baker, M. (n.d.; reviewed 2020). Shoe Savvy. FCS Publication #FCS2-342. <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/fcs2/fcs2342/fcs2342.pdf>
- Kostelic, AF. (2023). Happiness for Health and Well-being. FCS Family Caregiver Healthy Bulletin <https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/0423-healthbulletin-familycaregiver.pdf>
- Kostelic, AF. (2022). Resolve to Self-Care & Self-Pamper. FCS Family Caregiver Health Bulletin. <https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/0222-healthbulletin-familycaregiver.pdf>
- Sigler, P. (2011; Reviewed 2020). Color is Key. FCS Publication #FCS2-844. <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/fcs2/fcs2844/fcs2844.pdf>
- Sigler, P. (2011). Finding the Right Bra. FCS Publication #FCS2-845. <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/fcs2/fcs2845/fcs2845.pdf>
- Sigler, P. (2011; Reviewed 2020). Shed Five Pounds with Wardrobe Basics. FCS Publication #FCS2-848. <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/fcs2/fcs2848/fcs2848.pdf>

Media and marketing

- Social Media or Community Calendar posts
- Media advisory
- Radio Script
- Marketing Flyer

Activity worksheets

- Blue Zones True Happiness Quiz
- Self-Pamper Monthly Activity Calendar Worksheet

Program preparation, plan, script

Leader Training (allow 60 minutes):

- Review and make copies of the publications listed above to use as handouts.
- Review and make copies of this facilitator's guide to use as a reference and handout.
- Make a copy of the PowerPoint presentation to use as a handout.
- Make a copy of the activity worksheets.
- Make a copy of the lesson evaluation.

Using the PowerPoint slides and script, walk the KEHA Leaders through the content to provide them with lesson familiarity and background information. The training content is divided into three parts:

- **Part 1:** Differentiate between self-care and self-pampering.
- **Part 2:** Evaluate ways the environment maximizes happiness.
- **Part 3:** Determine various types of self-pampering techniques using the “flattering way to feel good” materials. (5 different tips are provided—instruct leaders to pick 1 or 2 for a lesson)

Walk leaders through this Facilitator's Guide, which includes the Homemaker Lesson instructions and review the importance of collecting evaluation data at club meetings.

Encourage Leaders to complete the evaluation at the end of the PowerPoint Presentation. Collect evaluations and send data to Amy Kostelic (amy.kostelic@uky.edu). Thank each leader for attending.

Homemaker Lesson (allow 15-30 minutes):

- **Review all the material.**
- **Make copies and distribute:**
 1. Resolve to Self-Care and Self-Pamper. FCS Family Caregiver Health Bulletin. <https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/0222-healthbulletin-familycaregiver.pdf>
 2. Kostelic, AF. (2023). Happiness for Health and Well-being. FCS Family Caregiver Healthy Bulletin. <https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/0423-healthbulletin-familycaregiver.pdf>
 3. Blue Zones True Happiness Test
 4. Optional: Self-Pamper Monthly Activity Calendar Worksheet
- **Review the “flattering ways to feel good” self-pampering material and choose one or two concepts below to highlight after you differentiate between and discuss self-care and self-pampering. Print and handout the corresponding publications.**
 - a. **Dress to feel good**
 - Badgett, J. (2021). Wardrobe Strategies: Fit, Style are More Important than Size. FCS Revised Publication. https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/wardrobe-bodytype_fitandsize_jan_2021.pdf
 - Sigler, P. (2011; Reviewed 2020). Shed Five Pounds with Wardrobe Basics. FCS Publication #FCS2-848. <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/fcs2/fcs2848/fcs2848.pdf>

b. Build a strong foundation with well-fitting shoes and bras

- Badgett, J. (2021) Bras: Find Your Fit. FCS Revised Publication. https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/bras_findyourfit_feb_2021.pdf
- Badgett, J. (2021). Selecting Shoes: How to Combine Comfort and Style. FCS Revised Publication. https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/shoes_comfortandstyle_feb_2021.pdf
- Baker, M. (n.d.; reviewed 2020). Shoe Savvy. FCS Publication #FCS2-342. <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/fcs2/fcs2342/fcs2342.pdf>
- Sigler, P. (2011). Finding the Right Bra. FCS Publication #FCS2-845. <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/fcs2/fcs2845/fcs2845.pdf>

c. Be unique with accessories

- Badgett, J. (2021). Wardrobe Accessories: Eye-Catching Enhancements. FCS Revised Publication. https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/accessories_eyecatchingenhancements_march_2021.pdf

d. Show your attitude with color

- Sigler, P. (2011; Reviewed 2020). Color is Key. FCS Publication #FCS2-844. <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/fcs2/fcs2844/fcs2844.pdf>

e. Sleep well with the right pajamas and sheets

- Badgett, J. (2023). Pamper with Pajamas. FCS Family Caregiver Health Bulletin. <https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/0523-healthbulletin-familycaregiver.pdf>
- Badgett, J. (2023). Selecting Sheets for Restful Sleep. FCS Family Caregiver Health Bulletin. <https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/0223-healthbulletin-familycaregiver.pdf>

• For the lesson and discussion (See script below):

- Part 1: Differentiate between self-care and self-pampering.
- Part 2: Evaluate ways the environment maximizes happiness.
- Part 3: Determine various types of self-pampering techniques using the “flattering way to feel good” materials.

- **Make copies of the lesson evaluation.** Send the completed evaluations to your county FCS Extension agent.

Leader training script

The “Notes” section of the PowerPoint slides includes script and discussion points.

Club lesson and script

Talk about the difference between self-care vs. self-pampering and then choose 1 or 2 “flattering to feel good” pampering concepts to discuss.

Part 1: Self-Care vs. Self-Pampering and Happiness

Discussion: What does self-care mean to you? What does self-pampering mean to you?

Self-Care, according to the Global Self-Care Federation and Jaime Osnato, a social worker and freelance writer for LiveStrong.com, includes practices that are more intentional and proactive. Self-care should contribute to future health and wellness in a way that has long-lasting effects on personal growth and well-being. Self-care practice helps you feel grounded physically, mentally, and emotionally. Examples might include eating healthy, being physically active, getting enough sleep, managing stress, going to therapy, scheduling preventative doctor’s appointments, organizing your finances, and staying socially connected.

Self-pampering, also referred to in the research as self-soothing, typically addresses more in-the-moment needs. You can use these coping skills in a moment of stress, crisis, or when feeling overwhelmed. They often engage your sensory system (vision, hearing, touch, taste, smell) and provide distractions. Things like a warm cup of herbal tea or a massage can provide immediate comfort after a tough day. They help bring us from a level of high anxiety or stress to a temporary level of calm.

Osnato emphasizes that self-soothing should not be a substitute for self-care. She goes on to share that IF self-soothing is getting in the way (aka “sabotaging” your self-care), you need to pause and reflect. Examples might include, paying for massages that blow up your finances; eating too much ice cream starts to cause weight gain, etc.

Discussion: Do you ever take time to pamper yourself? If so, what are some of your favorite ways to self-soothe?

Option: Pass out Self-Pamper Monthly Activity Calendar Worksheet. Encourage members to take 10 minutes a day for self-care and/ self-pampering.

Part 2: Self-Care and Self-Pampering Enhance Happiness

Again, both self-care and self-pampering are valuable tools for enhancing wellness and both can lead to happiness. Happiness is a challenging concept to define. It describes a range of positive emotions that can include contentment, joy, pride, and amusement. It includes worthwhile and meaningful life experiences. Increasing evidence demonstrates that happiness can improve physical health, promote feelings of positivity, and enhance cardiovascular health and the immune system. Some studies even connect happiness to longevity and overall well-being and life quality.

Happiness is influenced by many factors including your genetic makeup, life circumstances, achievements, social connections, and relationships. But a lot of happiness comes down to personal control. For example, people tend to be happier when they set and meet goals, maintain meaningful relationships, find purpose, engage in challenging activities, and indulge in life’s pleasures.

Dan Buettner, author of “The Blue Zones,” has worked with experts in the field of positive psychology to help evaluate true happiness. Dan believes that tracking your happiness helps you stay focused on your well-being.

PASS OUT THE TRUE HAPPINESS QUIZ AND TAKE THE TEST ON YOUR PHONES. The test will take 3 to 5 minutes.

Your score is calculated in terms of purpose, pleasure, and pride. After taking the test, you can see how balanced you are in these areas. Then, you will receive recommendations to adjust your environment and increase your happiness even more.

Option: Discuss results as a group.

Pass out the following publication:

- Resolve to Self-Care and Self-Pamper. FCS Family Caregiver Health Bulletin.
<https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/0222-healthbulletin-familycaregiver.pdf>

References:

- Psychology Today. (n.d.) What is Happiness? Retrieved February 24, 2023 from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/happiness>
- University of California, Berkley (2023). What is Happiness? Retrieved February 24, 2023 from <https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/happiness/definition>

Part 3: Flatter to Feel Good

Let’s now change gears and talk about some self-pampering ideas. In particular, we are going to highlight ways we can flatter ourselves with the clothes we wear and sheets we sleep on to feel good!

Choose one or two of the following self-pampering concepts to discuss in your meeting. Each concept has publications to handout for more detailed information.

a) Dress to feel good

Discussion: “When you look good, you feel good.” Who agrees or has experience with this?

Can clothes really make you happy and positively affect your well-being? The answer is yes! There is power in dress. Even the color of a sweater can spark joy. Your style and the clothes you choose reflect and affect your mood, health, and overall confidence. According to Professor Karen Pine, of the University of Hertfordshire in England, “When we put on a piece of clothing, we cannot help but adopt some of the characteristics associated with it, even if we are unaware of it.” Dr. Pine goes on to demonstrate that when we wear casual clothes, we tend to be more relaxed. But if you dress up, you will likely alter the way you walk and hold yourself.

I am going to highlight some tips for dressing for your body type. This is important because wearing something you love or feel good in can alter your mindset. You will likely stand a little straighter, walk a little taller and feel more confident. “Clothes that make you feel confident, happy and empowered can act as armor, shielding you from negative feelings and experiences,” according to Dr. Carolyn Mair, a behavioral psychologist and author of *The Psychology of Fashion* (Stylist, 2021).

First, let's talk about sizes. The numbers or letters on our tags that tell us our clothing size are just that – numbers or letters. They do not equate to our self-worth or importance. Size numbering has evolved over the years and can vary depending on the clothing designer or manufacturer, as well as ever-changing industry standards. For example, in the 1950s, Marilyn Monroe was a size 16. But based on today's size charts, she would fit into a size 6.

“Looking good” is subjective – what one person thinks “looks good” may not be what others think “looks good.” However, studies have shown that we are naturally drawn to “visual balance” – and, in general, clothing and outfits that are flattering, are also balanced and harmonious. That's where our “body type” comes into play. We are all different shapes and sizes, heights and weights. As a result of many factors, our shoulders, mid-section, and hips will either be wider, narrower, smaller, or larger than the other parts of our body – and this contributes to our overall body shape. Our goal is to dress in a way that balances our silhouette and makes us look proportionate.

Our handouts provide examples of five different body types (pear, inverted triangle, rectangle, apple, and hourglass), and discuss ways we can dress to make each shape appear proportionate. The goal is to wear clothing that calls attention to our favorite body parts and does not exaggerate areas of our body we find unattractive. For example:

- Wide shoulders? Wear narrow necklines and call attention to the lower portion of your body.
- Wide hips? Wear wide necklines and pull the emphasis away from your mid-section.
- Wear lighter colors in areas you wish to be seen and wear darker colors in areas you wish to be less noticeable.

But ultimately, it's up to you to dress in a way that makes you feel your best!

Pass out the following publications:

- Badgett, J. (2021). Wardrobe Strategies: Fit, Style are More Important than Size. FCS Revised Publication. https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/wardrobe-bodytype_fitandsize_jan_2021.pdf
- Sigler, P. (2011; Reviewed 2020). Shed Five Pounds with Wardrobe Basics. FCS Publication #FCS2-848. <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/fcs2/fcs2848/fcs2848.pdf>
- References: (*Note: UK FCS Extension does not endorse commercial entities, but these references were included because of the ties to professionals in the field of fashion.)
- Stylist. (2021). Can clothes really make you happy? Retrieved February 24, 2023 from <https://www.stylist.co.uk/fashion/style-wellbeing-clothes-happiness-dopamine-dressing/421073>
- How clothing choices affect and reflect your self-image. (2016). Retrieved February 24, 2023 from https://www.huffpost.com/entry/how-clothing-choices-affect-and-reflect-your-self-image_b_9163992

b) Build a strong foundation with well-fitting shoes and bras

Shoes and bras are sometimes an afterthought. Well-fitting, supportive shoes can make a positive impact on our balance and posture. A well-fitting bra can improve our overall silhouette and make us appear thinner. Take time to find a bra that works for you and treat your feet to well-fitting shoes, and you'll feel pampered all day!

Starting with our feet, be sure to maintain proper foot health and see a podiatrist when necessary. When it comes time to look for new shoes, it's a good idea to try them on in the afternoon when your feet are larger. Try on both shoes and walk several steps; shoes should not require a "break-in" period to feel good.

Other things to consider when looking for proper fitting shoes:

- Should evenly distribute the wearer's weight
- Will have NO gaps or bulges
- Will protect and support the foot
- Will provide plenty of room for the toes
- Should have a good appearance
- A "flattering" shoe will make shorter legs appear longer
- A "Low vamp" shoe is often most flattering for shorter legs (the vamp is the front and center part of a shoe that covers the top of the foot). The style of vamp, depends on the style of shoe - think where the top of your shoe ends on the top of your foot. It's a low vamp if it ends just above your toes. It's a high vamp if it covers the top of your foot. Legs look longer with a low vamp. A low vamp is ideal with skirts, dresses, and cropped pants. A high vamp is best with pants or very short hemlines (miniskirts, shorts).

Shoe discussion: Which pair of shoes are your most comfortable? Why?

Bra discussion: Moving on to bras, when is the last time any of you were professionally measured for a bra fitting? Were you surprised by your size?

Most of the support of a bra should come from the band – not the straps. Our band size is determined by the measurement of our rib cage, just below the breasts. Bands should be fastened on the row of hooks at the end (the largest setting); this way as the elastic stretches over time, we can make the band tighter by using the inner rows of hooks. The band should always fit snugly and be parallel to the floor, not be pulled down toward the waist or be pulled up toward the shoulders.

Cup size is determined by the difference in inches between the band size and the full bust measurement. We'll refer to the chart on page 2 of our "Finding the Right Bra" handout for details. What's important to know is that if after trying on a bra, you feel you need to go up or down a size in the band measurement, your cup size may also need to change. Because of the way bra sizing works, if you go down a size in the band measurement, you may need to go up a size in the cup measurement and vice-versa (if you go up a size in the band measurement, you may need to go down a cup size). However, because of the variety of bra styles and cup coverage, it's best to try on several size combinations to see which cup size provides the best coverage. There should not be gaps or bulges in our bra cups. Bra straps should not dig into our shoulders, nor should they always be falling down.

Replace frequently worn bras about once a year. This is because of the breakdown of elastic and other supporting materials that may not perform as well over time. Best care is taken when we hand wash our bras and avoid putting them in the dryer.

Pass out the following publications:

- Badgett, J. (2021) Bras: Find Your Fit. FCS Revised Publication.
https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/bras_findyourfit_feb_2021.pdf
- Badgett, J. (2021). Selecting Shoes: How to Combine Comfort and Style. FCS Revised Publication.
https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/shoes_comfortandstyle_feb_2021.pdf
- Baker, M. (n.d.; reviewed 2020). Shoe Savvy. FCS Publication #FCS2-342.
<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/fcs2/fcs2342/fcs2342.pdf>
- Sigler, P. (2011). Finding the Right Bra. FCS Publication #FCS2-845.
<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/fcs2/fcs2845/fcs2845.pdf>

c) Be unique with accessories

Discussion: How many of you like to wear “accessories”? What accessories are we all wearing now?

Accessories are additions to our wardrobe that make our outfits more flattering, versatile, and practical. We use them to draw attention to preferred areas of the body and balance our silhouette. If you are dressing to be looked at, then give others something to see! Accessorize! Layering accessories with our clothing is a simple way to feel special and pampered. For ease and success, you’ll want to incorporate the elements and principles of design to ensure you’ll end up with a look that flatters. Take into account the elements such as color, texture, shape, and size to accomplish the principles of balance, rhythm, proportion, and emphasis. Examples of this are in our handout, “Wardrobe accessories: eye-catching enhancements.”

Getting accessories “right” may take a little experimental trial and error. You may need some time to get used to wearing accessories in ways you’re not accustomed to. When you try a new look or variation, remember, many people may be seeing you for the first time, so they may assume you always accessorize that way. Take advantage of that mindset, and “own” the look you’ve created. It’s your choice to wear accessories that help you either stand out in a crowd, or blend in. If you are unsure about the accessories you are wearing, that’s OK, you can remove them later if you start to feel self-conscious. Be confident. Wear what you feel best in and enjoy wearing special accessories every day.

Pass out the following publications:

- Badgett, J. (2021). Wardrobe Accessories: Eye-Catching Enhancements. FCS Revised Publication. https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/accessories_eyecatchingenhancements_march_2021.pdf

d) Show your attitude with color

Discussion: Do you have a favorite shirt or outfit? Picture it in your mind. What color is it?

Color is closely connected to mood. It can transform confidence and outlook, and spark joy, according to Dr. Carolyn Mair, a behavioral psychologist and author of *The Psychology of Fashion* (Stylist, 2021).

We are surrounded by color, and our perception of it is influenced by not only the light source in the environment, but by everything else that surrounds it. When we consider which colors “look good” on us, we should really be saying, “in which colors do we look our best?” Which colors flatter us? Which colors make us feel good? Our skin tone, eye color, and hair color work together to determine which colors are our most flattering. Our skin undertone is usually a “cool” blue or pink, or a “warm” green or yellow. Knowing this guides our choices for flattering colors using a “seasonal color palette.” “Cool” undertones are flattered by colors in the “winter” and “summer” color palettes. “Warm” undertones are flattered by colors in the “autumn” and “spring” palettes. Examples of these are described in our “Color is Key” handout.

Unless you plan to always wear one color at a time (which is not always the best choice), take some time to look at how the colors you wear together appear next to each other. Colors come in different shades, tones, and tints – and this can impact how colors match or complement each other. Most likely, when you feel good about your appearance in color groupings, it’s because these colors are “working” together. Trust your instinct – the colors that are right for you will help you feel pampered! Avoid the temptation to buy something just because you like the color; remember to consider whether or not it is a flattering color for YOU.

Pass out the following publication:

- Sigler, P. (2011; Reviewed 2020). Color is Key. FCS Publication #FCS2-844.
<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/fcs2/fcs2844/fcs2844.pdf>

Reference:

- Stylist. (2021). Can clothes really make you happy? Retrieved February 24, 2023 from <https://www.stylist.co.uk/fashion/style-wellbeing-clothes-happiness-dopamine-dressing/421073>

e) Sleep well with the right sheets and comfortable pajamas

Sleep contributes to overall health and well-being. We might recall that pre-bedtime routines and even a bedroom should be optimized for sleep. For example, the Mayo Clinic stresses a consistent sleep schedule, avoiding heavy meals, nicotine, caffeine, and alcohol before bed, and creating a restful environment. Recommended environmental modifications include no electronics, light-blocking shades, and a thermostat set to 65 degrees.

Quality sheets and blankets can also contribute to a good night’s sleep. According to the Sleep Foundation, the right linens help create a sleep-inducing space. “Your sheets and blankets play a major role in helping your bed feel inviting. Look for bedding that feels comfortable to the touch and that will help maintain a comfortable temperature during the night.” The feel of sheets differs based on the fiber content and quality, as well as the method of construction. A plain or percale weave normally feels “crisp and cool,” while a sateen weave normally feels smooth and silky. Pay more attention to these characteristics, instead of thread count, because a higher thread count does not necessarily equal “better sheets.”

Sheets discussion: Do you have a favorite set of sheets? What do you like about them?

Now let's move on to pajamas. While not necessarily scientifically proven, some believe that choosing the right pajamas can contribute to positive sleep. Whether this is true or not, we do know that different fabrics may affect the way you sleep. A hot sleeper may want to consider rayon ("bamboo") fabrics that wick moisture and keep you feeling dry and cool. Or if you are always cold under the covers, you may want to consider long pajamas made with cotton flannel fabrics. Regardless of the fabric, take a moment to think about what is most comfortable for you and your body. Do you prefer nightgowns, pants, or shorts? Or do you prefer just a shirt on top? Sleeveless or with sleeves? Like with the clothes you wear, the pajamas you choose sometimes just make you feel good. Pamper yourself!

Pajamas discussion: Anyone here have favorite pajamas? What do you like about them?

Pass out the following publications:

- Badgett, J. (2023). Selecting Sheets for Restful Sleep. FCS Family Caregiver Health Bulletin. <https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/0223-healthbulletin-familycaregiver.pdf>
- Badgett, J. (2023). Pamper with Pajamas. FCS Family Caregiver Health Bulletin. <https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/0523-healthbulletin-familycaregiver.pdf>

References:

- Mayo Clinic. (2022). Sleep Tips: 6 steps to better sleep. Retrieved February 24, 2023 from <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/sleep/art-20048379>
- Sleep Foundation. (2023). How to Sleep Better. Retrieved February 24, 2023 from <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/sleep-hygiene/healthy-sleep-tips>

Mail-out lesson

- Write a cover letter (see template below)
- Print and mail:
 - Cover letter
 - Publications:
 - *Resolve to Self-Care and Self-Pamper*. FCS Family Caregiver Health Bulletin. <https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/0222-healthbulletin-familycaregiver.pdf>
 - *Happiness for Health and Well-being*. FCS Family Healthcare Bulletin. <https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/0423-healthbulletin-familycaregiver.pdf>
 - *Wardrobe Strategies: Fit, Style are More Important than Size*. FCS Revised Publication. https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/wardrobe-bodytype_fitandsize_jan_2021.pdf
 - *Bras: Find Your Fit*. FCS Revised Publication. https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/bras_findyourfit_feb_2021.pdf
 - *Selecting Shoes: How to Combine Comfort and Style*. FCS Revised Publication. https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/shoes_comfortandstyle_feb_2021.pdf
 - *Shoe Savvy*. FCS Publication #FCS2-342. <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/fcs2/fcs2342/fcs2342.pdf>

- *Wardrobe Accessories: Eye-Catching Enhancements*. FCS Revised Publication.
https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/accessories_eyecatchingenhancements_march_2021.pdf
- *Color is Key*. FCS Publication #FCS2-844.
<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/fcs2/fcs2844/fcs2844.pdf>
- *Selecting Sheets for Restful Sleep*. FCS Family Caregiver Health Bulletin.
<https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/0223-healthbulletin-familycaregiver.pdf>
- *Pamper with Pajamas*. FCS Family Caregiver Health Bulletin.
<https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/0523-healthbulletin-familycaregiver.pdf>
- Activity Worksheets:
 - Blue Zones Happiness Test Activity Worksheet
 - Self-Pamper Monthly Activity Calendar Worksheet
- Lesson evaluation and pre-addressed, stamped envelope to local FCS Agent

Dear KEHA Member,

KEHA recognizes that these past few years have been difficult for the many who have had to process fear, anxiety, and uncertainty. The ongoing health and political crises have affected people's mental health around the world; the impact of cumulative loss will be long-lasting. Ongoing research demonstrates that people are experiencing mental health issues at higher rates than before the pandemic. Issues include stress, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Unresolved mental health issues can have extremely negative effects on a person that can worsen over time. Examples include issues with physical health, financial problems, job loss, relationship issues, depression, and suicide. To help the Kentucky Extension Homemakers Association (KEHA) deal with the many different types of loss individuals and families may have experienced over the past few years, the Family and Individual Development Program of Work (POW) is addressing self-care. Specially, lessons and activities will focus on:

1. 2022-2023: Self-Care: Taking Care of Your Mental and Physical Health when Grieving Loss
2. 2023-2024: Self-Care: Self-Pamper
3. 2024-2025: Self-Care: Strengthening Connections

In today's mail, we are sending a lesson to you that promotes self-pampering. Pampering yourself is a valuable tool for enhancing happiness, health, and overall well-being. It typically addresses in-the-moment needs according to licensed social worker and freelance writer, Jaime Osnato. Think spa days, pedicures, scented candles, massages, and cups of herbal tea, and wearing bright colors! You can use these soothing practices to cope when stress and crises make you feel overwhelmed. Such rituals are beneficial because they provide a temporary distraction to help create a momentary level of calm. Self-pampering should not replace or sabotage proper self-care.

Self-care is the proactive or intentional act of caring for your physical, mental, and emotional or spiritual self. It may sound like common sense, but it is often the first thing we let go when juggling too many things or when faced with time-consuming or challenging situations like raising kids or grandchildren, job loss, divorce, change in health, pandemic, caregiving, financial stress, etc. It is important to embrace self-care practices to enhance and protect future health and wellness. Self-care has long-lasting effects on personal growth and well-being. Examples of self-care include attending preventative health-care appointments, eating and exercising regularly, meditating daily, and maintaining quality sleep routines.

This lesson is a reminder that self-care and self-pampering are not selfish. Taking care of yourself is not about being self-absorbed or ignoring others. Simply put, caring for yourself—long-term and in the moment, is about realizing and prioritizing your own importance and well-being. It means not ignoring your own needs, including things that make you feel good and happy. Just as others will always need you, you also need you. Caring for yourself is about extending the same time, kindness, and consideration to yourself as you do to those around you. Caring for yourself helps you take control of your own well-being. According to Harvard Health, a focus on things that make you happy can also improve health and enhance longevity.

The publications and activities included in this mailing will help you:

- Differentiate between self-care and self-pampering.
- Evaluate ways the environment maximizes happiness.
- Determine various types of self-pampering practices, such as dressing in a flattering way to feel good and selecting comfortable pajamas and sheets for better sleep.

Lastly, after you read through the materials, we encourage you to complete the lesson evaluation that is included in your packet. Please mail the packet to: [FILL IN CONTACT INFORMATION].

We hope these materials find you well and inspire you to pamper yourself for your health and well-being.

Cheers,

[ADD SIGNATURE and TITLE]

Evaluation procedures

Club Leaders: Present all participants who complete this lesson with an opportunity to fill out an evaluation. Return all evaluations to your local FCS Extension agent within one week of your club meeting.

FCS Agents: After a leader training, provide leaders with an opportunity to complete the evaluation form. Remind leaders to pass out evaluations at club meetings. Club leaders should return evaluations to their county agent within one week of the lesson.

Priority indicators for this program include:

FCS Improve Physical and Mental Health 2027 - Active Living and Health Promotions General

Number of participants who attended age related health and wellness programs not identified as a “major program.” Major age-related programs include: Keys to Embracing Again, 10 Warning Signs, and AARP Prepare to Care

Agents, please scan and email or mail lesson evaluations to:

Amy Kostelic, Ph.D. (KEHA Advisor/Ext. Specialist for Adult Development and Aging)
102 Erikson Hall, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40506
Email: amy.kostelic@uky.edu

Upon receipt of lesson evaluation, Amy Kostelic and Jeanne Badgett will work with county agents to return a county- and/or area-wide success story.