Moda Wellbeing Newsletter

Seasonal recipes, resources and tips to build
Happier, healthier, workplaces



Mindset Matters: Reverse Bucket List

Mindset plays a powerful role in how we experience our lives, especially during times of stress. When we feel stuck, the brain often slips int a negative spiral and focuses on what hasn't yet happened or feels unfinished, or even where we believe we've fallen short. Over time, this narrow focus can drain motivation and confidence. One effective way to interrupt this pattern is to intentionally shift perspective by reflecting on what has already been accomplished. A simple but impactful tool for this mindset shift is creating a Reverse Bucket List.

A reverse bucket list flips the traditional buck list concept. Instead of writing down things you hope to do someday, you list meaningful experiences you've already lived. These may include major milestones, personal challenges you've overcome, risks you've taken, boundaries you've set, or periods of resilience. The focus isn't perfection or productivity but recognizing your growth, effort, and lived experiences that often go unacknowledged.

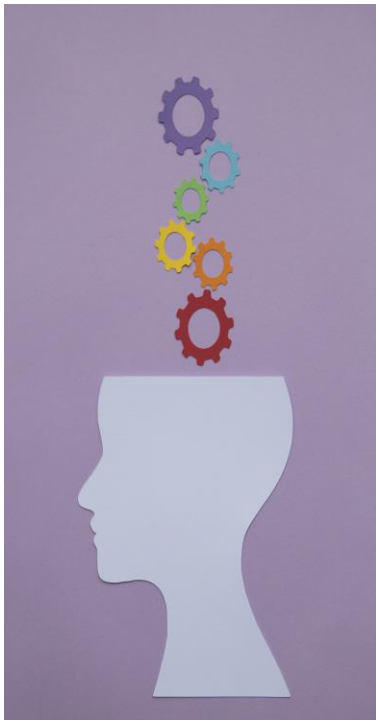
The benefits of a reverse bucket list are both grounding and empowering. It helps counter the brain's negative bias, builds self-trust, and offers concrete proof of progress during moments of self-doubt. By revisiting what you've already navigated you reinforce the belief that you can handle what comes next, even when the path forward feels unclear.

Now it's your turn. Sit down with a notepad and give yourself a moment to reflect. Write down challenges you've overcome, dreams you've already accomplished, moments when you were braver than you realized, and times you chose yourself or kept going when it was hard. Bullet points are enough. Each entry is a reminder that you are strong and capable, proof that you've already done hard things and have a solid foundation to move forward with confidence.



Health Coaching Hub
Seasonal Changes & Brain Health

For many of us around the States, come November, we've busted out the long pants, sweaters, and hats. Depending on where you live, perhaps this is your favorite time of year; and for others, maybe not so much! You might notice a downshift in your energy and feel more sluggish with darker evenings arriving sooner. Gloomier days can also trigger SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder), otherwise known as seasonal depression. The transition into less daylight can truly be a struggle! For those who are not winter's biggest fans, there is some light at the end of the tunnel – and I don't just mean the arrival of spring. Cooler weather boasts many benefits around habits that impact brain health, specifically supporting neuroplasticity, which is defined as your brain's ability to learn, create new pathways, and adapt to challenges.



So, what's all this fuss about neuroplasticity, and how can we promote this extra special brain power? It's quite simple - fall and winter might make staying active a bit easier and more enjoyable because you're not battling against the harsh sun or humidity. Research suggests that regular physical activity is one of the most powerful ways to support creating new connections in your brain. Anywhere from 6 minutes of high intensity training to a 20 minute casual walk stimulates the release of brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), which is a protein that supports the growth and maintenance of healthy brain cells. BDNF also enhances learning and memory. You might call BDNF "fertilizer for the brain!" Regular exercise is strongly linked to improvements in cognitive performance, mood, and long-term brain health.

Another way colder, darker days support brain health is through sleep. Your body naturally prepares for sleep by lowering the internal core temperature. This is why sleep specialists recommend keeping bedrooms cool at night – because it promotes deeper, more quality rest. Better sleep triggers more BDNF, which is in part why you feel so much better after a good night's sleep than a night that was disrupted or too warm to allow your body to cool down enough. When conditions are ideal, your brain does some of its most important "rewiring" –from strengthening important neural connections, pruning less useful ones, and processing information from the day – all fundamental to neuroplasticity!

While the colder months may not win everyone over, they do give your brain a few reasons to celebrate. A brisk walk, a cool bedroom, and a good night's sleep can all help nurture neuroplasticity and keep that BDNF "brain fertilizer" flowing. So bundle up, rest well, and let these brain-boosting benefits help you better "weather" winter's changes!

For Moda Health Members

Eligible Moda Health members have access to one-on-one condition management health coaching at no cost. To enroll or be contacted by a health coach to learn more, please fill out this form: Disease Management Health Coaching Interest Form.

Contact us for more information!

Call 800-913-4957 Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. PT, or email healthcoachteam@modahealth.com.

Better Bites: Borscht Soup

Borscht is a classic Eastern European beet soup that comes in many regional and family variations. This colorful winter favorite features beets, which provide fiber, folate, potassium and antioxidants that support overall wellness. Serve with fresh dill and a dollop of sour cream. Makes 4 servings.



Ingredients

- 0.5 IB beef stew meat
- 7 cups cold water
- 0.5 Tbsp salt + more to taste
- 1 large beet, peeled and grated
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 0.5 Tbsp vinegar
- 0.5 Tbsp sugar
- 1 Tbsp tomato sauce, or paste
- 0.5 Tbsp unsalted butter
- 0.5 medium onion
- 1 carrots, grated
- 1 large potato, diced
- ¼ small head cabbage, shredded
- 1 tomatoes, peeled and diced
- 1 bay leaf
- Pinch of black pepper
- 1/8 cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- Sour cream and fresh dill, for serving

Directions

1. Place meat, water, and salt in a large pot. Bring to boil, skim off any foam, then reduce heat and simmer 45 to 60 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, sauté beets in olive oil and vinegar for 5 minutes. Add sugar and tomato sauce; cook 10 minutes. In the same skillet, sauté onion and carrot until softened.
3. Add potatoes to the broth and cook 10 minutes. Stir in cabbage, beets, onion-carrot mixture, and tomatoes. Cook until vegetables are tender.
4. Season with bay leaves, pepper, and additional salt to taste. Stir in parsley and garlic, cover, and remove from heat.
5. Serve hot with fresh dill and a dollop of sour cream.

Recipe and image source: Borscht Recipe with Meat- Natasha's Kitchen

Beyond the Bite: Leaf Your Worries Behind, A Mindful Nature Walk

Mindfulness is the practice of paying attention to the present moment with curiosity and without judgment. Research suggests mindfulness can help reduce stress, improve focus, and support overall well-being. One simple way to practice mindfulness is by connecting with nature during a walk.



Next time you're outside, try a mindful leaf walk. As you walk, slow your pace and focus on the leaves around you. Notice their colors, shapes, sizes, and textures. Observe how they move in the breeze or rest on the ground. Pick up a few fallen leaves that catch your attention and take a moment to examine the details, such as the veins, edges, or patterns. If your mind begins to wander, gently bring your attention back to the leaves and your surroundings. The goal is to be fully present and engaged with the experience. By the end of your walk, you may feel calmer, more grounded, and more connected to the world around you.

Once you've finished your mindful walk, use your collected leaves to create something meaningful. Check out the two leaf craft ideas below to continue the experience and bring a little bit of nature indoors!

Quick Magical Bleach Printing with Leaves by barbmaker.com

DIY Leaf Stamped Napkins by All Things G&D

Let's Learn! Resource Spotlight

Moda Health Monthly Mini Challenges

Mini Challenges are a great way to encourage a healthier way of living! They're designed to create lasting change through small, simple steps, while also providing a fun activity that fosters friendly competition, teambuilding, and a supportive workplace culture.

Read about Moda's Health's mini challenges for November and December!

- **Take Your Mood Out of This World Challenge:** Boost your well-being with this fun two-week challenge focused on gratitude, kindness, mindfulness, connection, and positivity. Complete 10 simple activities over 14 days, such as expressing gratitude, practicing mindfulness, spending time in nature, and connecting with others, to help build healthy habits and support overall well-being.
- **Burning Bright Without Burning Out Challenge:** Prioritize self-care with this 10-day challenge designed to help prevent burnout and support your well-being. Choose 2-3 self-care activities that help you recharge, then complete and track one activity each day. From practicing gratitude to making time for hobbies and reflection, this challenge encourages healthy habits that help you stay energized and balanced.

Exciting News!

Our new website has officially launched, and we're looking forward to bringing the wellness mini challenges to the site soon. In the meantime, if you're interested in accessing the wellness mini challenges contact wellnessteam@modahealth.com.

Preventive Care Corner

Supporting Your Health Through the Holidays

As the year comes to a close, it's a good time to check in on your health and prepare for a healthy start to the new year. Whether you've been eating a little healthier, staying active, managing stress, or working toward personal health goals, every positive step matters.

Health Tips for the Season

✓ Stay active, even if it's just a short daily walk
✓ Choose nutritious, heart-healthy foods when you can
✓ Refill and take medications as prescribed to feel your best
✓ Make time for rest, connection, and self-care
✓ Keep up with recommended preventive care and screenings

The holiday season can be busy, and healthcare appointments don't always make it to the top of the list. If you've been meaning to schedule a checkup, complete a screening, or refill a prescription, consider adding it to your year-end to-do list. For some individuals who have already met their insurance deductible, certain healthcare services may also cost less out of pocket before the year ends.

If you have diabetes, you may be due for:

- ☐ An A1C test
- ☐ A diabetic eye exam
- ☐ Kidney health screening

If you have high cholesterol or heart disease:

- ☐ A review of your cholesterol levels
- ☐ A medication review, including statins if prescribed

If you have high blood pressure:

- ☐ A blood pressure check
- ☐ A conversation about keeping your numbers in a healthy range

Whether you check off one item on your to-do list or several, you're making an investment in your health which will support you through the year ahead!

Upcoming Wellness Events

November/December 2026

November 10th 12 PM

Wellness Webinar
Understanding Arthritis: Causes, Symptoms & Management Strategies

November 10th–30th

Sprout Challenge
Love Your Leftovers Challenge

Nov 16th 12 PM

Health Coaching Informational Session

Dec 9th 12PM

Wellness Webinar
Maintaining a Healthy Immune System

December 3rd–16th

Sprout Challenge
Festive Flex

*Moda members can register for Sprout through their Moda Member Dashboard. Click the programs icon then scroll to the Sprout wellness app title and follow the prompts.

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