

April/  
May  
2019

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
CITY OF TACOMA

# HealthVine



## Stress Less Journeys

### 10 Minutes a Day to Stress Less

**(2 Stages):** Feeling stressed?

Overwhelmed? It doesn't take much time to shrink your stress level—but it does take consistency. Invest 10 minutes a day to yourself, so you can be more clearheaded and energetic all day.

**Beat the Blues (2 Stages):** If you can devote 10 minutes a day to yourself, you can find your way back to a happier outlook. These proven strategies can improve your energy and your mood. Give it a try. You deserve more.

### Choose a New Attitude (2 Stages):

Discover small steps that help you coach yourself into a whole new frame of mind. View challenges from a different angle and find ways to solve everyday problems. Handle stress better by shifting your attitude.

**Make Time for Play (3 Stages):** Play is powerful. Devote time to leisure and you'll likely be healthier, happier and less stressed. And when you *have* more fun, you *are* more fun. Everyone around you benefits. In this Journey, get rid of your buzz kills and find your fun.

**Peak Performance Mind (3 Stages):** Work smarter by growing your brainpower. Learn how to improve your attention span and what to do when you're getting distracted. Try out the kinds of breaks that can feed your energy and focus.

### Stress to Energy Sampler (3 Stages):

Learn how to prompt your body to deliver more energy regardless of what life throws your way. Start with some better sleep habits, then move on to eating for energy, and discover how even a little bit of movement can go a long way toward boosting your energy.



## Stress Awareness Month

**Anxiety disorders** are a group of disorders that can affect adults, adolescents and children. Anxiety disorders overwhelm people with chronic feelings of anxiety and fear.

Unlike periods of anxiety that everyone feels because they are caused by a stressful event, anxiety disorders are chronic, and if not treated, can disrupt a person's life.

Fortunately, effective treatments do exist — and early diagnosis may aid early recovery, prevent the disorder from getting worse and possibly prevent accompanying depression. Yet, because many people don't understand these disorders, only 25% of those suffering from them seek treatment.

### Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)

GAD is characterized by at least six months of a constant state of exaggerated tension or worry not related to any particular problem or event. Sometimes the source of worry is evident (work, family, money) and other times it is not.

Physical symptoms often accompany anxiety, including fatigue, headache, muscle ache or tension, trembling, twitching, irritability, nausea, breathlessness and sweating. People with GAD cannot seem to relax.

GAD affects twice as many women as men. It can occur at any age and almost never occurs by itself; a person with GAD often has another anxiety disorder, depression or is a substance abuser.

### Panic Disorder

It is twice as common in women than men. People with this problem experience panic attacks—incidents of severe anxiety that occur unpredictably. The attacks can occur any time, even during sleep, according to NIMH. Symptoms of a panic attack include pounding heart, sweating, weakness, dizziness, chest pain, nausea, or a sense of doom, NIMH says. **Continued on Page 4.**

# Tacoma Employee Wellness Program Awards



Your very own Tacoma Employee Wellness Program recently won two awards from the Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce for its robust program and commitment to employee health and well-being.

The **WorkWell Award** is a program designed to recognize Tacoma-Pierce County employers who made a pledge to address workforce health issues and create a work culture that promotes healthy lifestyles among employees. There are three levels for this award: bronze, silver and gold.

The **Happy Heart Award** acknowledges organizations that demonstrate a broad and long-term commitment to employee wellness.

We aim to earn the **Gold Level WorkWell Award** next year and we seek your help when it comes to successfully accomplishing these goals:

- **Increased participation in the RedBrick Health Portal.** We find this to be a very feasible goal since we have added even more ways for you to earn the incentive; but it is truly your motivation and dedication that are key.
- **Healthier food options at work.** We will begin tackling this concept sometime in 2019; but we are also looking for employee feedback and support for adopting such changes.
- **Increased offering of onsite exercise and educational sessions.** As we continue to grow the availability of these classes, employee feedback and recommendations are extremely valuable.

**Do you have comments or ideas to help us reach the above goals?** Please contact your Wellness Coordinator, Shannon Carmody, at [wellness@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:wellness@cityoftacoma.org) or (253) 591-2002.

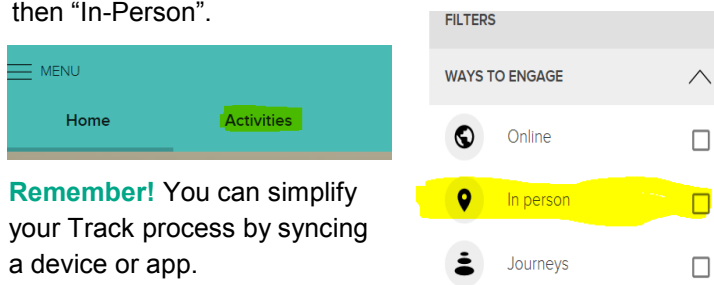
# Time is running out!

Our 2020 incentive period runs from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019. Your goal is to earn 1,000 points. Excitingly, you now have even more ways to do so!

Activity	Reward Value	Frequency
Complete the Compass Health Assessment. <b>(REQUIRED)</b>	400 points	1x / Plan Year
Complete a stage in a Journey.	10 points	3x / Monthly
Complete a Journey.	200 points	3x / Plan Year
Track your activities. (>300 Wellness Meter)	5 points	120x / Plan Year
Sync your device.	10 points	1x / Plan Year
Participate in a RedBrick Challenge.	50 points	2x / Plan Year
Attend a City of Tacoma webinar or onsite event. *	25 points	4x / Plan Year
Complete your annual physical. *	200 points	1x / Plan Year
Certified Weight Management Program *	200 points	2x / Plan Year

\* These three options are grouped together as “City of Tacoma Healthy Activities”. In order to receive credit for these specific activities, you may need to submit a Verification Form.

**How to Find and Submit a Verification Form.** You can learn more about the three “City of Tacoma Healthy Activities” by visiting [tew.redbrickhealth.com](http://tew.redbrickhealth.com) and clicking on “Activities” and then “In-Person”.



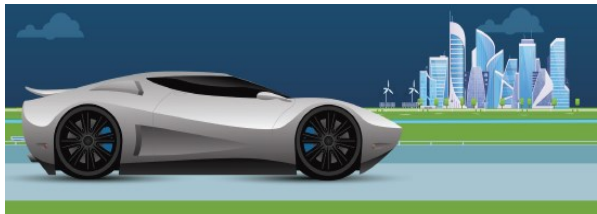
**Remember!** You can simplify your Track process by syncing a device or app.

## Did You Know?

There is also a [short video](#) (17 minutes) explaining the new and improved 2020 requirement options.



## RealizeRetirement® Time Machine (ICMA-RC)



Meet with the ICMA-RC representatives and participate in a retirement themed mobile escape room. The RealizeRetirement® Time Machine takes you on a time travel adventure that challenges your team to solve puzzles in time to save the future.

The time to beat is eight minutes, but let's see who can do it the fastest! Put a team together and see if you can beat the best time.

**Date:** June 3, 2019

**Time:** 7 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Location:** Tacoma Public Utilities (3628 S. 35th St.) — Parking Lot D

**Questions?** Contact Diane Peterson at [dpeterson@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:dpeterson@cityoftacoma.org) or (253) 591-5440.

## Upcoming Wellness Trainings

**Stressed Out:** The third and final class of the series will cover stress, sleep, and relaxation techniques. **May 15 from 2 to 3 p.m. in the TPU Auditorium.**



Check out the presentation [1](#) and [2](#) recordings.

**Get Fit on the Clock Webinar:** Learn exercises you can do at work and at your desk to stay in shape in our busy lives! **May 22 from 11:30 a.m. to noon.** [Register today!](#)



## Bike Everywhere Challenge

During the month of May, the City of Tacoma, in partnership with Pierce County and Pierce Transit, celebrate Bike Month. Lots of bike-related events and activities have been planned, and details can be found on [BIKE253.com](http://BIKE253.com) or [piercetrips.com](http://piercetrips.com).

### Bike Everywhere Challenge: Register, Ride and Win

Get rewarded for riding your bike everywhere! All you have to do is ride your bike in May and log your trips on [PierceTrips.com](http://PierceTrips.com). Bicyclists who log 10 or more trips will be eligible to win exciting prizes!

- Register at [PierceTrips.com](http://PierceTrips.com).
- Bike anywhere (park, library, work, grocery store, school, church, etc.).
- Log your trips on [Pierce Trips' Trip Calendar online](http://Pierce Trips' Trip Calendar online).
- Participate as an individual or as part of a team.

### Bike Month Events

**Bike to Market Day:** Thursday, May 2 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Broadway Farmers Market (Broadway between South 9th and South 11th streets).

**Women Trans Femme Night:** Friday, May 3 and May 17 from 6 to 9 p.m. at the 2nd Cycle Community Bike Shop (1205 MLK Jr. Way). This is a great opportunity for women, trans, femme and non-binary folks to hang out in a bike shop and gain access to assisted bicycle repairs from certified mechanics.

**Bike Month Proclamation:** Tuesday, May 7 at 5 p.m. in the Tacoma Municipal Building Council Chambers (747 Market St., 1st floor).

**Art Bike Ride:** Thursday, May 16 from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Tacoma Art Museum (1701 Pacific Ave.). This is an approximately 6-mile ride.

**Bike to Work Day:** Friday, May 17 from 6:30 to 9:30 a.m. at Honey at Alma Mater (1322 Fawcett Ave). Celebrate with coffee and treats!

Go [here](#) to view the other fun Bike Month events!

### City of Tacoma Fleet Bikes

Fleet e-bikes are coming soon! They will be available for reservation online and for use this spring at Center for Urban Waters and this summer at TMB in conjunction with completion of a new bike depot, which will be secure, and have easy access and bike racks for commuting employees. You can find more info at **Stewardship at Work** on the Gnet.

## Stress Awareness Month, Cont.

**Panic disorder, cont.** As with GAD, a panic disorder usually does not occur by itself. Another serious condition, such as depression, substance abuse or alcoholism, often is present, as well. People with panic disorder often try to avoid places or situations that may trigger a panic attack.

Panic disorders can be treated with medications or well-targeted psychotherapy.

**Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)** PTSD involves exposure to a trauma, during which a person experiences intense fear, helplessness and horror. The event that triggers PTSD may be something that threatened the person's life or the life of someone close to him or her, or it could be something the person witnessed. Someone with PTSD often suffers from nightmares, mentally re-experiences the traumatic event, feels numb emotionally and startles easily. Women are more likely than are men to develop PTSD. People with PTSD often have other mental health conditions such as depression, another anxiety disorder, or substance abuse.

PTSD is diagnosed if symptoms last more than a month. The disorder can be treated with medications or psychotherapy.

### Diagnosis

To diagnose an anxiety disorder, doctors first rule out other medical conditions. Anxiety attacks can mimic or accompany endocrine gland problems, or acute disorders of the heart or lungs, including heart attacks and asthma.

The second step involves a series of tests or questions used to assess a person's mental state and determine if he or she is suffering from an anxiety disorder and, if so, which one.

## 5 Simple Ways to Address Stress

Stress isn't always a negative thing. Sometimes a little added stress gives you the adrenaline boost you need to power through a deadline or accomplish a difficult task. But too much stress can be hard on your health — so it's important to find ways to offset those negative effects. These healthy habits can help you stay cool under pressure, even when you're pressed for time.



**Sweat more.** Symptoms of stress can create a vicious cycle between your mind and body. Exercise helps to break this cycle by relieving tension and releasing feel-good brain chemicals (endorphins) that fight the effects of stress. You feel the benefits immediately.

**Take a break to breathe.** When stress strikes, it is okay to walk away from a problem for a bit. Sometimes, when you are focusing too intently on one issue, your mind can either make it seem worse than it is, or can only see it one way. Try a few minutes of deep breathing. Breathe in for a count of 5, hold for a count of 5, and exhale for a count of 5. Repeat 10 times or until you start feeling more calm, grounded and focused. You could also try taking a brief walk around the building to take your mind off stress briefly.

**Unplug to recharge.** Your phone needs time to recharge, and so does your brain. Disconnecting from digital noise for a little while each day can help you stress less, sleep better, and spend time doing more rewarding activities.

**Get a hobby.** We mean this in the nicest way possible. Having another activity to look forward to outside of work can help you relax and cope with stress.

**Socialize.** For a lot of us, all we need to do is talk our stress out (i.e., vent), or laugh it off. Talking to friends and family can help you feel understood and validate your stress. They might also be able to offer a solution you hadn't thought of, or help you complete a task. Additionally, being with people you love may help you smile and laugh, which is also a good mood lifter and stress reducer.

## Helpful Mindfulness Apps

Mindfulness has been shown to help with anxiety disorders and stress. It is defined as a mental state achieved by focusing one's awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations, used as a therapeutic technique. Below are some recommended mindfulness apps.

**Calm.** Free offerings include basic mindfulness practices. These free meditations, about 25 in total, come in different lengths, from a quick 3-minute meditation to a half-hour sit.

**Insight Timer.** Free and huge library of content: nearly 13,000 guided meditations from over 2,600 teachers on topics like stress, relationships, creativity, and more.

**Stop, Breathe & Think.** This app features 34 free sessions. Each day you open the app, you're invited to check in with yourself — to rate your mind and body on a scale of "rough" to "great", and note up to five emotions that you're feeling. Then, the app will recommend meditations, yoga videos, and acupuncture videos tailored to how you feel.



Summer's coming! Look and feel better as you get ready to reveal a summer-ready you. Track your healthy habits to vie for points, prizes and bragging rights.

**Registration:** May 27 — June 24, 2019

**Team(s):** Employees create their own teams, which can have anywhere between two and six members.

**Challenge Duration:** June 3 — July 8, 2019

**Rules:** You can earn points on a daily basis (up to a maximum of 1,500) as you begin to move more, eat better and live well. Please refer to the activity points table on the right to learn more about how your activities can add up.

**Weekly Prize Draws:** There will be weekly drawings for employees who earn [at least 300 points](#) each day throughout the week:

- ✓ June 11 (for tracking June 3—9)
- ✓ June 18 (for tracking June 10—16)
- ✓ June 25 (for tracking June 17—23)
- ✓ July 2 (for tracking June 24—30)
- ✓ July 11 (for tracking July 1—7)

The weekly drawing winners will receive a **Fitbit Charge 3**, which is a heart rate and fitness wristband that tracks activity, exercise and sleep.

**Did You Know?** Fitbits are one of several wearable devices that you can sync directly with RedBrick to simplify your experience. Once synced, your steps and physical activity minutes will automatically upload to accumulate towards your incentive requirements.

**Extra Bonus!** Employees who reach an average of 300 on their daily wellness meter for at least 15 days of the challenge will be awarded 50 points towards their Wellness Incentive.

Get Active	Eat Healthy	Points	Live Well	Points
<p>Time-based activities credit 10 points per minute for moderate activity. For example, 45 minutes of exercise would count for 450 points.</p> <div> <div>Cardio Machine</div> <div>Walking</div> <div>Yardwork</div> <div>Golf</div> </div> <p>Low-intensity activities are worth 50 percent of moderate activities.</p> <p>High intensity activities are worth 200 percent of moderate activities.</p> <div> <div>Downhill Skiing</div> <div>Racquet Sports</div> <div>Steps</div> </div> <p>Step-based activities credit 0.10 points per step. For example, if you get 7,153 steps in for the day, you will earn 716 points.</p>	Breakfast	110	Belonging	90
	Fruit: 950g	80	Focused Relaxation	100
	Half Whole Grains	80	Friends and Family	80
	Healthy Fats	90	Goal Tracking	90
	Healthy Snacks	90	Involvement	90
	Lean Protein	90	Leisure	80
	No Sweets	110	Less TV	70
	Real Food	90	Learning	90
	Slower Meals	80	Priority Setting	110
	Veggies 2 1/2 Cups	110	Sleep	110
	Water	70	Time Outside	90

## Grand Prize Winners (Two Teams)

We will award the winning team with the **highest average points** and the team with the **highest cumulative points**. The winning team members from each team will each be awarded a **\$100 gift card**.

**What if there is a tie?** If there is a tie in either category, RedBrick will conduct a random drawing to select the winning team.

