

# Word for YO Wellness

April 2023

A Newsletter by the Yosemite Wellness Coalition

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**Breathe.** Enjoy this mindfulness exercise, try it by the river!

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Hear the sound of the river. Sit in a comfortable relaxed position.  
Unclench your jaw.

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**Let your worries pass through your mind like the clouds or rushing river.**

Breathe

Relax your shoulders back away from your ears and roll them back.

Repeat.

Breathe.

Roll your neck around one way, then switch.

You can continue to do this or sit in a comfortable still position.

- Hear the sound of the river -

Breathe in. Hold. Breathe out any negative or stressful thoughts.

Repeat.

- Hear the sound of the river -

Breathe in a good thought. Hold. Breathe out any negative or stressful thoughts.

Repeat.

Breathe in. Hold. Breathe out. (Repeat x5)

Be still.

- Hear the sound of the river -

Breathe in. Hold. Breathe out. (Repeat x5)

Be still.

# Upcoming Events

All events will be subject to weather and other conditions. Visit [yoscommunity.com/events](http://yoscommunity.com/events) for up-to-date information.

## Earth Day Celebrations!

10 am to 2 pm in Yosemite Village  
Earth Day Festival

A variety of booths will offer art, education, and activities for all ages. Learn about ways we're protecting Yosemite for future generations—and what you can do to help!

Saturday 4/22/2023

Questions: [yose\\_safety@nps.gov](mailto:yose_safety@nps.gov)

## Healthy Relationships and Communication Workshop!

Led by Jenni Buczko

Relationships can cause both the most stress and the most joy. Whether it's our spouse, partner, supervisor, housemate, colleague, neighbor or child, we are all in relationships all of the time. Would you like to learn some new skills in an engaging workshop?

In this free half day workshop (4 hours) we will cover evidenced based theories and models for building better relationships and improving communication skills. This workshop is for couples, friends, housemates, or join us solo and we'll pair you up for practice. (No partner required.) Come learn in community, practice with a friend or loved one, and also learn about self compassion. We're going to focus on the positive too!

**YOSEMITE VALLEY APRIL 8 1:00-5:00PM** Location: Curry Wellness Center

**EL PORTAL APRIL 9 1:00-5:00pm** Location: EP Community Hall

RSVP to Jenni :  
[Jenni.Buczko@gmail.com](mailto:Jenni.Buczko@gmail.com) or  
text 209-732-6118

## Shakespeare in Yosemite: April 21-23, 2023, in the Curry Village Amphitheatre.

With *UC Merced*

Romeo and Juliet in Yosemite This Earth Day weekend, Shakespeare in Yosemite returns to the Curry Village Amphitheater for free, live performances of a new 90-minute adaptation of Romeo and Juliet, especially created for Yosemite National Park and starring park rangers and community actors.

The play's action is transported to Yosemite and features loads of live music and family-friendly environmental messages. And this time, the lovers do not die! The show is a partnership between University of California Merced, Yosemite National Park, and Yosemite Hospitality.

More information:  
[yosemiteshakes.ucmerced.edu](http://yosemiteshakes.ucmerced.edu)

## Spring Fling

Hosted by YEA!  
Wednesday 4/22  
8am-10pm

Join YEA for an afternoon of events!

5k Fun Run Town Photo Vendor Fair Contra Dance

LIVE MUSIC  
The Mantis Shrimp  
Scotty Red Pants  
Eternal Turtle  
The Philharmonik  
The Humidors

At the El Portal Community Hall

**\$25 AT THE DOOR AFTER 5:30pm**  
**\$20 pre-sale tickets online**

YEA is a non-profit that provides much needed community-oriented services and social events to the Yosemite National Park area.

## Balanced Rock Community Programs

The following programs are being offered by outside organizations not associated with the Wellness Coalition.

Please note that some programs require a fee to participate.

## Monday Night Community Yoga

Join us Monday evenings in El Portal & Wawona from for a weekly dose of movement as medicine. Enjoy a meaningful, rejuvenating flow led by one of our local teachers. From ashtanga to gentle flow to strong vinyasa, there's a style for everyone to enjoy! All levels welcome.

We do our best to update the website with last-minute class cancellations due to unforeseen circumstances or weather.

When: Mondays, 6:00-7:15pm

Where: 2 Class Locations in 2023!  
In El Portal - El Portal Community Hall  
5512 Foresta Road, El Portal, CA 95318

In Wawona - The Redwoods  
8038 Chilnualna Falls Rd, Wawona, CA 95389

## Weekly Community Yoga at the Yosemite Bug

The Yosemite Bug Rustic Mountain Resort  
6979 Highway 140, Midpines, CA 95345

Sundays from 6pm-7:15pm PT

Join local instructors for yoga, meditation, and mindfulness! Roll out your yoga mat in-person and in community every Sunday in the Yoga Studio located next to the Yosemite Bug's Health Spa for an evening practice.

These classes are \$15-\$20 per class, and no one is turned away due to lack of funds.

Those who register online beforehand will have priority access to class, space is limited and walk-ins will be accommodated as available.

# Community Submissions



## Yosemite Spirit

-By  
Shawn Mackie

## Moment in Time

-By  
*Alix Journey*



For a chance to feature your personal artwork, poetry, articles, or short stories in our newsletter, please send your submission to [yos.communitybuilder@gmail.com](mailto:yos.communitybuilder@gmail.com)

# Wellness News

## Recipe For Yo' Wellness



### Spinach-Potato Tacos

#### Ingredients

- 12 large yukon gold potatoes, scrubbed and cut into small dice
- 1 lb Spinach
- 1 large onion, diced
- 1 medium poblano pepper, seeded and diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 cup unsweetened, unflavored plant milk
- 3 tablespoons nutritional yeast
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 12 corn tortillas
- ½ cup chopped fresh cilantro

#### Instructions

- Place the potatoes in a medium saucepan and add water to cover. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer, covered, until the potatoes are tender when pierced with the tip of a sharp knife, 10 to 12 minutes. Drain well and set aside.
- In a large skillet, cook the onion and poblano pepper over medium heat, stirring occasionally and adding water 1 to 2 tablespoons at a time as needed to keep the vegetables from sticking, until softened, 7 to 8 minutes. Add the garlic and cumin and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute.
- Add the spinach and potatoes along with the plant milk and nutritional yeast. Season to taste with salt and pepper and cook until heated through, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from the heat and set aside.
- Meanwhile, heat a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add as many corn tortillas to the pan as will fit in a single layer and heat for a few minutes to warm the tortillas through. Remove them from the pan and set them aside, covered with a clean kitchen towel to keep warm. Repeat with the remaining tortillas.
- To serve, place the tortillas on individual serving plates or a large platter and divide the potato mixture among them, spooning it onto the center of each. Sprinkle with cilantro and serve.

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## How Decluttering Can Transform Your Mental Well-being

### Clearing space helps clear your mind

Physically removing items in your space can help remove mental blockages. One study showed that cluttered spaces reduce your ability to focus and can impact your memory.

**A good first step to clearing space is to start with one room and pick 3-5 items that you like but don't love.**

#### Then, ask yourself:

- Do I actively use this item?
- Does this item bring joy into my life?
- Would I miss this item if it were gone tomorrow?

*If the answer to any of these questions is no, that's a clear indicator that this item can go. By removing unnecessary items from your space, you invite an opportunity to increase your mental focus and clarity, decrease distractions, and ultimately breathe easier.*

### Cleaner spaces can boost social relationships

When your home is clean and clutter-free, you're more comfortable inviting friends and family over to visit. Inviting friends and family over for quality time can encourage stronger interpersonal relationships, which has been shown to improve markers of good mental health over time. So on those days when you're feeling seriously unmotivated to clean, remind yourself of the positive outcomes of following through...like the loved ones you'll get more time with!

### You can prioritize what truly matters to you

Decluttering helps you see what's important in your life—and what's not.. Perhaps having treasured family photos on display in your home or having easy access to your favorite musical instruments bring you feelings of happiness and peace. But maybe holding onto decades-old, ill-fitting clothing and knick knacks make you feel quite the opposite. When you clear the physical clutter that's weighing you down, you can re-prioritize the objects, people, and situations that enrich your life instead.

### Decluttering positively impacts other areas of life

When you declutter one area of your life, like your home, it can spill over to other areas like your career, relationships, and habits. It starts with getting rid of old items, then less than great habits, and that cascades into hobbies, relationships, and other priorities. Decluttering your home can lead to better eating habits, lower stress levels, improved sleep and better work-life balance. When one area feels spacious, airy, and meaningful, other areas of life can follow suit.

### Find the items you love with ease

Imagine finding your favorite books, food, or clothes with ease every single day, instead of wading through a sea of stuff. Sounds amazing, right? It's totally possible with a bit of decluttering. When items are organized in a way that's logical and tidy, your favorite items will be easier to find and you'll be able to enjoy them more. Having easy access to the items that bring you joy can also positively impact your mental health. Double win!

# Activities

## Easy Ways to Make Decluttering Fun

Decluttering a lifetime's worth of stuff from your home is hard work – physically, emotionally and mentally. If you feel overwhelmed or stuck on your decluttering journey, shifting your perspective and your approach to decluttering can help.



### NOTE ABOUT "GETTING" RID OF IT

First, when I say "get rid" of something, I'm using that phrase to encompass any method of getting something out of your house.

Whether it's tossing it, donating it, selling it, etc. For simplicity's sake, I'll say "get rid of it" and you can decide the most appropriate way to do so.

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### SET A TIMER AND SEE HOW MANY ITEMS YOU CAN GET RID OF



It doesn't have to be a long time. It's amazing how much you'll likely be able to find to get rid of in just 5 or 10 minutes when you stay focused and work quickly. And 5 or 10 minutes can be squeezed in even when you're busy.

Remember, decluttering doesn't have to be done for hours at a time. A few minutes here and there, repeated on a regular basis, will add up to big changes in your home.

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### CRANK UP THE TUNES!

MAKE YOURSELF A DECLUTTERING PLAYLIST FULL OF MUSIC TO ENERGIZE AND MOTIVATE YOU AS YOU DECLUTTER. LISTENING TO YOUR FAVOURITE SONGS CAN NOT ONLY HELP BRIGHTEN THE MOOD. BUT ALSO HELP REDUCE SOME OF THE OVERWHELM AND DREAD ABOUT DECLUTTERING AND MAKE DECLUTTERING FUN.

ANOTHER GREAT OPTION IS LISTENING TO YOUR FAVOURITE PODCAST OR AN AUDIOBOOK YOU LOVE WHILE DECLUTTERING. PAIRING DECLUTTERING WITH SOMETHING YOU ENJOY WILL DEFINITELY HELP IT FEEL MORE ENJOYABLE.



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### FIND 10 THINGS TO GET RID OF RIGHT NOW

Get up right now and find 10 things to get rid of as quickly as you can. You might surprise yourself how quickly and easily you can find 10 things. And the great part is you've taken action and started the process, which might just inspire you to keep going!

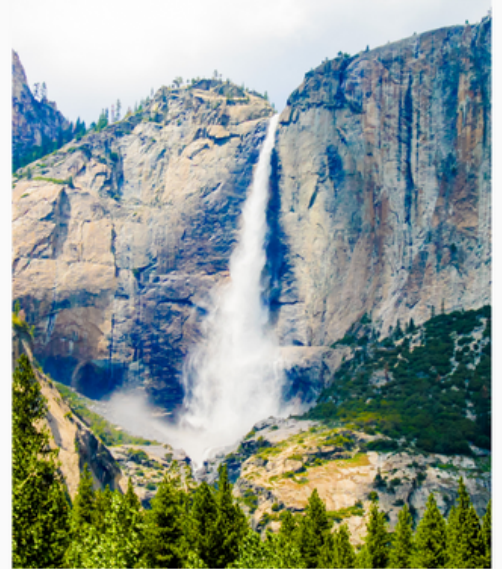


# Resources

## FOR ALL YOSEMITE EMPLOYEES

### Really?! What are the details?

- 3-5 Sessions with a Licensed Therapist
- Open to all current Yosemite Employees
- All sessions are FREE
- These are primarily telehealth (phone or internet) sessions that can be done from your home or a private space at the Yosemite Medical Clinic in Yosemite Valley
- Return clients (from previous years) are welcome



Theresa Inslee,  
LMFT/LPCC  
Staff Therapist



Rachel Gren  
LMFT  
Staff Therapist



Jenni Buczko, LPCC  
Program Director  
Crisis Response

QUESTIONS? EMAIL [JENNI.BUCZKO@GMAIL.COM](mailto:JENNI.BUCZKO@GMAIL.COM)  
OR YOU CAN REACH OUT DIRECTLY TO THE THERAPISTS TO SAVE TIME!

# Yosemite Therapists

## Free Counseling Program



Theresa Inslee is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) and a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC) with over a decade of experience in offering therapy to a wide variety of clients seeking support. She is also certified in EMDR. Theresa typically works with individuals that feel worried, sad, overwhelmed, stressed, or are trying to cope with loss. She helps people find alternative solutions to their problems, examines different perspectives on their unique circumstances, teaches coping and relationship skills, and explores motivations for change. (Telehealth or phone appts only)

- Call her at 916-955-3525 (preferred) or [counselingnorthstar@gmail.com](mailto:counselingnorthstar@gmail.com)
- Appointments: Tuesday/Thursday mornings & Wednesday afternoons



Rachel is a Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist, accepting new clients via telehealth. She understands the ups and downs of a frequently changing life/work schedule and offer flexible appointments other than what is described below. She welcomes you to therapy and looks forward to building a therapeutic alliance with you. It is her hope that you feel supported and leave therapy with a sense of peace.

- [guards.up.counseling@gmail.com](mailto:guards.up.counseling@gmail.com) (preferred) or call: 559-586-0881
- Appointment Times: Mondays, Tuesdays, & Thursdays



Jenni has been the Yosemite Park Therapist since 2018 and works primarily with adults. Jenni is the Counseling Program Director and primarily see's crisis clients, conducts park mental health consultations, and completes assessments. She believes in our innate power to grow and make the changes we desire for healthier and more satisfying lives. She is trained as a Somatic therapist incorporating mindfulness and the body into therapist sessions, is trained in EMDR, and uses a modality called Internal Family Systems (IFS).

**FOR QUESTIONS OR HELP WITH ANY COUNSELING SERVICES**  
**EMAIL: JENNI B ----- JENNI.BUCZKO@GMAIL.COM**

# Resources

## National Velociraptor Awareness Day

April 18, 2023 [nationaltoday.com/national-velociraptor-awareness-day/](https://nationaltoday.com/national-velociraptor-awareness-day/)

Velociraptor is one of the most bird-like dinosaurs ever discovered. It was small and fast, and the sickle-shaped claw on the second toe of each foot made it a formidable predator. A special bone in its wrist allowed it to swivel its wrist sideways in a flapping motion and to fold its arm against its body like a bird. This motion allowed it to snap its arms forward to grab fleeing prey and is an important part of the flight stroke in modern birds.

*Velociraptor: Facts about the 'Speedy Thief' | Live Science*, [www.livescience.com/23922-velociraptor-facts.html](http://www.livescience.com/23922-velociraptor-facts.html)

Velociraptor was an agile carnivorous, or meat-eating, dinosaur that inhabited Asia during the late Cretaceous period, approximately 65 to 99 million years ago. Velociraptor is classified as a member of the family Dromaeosauridae, which includes dinosaurs with an especially large and deadly sickle-shaped claw. Velociraptor belongs to the order Saurischia—the lizard-hipped dinosaurs—and the suborder Theropoda. [kids.britannica.com](https://kids.britannica.com)

### Fun Facts

- The name Velociraptor is extracted from Greek meaning 'speedy thief.' However, it wasn't as quick as 'bird mimic' dinosaurs or the modern ornithomimids, which could reach speeds of up to 50 MPH.
- The fossils of the Velociraptor were first found in Mongolia in 1924 by a paleontologist named H.F. Osborn. Velociraptors seem to have resided in Eurasia, as most fossils have been found in Russia, China, or Mongolia.
- Many dromaeosaurids have birdlike features, and it is believed that the Velociraptor may have had feathers.



### Safety Tips

#### 5 Tips For Surviving a Dinosaur Disaster

by Brian Switek

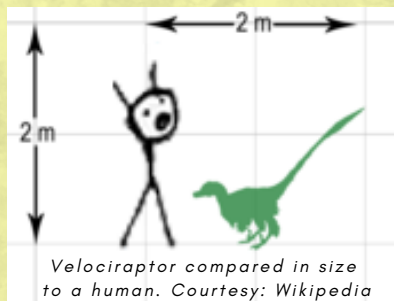
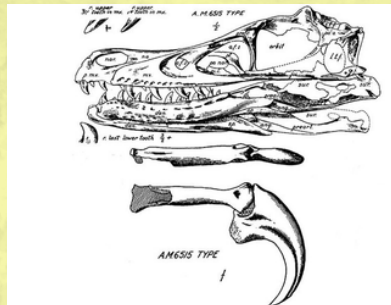
- 1: Run
- 2: Don't Scream
- 3: Steer Clear of Herbivores
- 4: Don't Worry About the Pterosaurs (Much)
- 5: Doors are your friend

### New Home Buyer Tips

-The American Society for Velociraptor Attack Prevention

When buying a new home, there are a few things to look out for when assessing potential velociraptor attacks:

- Check all doors and windows. Doors should be made of solid oak or steel. Windows should have steel bars with spacing smaller than the average raptor.
- Make sure all entryways have adequate deadbolts. Quality deadbolts may be purchased at your local hardware store.
- Always keep a loaded big-game rifle under your bed, and tire irons near every door. Remember, you should never be farther than 20 feet away from a tire iron.



## Resources

### Vicious Velociraptor: tales of a turkey-sized dinosaur

[Vicious Velociraptor: tales of a turkey-sized dinosaur | Natural History Museum \(nhm.ac.uk\)](https://www.nhm.ac.uk/explore-the-world-of-natural-history/vicious-velociraptor-2019)

### Yosemite Medical Clinic

209-372-4637

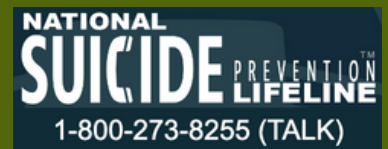
### Mariposa County Health & Human Services

#### 24-hour Crisis Hotline

209-966-7000

#### Crisis Text Line

Text 741741



### National Suicide Prevention

<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>



### Veterans Crisis Line

<https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>

### Alcoholics Anonymous

Mariposa & Sierra Foothill Chapter  
24 Hour Hotline

209-966-3110

<http://www.aamariposa>

[fellowship.org](http://www.aamariposafellowship.org)

YO WELLNESS | ISSUE 19

Word for Yo' Wellness is brought to you by the Wellness Coalition, an employee resource group (ERG) with members from many of Yosemite's park partners and hosted by the National Park Service.