

April 1, 2021

Word for YO Wellness

A Newsletter by the Pandemic Wellness Coalition

In This Issue

Upcoming Events
Page 2

Community
Submissions
Page 3

Wellness News
& Recipes
Page 4

Activities
Pages 5

Resources
Page 6

The Word

Freedom

Yosemite Valley is a land of ancient giants. To live here means to live among gargantuan waterfalls, trees whose trunks seem endlessly tall, and boulders that can easily crush a house. While all of these objects of nature are incredibly large, none of them compare to the colossal walls that barricade us from the rest of the world.

Although the granite walls are gorgeous spectacles for one to lay their eyes upon, there often comes a time in each local's tenure when the iconic walls begin to feel claustrophobic. When this happens to me, I begin to refer to Yosemite Valley as "The Fortress" in my head. As the valley morphs into The Fortress, it takes on an entirely different energy; I begin to feel trapped, and I long for a view of the far off horizon.

It can be some time before I realize that my own mind gave birth to this concept of "The Fortress" and projected it onto the environment around me. Ultimately, I remember that I can hike up the walls anytime I want, or disappear outside of the park for a weekend away. Or I can go even further, and realize that the idea of being trapped can simply be changed by a mindset instead of a physical location. At any given time, despite circumstances that may have us convinced otherwise, we are totally free. We are free to be in our bodies, free to breathe, free to move, and free to think. We are also free to make our own decisions, even when this power appears to be taken away from us.

To claim one's freedom back from the fortress that is mind and circumstance is to claim one's power back. This can help you stand in solidarity within yourself, make choices that are best for you as an individual, and think in a clear and rational way. It can help you develop into a more full and pure version of yourself.

There is freedom all around. This is freedom in the way the wind blows, in the blooming of the flowers, and in the flight of the peregrine falcon. That energy is available to us at any given time, as well.

By Jetta Blaine

Upcoming Events

Saturday Morning HIIT

Led by *Nina Listro*

Get your blood pumping every Saturday morning with a high-intensity interval training (HIIT) workout! No equipment needed, just an exercise mat if you have one. All ages and ability levels welcome.

Every Saturday
9:00-9:45am

zoom.us/join
Meeting ID: 826 3446 5078
Passcode: 790932

Community Yoga with Balanced Rock

Led by *Breezy Jackson*

Join local Balanced Rock instructors for our online community yoga class! All levels are encouraged to attend, classes are donation-based. These classes are about YOU and your practice, students are always encouraged to modify as needed for their comfort level.

Every Monday
6:00pm - 7:15pm

zoom.us/join
Meeting Code: 819 0173 4818
Passcode: BRYOGA

Wednesday Night Yoga

Led by *Jetta Blaine*

Every Wednesday
5:30pm - 6:30 pm

zoom.us/join
Meeting ID: 206 626 9920
Passcode: wellness1

Thursday Morning Meditation

Led by *Jetta Blaine*

Every Thursday
9:00 am - 9:15 am

zoom.us/join
Meeting ID: 206 626 9920
Passcode: wellness1

Community Brainstorm

- Open Forum -

Led by *Jamie Gonzales*

Do you have any ideas that can contribute to the health and wellness in the Park? This open format discussion will be a space where you can share your own ideas. Pop in for 10 min or the full hour.

Tuesday, April 6th
4:00pm - 5:00pm

zoom.us/join
Meeting ID: 206 626 9920
Passcode: wellness1

Virtual Creative Collective Art Sessions

Led by *Jamie Gonzales & Giselle Diaz*

In Partnership with the Center for Creative Arts Therapy, this 4-part series is a space to create art and connect. Each week will have a theme centered around Mindfulness. .

All levels welcome. Basic supplies needed are paper, pen/pencil, markers, color pencils, paint is optional.

Every Wednesday in April: 7, 14, 21, 28
1:00pm - 2:00pm

zoom.us/join
Meeting ID: 206 626 9920
Passcode: wellness1

Trashy Tuesday

Who said Facelift can only happen once a year? Join us for a community volunteer clean-up at the campgrounds and other popular visitor areas. Our focus is on that pesky micro-trash! You can volunteer for one hour or the whole day! Remember to bring a mask (and gloves, if you have them). All other trash pickup materials and equipment will be provided.

Tuesday, April 13th
10:00am - 2:00pm
Pines Campgrounds

Meet at the Lower Pines Registration Booth

Tuesday, April 20th
3:00pm - 7:00pm
Village Day-Use Parking Lot & Picnic Areas

Wellness Programs On Demand



On YouTube, search for the Yosemite Community Builder channel to find the following programs:

Yoga For Anxiety
Stress Management Workshop
Lifestyle Series
Wednesday Night Yoga

On the International Transgender Day of Visibility the LGBTQ+ Employee Resource Group hosted an informal meet & greet in support of the transgender & non-binary community in Yosemite, and beyond.

This event not only had educational handouts but also CUPCAKES!

Thank you for those who hosted the event and to those who came by to support.

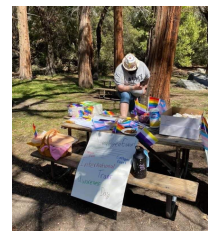


Photo by Jessica Bonner

Visit www.yoscommunity.com/events for direct event links and event updates.

Community Submissions



Pinecones
Rubber Block Print
By Katherine Bliss

Resin Coasters
By Bethany Matsumoto



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

Wellness News

Recipe

For Yo Wellness

This month's ingredient:

Artichokes

Artichokes are notoriously intimidating. They're pokey, dense, fibrous, and it's not entirely clear what part is supposed to be edible. But once you know how to properly prepare them, artichokes might just become your new springtime favorite. Fun fact: the artichoke is actually a type of thistle. The portion we eat is the bud of the thistle "flower," right before it blooms.

Steamed Artichoke with Pesto Aioli

- 1 globe artichoke (medium to large)
- 1-2 cups water
- Lemon Juice (Optional)
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1/4 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tbsp. pesto

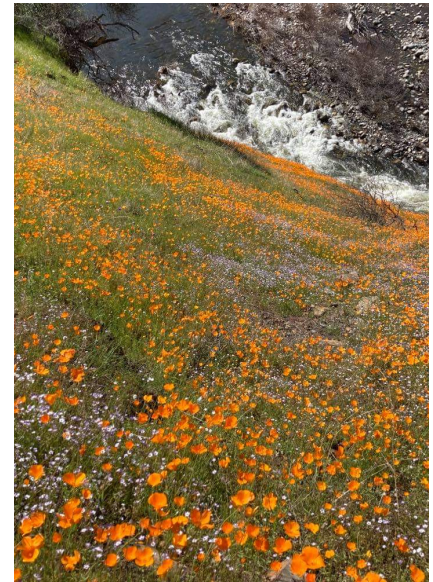
1. With a pair of kitchen shears, trim off spiny tips of the artichoke "leaves."
2. With a sharp knife (a bread knife works well), trim stem to about 1/2 - 1 inch from the base, and cut off the top of artichoke so it can stand upright, stem-up.
3. Add water and a couple dashes of lemon juice to a saucepan big enough for your artichoke, cover with a tight fitting lid, steam it on medium-low heat for 25 minutes, or until the stem is tender and the leaves pull off easily. Check water level occasionally, and add more water if needed.
4. Remove your artichoke with tongs (it's hot!) and let it cool a bit. While cooling...
5. Mix mayo, garlic powder, and pesto in a small bowl for dipping.
6. To eat, pull off the artichoke leaves, dip in aioli, and scrape the meaty base of the leaf off with your teeth. Discard the leaf. When you get to the base, or the "heart," scrape out the fluff with a spoon, then split the heart into quarters. Proceed to dip and enjoy.

Hite Cove Hike

Spring is finally here and we're all excited to hit the trails. One of the most popular trails this time of year is the beautiful Hite Cove. Enjoy everything the trail has to offer from small amphibian friends, to garter snakes, to the beloved and iconic California Poppies! Here are some tips to maximize your enjoyment of the hike.

Tips for Enjoying Hite Cove in El Portal

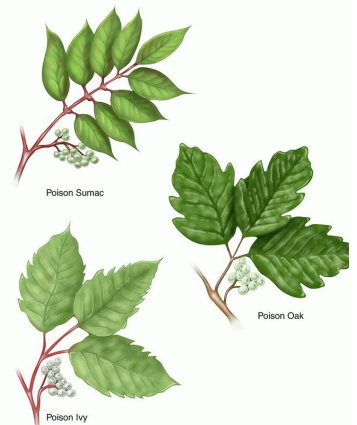
- Park in the turn out across the street from the trailhead at the Red Bud Lodge/Savages Trading Post on Highway 140. There are currently NO RESTROOMS so plan accordingly.
- Start early! Hike in with the newts while the trail is still wet with dew. Just don't lick the newts, they are poisonous. You may find a group of them swimming and mating in the shallow bank of the river.
- This narrow trail is very popular! It's 4.5 miles in and 4.5 miles out with plenty of great stopping places next to the river. Give other hikers plenty of space to pass you and look out for poison oak along the edges of the trail.
- Take your time! The flowers open up as they get hit with the sun. If you hike in early, enjoy a picnic lunch down by the river, you'll get an entirely different show on the hike out.
- Keep your eyes peeled for a bald eagle!
- Pack out what you pack in, including toilet paper! **Leave No Trace!**



Photograph by Britain Peters

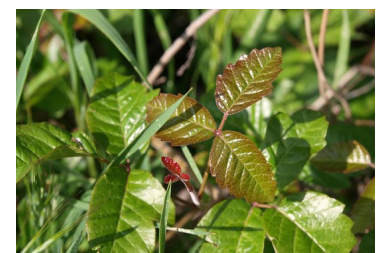
Watch out for Poison Oak

Poison Ivy, Sumac, and Oak



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Waxy leaves are an indicator



For more Information:
Yosemite Wildflower Guide (yosemitemhikes.com)

Activities

Breathing Techniques

Often times, we don't put much thought into our breath. That's understandable, given that breathing is regulated by our autonomic nervous system, and therefore happens automatically.

Focusing on your breath, however, particularly in times of stress, anxiety, and restlessness, can be incredibly beneficial. Breathing techniques can reduce harmful chemical buildup in your body, relax you, and promote clarity.

Below, we explore three breathing techniques and the benefits of them.

Try any or all of these, and incorporate those that benefit you into your wellness practice.

4-4-4 Breathing

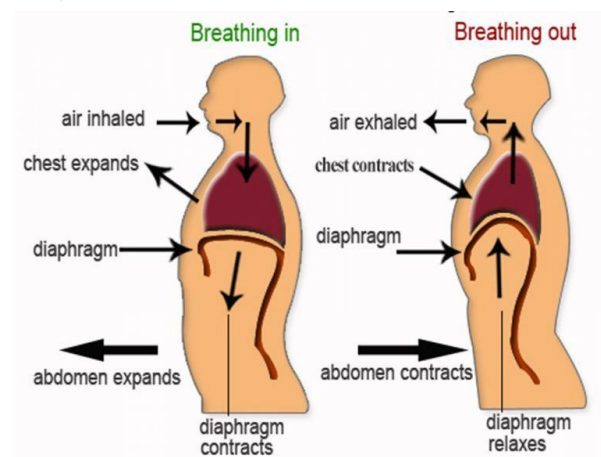
Utilized by Special Forces units throughout the world, the 4-4-4 breathing technique promotes calmness and clarity. To start, sit in a comfortable position. Slowly breathe in to a count of four, hold your inhale to a count of four, and slowly exhale to a count of four. Repeat this breathing technique for eight minutes.

4-7-8 Breathing

Sometimes called a "natural tranquilizer for the nervous system", the 4-7-8 breathing technique is great for reducing stress and anxiety while also improving sleep. To start, sit in a comfortable position. Slowly breathe in to a count of four, hold your inhale to a count of seven, and slowly exhale to a count of eight. Repeat this breathing technique for eight minutes.

Alternate Nostril Breathing

Alternate nostril breathing has shown to reduce heart rate and stress while improving cardiovascular performance and respiratory endurance. To start, sit in a comfortable position. Lift your right hand and cover your right nostril with your thumb. Breathe in fully through your left nostril, release your thumb from your right nostril while covering your left nostril with your index finger, and breathe out fully through your right nostril. Breathe in fully through your right nostril, release your index finger from your left nostril while covering your right nostril with your thumb, and breathe out fully through your left nostril. Repeat this breathing technique for eight minutes.



Resources

SUICIDE IS PREVENTABLE: KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS



TALK

- Wanting to die or kill themselves.
- Feeling hopeless or having no reason to live.
- Feeling trapped or unbearable pain.
- Being a burden to others.
- Seeking revenge.

BEHAVIOR

- Researching how to kill themselves.
- Increasing use of alcohol or drugs.
- Acting anxious or agitated or showing rage.
- Reckless behavior.
- Sleeping too little or too much.
- Withdrawing or isolating

MOOD

- Displaying extreme mood swings, such as:
 - Anxiety
 - Loss of interest
 - Rage
 - Depression

We are here for you, call our crisis line:
(209) 966-7000

For more information visit:
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

COVID-19 VACCINE ELIGIBILITY EXPANDS

Californians
Ages 50+

April 1

Californians
Ages 16+

April 15

covid19.ca.gov



COVID-19 vaccines are at
Yosemite!

Sign up for yours here →



Word for Yo' Wellness is brought to you by the Pandemic Wellness Coalition, an employee resource group (ERG) with members from many of Yosemite's park partners and hosted by the National Park Service. Look for our newsletter the first and fifteenth of every month. Each issue includes recipes, articles, community submissions, special events and more from your fellow park locals. Have a special request or an art submission? Contact yos.communitybuilders@gmail.com for more information!

Resources

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.amariposafellowship.org>

Coronavirus Sanity Guide
<https://www.tenpercent.com/coronavirus/sanityguide>