

Word for YO Wellness

A Newsletter by the Pandemic Wellness Coalition

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The Word

Fire

It's that time of year when we're seeing smoke and other effects of fire. Fire is an element often associated with destruction and devastation, an element that can tear down entire forests and towns in one swift blast of wind and flame. In parallel, many of us feel a fire kindled within ourselves, one that can easily ignite our own energy toward self-destruction and devastation.

We can further feed this inner fire with negative habits or negative self-talk, and before we know it, the effects begin to take off just like a wildfire untamed. As the summer powers on, we may notice ourselves using words synonymous with the effects of fire, like fatigue or burnout. It's challenging to say if we can avoid burnout all together, but we can take steps to mitigate the effects, just as with wildfires. Reduce the fuel it needs to survive by lowering the amount of negativity we hold within ourselves. Create a defensible space by taking time and space for your physical and mental health. Have a "hose" nearby, like a solid support system or something that brings comfort in times of stress.

But remember: we can also take that negative fuel and turn it into a productive spark, a spark of passion and creativity. Just as fire can destroy, it can also give life, peace, and fellowship; humans have gathered around the campfire for years, seeking its comfort and warmth, sharing stories, and building community. In the world of myth and imagination, the phoenix is a fire bird symbolizing the everlasting cycle of destruction and rebirth. In the Zodiac, fire signs often represent strength and light, motivation and compassion. The very stars in the sky exist by fire, as do we.

Luckily for us, the true secret of fire lies not in its destructive powers but in its power for regeneration. We have a choice to let our inner fire consume and devastate, or we can allow it to clear out what no longer serves us and create room for growth.

Upcoming Events

Yosemite Facelift

Led by Yosemite Climbing Association
& Yosemite VIP Program

September 21st - 26th, 2021

IT'S BACK! Facelift will begin September 21st, both in Yosemite and digitally, around the world!

Founded by Ken Yager and the Yosemite Climbing Association, the Yosemite Facelift is an annual volunteer cleanup event dedicated to the stewardship of Yosemite National Park.

To keep the event safe, pre-registration is strongly recommended. In person registration will be limited to very specific times. **Park employees should try to register in advance.** This will be helpful if you are planning to jump in on your lunchbreaks or half-days.

You will only need to register once. For more registration and event information, scan the QR code, or visit YosemiteFacelift.com.

Thursday Evening HIIT

Led by Nina Listro

Previously held on Saturday mornings, Nina's HIIT class will now be held on Thursday evenings. Get your blood pumping every Thursday 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. Led by Nina Listro

Every Thursday
5:30pm - 6:15pm

zoom.us/join
Meeting ID: 819 4104 8953
Passcode: weeklyhiit

Other Community Programs

The following programs are being offered by outside organizations not associated with the Pandemic Wellness Coalition. Please note that some programs require a fee to participate.

Balanced Rock

Community Yoga

Join local instructors for our outdoor 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 (Except Labor Day)
6:00pm - 7:15pm

El Portal Community Hall
(Outside, around the back)

Yosemite Conservancy Art Classes

Led by Yosemite Conservancy Artists in Residence

Did you know ANY Yosemite National Park employee can attend most art classes, theater shows, and outdoor adventures for free? (As space allows). YC will accept 1-2 employees per day.

Most classes are free to employees, except for classes that may charge a supply fee. In this case, employees will need to pay the \$20 materials fee, but the \$20 art registration fee is waived.

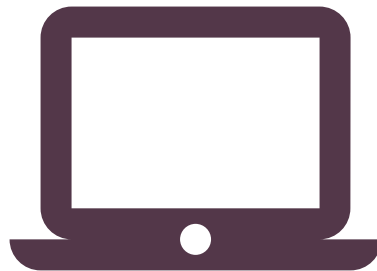
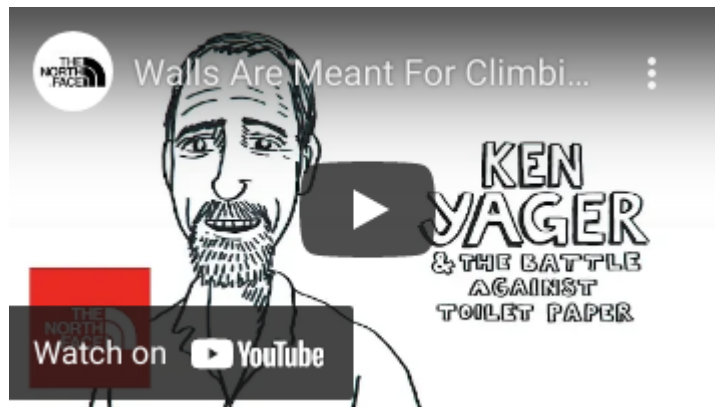
To reserve space, contact art@yosemite.org to inquire about availability. Please provide full name and phone number.

Watercolor w/ Michael Friedland
Sept 6-17, 2021

Watercolor w/ Casey Chevront
Sept 20-Oct 1, 2021

Virtual Wine & Paint
Every Friday
4:00 - 6:00pm

The full schedule can be found at:
yosemite.org/experience/art/



Wellness Programs On Demand

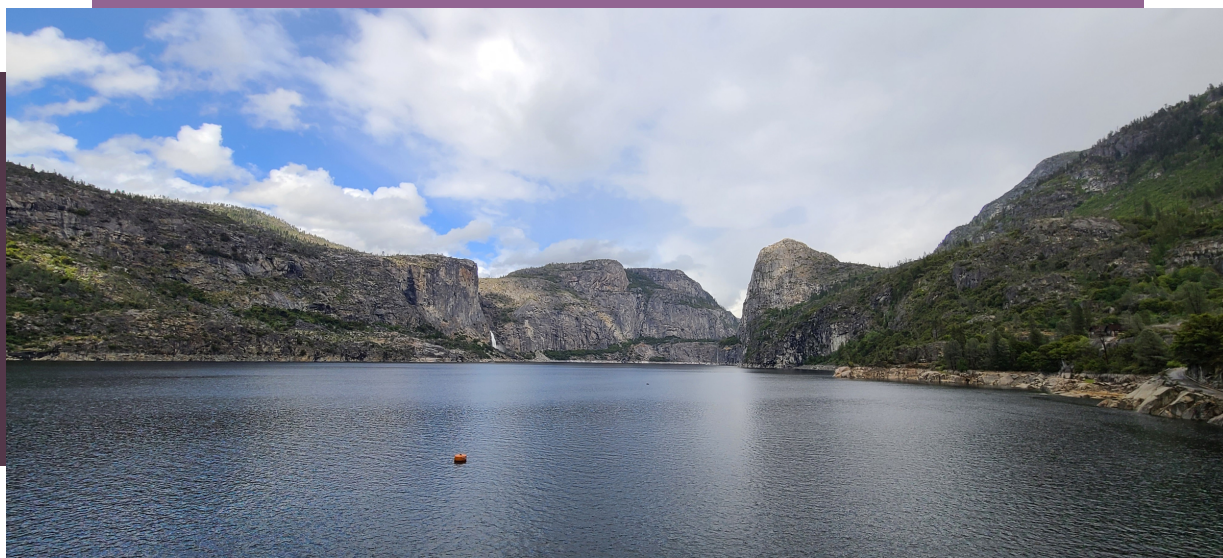
On YouTube, search for the [Yosemite Community Builder](#) channel to find the following programs:

- Yoga For Anxiety
- Stress Management Workshop
- Lifestyle Series
- Wednesday Night Yoga

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

Community Submissions

Young Lakes
by
Marty Anderson



By
Eddie Cruz

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:

Green Beans

Green Beans have been a garden staple for over 7,000 years, first cultivated in ancient Central and South America. For good reason, too: they are delicious, packed with nutrients, easy to grow, and even make the soil healthier by capturing nitrogen from the air and releasing it in the ground. If you end up with a surplus of this hearty legume (as most gardeners do), pickling is a great way to preserve them.

Easy Pickled Green Beans

1 1/2 lb. fresh green beans, washed, stem ends trimmed off

3/4 cups water

1/2 cup apple cider vinegar

1 1/2 tbsp. kosher salt

1 tbsp. granulated sugar

2 garlic cloves, peeled

1 tsp. whole mustard seeds

1 tsp. whole peppercorns

1/4 tsp. pepper flakes OR sliced fresh hot pepper of choice (for extra spicy!)

3 sprigs fresh dill

1. In a medium sized saucepan, combine water, vinegar, salt, and sugar. Over medium high heat, bring to a boil, boiling until sugar and salt are dissolved, stirring occasionally. Set aside to cool slightly.
2. Place garlic cloves, mustard seeds, peppercorns, and peppers at the bottom of a large, quart-sized jar. Arrange green beans vertically in jar and tuck dill sprigs into the jar.
3. Pour the brine into the jar, covering green beans completely. Tap to release air bubbles.
4. Cover jar and place in the fridge at least overnight but preferably three days or more before eating. Good for a whole month.

This recipe could be easily modified for other stick-shaped vegetables, or a vegetable medley! Think carrot spears, asparagus, peppers, etc.

Borrowed with modifications from:

<https://www.rachelcooks.com/pickled-green-beans/>

Stress Management: Breathing Exercises for Relaxation

Belly Breathing

Belly breathing is easy to do and very relaxing. Try this basic exercise anytime you need to relax or relieve stress.

1. Sit or lie flat in a comfortable position.
2. Put one hand on your belly just below your ribs and the other hand on your chest.
3. Take a deep breath in through your nose, and let your belly push your hand out. Your chest should not move.
4. Breathe out through pursed lips as if you were whistling. Feel the hand on your belly go in, and use it to push all the air out.

Do this breathing 3 to 10 times. Take your time with each breath.

Notice how you feel at the end of the exercise.

4-7-8 Breathing

This exercise also uses belly breathing to help you relax. You can do this exercise either sitting or lying down.

1. To start, put one hand on your belly and the other on your chest as in the belly breathing exercise.
2. Take a deep, slow breath from your belly, and silently count to 4 as you breathe in.
3. Hold your breath, and silently count from 1 to 7.
4. Breathe out completely as you silently count from 1 to 8. Try to get all the air out of your lungs by the time you count to 8.
5. Repeat 3 to 7 times or until you feel calm.
6. Notice how you feel at the end of the exercise.

Roll Breathing

Roll breathing helps you to develop full use of your lungs and to focus on the rhythm of your breathing. You can do it in any position. But while you are learning, it is best to lie on your back with your knees bent.

1. Put your left hand on your belly and your right hand on your chest. Notice how your hands move as you breathe in and out.
2. Practice filling your lower lungs by breathing so that your "belly" (left) hand goes up when you inhale and your "chest" (right) hand remains still. Always breathe in through your nose and breathe out through your mouth. Do this 8 to 10 times.
3. When you have filled and emptied your lower lungs 8 to 10 times, add the second step to your breathing: inhale first into your lower lungs as before, and then continue inhaling into your upper chest. Breathe slowly and regularly. As you do so, your right hand will rise and your left hand will fall a little as your belly falls.
4. As you exhale slowly through your mouth, make a quiet, whooshing sound as first your left hand and then your right hand fall. As you exhale, feel the tension leaving your body as you become more and more relaxed.
5. Practice breathing in and out in this way for 3 to 5 minutes. Notice that the movement of your belly and chest rises and falls like the motion of rolling waves.
6. Notice how you feel at the end of the exercise.

Practice roll breathing daily for several weeks until you can do it almost anywhere. You can use it as an instant relaxation tool anytime you need one.

Caution: Some people get dizzy the first few times they try roll breathing. If you begin to breathe too fast or feel lightheaded, slow your breathing. Get up slowly.

Morning Breathing

Try this exercise when you first get up in the morning to relieve muscle stiffness and clear clogged breathing passages. Then use it throughout the day to relieve back tension.

1. From a standing position, bend forward from the waist with your knees slightly bent, letting your arms dangle close to the floor.
2. As you inhale slowly and deeply, return to a standing position by rolling up slowly, lifting your head last.
3. Hold your breath for just a few seconds in this standing position.
4. Exhale slowly as you return to the original position, bending forward from the waist.

Notice how you feel at the end of the exercise.

For more information visit: <https://www.uofmhealth.org/health-library/uz2255>

Activities

The Five Senses Exercise

One example of a mindfulness exercise is called the Five Senses Exercise. The goal is to calm your mind by using your five senses to focus on your environment instead of your thoughts.

First, notice 5 things that you can see. Look around you and become aware of your environment. Try to pick out something that you don't usually notice.

Second, notice 4 things you can feel. Bring attention to the things that you're currently feeling, such as the texture of your clothing or the smooth surface of the table you're resting your hands on.

Third, notice 3 things that you can hear. Listen for and notice things in the background that you don't normally notice. It could be the birds chirping outside or an appliance humming in the next room.

Fourth, notice 2 things you can smell. Bring attention to scents that you usually filter out, either pleasant or unpleasant. Catch a whiff of the pine trees outside or food cooking in the kitchen.

Finally, notice 1 thing you can taste. Take a sip of a drink, chew gum, or notice the current taste in your mouth.

What can your 5 senses teach you about mindfulness?



Pausing to take a breath and observe the world can make a lot of difference to our emotional state. If you really look, just about everything has color, variation and texture that may have gone unnoticed.



Scents often trigger emotionally laden memories. Try closing your eyes so you can focus on the subtlest of scents.



Listening is a powerful practice and can enhance the state of relaxation.



Sense of touch provides opportunities to be fully attentive to tactile solutions.



Mindful eating develops a new mindset around food. It enhances flavor craving, and weight management.

Resources

Think Before You Spread

A HELPFUL GUIDE FOR A BETTER COMMUNITY

SPREAD

- Factual, credible information
- Cream cheese on your bagel
- Kindness & joy
- Good stories
- Your body on a comfy couch
- Positivity & hope
- Peanut butter & jelly
- Your blanket
- Good advice
- Avocado on toast
- Awareness



DON'T SPREAD

- COVID-19 virus
- Unverified information
- Hateful rhetoric
- Germs
- Rumors
- Dangerous challenges
- Panic
- Your body into other people's space
- Yourself thin
- Nonsense
- Fear
- Negativity



HEALTHY, SAFE, THRIVING.
MARIPOSA STRONG.



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.aamariposa.org/fellowship.org>

Coronavirus Sanity Guide

<https://www.tenpercent.com/coronavirusanxietyguide>

COVID-19 Testing

In addition to vaccinations, frequent testing is a critical tool to help protect the Yosemite Community. Many people carry the COVID virus but show no signs of illness. Surveillance testing helps to quickly identify anyone who is actively shedding the virus, but not showing any signs of illness. For people with frequent contact with large numbers of the general public or who work in the hospitality and public service sectors, our local Public Health officials recommend getting tested once every 7 to 14 days.

Free COVID-19 testing is available in Yosemite Valley on Mondays and Thursdays for the foreseeable future.

- On Mondays, testing is available by LHI outside of the Yosemite Medical Clinic Building from 10 am to 6 pm.
- On Thursdays, testing is available by LHI at the Curry Village Wellness Center from 10 am to 6 pm.

Walk-ins are welcome! If you happen to know your LHI patient ID number, please bring that with you to expedite your check-in process. To schedule an appointment, visit please <https://www.lhi.care/covidtesting>.

Yosemite Medical Clinic does perform COVID testing as needed for symptomatic individuals. The Yosemite Medical Clinic is open 6 days a week (Mon-Sat). Patients will be evaluated by a provider to determine if testing is indicated.

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.communitybuilder@gmail.com for more information!