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**BROWARD**  
County Public Schools

# Wellness Newsletter

January 2021

*Live. Life. Well.*

In this issue:

**The Psychology of  
Behavior Change**

**Leverage Your  
Character  
Strengths**

**The Secrets to  
Lasting Behavior  
Change**

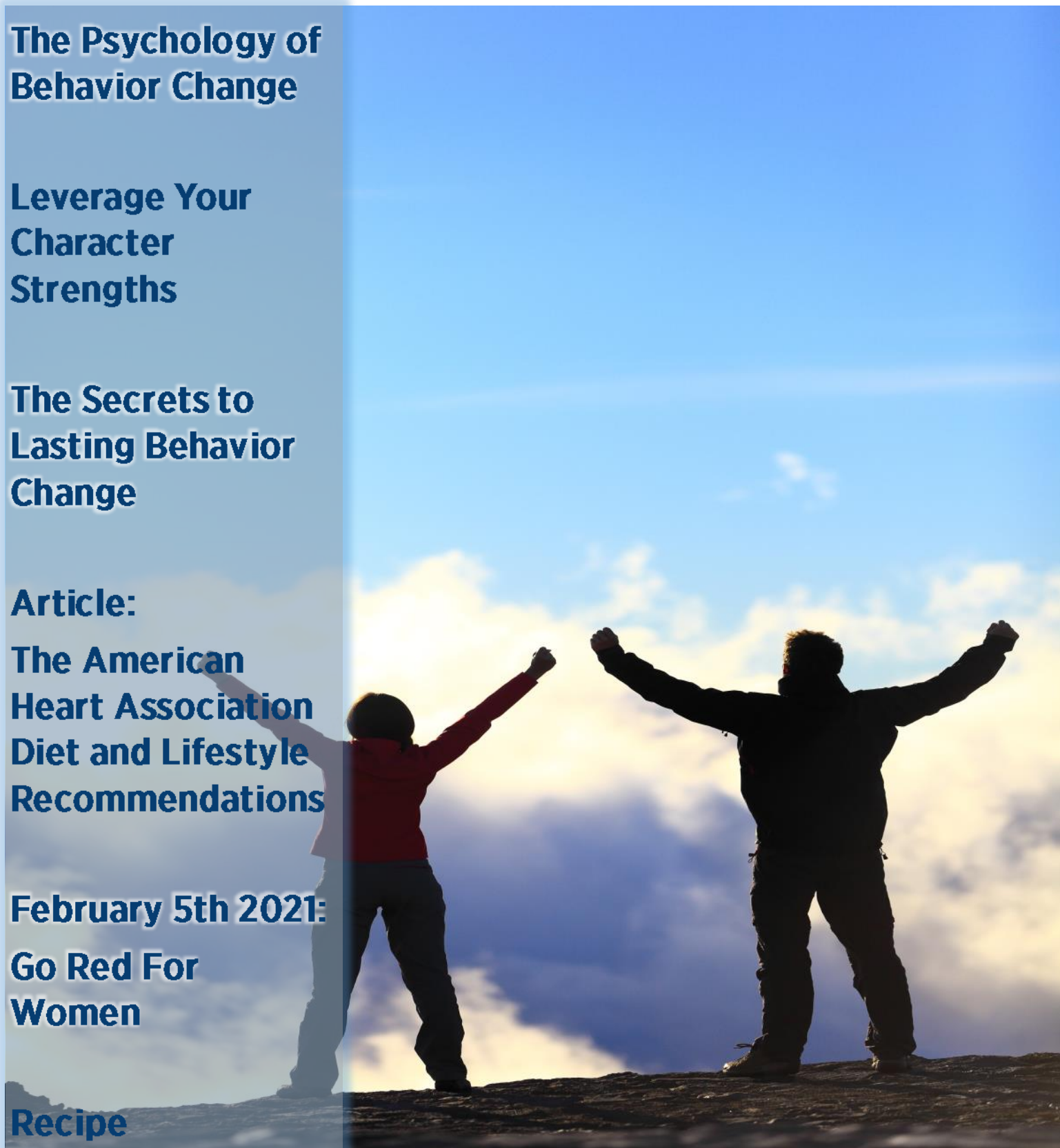
**Article:**

**The American  
Heart Association  
Diet and Lifestyle  
Recommendations**

**February 5th 2021:**

**Go Red For  
Women**

**Recipe**





## The Psychology of Behavior Change

Change can be difficult and getting stuck in the change process is common. Having a basic understanding of the mechanics of behavior change can help you overcome obstacles, especially when you are feeling frustrated by the lack of progress.

One of the most popular models for behavior change is the [Transtheoretical Stages of Change](#) framework, which was developed in the late 1970s by researchers James Prochaska and Carlo DiClemente.

They identified these six stages of change:

### Precontemplation

In the precontemplation stage, you are not yet ready to make any changes, and do not foresee making any changes in the next six months. In this early stage, it is likely that you do not even see a need for change.

### Contemplation

As you move into the contemplation stage, you are getting ready to make some changes. You are mulling things over, weighing the pros and cons, and learning more about how a change might benefit you.

### Preparation

Once you reach the preparation stage, you are ready to take action within the next three months. You still need to make some decisions about which action to take. You are telling your family, friends, and colleagues about your intentions, and you are researching possible ways to move forward.

### Action

By the time you move into the action stage, you are actively engaged in making changes. You are investing your time, energy, and money into the actions you outlined in the preparation stage.

### Maintenance

Once you make it into the maintenance stage, you have been taking action for at least six months.

### Relapse or Termination

A relapse is a short period of inconsistency, as if you pressed the pause button on action. Relapses are common throughout the behavior change process. Termination, on the other hand, is when you stop taking action permanently. Some experts believe the termination stage is the ultimate goal of all behavior change. However, it is more likely that once you reach your goal, you will continue to refine it and set new targets.

The truth is, most of us move back and forth between the stages as we move toward sustainable lifestyle changes. That is because behavior change is a process. Understanding where you are on the path to change can help you recover from relapses more easily and help you to stay connected to your goals.





## Leverage Your Character Strengths

Do you know your character strengths? What are the traits and skills that come naturally to you? It is likely that those things are rooted in your character strengths, [defined](#) as “positive traits reflected in thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.”

The University of Pennsylvania’s VIA Survey of Character Strengths [tests](#) was developed to help you assess these character strengths. Click the link above, create a username and password, and take the assessment to discover more about yourself.

### Wisdom

Creativity, Curiosity, Judgement, Love of Learning, and Perspective

### Courage

Bravery, Honesty, Perseverance, and Zest

### Humanity

Kindness, Love, and Social Intelligence

### Justice

Fairness, Leadership, and Teamwork

### Temperance

Forgiveness, Humility, Prudence, and Self-Regulation

### Transcendence

Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence, Gratitude, Hope, Humor, and Spirituality

Your character profile is comprised of all these traits, just in varying degrees. The more you operate within your strengths, using them in your day-to-day life, the more benefits you will experience. Leveraging your strengths on a regular basis leads to less stress, higher productivity, and even greater happiness.



Here are some different ways to leverage your strengths:

### Family

At home, volunteer for household tasks that are a good fit for your strengths, and offer support to other family members when you see them struggling.

### Peers

At work, seek out projects that require your specific strengths, and offer help to colleagues who do not share your strengths.

### Leadership

If you hold a leadership role, find ways to leverage your team’s strengths to improve the success of your team and organization as a whole.

### Community

Within your community, look for volunteer opportunities that enable you to use and expand your strengths while also contributing to the greater good.

Finding simple ways to leverage your strengths on a daily basis can improve your overall wellbeing.

2. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/258125423\\_Chara\\_Youth\\_Development](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/258125423_Chara_Youth_Development)

3. <https://www.authentic happiness.sas.upenn.edu/testcenter>





## The Secrets to Lasting Behavior Change

Do you struggle to make lasting changes when it comes to improving your wellbeing? Do you routinely fall back into old habits after doing well for only a couple of weeks?

Sustainable behavior change is hard work, but there are a few strategies that can improve your chances of making changes that stick.

Try these secret ingredients to lasting behavior change:

### Create exciting goals

Do you feel excited when you think about your goals? If you want to achieve your goals, they must excite you. They have to be compelling enough that you look forward to investing your time and energy in taking action to reach them. If they do not, or if you dread working on them, they probably are not the right goals for you. Whenever you feel stuck, it might be time to consider revising or changing your goal.

### Build a strong support network

Surround yourself with positive people who encourage you, and limit your exposure to those that derail your efforts. This might mean limiting the time you spend with certain people or the activities you engage in.

### Find alternatives

When you find yourself tempted to veer off the path that leads to your goals, have some alternatives ready. Create a list of possible substitutes in advance, so you have other healthy options to choose from.

### Celebrate

Do you tend to check goals off your list and move right along to the next one without acknowledging your success? Take a moment to celebrate each achievement and milestone you reach.

Lasting behavior change requires exciting goals, a supportive network, a plan to overcome roadblocks, and taking time to celebrate your milestones and achievements.



## The American Heart Association Diet and Lifestyle Recommendations

A healthy diet and lifestyle are your best weapons to fight cardiovascular disease. Make the simple steps below part of your life for long-term benefits to your health and your heart:

### **Burn at least as many calories as you take in.**

- Start by knowing how many calories you should be eating and drinking to maintain your weight. Nutrition and calorie information on food labels is typically based on a 2,000 calorie per day diet. You may need fewer or more calories depending on several factors including age, gender, and level of physical activity.
- If you are trying not to gain weight, do not eat more calories than you know you can burn every day.
- Increase the amount and intensity of your physical activity to burn more calories.

### **Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity or 75 minutes of vigorous physical activity (or an equal combination of both) each week.**

Regular physical activity can help you maintain your weight, keep off weight that you lose and help you reach physical and cardiovascular fitness. If it is hard to schedule regular exercise sessions, look for ways to build short bursts of activity into your daily routine, such as parking farther away and taking the stairs instead of the elevator. Ideally, your activity should be spread throughout the week.

### **Eat a variety of nutritious foods from all of the food groups.**

You may be eating plenty of food, but your body may not be getting the nutrients it needs to be healthy. Nutrient-rich foods have minerals, protein, whole grains and other nutrients but are lower in calories. They may help you control your weight, cholesterol and blood pressure.

### **Eat an overall healthy dietary pattern that emphasizes:**

- A variety of fruits and vegetables
- Whole grains
- Low-fat dairy products
- Skinless poultry and fish
- Nuts and legumes
- Non-tropical vegetable oils

Limit saturated fat, trans fat, sodium, red meat, sweets and sugar-sweetened beverages. If you choose to eat red meat, compare labels and select the leanest cuts available.

### **Eat less of the nutrient-poor foods.**

The right number of calories to eat each day is based on your age and physical activity level and whether you are trying to gain, lose or maintain your weight. You could use your daily allotment of calories on a few high-calorie foods and beverages, but you probably would not get the nutrients your body needs to be healthy. Limit foods and beverages high in calories but low in nutrients. Also limit the amount of saturated fat, trans fat and sodium you eat. Read Nutrition Facts labels carefully as the Nutrition Facts label states the amount of healthy and unhealthy nutrients in a food or beverage.

### **As you make daily food choices, base your eating pattern on these recommendations:**

- Eat a variety of fresh, frozen, canned vegetables and fruits without high-calorie sauces or added salt and sugars. Replace high-calorie foods with fruits and vegetables.
- Choose fiber-rich whole grains for most grain servings.
- Choose poultry and fish without skin and prepare them in healthy ways without added saturated and trans fat. If you choose to eat meat, look for the leanest cuts available and prepare them in healthier ways.
- Eat a variety of fish at least twice a week, especially fish containing omega-3 fatty acids (for example, salmon, trout and herring).
- Select fat-free (skim) and low-fat (1%) dairy products.
- Avoid foods containing partially hydrogenated vegetable oils to reduce trans fat in your diet.
- Limit saturated fat and trans fat and replace them with the better fats, monounsaturated and polyunsaturated. If you need to lower your blood cholesterol, reduce saturated fat to no more than 5 to 6 percent of total calories. For someone eating 2,000 calories a day, that is about 13 grams of saturated fat.
- Choose foods with less sodium and prepare foods with little or no salt. To lower blood pressure, aim to eat no more than 2,300 milligrams of sodium per day. Reducing your daily sodium intake to 1,500 mg is desirable as it can lower blood pressure even further.
- Follow the American Heart Association recommendations when dining out, and keep an eye on your portion sizes.

*Join us and wear red on.*



FRIDAY  
FEB • 5 • 2021  
AMERICAN  
HEART  
ASSOCIATION



IN CELEBRATION OF  
**GO RED**

★ **FOR WOMEN** ★  
AWARENESS MOVEMENT



## Recipe: Vegan Turmeric Pumpkin Soup

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 medium yellow onion, chopped (approx. 1 cup)
- 3 medium garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons chopped sage (approx. 10 sage leaves)
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- 1 15oz can pumpkin puree
- 1 15.5oz can cannellini beans
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Pepper to taste
- Optional: Pepitas for garnish

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a 4 quart pot, heat olive oil over medium heat.
2. Add onion and cook for 5-7 minutes, or until translucent. Add garlic and sage and cook for another minute, or until fragrant.
3. Add broth, pumpkin, beans, turmeric, nutmeg and salt and stir to combine. Bring to a simmer.
4. Transfer to a high-speed blender or use an immersion blender to puree the soup. If using a high-speed blender, transfer soup back to the pot. Let cook for 5-10 more minutes on medium-low heat. Add pepper to taste.
5. Optional: Garnish soup with pepitas (pumpkin seeds).

Total Time (Cook and Prep):

20 minutes

Servings: 4



### NUTRITION INFO

**(per serving)**

Calories: 208

Fat: 5g

Total Carbohydrates: 31g

Dietary Fiber: 9g

Sugars: 8g

Protein: 10g

Source:

<https://karalydon.com/recipes/vegan-turmeric-pumpkin-soup/>





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