

The TOPS Reminder

A newsletter for Western Massachusetts Counties

By Terri Lavigne (413) 532-7664 losingweight@tlavigne.us

December 2014

Workshops

Resume workshop
January 3, 2015.

Workshop will be held at
The Mill House 75 Wells
Street, Greenfield MA
01301. The cost of the
workshop will be \$5, if you
don't attend my workshop
please send Rosie Smith
\$5 with your weight charts
and resume. Thank you.
Registration is 9:30.

KOPS Honor Society

I'm excited to say we are
finally having a meeting to
start your KOPS Honor
Society. This meeting we
will make decisions on
what type of meeting is
preferred, eating out or
not. The board will be
elected that day.

February 28th at 9AM at
the Shriners' Hospital 516
Carew Street Springfield.
Cost a donation to pay for
the hall.

Bring \$15 for yearly dues
in case you decide to join.

Passed down from Barbara Cady

Area Captain and
Chapter Connections
November 2014

Clarifications:

1. E-cigarettes are considered as smoking and thus, not allowed at meetings.
2. If a chapter does not wish the Leader and Treasurer to reside in the same household, the chapter should not elect them. This qualifier may be placed in the chapter's bylaws.*
3. If a chapter of fewer than ten members does not wish one member to hold two offices, members should not elect the same person to the offices. This qualification may be placed in the chapter's bylaws.*
4. Adult members who are not spouses or legally blind may not enroll or renew without TOPS News at half price.

Allergies

Because so many people have respiratory allergies, chapters may want to consider adding to their bylaws a statement requesting members not wear scents and fragrances at meetings.

Esther Manz Memorial Garden pin collection

For each donation of \$10.00 to seasonally refresh and maintain the Esther Manz Memorial Garden, a yearly Collector's Garden Pin shall be presented as a thank you while the supply lasts.

Each year, this limited edition pin will represent a new plant or garden feature.

For 2015, the pink rose was selected.

For 2016 the maple leaf was selected.

Two new IRD sites are shining brightly on the TOPS horizon:

Niagara Falls, NY
Montreal, QC



Holidays

No matter what holiday you celebrate lets step back and think. What is more important the people you are around or the food? I feel the people are. Some ways not to overeat are to make sure you drink your water. While you're cooking keep some next to you .As a cook I understand that you need to taste but a teaspoon 2 or 3 times is not a taste. Try a little on the tip of your tongue or taste and spit out. If you are going to a buffet type dinner eat a salad before going and stand away from the table. Volunteer to bring something that is good for you. The holidays are a time for drinking and people don't take no for an answer, one time I finally took the drink and when they weren't around I spilled it. I also drink soda with lemon with a stirrer keeps people away . My favorite excuse for over eating is

we only have it one time a year. Why can't we make a turkey in the summer. Take some of those tasty desserts and freeze them. We just had to purchase a box of cookie dough from a fundraiser it will be in the freeze for a while. All I'm saying if you bite it write and is it going to be worth it when you start next year with a gain. I'm not saying don't eat but eat wisely.

Exercise

My Co-leader Amy Garron ,who was our chapter queen last year with a loss of 51pounds. (No gains) shared with me that her entire family takes a walk before eating (25) and after eating they play football all of them. That was for Thanksgiving, Christmas they will do the walk.

If we go back in January and have a STS we are winners.

If it's to be it's up to me!

Holiday Stuffed Portabellas



1/6th of recipe (1 stuffed mushroom): 188 calories, 2.5g fat, 449mg sodium, 38.5g carbs, 4g fiber, 14g sugars, 6.5g protein

PointsPlus® value 5*
Prep: 15 minutes
Cook: 30 minutes

Ingredients

6 large portabella mushrooms, stems chopped and reserved
1 cup chopped onion
3/4 cup finely chopped celery
1 tbsp. light whipped butter or light buttery spread (like Brummel & Brown)
One 6-oz. box Stove Top Cornbread Stuffing Mix
1/2 cup sweetened dried cranberries

Directions

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Spray a baking sheet with nonstick spray.

Place mushroom caps on the baking sheet, rounded sides down. Bake until slightly tender, about 8 minutes.

Remove sheet, but leave oven on. Blot away excess moisture from mushroom caps.

Bring a medium pot sprayed with nonstick spray to medium-high heat. Add onion, celery, and mushroom stems. Cook and stir until slightly softened and lightly browned, 6 - 8 minutes.

Transfer cooked veggies to a bowl.

Add butter and 1 1/2 cups water to the (empty) pot, and bring to a boil. Once water boils, remove from heat. Add stuffing mix, cooked veggies, and dried cranberries. Mix until water has absorbed.

Distribute stuffing mixture among the mushroom caps. Bake until slightly crisp on top, about 12 minutes. Serve 'em up!
MAKES 6 SERVINGS

2015 Area Captain Program
“Making Your Plate Great” with the food exchange program



Shown actual size: 1 1/2" x 1 1/4" x 1/2"

The promotional item for this years' program is this cute bear key chain that be attached to your purse or gym bag. The cost is \$3 and it is soft PVC (bendable) with food groups on it.

Chapter Visits

I have visited 100% of my chapters in 2014. It's nice to go to my chapters to see how each of you are progressing. I feel great when I'm invited back to help out with an installation or to honor your KOPS

Happy Hanukkah

Latkes (potato pancakes) are traditional for Hanukkah, but whether you are Jewish or not, celebrating Hanukkah or not, latkes are delicious savory treats. They make great party food, brunch side dishes (we love them topped with a poached egg), appetizers and accompaniments for entrees. Other cultures and traditions prepare variations on this theme, so here's to crispy savory pancakes everywhere, with a lineup of our favorites

Sweet potato Latkes

This recipe for sweet potato latkes takes latkes to a new level. Choose jewel or garnet sweet potatoes for their rich flavor and deep orange flesh; Japanese yams are creamy in color with a deep chestnut flavor. Even better, mix the two! These make a great side dish, and while you can serve them with

applesauce or crème fraiche as is traditional, I like them best plain.

Ingredients

1 pound sweet potatoes and/or Japanese yams (about three medium)
3 large shallots, chopped fine (about 1/2 cup)
1 egg
2 tablespoons all-purpose or gluten free flour

2 tablespoons chopped chives or scallions
1 tablespoon chopped parsley or cilantro
1/4 teaspoon sea salt or kosher salt
1/4 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
Pinch of cayenne
1 1/2 cups olive oil
Prep Time: 20 minutes
Cook Time: 30 minutes
Total Time: 50 minutes
Yield: 6-8

Preparation

Peel the sweet potatoes and drop them into a bowl of cool water to prevent discoloration. Pat them dry and grate with the large holes of a box grater, dropping them back into the water as you go.

When all of the potatoes are grated, drain them thoroughly in a colander, and wrap in a kitchen towel. Gather the edges of the towel and twist to press out any excess liquid. If the sweet potatoes are still wet, lay

them out on a double thickness of paper towel and pat dry. Preheat oven to 275°F. Place a baking rack on a sheet pan and put it in the oven to hold the cooked latkes.

Crack the egg into a mixing bowl, and beat it together with the flour, baking soda, salt, pepper and cayenne. Add the sweet potatoes, shallots, chives and parsley, and mix thoroughly.

Using a 1/4 cup scoop to measure with, form the mixture into patties about 3" across. Leave the edges jagged, as this creates a crisp "lace". Place them in a single layer on parchment or on a sheet pan.

Heat a heavy skillet over medium high. (Cast iron is great for creating an extra crisp latke). Add enough olive oil so that it fills the pan 1/4" deep. Heat the oil for about 5 minutes, or until a shred of latke sizzles and begins to fry immediately when dropped into the pan.

Carefully slide the patties into the oil one at a time about 45 seconds apart. This ensures that the oil stays sufficiently hot.

Make sure the latkes are not crowded.

Overcrowding will make them less crisp.

Cook each latke until the bottom is golden, about 5 minutes. Gently turn and

cook 3-4 minutes more, until deep golden brown. Place paper towels on the baking rack, and place the latkes in a single layer on the rack to drain and crisp. Keep the latkes in the oven while the remaining patties are cooking. Serve warm, either plain or with applesauce or crème fraiche on the side.

Makes 6-8 latkes
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by Jen Hoy

Pittsfield 0451



Sue O'Neil and Doris Felton Leader of 0451 Pittsfield are holding a map of the United States that Sue made for her students. The chapter decided to walk to different states. The distance was figured out and when the chapter reach it, someone chose another state. What fun!!

Doris Felton

I wanted to share a little about Doris. Doris is a 46 year TOPS member, I first had the honor to meet her when we went to a retreat together. If you think today's retreats are hard

bathrooms were outside. Doris has held every office for the chapter. Doris is a woman that isn't afraid of volunteering. When SRD'S and Fall Rallies were closer it was one activity she enjoyed. She would like to go to one again. Thank You Doris, for being you

Don't Be Good. **Feel Good!**

By Michelle May, M.D.



“Be good or Santa won’t bring you any presents!” Does this threat actually work to change behavior long term? Probably no better than, “Be good! You have to weigh in next week!” Although it’s been 15 years since I’ve been on a diet, just writing that made me cringe.

The entire conventional system of managing eating and exercise behavior is built on compliance with a predetermined set of guidelines. There are even guidelines for how to get around the guidelines during the holidays!

Be Good or Else!

It is an outside-in approach with a threat built in: “If you’re not good...(fill in your favorite dreaded threat here: you’ll never find a partner...you’ll die...or worse, you’ll gain weight)!” (Please read with sarcasm.)

Back in my yo-yo diets days, the holidays were an endless minefield of threats. I was still practicing medicine back then, so about mid-morning after half-dozen urgent visits for colds and flu I’d finally let myself sneak back to the break room to see what goodies had shown up. That is how I discovered Almond Roca.

To this day, that round pink container filled with gold-foil wrapped chocolate and almond covered toffee makes my heart race! (Reminder to self: Salivation is NOT a sign of hunger!) But back then, it went something like this:

I’ll just have one piece instead of the apple I brought for my snack. Let’s see...how many calories is in one of these things? Oh, wait, it says a serving size is 3 pieces. I’ll have three since that’s easier than doing the math.

One hour and three patient work-ins later: “Looks like lunch is going to be late, if I even have time! I’ll just have a few more pieces of Almond Roca to tie me over...oh no! I’m not the only one who loves these! They’re almost gone! I better take a few extra but I won’t eat them now.” Which of course I did, but it didn’t matter because another container or another

platter of goodies would take their place the next day. And each evening I would think, “I feel gross! Why was I so bad today?” On and on this went for all of December.

At some point, I’d make the decision to just start fresh in the new year. Come January, I denied, deprived, then eventually defied my way through the next year. Until December, when I just gave up completely.



Why spend December full, bloated, and tired, then spend January hungry, deprived, and obsessed?

AmIHungry.com

Why Feel Bad?

In the fifteen years that I’ve been teaching people how to break this cycle through Am I Hungry?, I’ve heard stories like that too many times to count! So I ask you, why spend all of December bloated, full, and tired, and then spend January feeling hungry, deprived, and obsessed?

Feel Good!

Threats don’t work with children, so why should they work with adults? They don’t. Fear is a short term motivator, intended to protect us from immediate danger. In fact, the physiological state induced by chronic fear

and stress leads to long term health and psychological consequences. External and internal threats to “be good or else” are actually counter-productive to good health. Motivation for sustainable change comes when the choices you make feel good. Eating the foods you love in moderation, moving your body, and practicing self-care all lead to positive feelings that reinforce the choices you are making. Am I Hungry? is a comprehensive approach to eating and self-care that focuses on changing thoughts and feelings first, so changes in behaviors will last.

Seeing that pink container of Almond Roca is no longer a trap. It is simply a favorite holiday treat that I'll enjoy mindfully if I choose. Each piece brings me pleasure without a plan to pay penance. I don't experience any urgency to have more than two or three pieces; why ruin the pleasure by feeling bad because I've eaten too much? And that *feels* good!



Remember

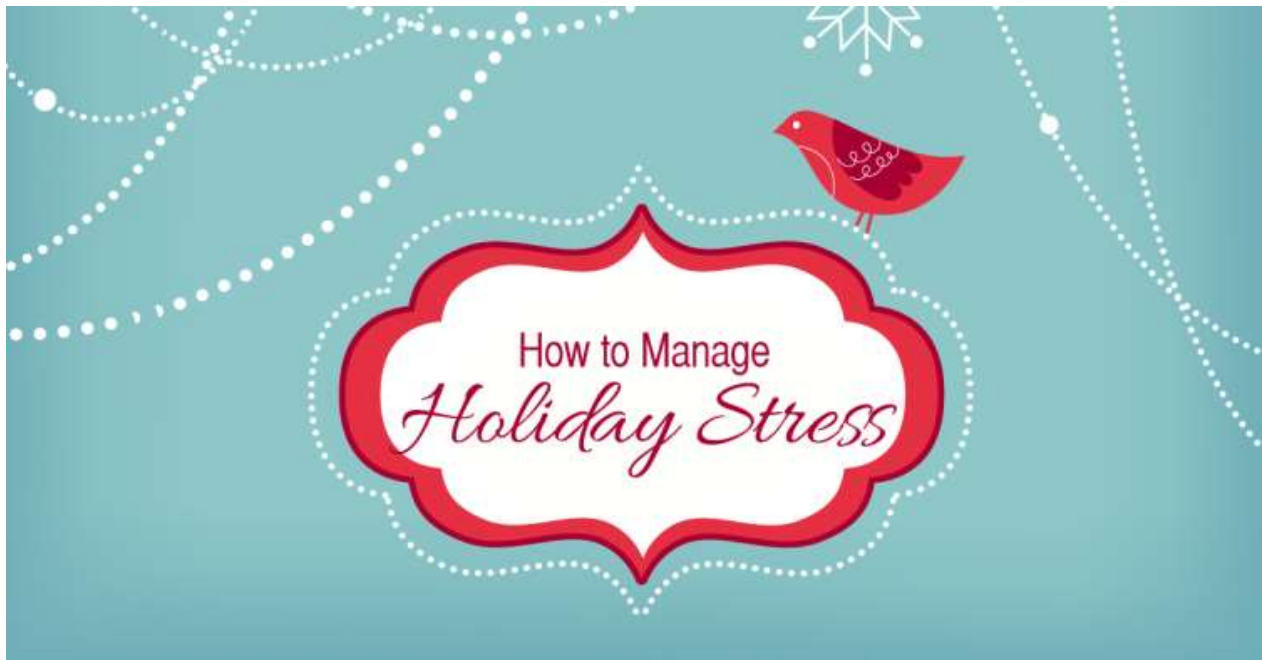
With baby steps you can climb any mountain to your goal!



Terri

Merry Christmas and a Healthy & Happy New Year!!!

How to Manage Holiday Stress



It's officially the most wonderful time of the year, right? The holiday season always makes me feel so happy, nostalgic, and joyful. That is, until I let the outside pressures of the holiday creep in, inducing stress and unease. Holidays have become bigger than life; more expectations, more highs and lows, and more pressure to be perfect. When we let this happen, the real meaning of love, joy, and peace tend to go out the window. Luckily, I'm here to help! I want to enjoy this magical time just as much as you, so I've put together some tips on keeping your holiday season (whatever that looks like for you) stress-free, happy, and calm. If you're feeling the heat from holiday stress, check out these tips below.

1. Center yourself so your presence is a present of peace. If you want your holidays to be less stressed, you have to start with yourself. A great way to find calm and centeredness no matter what is going on is to spend a few minutes everyday in silence and meditation. Your energy of ease will spread to those around you. Be the change!
2. Get organized. There tends to be a lot going on at this time of year. Holiday parties, gift exchanges, family get togethers, it can be challenging to keep it all in order. Give yourself a break by taking some time to get organized with all you have going on.
3. Set your priorities straight! Stemming off of tip #2 above, there is a ton going on at this time. You DON'T have to do it all. There you go, I gave you permission to say no. We often feel pressured to go to every party and event and please everyone. This mentality will only add more stress! Get clear on what you truly want to do and what you want to be apart of, and release the rest.

4. Let go of perfection. Things don't have to be perfect to be enjoyable. Some of the most fun, memorable holiday experiences I've had come from spur of the moment "mistakes" or unplanned events. Don't run yourself ragged trying to create the perfect holiday situation. Make plans, set intentions, but release control of minor details.

Remember the reason of the season. Be loving! Love is why we are here, isn't it? If you feel yourself getting caught up in the hustle and bustle, take a few seconds, come back to your breath, and get back in tune with that loving attitude. Try making someone else's day by being extra kind and compassionate. Give back to those who may need some help this year, and treat everyone with so much love.

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