



The G4A List of Practices:

We commit to embracing 4 NEW things that are good for you, good for me, and good for all!

We recommend Meat Free Monday (MFM) as our cornerstone new healthy practice. On Mondays, we will eat a plant-based diet and encourage our families to do the same. We will share recipes, ideas and encouragement with our friends and family. Two WONDERFUL resources for info, recipes and guidance are:

- 1) <https://www.meatfreemondays.com/>
- 2) <https://www.mondaycampaigns.org/meatless-monday>

In addition to MFM, do the following:

- **Scroll through this list and pick 3 more positive practices:** These may be daily, weekly, monthly or a one-time thing. The only caveat is choices must **foster physical, spiritual or planetary health.** (Consider adding new practices every 3 months). We have separated suggestions into the following categories, although they are all interconnected: **Mind, Body, Spirit, Planet.** If you don't find 3 things that speak to your heart in a positive, uplifting way, come up with your own.

Mind

- **Learn more about another culture or ethnicity.** Find a place to experience someone different than yourself or the people you normally socialize with.
- **Learn to play chess:** <https://www.chess.com/learn-how-to-play-chess>
- **Finish your degree.** There are online resources to get your General Educational Development (GED) credential
- **Take online college courses.**
- **Take online special interest courses.**
- **Be bookish!** Commit to reading one more book per month. If you currently read one, read two. And so on.
- **Complete a weekly crossword puzzle**
- **Study a foreign language.**
- **Learn a new musical instrument:** So, you've always wanted to play the harmonica/piano/guitar/ukulele? Now's the time! For the next 6 months commit to taking online or in person weekly lessons. Your goal? Have a song ready on this new instrument by New Year's Eve 2020!
- **Examine Racism: Take an honest look at racism and take action:**
 - **Read "How to Be Anti-Racist"** by Ibram Kendi. Discuss with at least two other people or your book club.
 - **Study History of Racism:** Commit to reading 2 books about Black History and the history of racism:
<https://nmaahc.si.edu/national-museum-african-american-history-and-culture-library>
 - **Examine Anti-racism resources** and pick what speaks to you.
(Provided by Friends of Youth)
<https://friendsofyouth.org/PDFs/Anti-Racism%20Resources.pdf>
- **Become civically engaged:** contact local or state representatives by email or phone once per month about initiatives you are passionate about.

Body

Exercise

- **Walk additional 5-10K steps per day** (in addition to what I already do)
- **Participate in organized run/walk:** Sign up for a 5k, 10k, or half marathon walk or run.
- **Walk or bike to pick up groceries** and/or pharmacy items once or twice per week. (instead of driving car).
- **Commit to a weekly hike** in nature-rain or shine!
- **Try a brand new exercise program-** online or in person
- **Take a dance class** online or in person
- **Kid's Too:** Take a daily family walk
- **Kid's Too:** Sign up for a 5K walk/run with your child

Food

- **Buy local food** to reduce the distance from farm to fork. Buy straight from the farm, frequent your local farmers' market, or join a local food co-op.
- **Buy organic food** to keep your body and the environment free of toxic pesticides. Support farmers and companies who use organic ingredients.
- **Grow your own organic garden** or join a farm-share group.
- **Spread the Word on Meat Free Monday!** Get two people outside of your group to try it! Send them this link:
<https://greenfuture.io/healthy-eating/meatless-monday/> (Based on current data and consumption patterns, if everyone on the planet went without meat for one day per week, we could reduce emissions by an estimated 1.0 gigaton per year. That's equal to taking 273 million cars off the road.)
- **Watch the documentary PlantPure Nation (Free Youtube video):**
<https://video.search.yahoo.com/search/video?fr=tightropetb&p=PlantPure+nation#id=2&vid=403a97fe71b4679a88ca8ff4cd592869&action=click>
- **Study Food Justice:** Learn about food justice issues through websites, books and videos. Here are some organizations involved:
<https://foodtank.com/news/2020/02/24-organizations-finding-food-justice/>
- **School Food:** Organize to have healthy, locally sourced food served at in your school district.
- **Donate to organizations promoting access to healthy food for all.** Here is one such organization <https://healfoodalliance.org/>
- **Prepare/serve a healthy meal for organizations serving people in need.**

- **Donate organic non-perishables to Food Banks:** canned goods, pastas and other non-perishables
- **Kid's Too:** Have your child grow and care for a tomato plant.

Spirit

- **Meditate or pray for 20 minutes each day for 3 months** (many apps and websites available. Here's one:
<https://www.nytimes.com/guides/well/how-to-meditate>
- **Read the Charter for Compassion.**
<https://www.charterforcompassion.org/charter/affirm>
- **Commit to Loving Kindness meditation/blessing daily** for 3 months: <https://www.verywellmind.com/how-to-practice-loving-kindness-meditation-3144786>
- **Journal daily for 3 months.** Countless articles and online help. Here's one: <https://www.wikihow.com/Start-a-Journal>
- **Walk a Labyrinth.** Visit this site to learn more about this spiritual tool <https://www.veriditas.org/> Find a public labyrinth in your city using this worldwide locator: <https://labyrinthlocator.com/>
- **Monitor Your Words for one week.** Words have weight. Choose a week to thoughtfully monitor your words with someone you have conflict with i.e. co-worker, friend, family member, and then journal about when you were pleased and/or displeased with how you communicated.
- **Improve Listening Skills. Take a week and truly listen to the people in your life. Journal about how it helped.**
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/how-do-life/201405/how-become-better-listener>
- **Pursue a friendship with someone very different from yourself.** Your new friend's life experience should be radically different from yours. Perhaps someone from a different race, religion, political party, or socio-economic reality.
- **Forgive a long- term grievance. This takes work. But commit to forgiving one grievance, or person who has harmed you.**
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/forgiveness/art-20047692>
- **Ask for forgiveness for a big mistake** from the past.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/27/fashion/how-to-forgive-in-four-steps.html>

- **Be present to a friend in need. Do you have a friend who is sick or in a difficult circumstance? Commit to being there for them in a way that works for both of you.** When someone has a painful moment or event, just *be with* them. Only give advice or help if they ask.
- **Create a work of art/Unleash your inner artist.** Set aside a morning or afternoon to create something: Paint, draw, write a poem, pen a song, sew, glue...whatever calls to you. SHARE IT with someone.
- **Practice Random Kindness:** Engage in one act of random kindness per week and share with one or more members of your group.
- **Re-discover Snail Mail:** Write a card or letter to someone who may need an encouraging word once per week. <https://www.lifehack.org/286924/10-reasons-you-should-write-more-handwritten-letters>
- **Start a gratitude practice.** Write down 1-5 positive things you are grateful for every single day. Involve the family! Put a chalkboard in the kitchen and everyone writes down 1 thing per day for 3 months.
- **Say Grace: bring back meal-time gratitude.** The ritual of saying grace or words of gratitude before a meal is one of humanity's oldest universal behaviors that crosses all cultures. Express gratitude for your food.
- **Address a trauma or difficult life event through therapy or spiritual direction/companionship.**
<https://www.verywellmind.com/how-to-find-a-therapist-425340>
<https://www.sdicompanions.org/find-a-spiritual-companion/>(Spiritual Directors International.)
- **Have an Interfaith experience:** Observe or participate in someone else's religious or spiritual practice. Journal about what you learned.
<https://www.wikihow.com/Appreciate-People-of-Other-Religions>
- **Commit to a weekly nature walk, hike or “Forest Bathing.”** Forest bathing is a research-based practice that encourages health and wellness through immersion in forests and natural environments. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/elizabethbroomhall/2020/04/13/forest-bathing-during-the-coronavirus-gardens-windows-and-virtual-walks/#785757502fae>
- **Mentor someone.** Either within your family or friends or as a volunteer with an organization. Teach someone a skill that you have i.e. reading, finance, baking, pet grooming, knitting, playing a musical instrument. Share something you have expertise in with someone who is a novice. Do this as a one- time session or

choose a weekly or monthly commitment.

<https://www.mentoring.org/take-action/become-a-mentor/>

- **Kids Too:** Include children in caring for pets
- **Kid's Too:** Read stories about kindness and inclusion.

Earth/Planet

Home/Family Life:

- **Compost kitchen scraps for use in your garden** — turning waste into fertilizer.
- **Practice Recycling:**
 - <https://www.recycleacrossamerica.org/tips-to-recycle-right>
 - www.recyclingsimplified.com
- **Consider buying a new energy-efficient water heater.**
- **Lower the temperature on your water heater to 120F.**
- **Take a shorter shower (over a bath):** Use a water-saving/low pressure showerhead.
- **Fix leaky faucets and showerheads.**
- **Only run FULL dishwasher:** Run your dishwasher only when it's full to save water and energy.
- **Conserve water outdoors:** Only water your lawn in the early morning or late at night. Use drought-resistant plants in dry areas.
- **Conscientious clothes washing:** Wash your clothes only when necessary, use cold water and line dry.
- **Leverage off-peak utility hours** (ie wash dishes after 9 pm)
- **Turn off and unplug appliances and electronics you're not using.** This includes turning off your computer at night.
- **Replace older appliances and electronics** with energy efficient models
- **Use a microwave or toaster oven** to heat smaller food items
- **Unplug battery chargers** as soon as charging is complete
- **Turn off lights when you leave a room.** Encourage family to do the same.
- **Install sensors** so lights automatically go off in unoccupied rooms.
- **Install motion-activated lighting** outdoors.

- **Choose solar** for landscape lighting.
- **Install solar panels on your roof.**
- **Move your heater thermostat down** two degrees in winter and up two degrees in the summer to reduce your carbon footprint by 2,000 pounds. Ideally, set your thermostat to 68 degrees F in the winter and 76 degrees F in the summer
- **Install a programmable thermostat** to automatically regulate your home's temperature.
- **Keep windows and doors closed** to prevent heat loss in the winter.
- **Locate and fix air leaks.**
- **Consider adding extra insulation** to floors and ceilings.
- **Keep windows and doors closed** to prevent loss of cool air in the summer
- **Cover windows with shades or drapes** to keep sunlight from warming up your home in the summer
- **Raise your thermostat** at night and whenever your home is unoccupied during the summer months.
- **To maintain optimum airflow,** change your air filter every 3 months
- **Contact your utility company** and find out about renewable energy options.
- **Recycle batteries** from small appliances and your electronics. Use rechargeable batteries instead!
- **Re-Discover the public library** and its numerous free, paper-saving resources (magazines, books, tapes etc.)
- **Commit to re-useable grocery bags** and store in your car
- **Eliminate Dryer sheets.** Use wool/organic dryer balls to cut down dryer time
- **Replace invasive plants** in your yard or garden with native ones.

Change Products:

- **Use non-toxic cleaning products.** (environmentally friendly)
- **Use LEDS or efficient CFL light bulbs.** Replace inefficient incandescent light bulbs with efficient CFLs or LEDs. Reduce your carbon footprint by 450 pounds a year.
- **Eliminate disposable plastics,** especially single-use plastics like bottles, bags and straws.

<http://www.greeneducationfoundation.org/nationalgreenweeksub/waste-reduction-tips/tips-to-use-less-plastic.html>

- Use **cloth towels** instead of paper ones.
- Use **reusable bottles** for water, and reusable mugs for coffee.
- Use **eco-friendly, coral reef safe sunscreens**.

Car/Auto Use and Maintenance:

- **Carpool, ride your bike, use public transportation, or drive an electric or hybrid car.** Reduce your carbon footprint by one pound for every mile you do not drive.
- **Keep your tires properly inflated** and get better gas mileage. Reduce your carbon footprint 20 pounds for each gallon of gas saved.
- **Change your car's air filter regularly.**

Work:

- **Teleconference** instead of traveling. If you fly five times per year, those trips are likely to account for 75% of your personal carbon footprint.
- **Pack your lunch in a reusable bag.**
- **Form a "green team" at your office** to find cost-effective ways to conserve resources and promote sustainability.
- **Take the stairs** instead of the elevator to save energy (and get exercise!).

Home Office:

- **Change your paper bills to online billing.** You will be saving trees and the fuel it takes to deliver your bills by truck.
- **Read documents online instead of printing them.**
- **Use 100% post-consumer recycled paper.** When you need to use paper, make sure it's 100% postconsumer recycled paper.
- **Set your office printer to print two-sided.**

Support A Community Effort:

- **Join a local park, river or beach clean-up.**
- **Convince your school district or office building to choose reusable utensils, trays, and dishes in the cafeteria.**