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# NEWSLETTER

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Winter 2024



# What's Included

- 01 Sprinkles of Joy**  
Transforming Self-Care in Buffalo
- 02 Buffalo's Winter Bounty**  
Nourish Your Body with Seasonal Delights
- 03 It's Only Cold If You're Standing Still**  
Tips to keep active this winter
- 04 Digital Detox**  
Crafting a Healthier Media Diet
- 05 Eating for Stress Relief**  
How Buffalonians Can Harness the Power of Food.



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# Sprinkles of Joy

## Transforming Self-Care in Buffalo

by Liberty Darr



A new wave of self-care is emerging and reshaping the way we view our daily routines. It's a movement that transforms self-care from a burdensome chore into a series of delightful, easily integrated activities. This emerging trend isn't about grand gestures or time-consuming commitments. Instead, it's about finding small, joy-filled moments in our everyday lives that collectively contribute to our well-being.

For Buffalonians, the city offers a plethora of indoor activities and community events designed to infuse happiness and relaxation into our busy schedules even during cold, winter months. But these aren't just activities; they're opportunities to pause, breathe, and appreciate the beauty of the present moment.

Picture this: it's achilly Tuesday evening in the Queen City. Instead of sinking into the sofa after a long day at work, you find yourself wrapped in the warm, inviting ambiance of a local art workshop. Take the Foundry on Northampton Street for example – a hub for makers and those looking for a new hobby and community. From sewing and woodworking classes to metal work and stained glass, The Foundry is a hands-on education facility with weekly classes that anyone can join. Surrounded by fellow community members, you're not just learning to make a scarf or laser cut a new pair of earrings; you're sewing away the stress of the day, one stitch at a time.

Or perhaps it's a lazy Sunday morning, and you're at a cozy café on the West Side, participating in a mindfulness meditation session at the Healing Grounds Co-op on Grant St. With a full list of monthly events from open mics, to community yoga sessions and educational talks, you can find a moment of peace amidst the hustle of city life almost any day of the week. It's these small acts, these simple joys, that are redefining self-care in Buffalo.

But why the shift? Why are we moving away from seeing self-care as a set of rigorous, time-consuming tasks? The answer lies in our inherent need for joy and relaxation. We're beginning to understand that self-care doesn't have to be elaborate. It's about finding what brings us joy and making it a part of our daily life.



This approach has a profound impact on our mental and emotional well-being. When we integrate these small, joyous activities into our routine, we're not just taking care of our physical health; we're nurturing our souls. We're giving ourselves permission to enjoy life, to relish in the small pleasures that make our days brighter.

As Buffalonians, we have the unique opportunity to be at the forefront of this self-care revolution. We're not just participating in activities; we're cultivating a culture of wellness, one small step at a time. It's about embracing the little things like your morning walk at Delaware Park, or an afternoon coffee break at Caffè Aroma, maybe even a post-work hot yoga class at Evolution Yoga Buffalo, perfect for escaping the winter chill.

These gatherings are more than just events; they're a celebration of community. They remind us that taking care of ourselves can also mean connecting with others, sharing experiences, and building a support system within our community.

So, let's redefine self-care in Buffalo. Let's fill our days with Sprinkles of Joy and embrace the small steps that lead to big changes in our happiness and health. It's time to transform our routines into something more - a celebration of life and the joy it brings.

This approach to self-care is not just a trend; it's a sustainable, enjoyable way of living. It's a reminder that in the pursuit of well-being, the smallest steps often lead to the greatest leaps. In Buffalo, we're not just taking care of ourselves; we're redefining what it means to live a joyful, fulfilled life. Join us in this journey of transformation, where every day brings a new opportunity to sprinkle joy into our lives.







# Buffalo's Winter Bounty

## A Feast of Seasonal Delights for Your Body and Soul.

by Daniel Lendzian

In the winter, it can be easy to extend the holiday celebratory eating well into January. Many Buffalonians have the New Year's resolution to get their eating back on track after the parties and celebrations have died down. An easy way to incorporate more healthy food into one's diet is by capitalizing on healthy winter vegetables to create hearty and filling meals that are good for the mind, body, and soul.

Root vegetables are not just food; they can be a canvas for culinary artistry. Beets, carrots, and parsnips, roasted to perfection, release their sweet, earthy flavors, creating dishes that are as nourishing as they are delicious. These humble ingredients, often overlooked, are the stars of winter, packed with nutrients that fortify the body against the chill.

Some people think the only way to serve sweet potatoes is to cover them with marshmallows and brown sugar. While this classic holiday side dish is delicious, it is also very high in calories and sugar. Another way to serve sweet potatoes is to mix their natural sweetness with a savory element. Cube them, and toss them with two tablespoons of olive oil, a tablespoon of minced garlic, some red pepper flakes, and salt and pepper to taste, and bake them at 375 degrees until tender. The balance of the hot spices marries perfectly with the natural sweetness of the potatoes, and the health benefits of all the ingredients are delivered to the body without any added sweeteners



Leafy greens like spinach, kale, and Swiss chard bring a burst of freshness and vitality to every meal. These greens are more than just a splash of color on the plate; they're a powerhouse of vitamins and minerals, essential for maintaining energy and mood during the shorter days.

Perhaps you want to power up your breakfast game this winter? Well, put a handful of leafy greens into a personal blender with the protein powder of your choice, half a banana, and a small handful of frozen blueberries... a perfect breakfast on the go. Kale is an incredibly versatile vegetable and can be added to soups, blended into smoothies, and baked into chips. Swiss chard is delicious when sauteed with garlic and olive oil.

And let's not forget the importance of Vitamin D, the sunshine vitamin, so crucial during these darker months. Winter dishes that are rich with Vitamin D sources, like fatty fish, eggs, and cheese, ensure that every bite not only tantalizes your taste buds but also supports your wellbeing. So, grill up some salmon, and invest in a charcuterie board for game day, rather than the wings and blue cheese. You will be so glad you did.

In Buffalo, winter is not a season to endure; it's a season to savor. Root vegetables, leafy greens, and heart healthy vitamin D dishes are the perfect way to ensure that you will stay healthy and happy during the darker months. Experiment with any of the ingredients above to create dishes that are not only a feast for the senses but also a boost for your health.



## Easy Chicken Soup

- 1 tablespoon of olive oil
- 2 carrots
- 2 celery stalks
- 1 small onion
- 1 tablespoon of garlic
- 2 boneless chicken breasts
- 1 can of chickpeas
- 1 cup of rice
- 2 tablespoons of italian seasoning
- 32 oz of chicken broth
- 2 handfuls of spinach, swiss chard or kale

Directions: Peel and dice carrots and onion. Dice celery. Heat one tbs of oil in a large pot or dutch oven. Put the carrots into the hot oil, and cook for 5 minutes. Add celery and onion, and cook until onion is translucent. Add garlic and cook for one minute. Add the chickpeas, broth, the Italian seasoning, and the uncooked chicken.

Put a lid on the pot, and simmer for 20 minutes, or until the chicken is cooked. Remove chicken from pot, shred it with two forks, and return it to the pot. Add 4 cups of water, and the cup of rice. Return the lid to the pot, and cook until the rice is tender. Shred the leafy greens, and put them into the pot for 10 minutes until they wilt. Serve with crusty bread for a fantastic winter meal.



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# It's Only Cold If You're Standing Still

## Tips to Keep Active This Winter

by Camilla Maxwell

As temperatures are about to be colder than a polar bears toenail on the shady side of the North Pole, you may be lacking the motivation to work out.

These days the idea of braving Arctic temperatures, digging your car out of a dirty snowbank and scraping your icy windshield (only to discover the icicles are actually on the inside of your car), may not seem worth the effort to make it to that Zumba class.

The winter season can be so hard to stick to a health plan, and while the idea of drinking eggnog and working on your own polar bear winter coat (made out of excess skin) may sound idyllic, it is so important for our mental health that we stay active.

"But it's so cold and dark and I slipped on black ice checking my mail and busted my tailbone," I hear you say.

Well, that's why it's imperative to keep your exercise routine exciting enough for you to brave the elements to show up.

So let us offer you a reason to put on your snow boots, dodge that yellow snow and run past that strange neighbor (who will not stop obsessively plowing his driveway), to head to a local fitness center you never knew you needed. Because remember it's only cold if you are standing still, so let's keep moving!

"Variety is the spice of life and when it comes to exercise the key is to keep it unique, engaging and varied," said a random inspirational quote I found on the internet. And on further searching I found that there are exercise options that fit this criteria in Buffalo.

Ever heard of the saying "not my circus, not my monkeys?" Well, when you are trapped inside because of freezing temperatures with those monkeys (aka children), you might beg to differ.

"I'm bored!" "She hit me!!" "I want a cookie!!!"  
Sound familiar?

## The Bird's Nest Circus Arts of Buffalo

Before they wear you down completely and you find yourself hiding in the pantry rocking back and forth over that last "Toll House" cookie. The Bird Nest Circus Arts is offering you the chance to become a ringmaster in the circus that is your life.

The Bird's Nest Circus Arts offers a variety of classes including aerial arts, pole dancing, acrobatics and dance. And since you might not consider yourself "Cirque du Soleil" material (yet) - they do offer a variety of options for beginners. You're also not going to have to pawn that old unicycle gathering dust in the basement just to attend a class.

New members receive an introductory rate of \$55 for 5 classes. It is a fun alternative to conventional exercise and the best part is they also offer classes for those little monkeys.



## Fitnessability, Inc

Listen, we all know a winter work out regime can be as bumpy as a pothole filled drive down Main Street. So let's keep that bouncy momentum going and try some bungee fitness at Fitnessability, Inc, in Kenmore.

Bungee fitness is a high-energy workout that involves participants wearing a harness connected to bungee cords suspended from the ceiling.

The bungee cords are securely anchored, allowing participants to perform a wide range of dynamic movements, including jumping, spinning, flipping, and dancing while being supported by the cords.

So, if you are having withdrawals from jumping off the back of an F-150 and smashing a table at your local Bills tailgate, this is the perfect alternative. Bounce into Fitnessability, Inc for a thrilling, gravity-defying experience that is both fun and physically demanding.



# Nickel City Longsword Academy

Nothing quite beats the silent steady rage that builds inside a person after they have been kept indoors for months at a time. If you find yourself screaming profanities at people on the 90 to stop tailgating you, or getting unreasonably angry putting on your kids snow pants - you may just need to exercise... With a sword, a longsword.

The Nickel City Longsword Academy provides a safe environment where each student can explore their potential through the martial arts experience of the German Longsword. They currently offer classes in Kunst Des Fechten also known as "The Art of Fighting." Similar to what is going on currently in your house, but way more beneficial to your health.

The club focuses on unarmored German longsword fighting and also offers classes in mixed weapons and the military sabre. It's a full body workout that builds excellent muscle tone. Not to mention it's also a healthy way release some of that pent-up winter aggression.



## Exercise Snack

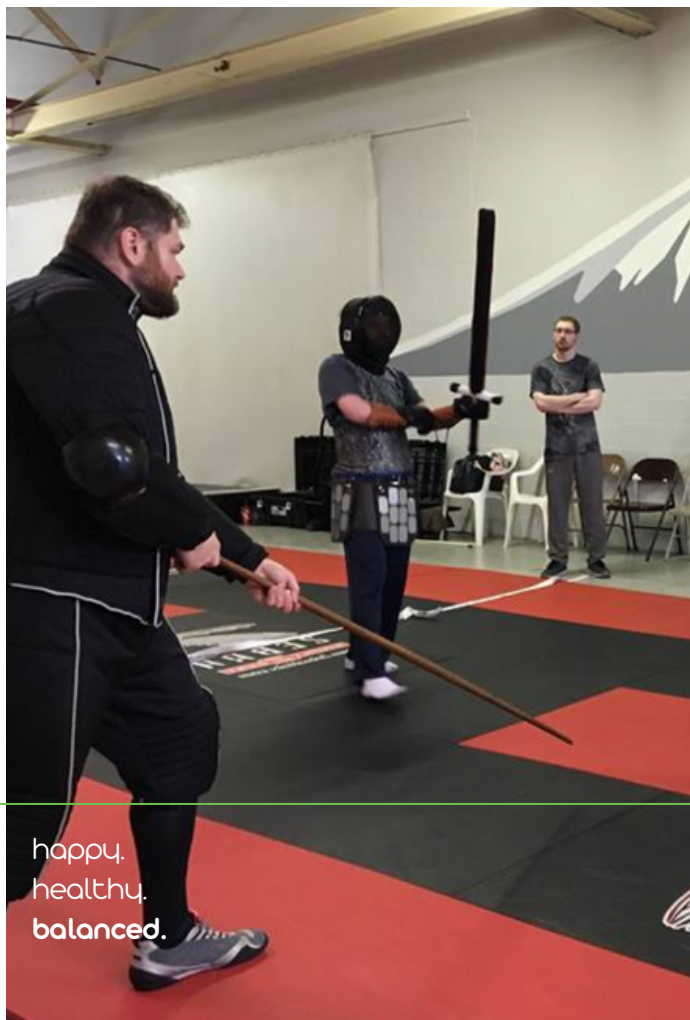
After all of this, if you are still sitting there on your couch in your Bills Snuggie and thinking - "I really don't want to leave the house for buns of steel. I'd be happier with buns of cinnamon on the couch." Then perhaps you need an "exercise snack."

Just as you might grab a handful of sponge candy, to break up the monotony of your day, you can enjoy a brief "snack" of exercise whenever you have a few minutes. There is this amazing invention called Youtube which, contrary to popular belief, has much more than just highlights of Josh Allen throwing touchdowns. There are so many quick workouts you can search and the best part is you can always pause, have an actual snack, then come back for more "exercise snack."

For free online yoga I highly recommend Yoga with Kassandra . You can visit Sweat With Self for free cardio and strength training or if you are looking to party in your Snuggie like it's 1999 - you can visit Move With Color for some great dance classes.

Remember, eventually winter will pass. It may pass like a kidney stone - but it will pass.

Soon enough we will be outside enjoying Vitamin D and not risking frostbite every time we take out our trash. In the meantime though, stay healthy, stay active and remember that a summer body is made in the winter.



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# Digital Detox

## Crafting a Healthier Media Diet

by Jessica Marinelli

In the season of self-reflection and goal-setting, our focus often lands on the usual suspects: exercise, hydration, sugar reduction, and escaping the relentless 'busy' trap. I imagine few of us ponder, "How can I spend more time online?" Yet, last year's dramatic surge in digital engagement, especially on platforms like TikTok, demands a critical look at our online habits.

Consider this: the average user spends approximately 2.5 hours daily on social media. That's 36 days each year. Imagine reclaiming an entire month!

### The Art of Digital Detox

A digital detox is more than a fleeting trend; it's an essential recalibration of our relationship with digital devices. It's about mindfulness in our digital interactions and the social media we consume.

### Step One: Cleanse Your Feed

Begin by auditing your social media. Scroll through your feeds and notice your emotional responses. Unfollow or mute sources that evoke negativity or distraction. This step can significantly lessen stress, and foster a healthier online space. Try the 'positive content challenge' by seeking accounts that inspire and uplift you. Join online groups that mirror your interests, from wellness to hobbies, cultivating community and belonging.

### Step Two: Establish Boundaries

Implementing time limits on social media usage is crucial. It's easy to lose track in the endless scroll. Setting specific times for checking your feeds not only reduces screen time but enhances your presence in the real world. Have a list of life goals and fun activities like repotting a plant, mastering a sourdough starter, or planning outings with friends.



## Additional Tips for a Healthier Digital Life

- Move social apps away from your home screen (or delete entirely) to reduce impulsive checking.
- Use silent modes to lessen the temptation of constant notifications.
- Occasionally leave your phone behind for a true break.
- Choose 1 or 2 essential social media apps where you find the most positive engagement
- Recognize that social media often showcases curated, edited realities. Reels aren't real.
- Use social platforms for planning real-life gatherings or keeping up with distant loved ones.

## Embracing a Mindful Digital Existence

The aim isn't to eradicate social media but to foster a mindful, healthy engagement with it. As we progress through 2024, let's actively curate our digital intake. Unfollow the negative, snooze the distractions, and set boundaries to maintain a balanced online life. Let's transform our digital spaces into sources of joy, learning, and genuine connection. Together, we embark on a journey towards a more balanced, fulfilling digital existence. Join us in cultivating a digital world that nurtures our mental health and well-being, one mindful step at a time.



# Eating for Stress Relief

## How Buffalonians Can Harness the Power of Food

By Daniel Lendzian



It has been said, “you are what you eat,” and while none of us look like a burger and fries, we are certainly affected by the foods we eat. What we consume can make us feel good or bad, depending on our bodies reaction to it. Incorporating some foods into our diets can contribute to the stress relief mechanisms that affect both the body and the mind. These foods can include probiotics and adaptogenic herbs. Consuming foods and beverages like kombucha, mushrooms, and adaptogens may offer various health benefits, particularly in terms of stress relief and overall well-being.

Kombucha, a fermented tea rich in probiotics, can promote a healthy gut microbiome, supporting digestion and potentially influencing mental health. Big Norwegian Kombucha, located at 500 Seneca Street, is a great place to get a taste for kombucha.

As one of the first kombucha brewers in Buffalo, and with over five years of commercial kombucha brewing experience, Andy Bannister has perfected his version of the gut healthy drink. His shop has flavors like Apple Spice, Blueberry Lemongrass, Green Tea, Strawberry Lavender, and Ginger Green on tap. You can go down and pick up a growler, or sign up for their adventure club, which delivers a bottle of fresh Kombucha right to your door (if you live in Erie County).

Certain mushrooms, considered adaptogens, including reishi, lion’s mane, and cordyceps, are believed to modulate the body’s response to stress, enhance immune function, and provide energy support. For those interested in adding mushrooms to their diets, Flat 12 Mushrooms, at 37 Chandler Street, has got you covered. Flat 12 sells different varieties by the half pound, which can be easily added to soups, sides, or other recipes. They also have a simple way to add mushrooms to your morning routine... lion’s mane coffee! Easily brewed in any home coffee maker, this blend of lion’s mane mushrooms is grown and dehydrated by Flat 12 Mushrooms, and is perfectly combined with Tipico’s house blend for a refreshing cup of joe. Flat 12 also offers some food items including soups and savory pastries at their storefront.

Additionally, adaptogens like ashwagandha and rhodiola have been associated with stress reduction and improved resilience. These natural substances are thought to have properties that assist the body in adapting to environmental stressors and promoting balance. Local health food stores are a treasure trove of adaptogenic herbs and mushrooms, offering them in various forms –



from powders and capsules to teas and tinctures. These stores are more than just retail spaces; they're centers of learning and discovery, where you can gain insights into the benefits of adaptogens and how to integrate them into your cooking at home. Feel Rite Fresh Markets would certainly carry ashwagandha and rhodiola, and their staff could help you find a product that may work for you. If you would like to try an adaptogen in a smoothie, Kornerstone Cafe has a fantastic juice bar that would allow you to add a scoop of energizing maca powder for a healthy boost.

It's important to note that individual health conditions and considerations should be taken into account, and consulting with a healthcare professional is advisable before making significant dietary changes. While individual responses may vary, incorporating these elements into a balanced diet may contribute to holistic well-being, offering a potential avenue for managing stress and supporting overall health.







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