

## LET ME ENTERTAIN YOU!



When we think about wellbeing different ideas might spring to mind. Wellbeing is the state of being comfortable, healthy or happy. This time of year can be really challenging on your wellbeing. There are extra costs, the weather doesn't lend itself to outdoor activities and it's easy to get into a slump. This week I'll chat about 5 interesting ways that you may not have thought of for your winter wellbeing. They are low on cost but high on return for your wellbeing. Recipe wise I have one of my favourites ....

### Simple Winter Wellbeing Activities:

1. The library- I love the library, I think it is one of the most underrated ways to spend some time and avail of their amazing service. Whether you are going by yourself or with children, it is without doubt a great resource. Make sure to avail of their 'borrow box' app and for anyone who feels a bit pressurised about returns there are no longer fines in place so you can borrow without worrying of accumulating a fine if for some reason you were delayed. My kids love the library and I've spent many a rainy day there. Did you know that there has been research to show that reading as little as 6 minutes a day can reduce stress by 60%?
2. Game Night - We are all on our phones or looking at screens a huge amount of the time and blue light from screens can impact our sleep, bad quality sleep negatively impacts your overall wellbeing. Playing games is a great way to turn off the screens and get your brain working. Dig out a deck of cards or a board game and organise a games night. There's lots of research to suggest that playing board games increases brain function.
3. Get Crafty – Did you know that crafting such as sewing, weaving and crocheting have a lot in common with mindfulness. Crafting can help to boost your mood. There are endless ideas online for great crafts. Cobh author Lilly Higgins has a great new book out called 'The Homemade Year' and it has some really nice crafting ideas. Whether you are an adult or a child you will feel the benefits of time spent crafting. If you would like to mix your crafting with friendship, be sure to look up local craft clubs that meet up each week, these are inexpensive and a lovely way to spend time.
4. Walk and Talk- Pick a new destination to go for a walk and organise to meet someone to walk and talk with. It's free and guaranteed to make you feel super charged. Walking is one of the most effective ways to increase your energy levels, so even when it looks a bit wet and miserable try to find the time to wrap up and get out. Make sure to wear a hi vis vest.
5. Mindfulness- Winter is a great time to add mindfulness as a tool in your wellbeing kit. Personally, I find formal meditating hard but informal mindfulness is something that I've found really useful. There are lots of low cost resources for learning simple mindfulness techniques. Putting some time into mindfulness during this period of the year will help you to easily use it throughout your life when navigating challenging situations.

Winter can be hard for many people. If you can take it as an opportunity to add layers to your wellbeing tool kit it can become really beneficial for you. Remember wellbeing is so much more than fitness and eating healthy food. Think about yourself as a whole and what you can do to support yourself. Some of the activities above might seem simple but they will benefit you. Any activity that you include connecting with people is also a really big bonus. Human connection is incredibly important, check in on people and spend time with others. As Seamus Heaney once said 'If we winter this one out, we can summer anywhere'

Wellness Tip: Mindfulness Moment once a day -set a reminder in your phone. Setting a reminder might sound a bit extreme but having it before you go to bed can be a great reminder if you haven't managed to have some time for you during the day. Take 10 minutes before you fall asleep to just be in that moment, use a guided meditation if you struggle to quiet your thoughts.

Exercise Tip: Shoulder Rolls

Recipe: Lime, Chocolate & Oat Biscuits.



Ingredients:

- 100g butter at room temperature
- 1 egg
- 1 banana, mashed
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 tbsp. Honey
- Zest of 1 lime
- 100g wholemeal flour
- Pinch of salt
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 100g porridge oats
- 25g desiccated coconut
- 50g chopped walnuts
- 75g dark chocolate, roughly chopped

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 180. Place all of the ingredients in a large mixing bowl.
2. Using your hands combine all the ingredients. Using the palm of your hands form into individual biscuit patties and place on a non-stick baking tray.
3. Pop in the oven for 15 minutes until lightly browned.
4. Remove and cool. Store in an airtight container