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Respect

Independence

Self-determination

Integration

Empowerment

Skills Unlimited

Summer 2026



Goal Garden: Summer (is a) Breeze



Summer can be full of distractions: as if the warmer weather and sunshine weren't enough! Treating summer as a way of re-connecting with a different part of ourselves, can keep us connected to the child-like feeling of 'summer vacation'. This time of year is perfect for working on mini, or very short-term goals (think 3 week – 90 day goals). It is also an ideal time to switch our primary focus from professional and academic or skill building goals, to setting targets for personal, wellness, and/or leisure goals. Choosing goals that are more about self-expression, freedom, play, leisure and long-term creativity is an excellent approach. Here are a few ideas to start with, and to help inspire other ideas that might come to mind:

- ❖ **Expedition Dates:** like the solo artist dates that became popular due to the book 'The Artist's Way' by Julia Cameron (<https://juliacameronlive.com/>), setting dates and making specific plans to build a routine of taking ourselves out to explore and chase down adventures, makes it much more likely we will actually get out there. Adventure with a friend if you'd prefer, but do try some out independently: taking yourself out on dates, of any kind, is a radical act of self-love that is powerfully transformative over time.
- ❖ **Picnics:** you'll be eating those meals no matter what, so may as well take some of them outside while the weather is agreeable to it. Keep it easily accessible with a quick sandwich and a piece of fruit eaten on a blanket in your yard or at the park down the way, or it could be a more involved plan for a full picnic in another area of town at a park or by the river, or a day trip to the country or beach.
- ❖ **Water:** make a commitment to regularly spend time by the water this summer. The sight, sound, smell and feel of water soothes us on a deep and primitive level that can't be beat. A creek, fountain, or river is best due to the fact that the water is moving. However, a pool or pond will do.
- ❖ **Sidewalk Chalk & Bubbles:** re-connect with your inner child and spread joy around while you're at it. These seemingly simple, inexpensive, and 'immature' toys are actually mindfulness tools and activities in disguise! Grab some at the dollar store to tuck into your bag to take on an Expedition Date, Picnic, etc. or keep them in your bag for spontaneous fun that seems frivolous, but is actually quite impactful and meaningful.
 - ☀ Bubbles are great for practicing breath work and encouraging us to slow down, while providing floating, shimmering orbs that are pretty and pleasant to observe as they dance and bob around in the air. This type of activity encourages mindfulness, day dreaming, and letting go in a beautiful and peaceful way.
 - ☀ Sidewalk Chalk is a fantastic way to engage creativity while brightening up your sidewalk, driveway, or parking lot, or those found in your neighborhood and along the way on adventures. It's cheap, accessible to almost everyone, and washes away with the rain leaving no trace. Draw little pictures, or write out an affirmation or friendly message to remind you to go easy on, and take care of yourself, while doing the same for passersby too.





Let Nature be Your Guide



Winnipeg boasts many parks and green spaces that are the ideal destinations for exploration, playing, and chilling out in the summer weather. Here's a little list that might inspire you to go out and play:

Downtown

- ❖ **Air Canada Window Park** is shaded and has a big fountain, so it tends to be cooler than the surrounding area. This, and its central location make it a great place to eat lunch, have a beverage and a mindful break, or meet a friend to go on an outing downtown.
- ❖ **Millennium Library Park** is perfect for leisurely perusing books borrowed from the library, where you can grab a bistro table to eat, or simply enjoy the water features, prairie grass gardens, and art installations. The park is even more beautiful at night, making it perfect to take a stroll through on your way to, or from, the bus stop or car when attending meals or events in the surrounding area.
- ❖ **Old Market Square and The Cube Stage** are the perfect spot to meet before checking out the various festivals and activities in the Exchange District. The cube often has music and performances that the public can enjoy for free, especially during First Fridays, festivals, and special events.

St James

- ❖ **Bruce Park** is a tiny little riverside park boasting old growth trees, and a staggered landscape. It can get busy, but most people are simply passing through while on a walk.
- ❖ **Grant's Old Mill** is on a wide, grassy area along Sturgeon Creek, right next to Portage Ave. in front of the Grace Hospital. You can explore the mill inside, buy flour milled on site, have a picnic next to the creek, and hike the Sturgeon Creek Walking Paths.

Fort Rouge

- ❖ **Churchill Drive** boasts several parks along a riverside trail (there is a break in the trail, but one can easily move to a sidewalk on a side street and pop back to the trail when it picks up again). There are also many other small parks in Fort Rouge between Osborne Ave. and the river.

River East

- ❖ **Along Buns Creek** is a lovely parkway with a path that ends on the West side of Henderson Hwy. at the Red River. There's a small park at the spot where the creek and river meet, that is usually quiet and is the perfect place (especially dinner time/early evening) to enjoy the water, birds, and occasional wildlife. Watch the creek mouth for splashes indicating that big fish are active; you may even want to bring fishing gear!



Air Canada Window Park



Grant's Old Mill

Confidence Boost:

Pay it Forward

Random acts of kindness make the world a better place and can make you feel better about yourself while brightening someone else's day. Send a thank you card, bake some brownies for your co-workers, or compliment someone you usually don't talk to. Even small good deeds can have a big impact on your mood.

"A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions, and the roots spring up and make new trees."

-Amelia Earhart



"Remember there's no such thing as a small act of kindness. Every act creates a ripple with no logical end."

SCOTT ADAMS



Laughter IS the Best Medicine, and Science Proves it!



Have you ever noticed the feeling of rejuvenation after watching a hilarious video or movie? Or perhaps you have burst into a fit of laughter when in a tense or stressful situation. Laughter is a powerful tool in helping to cope with stress. There is scientific evidence validating the phrase "laughter is the best medicine" and research proves it promotes a multitude of benefits for the mind and body.

Laughter is Contagious: Similar to what causes you to smile when someone smiles at you, *mirror neurons* give credibility to the belief that laughter is contagious. When feeling down, laughing with someone can help trigger a laughter response in the brain and encourage closeness, which can contribute to a sense of well-being. As humans we tend to enjoy the feeling of shared laughter, and our body wants as much of this feeling as possible.

Laughter Reduces the Stress Response: When you laugh, your muscles contract, which increases blood flow and oxygenation. This stimulates the heart and lungs, triggering the release of endorphins that help you feel more relaxed physically and emotionally.

Laughter Boots Immunity: Laughter increases immune cells and infection fighting antibodies thus improving your resistance to disease and illness. The Indiana State School of Nursing conducted a study that demonstrated, joyful laughter may increase a type of white blood cell that attacks cancer cells.

Laughter Helps Ease Distressing Emotions: Laughter has positive effects on our mental health and counteracts feelings of anxiety, sadness and anger. Finding the humor in a difficult situation can also help you to see a new perspective. Even forced laughter releases a powerful combination that can help boost your mood.

Laughter Helps to Dampen Pain: It is not that those who are laughing experience less pain, but they do tend to be less bothered by it. Laughter does not directly decrease pain levels; however, the perceived pain levels decrease and the belief your ability to cope with it increases, which can help you overcome discomfort.

Think of laughter like exercise, and make a conscious effort to find something that makes you laugh every day! Take some pointers from children – they are the experts in finding joy and humor in ordinary things. Gravitate to the source of laughter and spend time with fun, playful people... a littler more laughter in life is just what the doctor ordered!



Activities & Events of Interest



Agowiidiwinan Centre

Admission: Free

The Agowiidiwinan Centre, which opened at The Forks in December 2022, offers the opportunity to expand one's knowledge about the treaties. Developed by the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba, the exhibits teach about the history, meaning, and contemporary aspects of the treaties.

Assiniboine Park

There's a huge range of activities to enjoy at this expansive park (many of them free), on top of the vast swath of landscape to explore. The Park is so large that it's possible to find tucked away, quiet corners even when it's quite busy. The Lyric Theater even has movie nights!

Winnipeg Public Art Tours

Admission: Free ~ May to September ~ Sign up at winnipegarts.ca

Get outside and explore Winnipeg through public art—find out where the art is, why it is there and what it means! Some works are fun, colourful and interactive, while others will challenge your thinking.

Contact Us:

Give us a call for more information about our programs and services.



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