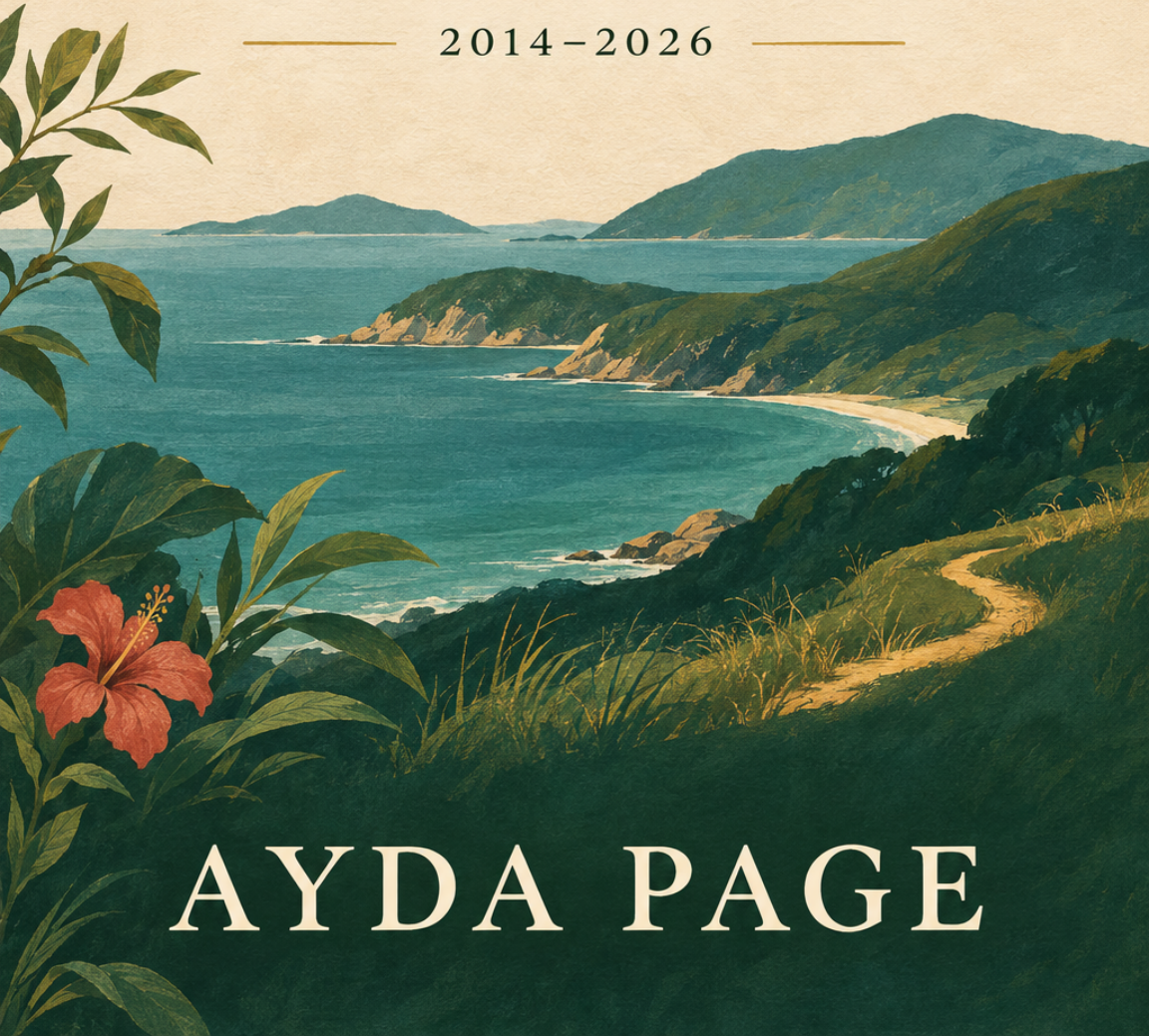
Collected Writings

Health, Movement & Performance

2014–2026



AYDA PAGE

Collected Writings

Health, Movement & Performance

Twenty-four articles on the choices, habits, and experiences that shape a full life - from everyday food and movement to the meaning we find in our communities.

These pieces were selected from Ayda Page's writing between 2014 and 2026 and arranged in four parts. You can read them in order or begin with the topic that speaks to you.

The selected edition has been edited for clarity and consistency. Repeated passages and dated promotions have been trimmed, and two pieces have been abridged. Personal stories remain connected to their original setting. Publication details appear at the back.

The practical health pieces provide general education and do not replace individual medical or nutrition advice.

Selected reader edition · November 2026
Prepared for author review · aydapage.com

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01 / BEGIN WITH MEANING

Motivation Requires Meaning

AydaPage.com · 2020



All the time I hear the same reason for not starting a workout plan or making a lifestyle change, such as choosing healthier food: no motivation.

Most of us want to feel motivated before we start something new. We watch someone else's success, look at old pictures to remind ourselves of how we once felt, or even look at our medical bills and think about what we want to change. Yes, these things can be strong motivators. But that feeling can fade, and we find ourselves looking for another reminder of why we wanted to start.

That's why we often look for someone to show us a smarter, more practical way to reach our goal. But what if we don't have anyone to help, or we don't have the budget to hire someone right now?

Here are some things you can try.

First, find the meaning behind what you want to achieve. This sounds simple, but it deserves some thought. Let's say you want to lose a certain amount of weight. Then what? Why do you want to lose that weight? Perhaps you want to move more comfortably, have energy for your family, or feel more confident. Your answer gives the goal meaning. If you're honest with yourself, the real reason may be different from the one you first imagined.

Second, write it down. How do you hope to feel when you reach your goal? What could it change in your life? Return to those questions regularly. If you like reflecting before bed, use that quiet moment to remind yourself what matters and choose one small action for the next day.

Third, expect change to take practice. Familiar routines can be easier to follow than new ones, especially when we are tired or busy. That does not mean your mind is lazy or that you are doing something wrong. Encouraging yourself and repeating manageable actions can help you become more comfortable with a new routine. You do not have to feel positive every moment to keep going.

Finally, give your plan a realistic time frame. Break it into smaller steps so you can notice progress and celebrate along the way. Think of it as a project: what can you do this week, and when will you check how it is going? Choose actions you can influence, and leave room to adjust the deadline if your health or circumstances change.

When you read this, please don't think that I have figured everything out or that I do everything I've written here perfectly! Absolutely not. I am practicing, learning, and improving as much as I can, all the time. But I do believe that sharing our perspectives and experiences can help us support each other and find different ways forward.

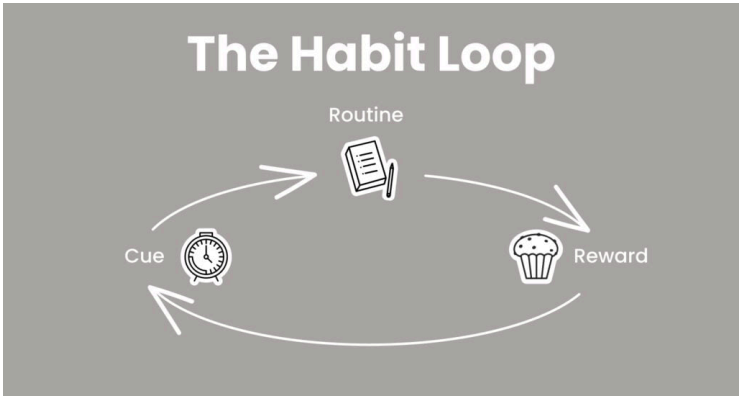
Start today, not tomorrow. Today is a goooooood day!

Inhale peace, exhale LOVE.

02 / BEGIN WITH MEANING

How to Create a Habit and Stick to It

AydaPage.com · 2021



We all have something we want to achieve, whether it is a short-term or a long-term goal. We may have a clear purpose and all the resources we think we need. Yet we still struggle to begin, or we give up quickly.

For example, you probably often hear that you should move more during the day. You agree and decide to take action. Then the day goes on, and the intention gets forgotten. Without a specific plan for when, where, and how you will act, it can be difficult to fit something new into an already busy life.

An active lifestyle has many benefits for physical and mental health. But knowing the benefits is not always enough to help us get out the door. Motivation comes and goes. Making an action simple, achievable, and part of a familiar routine gives us something more dependable to work with.

Creating a habit takes practice. Repeating a behavior in a consistent context can help it become more automatic over time. A habit does not mean that you never think about the activity again or never need encouragement. If you are still asking yourself whether to go for a workout, that does not prove you don't want it. The action may simply need a clearer cue, a smaller starting point, or a better fit with your day.

So what if we create a system that feels achievable and even fun, using very small steps? Behavior researcher BJ Fogg's Tiny Habits method offers one way to do that. It connects an existing routine with a tiny new action and a brief celebration.

The first part is an anchor: something you already do that will remind you to take the new action. For example, after brushing your teeth in the morning, you might do one gentle stretch. Put your mat where it is easy to reach. If you want to floss, keep the floss beside your toothbrush and connect the action to finishing brushing. The existing routine gives the new behavior a place to belong.

The second part is the tiny behavior. Choose one thing and make it small enough to feel manageable. If you want to walk for 20 minutes each day, your starting action could simply be putting on your walking shoes. That may take only 30 seconds. Afterward, you might choose to walk for a few minutes. Fogg describes doing more as “extra credit”; the small action still counts on its own.

The third part is celebration. After you do the action, acknowledge it in a way that feels natural: a smile, a quiet “well done,” or a moment of satisfaction. Fogg emphasizes positive feelings in his method. You do not need to manufacture excitement, but you can give yourself credit for following through. Noticing a small success may help you feel more willing to try again.

Think of creating habits as an experiment. If a pairing does not work, change the anchor or make the action smaller. You are adjusting the plan, not failing as a person. Here are some possibilities:

- After you turn on the kettle, do two comfortable squats or wall push-ups.
- After you get into bed, read one sentence.
- When you wake up, name one thing you are grateful for.
- After you start brewing coffee or tea, take a minute to breathe quietly.
- If you hope to walk for 30 minutes three times a week, begin with two minutes on those days, perhaps just to your mailbox.

Try not to raise the bar too quickly. Doing more can be a lovely bonus, but making the minimum too demanding may make it harder to keep going. Start with one small action, repeat it in a situation that suits you, and adjust as needed. Everyone is working with different circumstances, so don't be too hard on yourself.

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03 / BEGIN WITH MEANING

Do What You Can, When You Can

AydaPage.com · 2022



Joan MacDonald began her fitness transformation at 70. Photo credit: Train with Joan.

Knowingly or unknowingly, many of us are thinking about how to age well and stay happy. For the most part, we also have some idea of what might help. But daily challenges, and often thinking about others before ourselves, can distract us from our own needs and wishes.

When I wrote this article, I was traveling and seeing other cultures, lifestyles, and perspectives. Stepping back to look at the bigger picture helped me simplify some of my worries and question whether they were as important as I had thought.

Do you think our environment and surroundings condition our beliefs? I think they can. For example, we may assume that once we reach a certain age, we must feel old and give up activities we enjoy. Yet I know many older people who remain curious, active, and involved in life. That

does not mean thoughts control our cells or determine our health. It does make me wonder whether, sometimes, our expectations lead us to stop trying sooner than we need to.

During my travels, I talked to a 28-year-old man who told me he felt 56 inside because of the way he had chosen to live. His comment stayed with me. People of any age can feel trapped in a difficult, stressful lifestyle. Changing lifelong habits is not easy, and our circumstances are not always within our control. Still, taking a little step back may help us recognize one thing we would like to change.

Aging itself is not a choice, and we cannot reverse or completely stop every physical change. Wrinkles arrive - I wish they didn't! Vision, teeth, bones, and muscles can change too. Genetics, illness, living conditions, and access to care all matter. Healthy routines may help us maintain strength, independence, and quality of life, but they do not make us immune to aging or disease.

There are many practical ways to support ourselves: eating a varied diet with enough protein, staying active in ways that suit our abilities, getting regular sleep, drinking enough water, caring for our mental health, and staying connected with others. Strength training, aerobic activity, and balance work can all have a place. Spending time outdoors, while protecting our skin, can also be an enjoyable part of the day. And don't forget community and laughter.

That is a lot of possibilities, so you do not have to turn them into another overwhelming to-do list. Some may be easier to access than others. Start with something that fits your health, time, and circumstances. If you need help adapting an activity, ask for it. Small, appropriate changes are still worthwhile.

Joan MacDonald, whose story originally caught my attention, began her fitness transformation at 70. Her experience is inspiring, but it is not a standard everyone must match. Your progress belongs to you. You may

think making changes is not easy, and you're absolutely right. Just do what you can, when you can.

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04 / BEGIN WITH MEANING

Is It Important to Have a Goal?

AydaPage.com · 2024



Is having a goal important? My answer is yes. So can I finish this article now? Actually, it's not that simple! We need to think about why a goal matters, what we hope to gain from it, and whether it fits the life we want to live.

A goal gives us a direction. It helps us identify something we would like to do and think about the steps that could take us there. Without that reflection, it is easy to spend a lot of energy being busy without feeling that we are moving toward anything meaningful.

Goal-setting research suggests that specific, challenging goals can improve performance in many situations. But the conditions matter: we need commitment, useful feedback, and the skills or support to make progress. A bigger goal is not automatically a better one. Sometimes the useful first goal is to learn a skill or establish a manageable routine.

Goals also give us something to review. We can notice what is working, adjust what isn't, and decide whether the goal still matters. This is a more helpful approach than treating a plan as a promise we are never allowed to change.

One of the first questions I ask my clients is, “What is your goal?” If you don't have an answer yet, that is where we can begin. You may have an ambition that feels unrealistic right now, but naming it gives us something to explore. What would reaching it mean to you? Which part could you begin working toward?

I like the possibility in a bigger goal. It can invite us to think beyond our immediate limitations and imagine a future that feels different from the present. But the ambition needs a practical plan. If a goal leaves you feeling constantly overwhelmed, it may need a smaller starting point, more support, or a longer time frame.

Working toward something ambitious often asks us to learn new skills and adapt to challenges. Each step can show us something about our abilities, even when progress is slower than we hoped. That is one reason I find the process valuable. We are learning as we go, not simply waiting for the final result.

Visualization can be one way to think through that process. Rather than picturing only the finish line, consider the actions that might get you there. What will you do when you are tired? What might interrupt your plan? Who could help? Imagining a good outcome can be encouraging; thinking through the work makes the idea more useful.

As we make progress, small successes can build confidence. We may begin to think, “I can do this,” because we have evidence of something we have already done. That confidence does not have to come from a dramatic result. It might come from completing a practice session, asking a useful question, or returning to the plan after a difficult week.

Break the larger goal into smaller pieces that you can recognize and review. Be specific enough to notice progress, but leave room for real life. If your original plan no longer fits your circumstances, changing it is not the same as giving up on yourself.

It is also worth remembering that a goal should serve your life. Achieving it will not solve every problem or guarantee happiness. Your health, relationships, and everyday experience matter along the way. A target that costs you all of those things deserves another look.

For me, setting a goal is about creating direction and a reason to take the next step. You can aim high and still begin with something small. Choose something meaningful, make a workable plan, and give yourself permission to learn and adjust as you go.

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05 / BEGIN WITH MEANING

Applying a Champion Mindset in Daily Life

AydaPage.com · 2024



Photo: Hugo LUC, via Wikimedia Commons, licensed CC BY-SA 4.0.

We can all learn something from an athlete's mindset and determination. A top-level athlete needs consistent work, opportunities, a strong support system, and physical abilities suited to the sport. But the idea of a champion mindset is useful beyond elite competition. Setting clear goals, practicing consistently, recovering from setbacks, and making room for rest can help recreational athletes and many of us in daily life.

Start with a simple but necessary step: choose a goal and make a plan. Research on goal setting suggests that specific, challenging goals can support motivation and performance when they fit our abilities and we have commitment and feedback. For recreational athletes, gradual fitness goals can provide direction and a sense of accomplishment. Personal or professional goals can give us that same sense of focus.

Break a larger objective into smaller, manageable tasks, and decide how you will notice progress. Stay realistic. Don't plan to run your first marathon in a month if you have not yet run a 5K! Give yourself enough time to build the skills and fitness you need. Your goal should be relevant to your circumstances, and your timeline should leave room to adjust.

Discipline matters in sport, but I think of it as returning to useful routines, rather than demanding perfection. Create space in your schedule for workouts, meals, and relaxation, just as you do for work. Consistent practice can make some actions more familiar and less dependent on how motivated you feel that day. For a recreational athlete, that might mean regular training, balanced meals, and enough recovery.

Setbacks will happen. Resilience is the ability to adapt and recover when things become difficult; it does not mean that nothing affects you or that you must handle everything alone. Support from friends, family, coaches, or other professionals can matter. Try to approach a challenge as something you can learn from while being honest about what you need.

A constructive attitude can help, but you do not have to banish every negative thought. Visualization is one tool some athletes use to rehearse a skill or prepare for a situation. You can picture the steps involved in an activity, including how you might respond if something does not go to plan. It is a practice tool, not a guarantee of success.

Peace Pilgrim is one of the people whose words inspire me. She walked more than 25,000 miles on a pilgrimage for peace. One of her thoughts that stays with me is: “Anything that you cannot relinquish when it has outlived its usefulness possesses you.” I take that as an invitation to notice the beliefs and habits that may no longer help us.

While working toward a goal, do not forget rest and recovery. Repeated hard training without enough recovery can lead to problems rather than progress. Days off, easier days, adequate sleep, and time away from work all have a place. Rest belongs in the plan.

You may already know many of these ideas. Putting them into practice is the challenge. Clear goals, consistent effort, support, and room to recover can help us bring an athlete's sense of purpose into everyday living. None of this belongs only to champions.

Watching the Tour de France helped inspire this article. Seeing athletes deal with injuries, accidents, and long periods away from their families made me think about their determination and the demands behind a performance. I wrote it as the 2024 Paris Olympics were beginning, another chance to see what people can achieve with years of practice and support.

We do not need to copy an elite athlete's life to learn from it. We can take the parts that help us: a meaningful goal, a workable plan, and the willingness to keep learning. Then we can apply them to the life we actually have.

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06 / BEGIN WITH MEANING

What We Can Learn from Other People's Achievements

AydaPage.com · 2022

I think many of us like to read, watch, or hear someone else's success story. A story with real emotion can draw us in and help us connect with another person's experience. We may see something of ourselves in it, or discover a possibility we had not considered before.

These stories inspire us and make us curious about how the person achieved what they did. People are doing amazing things: changing long-standing habits, running marathons, building businesses, or living with difficult health challenges. Behind the headline there is usually effort, but also circumstances, support, and opportunities that we may not see.

Someone else's success may motivate us for a while. But how long can we hold on to that feeling? Unless we connect the inspiration to something meaningful in our own lives, it can quickly fade. Our goals and reasons are different from anyone else's. We do not have to want the same result to learn something useful.

When listening to an inspiring story, try looking behind the achievement. What did the person actually do? How long did it take? What help did they have? How did they feel before they began, and what happened when things went wrong? Those details may be more useful than the final result.

Personally, I look at everyone as my teacher. I think we can all learn from each other, and one simple idea can sometimes make a difference. We learn while pursuing our own goals too. Along the way, we may need

to reassess what we want, and we may end up somewhere different from where we expected.

When we finally reach a goal, it may not feel as dramatic as we imagined. The process has already changed us. The familiar saying about the journey mattering as much as the destination resonates with me, but I also like having a direction that helps me choose my next step.

Here are a few stories that have inspired me.

Jeannie Rice ran the 2018 Chicago Marathon in 3 hours, 27 minutes, and 50 seconds at the age of 70. She began running at 35, not in childhood. Her experience is a remarkable example of what sustained training can make possible for an individual. It is encouragement to explore our own potential, rather than a promise that everyone will achieve the same performance.

Then there is Eliud Kipchoge, who completed the marathon distance in 1:59:40.2 at the specially organized INEOS 1:59 Challenge in Vienna in 2019. This was a paced exhibition rather than a record-eligible marathon race. His phrase, “No human is limited,” captures the spirit of that attempt. I hear it as an invitation to question the limits we assume, not to ignore the real limits and circumstances of our bodies. His story is also told in the documentary The Last Milestone.

Another story is that of runner Justin Gallegos, who has cerebral palsy. He became Nike's first professional athlete with cerebral palsy when he signed with the company in 2018. His story is about pursuing running while living with a disability, not making the disability disappear through determination. What began as a wish to become stronger and improve his quality of life developed into opportunities he had not expected.

These examples involve running, but the questions behind them apply much more widely. What matters to you? What is one action you could take? What support would make it more manageable? You do not need

to match another person's achievement for your own effort to count.

Persistence can help us make progress, but it cannot guarantee every outcome. Sometimes the plan needs to change, and sometimes our goals do too. Let an inspiring story open a possibility rather than become another way to judge yourself. Learn what you can, keep your own purpose in view, and take a step that belongs to you.

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07 / NOURISH YOUR EVERYDAY

Meal Prep Made Easier

AydaPage.com · 2019

At an event I held, I shared tips for easy meal prep. The menu was burgers, sweet potato fries, salad, and ice cream, made with nourishing ingredients. Here are the practical preparation tips from that handout. I hope you find them useful!

1. Plan your meals in advance. A little planning makes it easier to see what you already have and what you need to buy.

2. When you have time, cook larger quantities and freeze individual portions. You do not have to do everything every day.

3. Prepare a few ingredients beforehand. Roast vegetables, buy pre-cut frozen vegetables, cook lentils, or prepare hard-boiled eggs. Choose the foods that will make your next meal easier.

4. Prepare breakfast the night before. A sandwich or overnight oats can be ready when you are. Keep prepared breakfasts refrigerated.

5. Have suitable storage containers ready. Portioning your food makes it easier to put meals away and take them with you.

6. Freeze useful ingredients in portions: chicken, vegetables, pesto, broth, or lemon juice with herbs such as basil, oregano, or parsley.

7. Chop onions or garlic and freeze them for later cooking.

Keep food safety part of the plan. Refrigerate or freeze perishable food within two hours, or within one hour when the temperature is above 90°F (32°C). Use shallow containers so leftovers cool promptly. Keep

the refrigerator at 40°F (4°C) or below; use cooked leftovers within three to four days or freeze them. Thaw food in the refrigerator, not on the counter, and reheat leftovers to 165°F (74°C).

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08 / NOURISH YOUR EVERYDAY

Cooking at Home, Part 1: Why It Helps

AydaPage.com · 2024

In US survey data collected during 2013–2016, 36.6 percent of adults reported eating fast food on a given day. That describes a daily snapshot, not proof that the same people eat it every day. In today's busy world, the convenience of fast food and restaurants often competes with preparing meals at home. Grabbing a quick bite or ordering takeout can save time, but home cooking also has practical advantages.



Home-cooked meals give you more control over ingredients and cooking methods. One observational study found that people who frequently cooked dinner at home consumed fewer calories, sugar, and fat than those who cooked less often. That is an association, not proof that cooking alone caused the difference. At home, you can build meals around vegetables, proteins you enjoy, and whole grains. Fast-food meals are often higher in sodium, saturated fat, or energy, although both restaurant and home-cooked meals vary. Where food is prepared is only part of the picture; what goes into it matters too.

Cooking at home can also be more cost-effective. Buying ingredients for several meals and using what you already have may reduce cost and waste. Research has linked more home cooking with better diet quality without higher food spending. Still, ingredients, cooking equipment, energy, and time all have costs, and savings vary. You may be surprised by the delicious meals you can prepare on a modest budget. Compare the cost per serving and choose what works for your household.

Cooking at home also makes it easier to choose your portion and save leftovers. Restaurant portions can be larger than you want at one sitting, and very palatable foods can make it easy to keep eating. You can respond by sharing a dish, setting some aside, or simply noticing when you have had enough. These habits can work at home or away.

Home cooking can offer social and emotional benefits too. Preparing and sharing a meal with someone you care about can be a way to connect. But a meal out can be meaningful as well, and eating alone is not a failure. Wherever you eat, setting the phone aside and paying attention to the food can help you enjoy the experience.

Yes, fast food, takeout, and restaurants can make life easier. Home cooking is another useful option: it gives you control over ingredients, portions, and how you spend your food budget. You do not need an all-or-nothing rule. But what if you do not know how to cook or how to make good, budget-friendly food? I explore that in Part 2. If you can, try preparing a meal at home and enjoying it with family or friends.

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09 / NOURISH YOUR EVERYDAY

Cooking at Home, Part 2: Making It Work

AydaPage.com · 2024

Cost, time, and learning to cook

Eating out can be tasty and convenient. Cooking at home offers a different advantage: greater control over ingredients, portions, and the food budget. Many people still face real challenges with cost, time, equipment, and cooking skills. So how can we make home cooking easier when it is an option?



First, some tips that might help you reduce cooking cost. Planning your meals for the week ahead can help you create a precise shopping list, reducing impulse buys and food waste. Focus on recipes that use similar ingredients to maximize your grocery purchases, and buy non-perishable items like grains, beans, and pasta in larger bulk quantities to save money. Compare unit prices: larger packages may save money if you have storage space and will use the food.

You can also buy seasonal and local produce such as fruits and vegetables when they are affordable and fresh. Local farmers markets can offer good deals and fresh produce.

You can choose store brands over name brands, and look for discounts or coupons to save on groceries. Many store brands offer very similar quality at a much lower price.

You can cook in larger quantities too, then freeze leftovers in single-serving containers. Cool perishable food promptly in shallow containers and refrigerate or freeze it within two hours, or one hour above 90°F (32°C). Use refrigerated cooked leftovers within three to four days. This gives you meals to reheat when you need them.

You can save time by starting with simple recipes that need few ingredients and little preparation, then moving to more complex dishes when you are ready. One-pot meals such as soups, stews, and casseroles can mean less cleanup. Set aside some time for meal prep: chop vegetables, prepare grains, or marinate meat in the refrigerator. A pressure cooker or slow cooker can also reduce hands-on work. I like to prepare things ahead so cooking feels easier. Follow the appliance instructions and a suitable recipe, thaw meat safely before slow cooking, and keep perishable ingredients refrigerated until cooking begins.

You can also use leftovers creatively by turning them into new meals, such as using roasted vegetables in a salad or stir-fry. Keep quick-fix items like canned beans handy, adding something like ground beef and frozen vegetables then creates a very fast and low cost meal option.

If you're not yet comfortable cooking and feel you need to learn to cook then start with basic recipes that require few ingredients and simple techniques. When you're ready you can gradually expand your repertoire as you become more comfortable. You can enroll in a local cooking class or online course and learn from professionals, some community centers offer affordable or free classes. Online courses and tutorials are another option; check their cost and what they cover.

Recipe books are also great sources of information and inspiration, often giving tips for troubleshooting and explaining cooking techniques as well. My favorites are Anna Olson's “Baking Wisdom”, Darren McGrady's "The Royal Chef at Home” and “Schnelle Rezepte” (which is German for “quick recipes”). They all have delicious recipes from simple to advanced levels.

Don't be afraid to experiment and make mistakes, so do try out new recipes and techniques regularly to build confidence. Maybe you can ask for help from friends or family too, cooking together can be a fun experience.

Of course there are endless online resources including cooking blogs and YouTube channels with an abundance of recipe videos as well. My favorite is “Farmhouse on Boone,” which has so many great resources, not just cooking but how to make things around the house, gardening, fermenting and so on.

Planning, preparation, and practice can make home cooking feel more manageable. Not every barrier is easy to solve, so start with what is possible in your kitchen and your week. Even one reliable meal can become a rewarding habit that supports your health and budget.

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- USDA: Keeping cooked leftovers
- Anna Olson
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- Farmhouse on Boone
- Schnelle Rezepte

10 / NOURISH YOUR EVERYDAY

Healthier Choices When Eating Out

AydaPage.com · 2023

Some of the main reasons why we choose to eat out are simply that our lives are getting busier, many options are affordable, and it is convenient. But what if you care about your health and want to choose healthier options? Is that possible? Absolutely. It helps to pay attention to portions, sauces, and how a dish is prepared. Nutrition information is available at some restaurants; when it is not, you can ask about ingredients. Personally, even when I choose what seems like the best option, I sometimes feel that my digestion is struggling afterward. So what can we do to make eating out work better for us?



First, if you know which restaurant you are going to, check its menu online and plan what you might order. Many restaurants also provide calorie counts. Look for dishes that fit your needs, such as meals with vegetables and a substantial protein source. Restaurant portions can be large, so sharing or choosing a smaller order may help. If you want an appetizer, consider how it fits with the rest of your meal. Steamed,

grilled, roasted, or broiled dishes often use less added fat than deep-fried dishes. Descriptions such as creamy, battered, or breaded can offer clues, but the ingredients and portion matter too. Ask for salad dressing or sauces on the side so you can choose how much to use. Water or an unsweetened drink can be a simple alternative to a sugary beverage.

Restaurants and fast-food places work hard to make their food delicious. Salt, oils, and sugar can be part of that, so it is useful to ask how a dish is prepared. Quality varies, and price alone does not tell you whether a meal is nutritious.

Keep in mind that calorie content can vary widely with portion size, preparation, and ingredients. A large burger with cheese, bacon, and mayonnaise will be different from a smaller, simpler burger. Thick-crust pizza with several toppings, fried chicken, creamy pasta, and loaded nachos can be substantial meals. The same is true of large portions of fried rice or dishes with sweet sauces. Desserts and large sweetened drinks can add more energy than you expect. You do not need to label these foods as forbidden; just consider the whole meal and how much feels satisfying.

Have some water with your meal, and give yourself time to notice hunger and fullness. You can decide whether you still want an appetizer or dessert rather than ordering it automatically.

Of course, I understand that knowing what you want to do and putting it into practice are different things, and it is not always easy. Start with one small change that fits your life. Making your own lunch may help when it is practical, but eating out can also fit into a healthy pattern. Pay a little attention, make a choice that works for you, and enjoy your meal.

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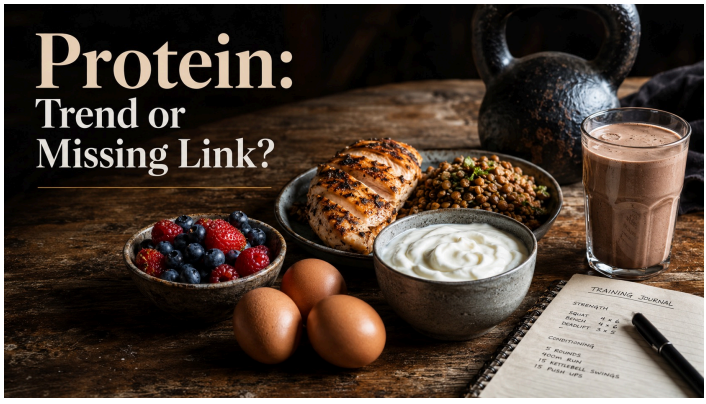
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Why Protein Matters After 40

AydaPage.com · 2026

For years, nutrition conversations were dominated by what to remove. Less fat, less carbs, less sugar, less snacking. Less this, less that. But lately, one of the most useful shifts in nutrition is not about what people are cutting out. It is about what many of us are finally making sure we get enough of: protein.



Protein is not a fad nutrient. It has always mattered. But it is getting more attention now because more people are beginning to understand what happens when intake stays too low for too long, especially in midlife and older adulthood. Low protein intake can make it harder to maintain muscle, recover from exercise, preserve strength, stay satisfied between meals, and support healthy aging.

That matters more than many people realize.

When most people hear about consuming protein, they think of gym culture. Protein shakes, endless meals of chicken breast, maybe bodybuilding. But the real role of protein is much more basic and much

more important. Protein provides amino acids, which the body uses to build and repair tissue, support muscle, make enzymes and hormones, and maintain many systems that keep us functioning well. It is useful to build these habits in midlife, and they become especially relevant as people move into older adulthood. With aging, the body becomes less responsive to smaller doses of protein and muscle is easier to lose during inactivity, illness, high stress, or under-eating. That gradual loss of muscle is not just a sports issue. It affects metabolism, stability, recovery, and independence.

That is why expert groups have suggested that healthy older adults may benefit from protein intakes above the general adult reference intake. PROT-AGE recommends roughly 1.0 to 1.2 grams per kilogram of body weight per day for many healthy older adults, and ESPEN recommends at least 1.0 gram per kilogram, with individual adjustment. These are older-adult recommendations, not an automatic target for everyone over forty. Activity, illness, nutritional status, and kidney function can change what is appropriate.

This does not mean everyone needs a high-protein obsession. But it does mean we should stop treating protein like a side detail.

In real life, many people eat very little protein earlier in the day, then try to catch up at dinner. Breakfast might be toast and fruit. Lunch might be a salad with hardly any substantial protein. Then dinner becomes the one real protein meal. That pattern can make it harder to reach an appropriate daily total.

One practical approach is to spread protein across meals while paying attention to the daily total. Instead of putting nearly all protein at night, aim to include a meaningful amount at each meal. That could look like eggs and Greek yogurt in the morning, fish or chicken with lunch, beans or lentils in a grain bowl, cottage cheese as a snack, tofu in a stir-fry, or a more balanced smoothie that actually contains enough protein to count.

Protein also matters for appetite. People often feel more satisfied and less likely to keep hunting for snacks one hour later if the meal contains enough protein. That does not mean protein is magic, but it can make balanced eating easier because it adds structure to a meal.

Protein and strength training work together. Resistance training gives the body a reason to keep and build muscle. Protein gives it some of the raw material to do so. Neither one works as well alone. When both are present, especially consistently over time, the effect is much more meaningful.

This is important for women too, particularly in midlife when hormonal changes, lower overall intake, under-fueling, or years of “light eating” can quietly reduce muscle reserves. Many women do not need less food, they need better-composed food — including enough protein and enough total nourishment to support training, recovery, and bone health.

Of course, context still matters. Protein needs are not identical for everyone. An individual with kidney disease, appetite issues, medications, chewing problems, food access, or digestive concerns may need to approach intake differently. That is one reason that individualized advice can help. For someone whose intake is low, noticing the pattern is a useful first step.

The answer is not to make every meal rigid or joyless. Instead, simply look at the plate and ask whether there is a real protein source there. Not a sprinkle. Not a tiny amount. A real whole-food source.

This may be one of the most useful nutrition upgrades we can make because it supports more than body composition. It supports energy, function, resilience, and aging well.

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No Soil, Still Growing

AydaPage.com · 2026

What hydroponic gardening can teach us about food, health, and starting again.



There is something wonderfully fitting about talking about hydroponic gardening on Kauai, the Garden Island. Here, and throughout Hawaii, growth is everywhere. It climbs mountains, spills over fences, blooms along roadsides, and returns almost overnight after a good rain. When most of us picture gardening in Hawaii, we picture soil: hands in the dirt, getting muddy, our pickings on the lanai, and hopefully the quiet satisfaction of picking something we helped grow.

Hydroponic gardening gently challenges that picture.

Hydroponics is the practice of growing plants without soil. Instead of anchoring roots in the ground, a hydroponic system gives plants water, oxygen, light, and dissolved nutrients in a managed environment. It can

be simple or technical, small enough for a kitchen counter or large enough for a farm. But the main idea is beautiful and simple: no soil, but still growing.

At first, that sounds almost impossible. How can something grow without the very thing we have always believed it needs? That is exactly why I love it. Hydroponics reminds us that growth is not always about perfect conditions. Growth is about the right support.

Soil is one way to deliver what plants need. But plants need nutrients, hydration, oxygen, light, structure, and consistency. And humans are not so different. We often wait for perfect circumstances before taking care of ourselves. We say we will exercise when work slows down. We will cook more when the schedule gets easier. We will drink more water when we get organized. We will sleep when stress disappears. But life rarely gives us perfect conditions — you plan to get outside but it may rain, you commit to a routine, your schedule may shift. If we wait for perfect, we may wait a long time. Like plants, we need the right inputs repeated consistently: nourishing food, enough protein, colorful plants, water, movement, strength, time outdoors, sleep, laughter, connection, and purpose. None of these has to be perfect. They just need to show up often enough to support life.

A hydroponic garden also teaches patience. The first batch may grow beautifully. The second may struggle. The third may require detective work. Maybe the water level dropped. Maybe the nutrients were too strong or too weak. Maybe the roots needed more oxygen. Maybe the lettuce got too much heat. Maybe algae moved in because sunlight was hitting the reservoir.

Isn't that how health habits work?

We begin with excitement. We buy the groceries. We join the gym. We start walking. We fill the water bottle. Then life shifts, energy dips, progress slows, and the habit that once felt exciting asks for patience and problem-solving.

That moment is not always failure. Sometimes it is feedback. A struggling plant is not a bad plant. It is a plant asking for a better environment. A tired body is not a failed body. It may be asking for recovery, and persistent or unexplained fatigue deserves attention. A plateau is not the end of progress. It is information.

A garden does not grow because we shame it into growing. It grows because we observe, adjust, and care for it. Our bodies deserve the same respect.

If you are curious about hydroponics, start small. Grow something you will actually eat. Basil, mint, green onions, bok choy, kale, Swiss chard, parsley, cilantro, and leafy greens are forgiving beginner choices. Lettuce can do well, though in warmer conditions it may prefer morning light, partial shade, or an indoor setup with bright light. Fruiting crops like tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, and strawberries are possible too, but they usually require more light, support, and attention.

For Kauai beginners, a few simple tips help: use food-grade containers, choose nutrients made for hydroponics, keep water reservoirs covered to discourage algae and mosquitoes, check water levels often, maintain the air space or aeration the system requires, clean the system between plantings, and harvest herbs and greens regularly. Most important, keep notes. Write down what you planted, where it grew, and what worked. That tiny garden journal turns frustration into learning. The same is true for health. When we notice sleep, food, movement, mood, and recovery without judgment, we begin to see patterns. We stop guessing and start adjusting. Maybe the leaves need more light. Maybe the roots need oxygen. Maybe your meals need more protein. Maybe your body needs more sleep. Maybe the better habit is not bigger, but smaller and more consistent.

Small does not mean insignificant. A few herbs can change how someone cooks. A short daily walk can change energy. A simple strength routine can change confidence. A plate with protein and vegetables can change the day.

In Hawaii, growth in nature is easy to see. Hydroponics reminds us of something deeper: even without soil, life can grow when it receives what it needs. We may not always feel rooted. We may not always know exactly what we are doing. But with nourishment, support, patience, and the willingness to adjust, we can still grow.

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The Power of Movement

AydaPage.com · 2025



Are you aware of how useful mobility and stability work can be? Especially as we age, strength and cardiovascular fitness often get more attention. Mobility and balance deserve a place in the routine too.

These two components of physical health can support independence, confidence, and quality of life.

Mobility refers to the ability of a joint to move actively through a range of motion. Stability is the ability to control that movement with strength and coordination. Together, they form the foundation of safe and efficient movement patterns — whether it's getting out of a chair, walking up stairs, or reacting quickly to prevent a fall.

When comfortable movement becomes limited, everyday tasks can feel harder. When balance and control decline, we may feel less steady. Falls have many causes, but improving strength and balance is one useful part of reducing the risk.

Muscle mass, strength, and physical performance tend to decline with age, although the rate varies widely. This loss is often called sarcopenia. Inactivity, illness, and poor nutrition can make it worse. Changes in coordination and our sense of body position can also affect balance. None of this means that every person follows the same timetable or that becoming less capable is inevitable.

Different types of movement help in different ways. Mobility exercises can maintain or improve a comfortable range of motion. Resistance training gives the muscles a reason to stay strong, while balance practice helps us control our position. Stretching alone does not replace strength training, but these activities can work well together.

The good news? Strength, balance, and everyday function can improve with regular, appropriate practice. Programs that combine balance and muscle-strengthening activities can reduce falls in older adults. Exercise can also help many people manage arthritis symptoms, although the movements need to suit the person. The practical goal is simple: making daily activities such as dressing, cooking, carrying groceries, and walking feel more manageable.

Imagine someone who has practiced getting up from a chair, stepping in different directions, and reaching comfortably. Those skills may make it easier to pick up groceries, turn to look behind, or step off a curb. Someone who has lost confidence in those movements may begin to avoid them and rely more on furniture or other people. Practice is one way to rebuild that confidence, alongside any support a person needs.

So what can you do to improve mobility and stability at home? You do not need a gym membership or expensive equipment. Start with a few movements you can do comfortably. Choose two or three from the ideas below rather than trying to complete every exercise at once.

Gentle moving stretches:

- Arm circles: Use small, controlled circles within a comfortable range.

- Leg swings: Hold a stable support and use a small front-to-back or side-to-side movement.
- Cat-cow: Gently explore spinal movement on hands and knees, if that position is comfortable.

Joint mobility ideas:

- Ankle circles and heel raises: Sit for ankle circles; use a sturdy support for standing heel raises.
- Hip movements: Explore a comfortable range while seated or standing with support.
- Gentle upper-body turns: Turn only as far as is comfortable, without forcing the movement.

Stability and balance practice:

- Single-leg stands: Stand beside a sturdy chair or counter and keep a hand on it as needed.
- Heel-to-toe walking: Take slow steps alongside a stable support.
- Supported squats: Hold a counter or sturdy chair and bend only as far as feels manageable.

Chair-based strength and coordination:

- Sit-to-stand: Rise from a stable chair, using your hands for help if needed.
- Marching in place: Try it seated, or standing while holding support.

Consistency matters more than completing a long routine. A few comfortable minutes are a useful start; build toward longer practice as you feel ready. Breathe normally, move with control, and use support when needed. If you have osteoporosis, a recent injury, frequent falls, or a condition that limits movement, get help choosing suitable exercises. When a movement becomes easy, you can progress gradually, perhaps with a resistance band or light weight.

Mobility and stability aren't just for athletes, they're for everyone. These foundational elements of movement allow us to stay active, independent, and confident as we age. Whether it's playing with grandchildren, walking the dog, doing gardening or enjoying a morning stretch, investing in your body's ability to move and balance well is one of the best gifts you can give yourself.

Keep moving, start where you are, and give yourself time to become stronger.

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How to Improve the Quality of Your Movement

AydaPage.com · 2023



Do you think that we know how to walk and move comfortably? You may be thinking that's a silly question: of course I know how to walk. But have you ever noticed that you always carry a bag on the same shoulder, sit in one position for hours, or avoid a movement because it feels uncomfortable? How we move and the demands we repeat can affect how we feel. Pain, though, has many possible causes, and it is not proof that your posture is wrong.

It would be great if we could all get help from a physiotherapist or another qualified professional to understand our own movement and find useful adjustments. But what if you can't get help, perhaps because there is no one nearby or the cost is too high? Here are some observations and gentle practices that may help you become more aware of how you move in daily life. They are a starting point for exploration, rather than a way to diagnose an injury yourself.

First, our bodies adapt to what we ask them to do. If you have back pain, you may change how you stand or bend to find a more comfortable position. That does not mean everyone with back pain has the same pelvic tilt or the same underlying problem. Osteoarthritis, for example, involves changes in several tissues within a joint. Age, previous injury, joint structure, and repeated overloading can all contribute; it cannot be explained by one posture or movement habit alone.

It is important to understand that if your friend has back or shoulder pain similar to yours, you do not necessarily need the same treatment. We have different bodies, activities, histories, and reasons for pain. Notice when a problem appears and what makes it better or worse. Those observations can be useful when discussing it with a professional, even when you cannot identify the cause yourself.

Let's say your back hurts when you bend over. Do not force through sharp or worsening pain. Try a smaller, comfortable movement or change the task, and notice how you respond. A feeling of tightness alone does not tell you which muscle needs stretching or strengthening. In particular, it is not accurate to assume that most back pain comes from tight abdominal muscles. If pain persists, limits your daily activities, or follows an injury, seek an assessment rather than repeatedly testing a painful movement.

Try looking in a mirror from the side, or taking a picture, to see how you usually stand. Are you leaning back, arching, or curling your spine? You can also stand near a wall and notice the space behind your back and the position of your shoulders. There is no need to force every part of your body against the wall. A photograph can show one moment, but it cannot tell you whether a posture is the cause of pain. Use it to build awareness, not to judge your body.

Try to be aware of your posture throughout the day, especially if you have a sedentary job. A chair that supports your back, a comfortable work-surface height, and a footrest when your feet do not reach the floor can make sitting easier. Keep your shoulders relaxed and leave room to

move. Most importantly, change positions and take short walking or stretching breaks instead of trying to hold one position for the whole day.

When standing, aim for a comfortable, balanced position: head level, arms relaxed, and feet placed where you feel steady. Let your spine keep its natural curves rather than bracing rigidly or holding your stomach tight all day. Small adjustments may improve comfort, but no single posture can guarantee that you will avoid pain or injury. Moving regularly and building the capacity for your everyday tasks matter too.

Regular strength training, comfortable mobility work, and balance practice can help you learn what your body can do and where you would like more confidence. Start with manageable movements, pay attention to your response, and build gradually. Over time, those small practices can help you move through daily life with more ease.

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Strength for Life

Author manuscript

For a long time, fitness was marketed like a penalty for living. Eat too much? Work it off. Feel uncomfortable in your body? Push harder. Miss a few days? Start over with guilt. I would like to see a different conversation: one that helps people build a useful, repeatable relationship with movement.

That direction is about function. It is about building a body that can carry you through real life with more confidence and independence. In plain language, it means making room for strength, mobility, balance, and long-term health.

That shift matters because most people do not need a more aggressive routine. They need a more useful one.

On Kauai, health rarely shows up only inside a gym. It shows up when you carry groceries, spend hours on your feet at work, lift beach gear, garden, paddle, walk uneven ground, or try to keep up with children and grandchildren. Training only to “burn calories” can miss the strength and control those tasks require. Preparing for them gives exercise a practical purpose.

The American College of Sports Medicine’s 2026 resistance-training update offers an encouraging message: regular participation matters more than making a program complicated. You do not need the perfect split, a fancy machine, or a complicated sequence of methods to benefit. Moving from doing no strength work to doing some is often an important first step.

That should be encouraging for anyone who has ever felt intimidated by fitness culture.

The same update also reinforced something many coaches and clinicians have been saying for years: resistance training does not have to look one way. Barbells can work. So can resistance bands, bodyweight movements, dumbbells, machines, kettlebells, and simple home routines. What matters most is that the muscles are being challenged regularly enough to adapt.

This becomes even more relevant as we get older. Muscle mass and strength tend to decline with age, although the rate varies and training can help. The loss can affect much more than appearance: getting out of a chair, carrying things, and moving confidently may become harder. The National Institute on Aging highlights strength training as a way to support muscle and everyday function as we age.

That is one reason strength training deserves a lasting place in our lives. Its value does not depend on whether it tops a trend report.

And yet many people still avoid it. Some think they are “too old” to start. Others think strength training automatically means heavy barbells, crowded gyms, or trying to look like an athlete. Some women still worry they will get bulky. Others believe walking is enough for everything. Walking is excellent, but it does not replace the need to challenge muscle and support bone.

A useful way to think about exercise is to make room for stamina, strength, and movement quality, in amounts that fit your starting point.

Stamina can come from brisk walking, cycling, swimming, hiking, or short intervals. Strength can come from squats to a chair, step-ups, rows, presses, carries, deadlifts, or band work. Movement quality can come from mobility drills, balance practice, and controlled tempo work.

It does not need to be fancy. In fact, the simpler it is, the more likely people are to stick with it.

For many adults, working toward strength sessions on at least two days each week, a regular walking habit, and suitable balance practice is a useful direction. Start with what you can manage and build gradually. The aim is not to complete a perfect week; it is to create a routine that you can recover from and repeat.

There is also a mental shift happening here, and I think it is just as important. More people are beginning to train for capacity instead of punishment. That means asking different questions. Not “How can I burn the most?” but “How can I feel stronger?” Not “How can I shrink myself?” but “How can I stay capable?” Not “How hard can I go today?” but “What can I recover from and repeat next week?”

That change may be especially important for women in midlife and beyond, and for older adults who have been told for years that walking and light cardio are enough. Cardiovascular exercise matters. But muscle is protective. Strength is protective. Balance is protective. These are not extras. They are part of healthy aging.

This is the approach I want to keep: less emphasis on proving something in one exhausting workout, and more attention to building capacity over time. Progress may look quiet from the outside, but carrying a bag more easily or getting up from the floor with confidence can mean a great deal.

The best program is not the trendiest one. It is the one that helps you live better in your actual life.

That may mean resistance bands in your living room. It may mean a few sets of squats and rows before a walk. It may mean learning how to hinge, carry, push, pull, and get up from the ground with confidence. It may mean starting small and staying consistent.

None of that is glamorous. But it is powerful.

If there is one idea worth keeping, it is this: train for life.

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Why Women Need More Than Cardio

AydaPage.com · 2025



How strength and cardiovascular training support women’s bones, mood, and long-term health.

If you walk into most gyms or beach parks, you'll still see a familiar pattern: a lot of women on the treadmill or walking the path, and far fewer in the weight area picking up heavy things. For years, women were told to “tone,” do more cardio, and avoid getting too muscular. From a health perspective, that advice has not aged well.

Regular strength training alongside cardiovascular activity is a valuable part of long-term health. This is about more than appearance. It is about muscle, bones, mood, and being able to move confidently through life as the years go by.

“Hybrid training” simply means combining resistance work, such as squats, lunges, carries, pushing, and pulling, with cardiovascular work such as walking, running, hiking, or rowing. You can combine them in a session or do them on different days. The useful blend is the one that fits your health, goals, and recovery.

Skeletal muscle is a living metabolic organ. It uses energy, including glucose, and plays a major role in moving and supporting the body. Regular activity helps with blood sugar management, while resistance work builds or maintains strength. Keeping muscle also gives you more capacity for everyday life: carrying shopping, lifting a suitcase, or getting up from the floor. You do not need to become a bodybuilder to benefit.

Bone health is another reason to include more than walking. Bone loss often speeds up around menopause, and a fracture can be the first sign that bones have become fragile. Weight-bearing activity and resistance exercise can help maintain bone health. The right loading matters, though. Impact exercise is not suitable for everyone, especially with osteoporosis or a previous fracture, so the program should match the person’s bone health and abilities.

Strength and cardiovascular training can also support mood, sleep, and general wellbeing. Many women notice that a regular routine helps them handle stress and feel more capable. That is valuable, but exercise should not be presented as a guaranteed way to balance sex hormones or improve thyroid function. Persistent symptoms deserve attention in their own right.

Research on resistance training has found improvements in depressive symptoms in some groups, although results differ between people and studies. Exercise can be one part of support; it does not mean someone should abandon other care that helps them. For women carrying a lot of responsibility, a strength session can also be a regular space to focus on themselves, practise a skill, and notice progress.

So what happens if women avoid strength work altogether? They miss one useful way to maintain the muscle and physical capacity that can become harder to preserve with age. That does not mean a particular disease is inevitable, and health is shaped by far more than exercise. It does mean that including some resistance work is worth considering, even if you already walk regularly.

The good news is that you do not need a complicated routine. General adult guidance includes muscle-strengthening activity on at least two days each week, alongside at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity or an equivalent amount of more vigorous activity. Build toward that from your own starting point. Strength sessions might include a squat, a hinge, a push, a pull, and a carry, with movements and resistance you can control. Brisk walking, cycling, swimming, or hiking can supply the aerobic part. A combined circuit is optional, rather than a requirement.

If time is limited, here is a starting schedule you can adapt. Add comfortable walks on other days as your schedule and recovery allow:

- Monday - Strength: chair or goblet squats, hip hinges, rows, presses, and carries, using manageable resistance.
- Wednesday - Cardio: a comfortable walk, gradually building toward 30-40 minutes if that suits you.
- Friday - Strength: supported split squats or chair stands, bridges, rows, wall push-ups, and a suitable core exercise.
- Saturday - Optional mixed session: alternate easy walking with a few familiar strength movements. Rest between rounds and stop before fatigue changes your technique.

Training is only part of the equation. To build and protect muscle and bone, women also need enough nourishment and recovery. Give your body the food and rest it needs to respond to the work, rather than treating exercise as a reason to eat as little as possible.

Strong women change families and communities. Shifting the question from “How do I get smaller?” to “How do I get stronger, more capable, and more alive in my body?” can be an act of self-care. If you are not sure where to start, pick one manageable option that fits your schedule. Most importantly, be consistent. You may not see results quickly, but the practice can add up in the way you feel and what you can do.

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The 10-Minute Walk After Meals: Small Habit, Big Payoff

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In health and fitness, people often look for dramatic solutions. A total reset, a strict plan, a new supplement, or a hard challenge. But sometimes one of the most helpful habits is also one of the simplest: taking a short walk after a meal.

This is not new advice, but there is a useful reason to pay attention to it. Research suggests that a brief walk after eating can reduce the rise in blood glucose compared with remaining seated. That makes it a practical “exercise snack” for many people. And unlike many wellness trends, a walk does not require a new product.

After you eat, your blood sugar naturally rises. That is normal: your body breaks down carbohydrates into glucose, and insulin helps move glucose into cells. A normal rise is not something everyone needs to fear or track. For people with diabetes or prediabetes, managing blood

glucose is part of their care. Tiredness or cravings alone cannot tell you what your glucose is doing, but an easy walk can still be a useful way to add movement to the day.

One reason walking helps is simple physiology. Working muscles take up glucose and use it for energy. That can reduce the glucose rise after a meal compared with staying seated. It does not mean the meal was harmful, or that you must exercise to earn or cancel out your food.

A small 2025 trial makes the idea interesting. Twelve healthy young adults tried a 10-minute walk immediately after a glucose drink, a 30-minute walk beginning half an hour later, and a seated condition. Both walks reduced the overall two-hour glucose response compared with sitting; the difference between the two walking conditions was not statistically significant. This was a laboratory glucose drink, not a normal mixed meal, and the participants did not have diabetes. Other small meal studies also support post-meal walking, but the research does not establish one perfect schedule for everyone.

That is good news because ten minutes may feel more manageable than thirty or forty-five. A walk down the driveway, around the block, down a path and back, or through the yard can be a start. You might walk around the store before getting back in the car, or take a phone call while walking. Choose a safe route and a pace that suits you. This does not have to feel like a formal workout to count as movement.

For some people, the main appeal is blood sugar support. Others simply enjoy how an easy walk feels after a meal. If you tend to feel heavy or overly full, notice whether gentle movement feels comfortable for you rather than assuming it will fix a digestive problem. It can also become a pleasant transition between eating and the rest of the day.

There is also a behavioral benefit. Small walks can break the all-or-nothing mindset around exercise. Many people assume movement only counts if it is hard, sweaty, or long. That belief stops a lot of good habits before they begin. A ten-minute walk is not a replacement for all

exercise, but it is still real movement. Three ten-minute walks add up to thirty minutes. Walking after lunch and dinner adds twenty minutes on each day you do it. More importantly, it can help you build a repeatable rhythm.

This can be especially useful when work involves long periods of sitting. A brief walk interrupts that pattern. If a full walk is not possible, try a few minutes of easy pacing or a light task that gets you moving. Standing up is a welcome change of position, although it does not produce the same activity as walking.

Of course, context matters. Significant digestive symptoms, dizziness, or mobility limitations may change what is comfortable and suitable. If you use insulin or another medicine that can cause low blood glucose, ask your diabetes care team how to fit activity around meals and medication. For many generally healthy adults, an easy post-meal walk is a reasonable habit to try. The key word is easy: breathe comfortably, carry on a conversation, and choose the duration that works for you.

If you want to make this habit easier, start with the meal that is most realistic. Maybe it is after dinner. Maybe it is after lunch at work. Maybe it is only five minutes at first. That still counts.

We often underestimate how much power there is in small, repeatable habits. A short walk after meals will not solve every health issue. But it is one of those rare practices that is simple, useful, low cost, and supported by physiology and emerging research. Sometimes the best plan is not the most intense one. It is the one you can do today, tomorrow, and next week.

So put your shoes on and start with a few comfortable minutes. Ten minutes can be a useful goal, not a rule.

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Can Your Fitness Tracker Help - or Harm?

AydaPage.com · 2026



Wearable technology has become a familiar part of fitness. Smartwatches, rings, heart-rate monitors, and sleep trackers promise something many people want: more insight, more control, and a clearer picture of what is happening in the body. Medical devices such as continuous glucose monitors serve a different purpose and need to be interpreted in the appropriate context.

Used well, these tools can be helpful. Used poorly, they can make people more anxious, more obsessive, and oddly less connected to how they actually feel.

That is why the better question is not whether wearables are good or bad. It is whether we know how to use them wisely.

The interest extends beyond the fitness industry. In 2026, the World Health Organization published a scientific meeting report on measuring physical activity with wearable technologies. Researchers are still

working on how best to compare devices, define useful measures, and understand their limitations. That is a reminder that more data does not automatically mean a complete or precise picture.

Depending on the device, wearables can estimate steps, heart rate, sleep duration, heart-rate variability, pace, and training load. Some also track temperature trends or produce stress and recovery estimates. An ordinary watch or ring should not be assumed to measure blood glucose: that requires an appropriate authorized glucose-monitoring device. Knowing what your device actually measures is part of using it well.

For example, a person may realize they are sleeping less than they thought. Another may notice their resting heart rate stays elevated after alcohol, illness, or poor recovery. Someone else may discover that their "active day" still included ten straight hours of sitting. Sometimes data tells the truth more clearly than memory does.

There is evidence that wearable-based programs can help people increase steps and activity, particularly when paired with goals, feedback, or coaching. Results vary, and sustained benefits are less certain. A device alone does not guarantee better health or less sitting. That is the key part many people miss: the behavior it helps reinforce matters more than owning the device.

But being helpful does not make a wearable perfect. One problem is false precision. A number can look exact while still being an estimate that depends on the device and the circumstances. Sleep stages, calorie burn, readiness scores, and recovery percentages are not direct windows into the whole person. Some are useful for noticing trends, but they do not replace clinical judgment or your own observations. Persistent symptoms deserve attention even when a score looks normal.

Another problem is over-identification. Some people start outsourcing body trust to a screen. If the watch says recovery is low, they assume they cannot train even if they feel strong. If the score says sleep was

poor, they decide the entire day is ruined. If they forget the device, they feel strangely disconnected from their own body.

That is where a good rule helps: use the data as information, not as a command.

Think of a wearable as a dashboard, not a boss. It may point to patterns worth respecting, but it should not erase context. Maybe your recovery score is low because you traveled yesterday, but your planned workout is a gentle walk and mobility session. That may still be exactly right. Maybe your sleep score looks decent, but you know you woke up tense and unrefreshed. Your lived experience still matters.

Wearables also work best when they track what is useful to you. Not everyone needs to monitor everything. Too much data can create noise. For one person, steps and resting heart rate may be enough. For another, pace and heart-rate trends may matter because of training goals. For someone rebuilding consistency, the most useful measure may simply be whether they moved that day.

This is especially important in a time when wellness is becoming increasingly quantified. More numbers do not automatically create better health. Better decisions create better health. If a device helps you walk more, notice stress patterns, go to bed earlier, or train with better pacing, that is great. If it makes you fearful, rigid, or constantly preoccupied with metrics, then the tool may need new boundaries.

A healthy way to use wearables includes a few simple habits. Look for trends, not one-off drama. Compare the data with how you actually feel. Use the numbers to ask questions instead of jumping to conclusions. And remember that no wearable can measure meaning, joy, resilience, or common sense.

In Hawaii, some of the best health behaviors are still beautifully low-tech: walking outside, lifting something with intention, being in touch with nature, sleeping in a dark room, eating real meals, getting morning

light, moving after dinner, and spending less time sitting. A wearable can support those habits but it cannot replace them.

Technology can help us pay attention, but it should not become the center of the story. Your body is still the story.

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A Beginning on Molokai

AydaPage.com · 2014

A personal introduction from 2014, when Ayda was writing as Ayda Ersoy.

I am excited to introduce myself and share my story with you.

My name is Ayda Ersoy, and I grew up in Istanbul, Turkey. Almost all my life I've been very active, playing many different types of sports. I became a trainer almost 20 years ago. I'm a personal trainer, sports nutritionist and circular strength training instructor (a type of joint mobility exercise). I also teach Pilates, yoga, and total body shape classes, and I hope to share this experience on Molokai. I love helping people reach their goals and seeing the smiles on their faces when they do!

So what brought me to Molokai? Eight years ago, I was living in Turkey when I read Dan Millman's book “Sacred Journey of the Peaceful Warrior.” It describes meeting a wise sage on the island of Molokai. I didn't know anything about Hawaii but I felt a strong energy from this book, so I started searching. And I couldn't believe my eyes, it was just amazing!

I started dreaming almost every day about how beautiful, how strong spiritually and how amazing Molokai must be. I decided to live there. Yes, I was living in Turkey, on the other side of the world, and I didn't even have a passport. Making that decision gave me something to work toward. I needed a strong connection to my inner self, and I needed to believe.

It was not an easy journey. First I moved from Turkey to Vancouver in Canada with my son. He started school there, I started working, but I never forgot my dream. And now here I am, living in Molokai, and it is magnificent!

Everyone here is so friendly, with great, open hearts. I'm so thankful and grateful to be able to be here, and I want to give my energy and help to everyone here as much as I can. I am really excited and look forward to sharing my experience and education with you for a healthy lifestyle, a good relationship with food, exercise and more with regular articles here in The Molokai Dispatch.

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Four Honu, and a Reason to Pause

Author manuscript

A quiet encounter on Molokaʻi, and the questions that made me look again.



Four Hawaiian green sea turtles rest among shoreline rocks on Molokaʻi. Photograph by Ayda Page.

Recently, on Molokaʻi, I photographed four honu resting among the shoreline rocks. I had photographed turtles the week before, too, but this was my first time seeing four together.

In the wide photograph, the water fills one corner, pale stones fill another, and the turtles almost disappear into the colors of the shore. Once you find one rounded shell, you begin to notice the others.

Looking at the photographs afterward, I found myself with questions. How old were they? Were they male or female? What could I actually tell from a picture?

The first thing worth knowing is that a honu resting on land is not necessarily in trouble. Hawaiian green sea turtles come ashore to bask. Researchers believe this behavior helps them regulate body temperature; it also gives them a place to rest. A turtle on the beach is not automatically nesting, either.1

That changes how we look at a quiet animal. What might seem like doing nothing can be part of its normal day. A basking turtle does not need us to hurry it back into the ocean.1

Age is more difficult. I would love to put a number beside each of those four shells, but the photographs do not give me enough information. The turtle that looks larger is also closer to the camera. There is no dependable way to turn that impression into a birthday.

NOAA gives roughly 25 to 35 years as the age when female green turtles reach maturity, and estimates that green turtles may live for 70 years or more. Their lifespan remains uncertain. These are species estimates, not ages for the turtles in my photographs.2

The question about males and females has a more visible clue, but also a catch. Mature males develop much longer, thicker tails than females. Before maturity, however, males and females are not easily distinguished by their outward appearance. A short tail does not automatically mean a female.3

In my pictures, the rear of the shell is not clearly visible enough to make that call. I can admire the patterns and notice the different shapes, but I cannot honestly label one male and another female. Sometimes learning more means becoming more comfortable with what we do not know.

There is another remarkable detail behind that question: temperature during incubation helps determine whether a sea turtle develops as male or female. Cooler conditions generally produce more males, and warmer conditions more females. The sand around an egg is doing much more than holding it in place.4

Then there is the food. Adult Hawaiian honu feed mainly on marine algae, or limu, in shallow coastal waters. Reefs, rocky areas and algal beds are feeding habitat, not simply a beautiful background for a swimming turtle. Their name, green turtle, refers to the color of their body fat, not necessarily their shell.5

I like knowing that when I look at this stretch of coast. The water, the rocks and the places where algae grow belong to the same story as the animal we stop to photograph.

For some Native Hawaiian families, honu are also ʻaumākua, ancestral guardians. That relationship holds a depth of meaning beyond a visitor's encounter or a photograph. It deserves respect in its own right, not just a passing mention because we find turtles beautiful.6

Their conservation story deserves a careful reading, too. In October 2025, the green turtle's global IUCN assessment improved from Endangered to Least Concern. But Hawaiian green turtles remain listed as threatened under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, and state protections remain in place. A global assessment and a legal listing for a particular population are not the same thing.5

That is encouraging news, not permission to stop caring. Fishing gear, marine debris, boat strikes and damage to feeding and nesting habitat still put green turtles at risk.2

And although seeing four together was a first for me, one photograph cannot tell us whether the local population is growing. It records an encounter, not a census.

Whether we are watching honu on Molokaʻi or Kauaʻi, the practical part is simple. NOAA recommends staying at least 10 feet, or 3 meters, away on land and in the water. Give them more space if needed, respect barriers, and leave their route to the ocean clear. Do not touch, feed or chase them. A camera's zoom is a better choice than another step closer.7,3

I spend plenty of my working life looking for answers: what an athlete needs, what a result means, what should change next. Looking at these photographs reminded me that curiosity does not have to end with certainty.

I still do not know the ages or sexes of those four honu. What I have is a photograph, the pleasure of a first-time sighting, and a little more understanding of the lives beside our own.

Four turtles resting among the rocks. A reason to pause, learn something, and leave them in peace.

SOURCE KEY

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What a Tray of Shells Taught Me About Molokaʻi

Author manuscript

A West End walk, a few beautiful discoveries, and the island stories that made me look again.

On a recent walk along Molokaʻi's West End, I kept finding reasons to stop. There was salt in the hollows of the rocks, a monk seal stretched out on a lava shelf, and a honu tucked among the stones. Then there were the shells. The big ones caught my eye first, but the small pink and brown ones kept me looking.

Later, with the shells laid out on a tray, I wanted to know more. What had lived inside them? Why did some have such fine patterns? Were the cowries really the "money shells" I remembered hearing about?

I had gone out for a hike. Apparently, I had also signed up for homework.

That is something I love about spending time on Molokaʻi. A familiar stretch of coast can still leave me with a question I have never thought to ask. And once I start looking for an answer, the island becomes more interesting than the view alone.

That beautiful shell belonged to a hunter

The large cone-shaped shells in my tray look almost too carefully patterned to be natural. One is pale with rows of little brown marks; another has lines that remind me of a hand-drawn map. It is easy to admire the shell and forget there was an animal behind it.

Cone snails are predators. Their feeding equipment includes a modified tooth that works rather like a tiny harpoon, delivering venom into prey. A shell that looks delicate or decorative can belong to a remarkably effective hunter.[1]

That is a good reason to leave living cone snails alone, and not handle a shell that may contain one. We can appreciate the pattern without investigating the animal at close range.[1]

The other lesson is less dramatic but just as useful: I do not need a confident species name for every worn shell. Some of mine have lost much of their original surface. “I am still finding out” is a perfectly reasonable label. It leaves room to learn instead of turning a guess into a fact.

The cowrie story is more interesting than “old money”

I had connected cowries with money, and there is a real history behind that. Cowrie shells circulated as currency in parts of Africa and Asia. But that wider story does not establish that the cowries on a Moloka‘i beach were traditional Hawaiian money.[2]

The Hawaiian connection I found especially fascinating was fishing. Bishop Museum describes lūhe‘e, octopus lures made by pairing a cowrie shell with a stone sinker and fastening them to a wooden shank. The fisher moved the lure through the water to attract an octopus.[3]

Look at the same smooth, rounded shell with that in mind and it becomes more than something pretty. Its shape and appearance were useful. Someone understood the animal they were trying to catch and made a tool around that knowledge.

I like the more accurate story better. There is no need to borrow another place’s history when the Hawaiian story is already this good.

Those low stone walls were designed to feed people

Along Molokaʻi's south shore, the fishpond walls can be easy to take in as part of the scenery. Learning how they work changes that view.

Hawaiian loko iʻa are fishponds, and the coastal walled ponds are a form of aquaculture. Gates called mākāhā allow water exchange and can let small fish enter. As the fish grow, the spacing of the gate helps keep them inside. The design brings together knowledge of tides, fish growth and the local shoreline.[4]

This is not only an account of what people did long ago. Ka Honua Momona cares for Aliʻi and Kalokoʻeli fishponds today, working on restoration that includes removing invasive mangroves and algae. The work is about recovering the ponds' health and their ability to support the community.[4]

As a nutritionist, that part stays with me. We talk so much about what ends up on a plate. Here is a reason to think about everything that has to happen before the meal: healthy water, practical knowledge, people working together, and enough care to keep the system functioning.

A quiet island has a very dramatic geological past

Molokaʻi's northern cliffs are not simply the result of waves patiently chipping away at rock. The National Park Service explains that a massive collapse of the island's northern flank helped create this coastline roughly one to one-and-a-half million years ago. Debris from that event lies far out on the seafloor. Rain, streams and waves continued shaping the landscape afterward.[5]

Even the flat peninsula of Kalaupapa has a different chapter in its formation: later volcanic eruptions built land at the foot of the older cliffs.[5]

It is a lot to imagine while looking at something that seems so solid.

There is also a human history here that deserves more than a scenic caption. Kalaupapa became a place of forced isolation for people with Hansen's disease. Remembering the people separated from their families matters just as much as understanding the land that made that isolation possible.[5]

Above the dry coast, a forest holds a much older record

The West End's dry, open landscape is only one part of Molokaʻi. High in East Molokaʻi, Kamakou Preserve protects a very different world of rainforest and native plants. The Nature Conservancy reports more than 250 native plant species within the preserve.[6]

One detail stopped me: the Pēpēʻōpae bog contains organic material around 10,000 years old, preserving evidence of forests from the past. The landscape is not just growing. It is holding a record.[6]

That forest also has a practical connection to life below. Native forests capture rain and mist, and protecting the mountain watershed helps protect the island's freshwater supply. A healthy forest is doing work we may never notice from the coast.[6]

Kamakou's condition is the result of ongoing conservation, not an absence of people. The preserve has limited access, and its fragile bog is not a place to wander off a boardwalk for a photograph.[6] The more I learn about it, the less "untouched" seems like the right word. "Carefully cared for" is closer.

The seal and the honu were using their shoreline

The monk seal in my photograph almost blends into the rock shelf. The honu does the same among the stones. I love those images, but I also like remembering that these animals were there for their own reasons.

Hawaiian monk seals use shorelines to rest, molt, give birth and nurse their pups. A seal spending a long time on land is not automatically stranded. Coming ashore is part of its normal life.[7]

Green turtles in Hawai‘i also come out of the water to bask. A turtle on the shore is not necessarily nesting or waiting for someone to help it back into the sea.[8]

NOAA recommends keeping at least 50 feet from monk seals, 150 feet from a mother with a pup, and 10 feet from sea turtles, while respecting any larger marked buffer.[8] That is where the camera’s zoom earns its place. A good photograph does not require us to become part of the animal’s afternoon.

A little more curiosity, a little less taking

Looking closely has also made me more careful about what “collecting” means. Not everything that looks empty or lifeless is ours to remove. Hawai‘i’s land and natural resources department specifically warns against taking beach sand, dead coral and coral rubble. Dead coral is still part of the coastal environment.[9]

So a photograph can be the find. A name written down can be the find. Sometimes the best thing to bring home is a question for someone who knows much more than I do.

I do not want to turn Moloka‘i into a list of secret spots. The island has communities, working places and histories that do not exist for my entertainment. Learning from the people who care for them is more valuable than trying to reach every corner.

I still love my tray of shells. But now, when I look at it, I think about the animals, the fishing knowledge, the fishponds and the forest above the coast. A walk I expected to enjoy gave me more to notice on the next one.

And yes, I will probably stop just as often.

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Why True Peace Begins with Us

AydaPage.com · 2025



Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Peace_Pilgrim-1980-Hawaii.jpg

In today's fast-moving world - full of screens, news, and social media - it's easy to feel like everything is out of control. War and conflict continue across the globe, and many of us aren't even sure why some of them started. These situations may feel far away, yet their emotional weight reaches us. Many people feel anxious, angry, divided, and overwhelmed. So here's a question worth asking: why, with all of our progress, are we still struggling to live in peace?

To begin answering that question, we have to look beyond the headlines. It's not just about politics or foreign policy. What's happening outside us is often a mirror of what's going on inside us. Without finding peace in ourselves, how can we hope to create peace in the world?

One inspiring example is Peace Pilgrim. She began walking across America for peace in 1953, reached 25,000 miles in 1964, then stopped counting while continuing her pilgrimage until 1981. She traveled

simply and relied on the kindness of strangers. Her message was that lasting peace begins in the human heart.

Another spiritual speaker and writer, Jiddu Krishnamurti, encouraged people to understand their own thoughts and emotions. His work invites us to look at our fears, comparisons, and need for control. I find that a useful starting point: before we ask other people to change, can we look honestly at ourselves?

The questions that they asked are as relevant as ever today. We live in a world that's loud with opinions, judgment, and blame. Social media makes it easy to argue and hard to understand. Many people feel disconnected and frustrated. But underneath all of this noise is a common truth: we all want to feel safe, seen, and valued.

So where do we begin?

We begin by noticing how we think and how we treat each other. Every day, our actions have an impact. If we're stressed or angry, that energy often spills out into our conversations and decisions. It can affect our families, our co-workers, and even strangers we meet. On the flip side, when we bring patience, kindness, and understanding into our day, that spreads too.

This doesn't mean we ignore the problems in the world. It means we learn how to respond with wisdom instead of reacting with fear. It means we pause before speaking, listen more deeply, and try to understand others even when we disagree.

Here are a few simple ways we can start building peace in everyday life:

- Notice how you feel before you speak or act. Be aware of your breathing first, then ask yourself: am I reacting out of fear or love?
- Be curious, not combative. When someone challenges your view, ask questions. Are you really listening and giving your full attention to understand?

- Practice presence. Whether you're having a conversation, making dinner, or walking the dog — really be there. Give the person in front of you your attention.
- Choose kindness. Smile at a stranger. Apologize when needed. Offer help without expecting anything back. Small acts create big change.
- Be patient — with others and with yourself. Growth takes time, and so does peace.

These aren't complicated actions. Repeated consistently, they can change the tone of the relationships around us. Understanding ourselves can help us pause before adding to a disagreement. We can spend less time blaming and more time connecting.

Let's be honest and realistic: none of us can end global war alone. But we can begin to notice the arguments we carry inside ourselves and the way we treat our loved ones. We can practice responding with a little less anger and a little more care.

Today, let's remember those who've walked this path before us — like Peace Pilgrim and Krishnamurti — and continue their work in our own way. Start with awareness. Start with yourself. Because without changing ourselves, the world cannot truly change.

"*This is the way of peace: Overcome evil with good, falsehood with truth, and hatred with love.*"

— Peace Pilgrim

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Giving Thanks Every Day

AydaPage.com · 2025



One more year, one more Thanksgiving celebration. Many of us celebrate with our ʻohana and friends, with laughter, delicious food, and thoughts of people who could use some care. But we don't need to wait for one day each year to be grateful.

Thanksgiving is often described as one simple story, but its history is more complex. In 1863, during the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed a national day of Thanksgiving. Today, many families also choose to acknowledge Indigenous perspectives, learn about local history, and pair gratitude with giving - supporting food drives, kūpuna programs, or community organizations.

What do gratitude and thankfulness mean to you? Gratitude is a feeling of appreciation for something good that you've received.

Being thankful means recognizing that something good happened and taking a moment to appreciate it - especially when we know we did not make it happen alone.

In Hawaiian, *Mahalo* can include a sense of gratitude, respect, admiration, and praise. When we say “mahalo nui” or “mahalo nui loa,” we're offering deep, heartfelt thanks. Gratitude is not just something we feel or say, it's something we live. We show it by mālama caring for ohana, neighbors, and āina. In that sense, gratitude and mahalo meet in the same place — noticing the good we've been given, and then responding with care, kindness, and responsibility in return.

Why did I want to describe those words? Because simple questions such as “Who helped make it possible for us to be here today?” and “How can we give back?” can lead to a meaningful conversation.

And then there is the meal. With a full house, busy schedules, last-minute shopping, and family flying in from off-island, it's easy to arrive at the table already tired. We can make room for enjoyment without turning the next morning into a judgment about ourselves.

A few simple choices can make the gathering feel easier. Make room for vegetables, protein foods, and the dishes you especially enjoy. Eat slowly enough to notice the flavors and the people around you. A holiday meal does not need to be perfect to be meaningful.

Leftovers are one of the best parts of Thanksgiving. Sharing portions with guests is another way to extend the meal and the care that went into it. Refrigerate perishable leftovers promptly, and freeze what you will not use within a few days.

Remember, gratitude does not have to come from comparing ourselves with others. It can begin with noticing the care already present in our lives, and finding a way to return it. We do not have to wait until we need gratitude to practice it.

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When a Race Is Canceled

The Garden Island · 2026

The women and community behind Nā Wāhine O Ke Kai

For an athlete, a race date can quietly organize an entire season. Training fits between work and family. Weekends are planned around longer sessions, and money is set aside for travel. By the final week, there is a particular kind of anticipation: after all those ordinary days of preparation, you are finally going to find out what you can do.

That helps explain why the cancellation of Nā Wāhine O Ke Kai reaches so far beyond one Sunday. The women's outrigger canoe race, scheduled for September 27, 2026, was called off as a tropical weather system approached Hawai‘i. Crews had been preparing for roughly 41 miles across the Kaiwi Channel, from Moloka‘i to O‘ahu.

In Hawai‘i News Now's coverage, Jennifer Li of Alapā Hoe described finally feeling ready, after more than 15 years, to make her first channel crossing. That detail gives the disappointment a human scale. For someone approaching a long-awaited first, another chance can feel very far away.

As a coach, I think we should allow room for that feeling. An athlete can understand a safety decision completely and still be heartbroken. A person can worry about neighbors facing a storm and also grieve a goal. Compassion leaves room for both.

This race carries a history of women asking for the chance to test themselves. According to the event's own history, Waikīkī Surf Club's senior women proposed a Moloka‘i-to-O‘ahu race in 1954. Coaches and officials doubted that women could handle the channel. In 1975, two

women's crews completed an unofficial crossing. The formal race followed in 1979, with Hannie Anderson as race director. Puna Kalama Dawson gave it the name Nā Wāhine O Ke Kai, or Women of the Sea.

Imagine what that opportunity meant after years of being told the crossing was beyond you. Every new generation of paddlers inherits some of that determination.

Yet caution is part of the race's history too. MidWeek later recalled how Anderson canceled the 1980 race after the Coast Guard warned of dangerous conditions. Some crews were upset; others were relieved. The woman who had worked to make the race possible also had to make the difficult decision to stop it.

That history gives weight to the organizers' explanation in 2026. They explicitly affirmed the paddlers' ability. Their responsibility also included escort crews, officials, volunteers and Molokaʻi residents. Support boats must reach the island before they can accompany the women across the channel. Some have other channel crossings to complete along the way. A race depends on many people whose own journey begins long before the start.

The wider storm preparations made those responsibilities even clearer. As Nolo approached, school and government-office closures were announced for Hawaiʻi Island and Maui County. Families and workers needed time to prepare. On Molokaʻi, the Kulaia Hoʻolaulea canoe festival was canceled too, extending the loss beyond the race itself.

Kauaʻi readers had experienced a similar disappointment earlier that month. The 2026 Kauaʻi Marathon and Half Marathon was canceled ahead of Hurricane Lowell. Organizers explained that race-day road closures would restrict residents and businesses preparing for the storm, while the public-safety resources needed for the event could not be guaranteed. Even a promising race-morning forecast could not settle those larger concerns.

There is a financial side to these decisions that deserves acknowledgment. Visiting athletes may have already paid for flights, lodging and transport. Hawai‘i News Now reported that some international crews were already in the islands when the canoe race was canceled. Rearranging a trip takes time, and the cost can fall on people who saved carefully to be there.

For local businesses, a disrupted race weekend can mean fewer customers or changed bookings. A food vendor may have purchased supplies; a small business may have planned staff around an expected crowd. The effects will differ from one business to another, but the uncertainty can reach people who never intended to pick up a paddle.

Tourism is part of the story because visitors join the gathering. The meaning of the gathering comes from the people and traditions already there. Protecting that relationship includes respecting a host community’s need to prepare, recover and decide when it is ready to welcome an event.

For anyone supporting a disappointed athlete, I would begin by listening. Ask about the training, the teammates, and what the crossing meant. Give the disappointment some room before suggesting another event. The strength and skills developed during preparation remain worth recognizing, even when there is no race result to record.

On Kaua‘i, the marathon organizers offered a practical example of care. In their cancellation announcement, they said the water, ice and finish-line food prepared for runners would be donated to the local community for storm preparation. The planning behind the race could still serve people who needed it.

I hope we carry that same attention into the weeks after any canceled event. Check on a teammate. Thank the volunteers who prepared for a day that will not happen. When conditions and local guidance allow,

support the small businesses affected. The women who trained for this crossing, and the community that helped them get there, deserve to know that their effort mattered.

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About Ayda

Ayda Page is a coach and writer whose work explores nutrition, movement, mindset, and everyday life. Her articles bring practical health education together with personal stories, curiosity, and experiences shaped by her time in Hawai‘i.

This collection follows those connections: the food we make, the movement we enjoy, the habits we practice, and the people and places that help us see differently.

Explore more writing at aydapage.com

Performance and coaching: Warrior Performance Lab

Publication notes

Original titles and source dates are listed below. The selected edition uses shorter chapter titles where helpful. “Meal Prep Made Easier” and “Giving Thanks Every Day” are abridged. Undated author manuscripts are identified without assigning an unverified publication date.

01. Motivation Requires Meaning

Motivation Requires Meaning
AydaPage.com · June 1st 2020

02. How to Create a Habit and Stick to It

How to create a habit and stick to it
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03. Do What You Can, When You Can

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