NOVEMBER:
The Gratitude Attitude.

Be thankful for that pumpkin pie. It’s officially the holiday season, but we’re here to talk about more than just the 5 best gluten-free stuffing recipes (although Cornbread stuffing is both gluten-free and delicious). This month, we’re exploring the powerful effects that gratitude can have on our brains, bodies, relationships, and success at work. So without further adieu, we present the work well update: Turkey Day Edition.

A PEEK INSIDE:

MIND
Learn the two most powerful words that drive human connection.

BODY
Thank your body with exercise; it makes a difference.

FOOD
This side dish will steal the show at any dinner table.

RESEARCH
Thanksgiving is the secret to a happy, healthy life.

MYTHS DEBUNKED
Stop blaming the turkeys for your thanksgiving couch naps.

On the Goga is a workplace wellness company guided by one, simple principle: Happy People Do Great Things.

Learn More About Mindful Wellness Programs
www.onthegoga.com

Special Thanks To
Tompkins Insurance Agencies, an On the Goga Wellness Partner
**healthy tech**

**‘HAPPIER’ APP**
This app helps you track “happy moments” during your day. The practice of daily gratitude journaling has been shown to improve creativity, sleep, and productivity.

*Cost: Free + In App Purchases*

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**office holidays**

**THE OFFICIAL NOVEMBER LIST:**

3rd: National Sandwich Day  
4th: Stress Awareness Day  
13th: World Kindness Day  
15th: Clean Out The Refrigerator Day  
23rd: Thanksgiving  
26th: National Cake Day

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**wellness in 2**

This month’s 2-min wellness tip: **Thank Someone**

Saying “thank you” helps to build stronger relationships, improve physical and psychological health, enhance empathy and self-esteem, and even promote better sleep.

Thank someone in your life. Remember, it doesn’t have to be for something big. It could be as simple as a word of thanks to a friend for being a positive force in your life, or even a stranger for holding the door.
MYTH: TURKEY MAKES YOU SLEEPY

FACT: Many of us have been told that the chemical Tryptophan in turkey is to blame for the general malaise that follows thanksgiving dinner. We’re here this month to put that myth to rest. Here’s the scoop on Tryptophan:

The chemical Tryptophan is present in turkey. Tryptophan helps our bodies make Nacin, a B vitamin, which in turn helps us produce Serotonin. Serotonin is a brain chemical that promotes happy thoughts, relaxation and sleep.

However, there is not enough Tryptophan in turkey to actually put us to sleep. In fact, many foods including chicken, cheese, and chocolate contain higher levels of Tryptophan than turkey, but enjoy none of the bad press.

So what is the most likely reason for your post-thanksgiving couch nap? Probably the combination of energy it takes to digest large quantities of food, the sugar-crash from dessert, and the third glass of Uncle Bruce’s famous spiked cider. So go ahead, enjoy an amazing, yawn-inducing thanksgiving dinner, just stop blaming the poor turkeys.

GRATI-FOOD: THANKSGIVING SIDE

Maple & Pecan Sweet Potato Casserole

You don’t have to give up comfort food over the holidays to live healthy.

This amazing sweet potato casserole with maple pecan topping is the perfect addition to any Thanksgiving meal.

It’s got all the delicious properties of comfort food, with half the calories. And it’s full of many other health boosting ingredients, including:

- Sweet Potatoes – High in Vitamin A, beta carotene, dietary fiber and Vitamin C
- Coconut Oil – increases healthy cholesterol, high in healthy fats (MCTs)
- Pecans – high source of energy, healthy fats and Vitamin E.

VIEW THE FULL RECIPE HERE
8-10 Servings | Prep: 20 Min | Cook: 15 Min

Source: Jessica in the Kitchen
When was the last time you sat around the dinner table with your friends and family and expressed what you are thankful for? For most of us, the answer is simple - on Thanksgiving. The one day a year when we openly share what we are thankful for with the people we care about over a delicious dinner.

But what if you found out that this seemingly simple practice of sharing what you’re grateful for could actually change your brain for the better? It turns out that this is the case. Gratitude rewires our brains for happiness and health. Let’s find out how...

THE RESEARCH
Research studies have taken a direct look into how brain activity and function are affected by the practice of gratitude. What they’ve found is pretty incredible: the practice of gratitude has the power to reshape our neural pathways. In research studies targeting diverse populations, the practice of gratitude was linked to improvements in determination, attention, enthusiasm, energy, exercise patterns and optimism, as well as decreased depression, anxiety, and physical pain.

The studies point to evidence that these changes occur because the practice of gratitude increases activity in the hypothalamus, a part of the brain responsible for controlling stress and basic functions like sleeping and eating. It also increases levels of dopamine, one of the body’s “happy chemicals.”

INSTRUCTOR SPOTLIGHT
ASHLEY LAW
OTG Program Developer and Coach

HOW I PRACTICE GRATITUDE:

Gratitude has become a foundation of my health in 2017. Since I’ve started the practice of shifting my thoughts towards gratitude on a daily basis, it has become a natural part of my life. The first step for me was finding time to express appreciation. That has occurred in a few different ways:

The first was to intentionally express gratitude to myself, simply by being mindful of my thoughts. I practice this by going over what I am grateful for in my mind, thinking about the ways in which I feel truly blessed, and seeing all the opportunities I have around me - and the ones I can create.

I also tap into my sense of appreciation during routine events in the day: on a walk, cooking dinner, or before bed.

I practice connecting my thoughts of gratitude with my body. Through the physical practice of yoga and other exercise, I practice feeling grateful for my working body. The journey, rather than the destination. Having a mindset grounded in appreciation and gratitude has made my physical practice more rewarding.

Next up on my list? Honing in on increasing my positive self-talk. I’m working to use this act of self-care to help create stronger healthy habits through my practice of gratitude.”
**SEND FLOWERS**
to your co-workers, your boss, or the entire office. Add a message for a personal touch.

**SEND THANK-YOU NOTES**
to your team, friends, family, or even clients.

**SHARE HEALTHY SNACKS**
with the office. Everyone is grateful for delicious food.

**ORGANIZE A GIFT EXCHANGE**
for the holidays, or even just for thanksgiving!

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**MAKE YOUR OWN DAILY GRATITUDE JOURNAL**

Make this gratitude journal for yourself or as a gift for friends and family. List 3 things you’re grateful for each day for 21 days.

**You’ll Need…**
1 Small Composition Notebook (try 5×7)
2 Sheets of Decorative Paper
1 Glue Stick
1 Printable “Today I am Grateful For”  Download Here

**STEP 1** - Cover the front of the notebook (not the spine) in glue.

**STEP 2** - Attach the decorative paper and cut away the excess.

**STEP 3** - Repeat on the back.

**STEP 4** - Glue the “Today I am Grateful For” square to the cover.

**STEP 5** - Tie gold cording around the front cover as a finishing touch.

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**THIS MONTH’S QUESTION, ANSWERED.**

Have a health or wellness related question you want answered?

Email us at info@onthegoga.com

use the subject line ‘MY QUESTION ANSWERED’

**QUESTION:** “What are some natural things you can do to reduce stress during the day?” - Mana W., Chicago, IL

Hey Mana, thank you for writing! We could go on forever about this subject, so here is our quickest tip to instantly reduce that chronic “fight or flight” response that gets activated during the workday.

**Breathe.** It sounds simple, but it’s true! Deep, abdominal breathing instantly triggers your parasympathetic nervous response (that’s the exact opposite of your stress response.) Deep, slow breathing almost instantly lowers the levels of stress hormones present in your body, and decreases the physical and emotional feelings of stress. Try it out! It only takes a minute.