

LIFE IN *BALANCE*

Your guide to healthy living.

Thinking Before You Speak!

In a world of instant gratification, it may be hard to understand why thinking before you speak or act would be considered a virtue, but it is.

Though spontaneity can be considered fun and exciting, there is a thin line between being spontaneous and being impulsive. Impulsivity can cause hurt feelings, trouble for yourself, or inconvenience to another person. In other words, you could be perceived as being reckless, and not giving enough thought to consequences.

Ideally, nearly everything in life falls under “everything in moderation,” but this is especially true for acting and speaking. It’s not suggested that a person never offer their opinion, or act on their feelings. However, if it’s done hastily, there could be negative consequences.

Life is full of decisions. The average amount of remotely conscious decisions an adult makes each day can be in the hundreds. Therefore, a person has many opportunities each day to practice slowing down and thinking before they speak or act.

However, in order to help with that practice, Aspirus Employee Assistance Services would like to offer the following tips:

- As a reminder to “think before speech or action,” use a physical reminder. An example would be to pinch yourself on the finger or snap a rubber band on your wrist (just enough to get yourself on track).
- Practice, practice, practice. Thinking first will take time. As you get better, it will become a normal part of your life.
- When you say or do something you shouldn’t have, make a mental note on how to avoid that in the future.
- Before meeting with others think about the people involved and possible situations that could occur. Decide what actions and speech will work best.
- And most importantly: if you say something, or act in a manner you shouldn’t have, especially if it was hurtful, make a point to apologize.





Change your Wallpaper

Worried about fading brain power when cognitive skills start to decline? While some changes in thinking and memory are inevitable as we age, the good news is that lifestyle seems to be able to ward off some of these effects, and keep minds working sharply as we age.

When doing routine things, the brain runs on autopilot. Novelty, on the other hand, literally fires up the brain as new data creates and works new neural pathways. So shake up what you see and do every day: If your computer screen background (wallpaper) is “invisible” to you, run a program that mixes it up every day or every hour. Take a different route home from work. Brush your teeth with your nondominant hand. Buy, borrow, or download a book that makes you think about new ideas. Memory boosters are a great way to exercise your brain and keep fading brain power in check.

-Excerpts from caring.com/easy-ways-to-boost-your-memory

July is Social Wellness Month

So, why is social wellness important?

Healthy relationships are a vital component of mental health. The health risks from being alone or isolated in one's life are comparable to the risks associated with cigarette smoking, high blood pressure, and morbid obesity.

Research shows that:

- People who have a strong social network tend to live longer.
- The heart and blood pressure of people with healthy relationships respond better to stress.
- Strong social networks are associated with a healthier endocrine system and healthier cardiovascular functioning.
- Healthy social networks enhance the immune system's ability to fight off infectious diseases.

Here are some inexpensive and readily available ways you can grow your social network:

- **Work out.** Joining a gym or an exercise group allows you to meet new people while exercising.
- **Take a walk (with your pet).** Starting a walking routine would not only give you another opportunity to be physically active, but it would also create more opportunities for you to meet your neighbors.
- **Volunteer.** Donate some of your time and work. You'll feel good about the cause, and you'll meet others with similar passions.
- **Find others who share a hobby,** such as hiking, painting, scrapbooking or running.

There are countless ways to grow your social network. Consider your interests and hobbies, and then pursue them. You're bound to find others with similar passions

- Excerpts from UM Taking Charge of your Health & Wellbeing





Nurture Your Relationships

- 1 Become a master of commitment.** It's important to be aware of precisely what you are committing to, so you can realistically judge whether or not you have the capacity to follow through on the commitment.
- 2 Make commitments you can stand by.** In a relationship, it is important to be honest and empathetic to each other's feelings, hopes, and dreams.
- 3 Break the cycle of blame and criticism.** It is important to own your part in the relationship dynamics.
- 4 Look to shift your attention away from "fixing the other person"** and onto more creative expressions for resolving conflict. Shifting the focus in this way will help to inject more positivity into the relationship.
- 5 Show verbal and nonverbal appreciation.** Showing appreciation of others in a variety of ways is critical to healthy relationships.

Rules of the Road Safety Tips

Summer is officially here and it's a great time to get out and enjoy the outdoors. As you lace up your sneakers and hit the trails, keep these "Rules of the Road" safety tips* in mind:

Running/Walking:

Always run/walk against traffic so you can observe approaching vehicles. Facing on-coming traffic allows you to react quicker to a situation. One exception, if you come upon a "blind curve" or "blind hill," cross to the other side until you are safely through this section and return back to the correct side.

Biking:

Ride with traffic and coexist with cars. Besides being safer, it is the law. Use the rightmost lane headed in the direction you are going.

General Safety Tips:

- **Don't wear headphones.** Use your ears to be aware of your surroundings and help avoid dangers your eyes may miss especially during evening or early morning hours. If you choose to use headphones leave one earbud out (one facing traffic recommended) and keep the volume low.
- **Pay attention and obey traffic signals and stop signs.** Make sure a driver acknowledges you with eye contact or a wave before crossing in front or moving through an intersection. Use hand signals when changing direction.
- **Maintain a three-foot distance between you and any vehicle.**
- **Always carry identification.** This could be a lifesaver. Put your driver's license in your pocket or wear a shoe ID tag (i.e. Road ID).
- **Carry a cell phone.** Tape emergency contacts on the back.
- **Trust your intuition about a person or an area.** If you feel that you're entering an unsafe situation, trust your gut and go to a safe location. Call police if you notice anything suspicious.

- **Choose low traffic areas.** When able, try to plan a route on streets with less traffic, have a bike path, or sidewalks. You will be less frustrated not having to consistently stop for vehicles and crossing cross walks.
- **Alter your route.** Don't make yourself an easy target by always going the same route at the same time. Use familiar areas if possible. Know where open businesses or stores are located in case of emergency.
- **Go with a partner.** There's strength and safety in numbers. Take along a dog who loves to go for those runs/walks.
- **Write down or leave word of the direction of your route.** Tell friends and family of your favorite routes.
- **Consider a safety app.** that allows others to track you while you're out and notifies them if something should happen. (i.e. Road ID, and RunSafe)
- **Be visible!** Wear light-colored clothing (i.e. white, yellow, or orange) and reflective gear. If out before dawn, after dusk, or during low visibility, use appropriate headlamps, flashing lights, and reflectors. (Bikers: white or green and steady mode in front; blinking red or blue in back.)
- **Practice memorizing license tags** or identifying characteristics of strangers.
- **Carry a noisemaker, mace or pepper spray.**
- **When using multi-use trails, follow the rules of the road.** If you alter your direction, look over your shoulder before crossing to avoid a potential collision with an oncoming cyclist or passing runner.

**Safety Tips not all inclusive listing*

Sources:

*rrca-general-running-safety-tips, RoadID.com/SafetyCenter
Active.com, Runnersworld.com*



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Aspirus Doctors Clinic
2031 Peach St, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495
Curran Professional Park Building
315 S Oneida Ave, Rhinelander, WI 54501

Confidential Helpline

800.236.4457

Counselors available 24/7

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