<u>Title:</u> Skill-Building Course: Food & Drink

<u>Description:</u> This course will assist a Whole Health Coach or other educator working with Veterans who would like to incorporate "Food & Drink" into their Personal Health Plans. It reviews six different "subtopics" related to this aspect of self-care, designed to give Veterans additional ideas, insight, and resources to support them on their Whole Health journey.

Objectives and Key Points

- Explore different ways that Food & Drink tie into self-care and what really matters to a person
- Discuss some of the health benefits of good nutrition
- Practice a mindful eating exercise
- Experience a demonstration related to buying and/or preparing a meal, through the use of a healthy teaching kitchen or other model, with the assistance of a dietitian
- Identify local resources that can support Veterans with this aspect of self care at a local level. This includes recipes, classes, and resources for people with food insecurity
- With a partner, create a Personal Health Plan focused on one aspect of nutrition

Sample Agenda (total time 60-75 minutes)

- Introductions and why Food & Drink matter (5 minutes)
- Partner exercise and group discussion: Best Meal Ever (10 minutes)
- Reminders, Intro to Personal Food & Drink Plans (5 minutes)
- Meal Preparation with Demo of Healthy Teaching Kitchen (10-15 minutes)
- Eating mindful awareness exercise (10-15 minutes)
- Eating based on health needs, introduction to VA's Nutrition and Food Services, and the role of dietitians (5-10 minutes)
- Partner activity: Setting a Surroundings goal, large group sharing (15 minutes)
- Wrap up, questions, and evaluations

Preparation

- 1. Pre-Reading for Instructors
 - Passport to Whole Health, Chapter 8. Food & Drink. Available at https://wholehealth.wiscweb.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/414/2018/09/Passport-to-Whole-Health-3rd-Edition-2018.pdf. Pay particular attention to the clinical tools and the various resources at the end of the chapter. It might help to keep a listing of all your different ideas for making one small change
 - The Whole Health Education Website has a number of additional materials that are also worth a look. Go to https://wholehealth.wisc.edu/overviews/food-drink/.

2. Prepare course materials and handouts

• If you arrange a cooking demo, you'll need to buy the food and arrange for initial prep. You will also need something to distribute the food to the class (e.g., paper

- cups and plastic spoons). Talk to the teaching kitchen staff about a recipe that could be used
- For the mindful awareness eating experience, you will NOT need food items; this is an entirely visualization-based exercise
- Each participant will receive a copy of the Veteran Handout designed to accompany this course
- You may also wish to provide some of the Whole Health Library's Veteran handouts related to Food & Drink, available at https://www.va.gov/PATIENTCENTEREDCARE/veteran-handouts/index.asp#food-and-drink
- It may be easiest to have handouts at participants' seats, or you can pass them around later. Review the handout in advance, so you can be ready for questions
- Be sure to have evaluations form ready to give them at the end as well. There is a general, one-page form available as part of the course materials

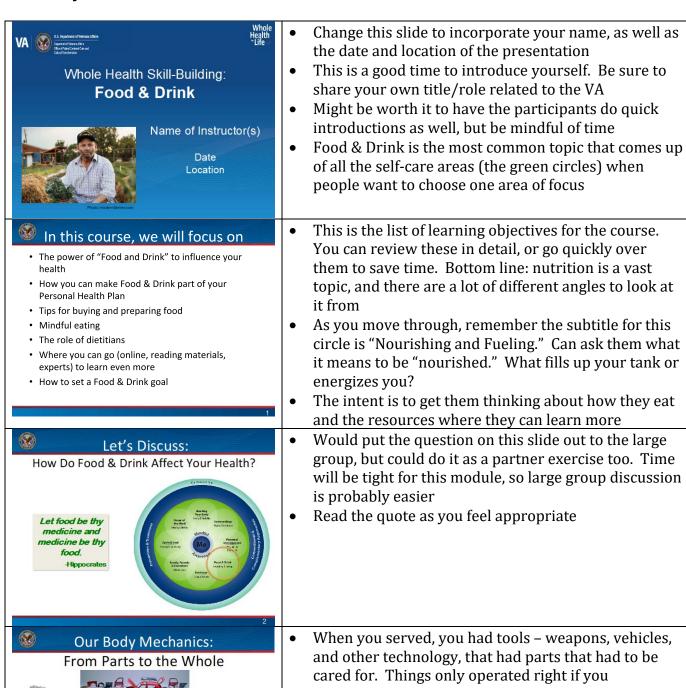
3. Set up AV and other equipment

- Be prepared to share the PowerPoint slides related to this course. A guide to each of the individual slides is featured later in this faculty guide
- Connect with the AV support person at your site
- A flip chart and markers, or a dry erase board, may be helpful as you conduct group discussions
- If you do not have a slide projector, you can simply take them through the Veteran handout after you give each person a copy. Alternatively, you can print out the slides and give them copies. Then, just take them through the slides, following the faculty guide

4. Identify local and other resources

- This is a great opportunity to invite one or more dietitians to join you with the teaching. They can help with the teaching kitchen/food preparation demo, as well as be part of the discussion about how dietitians can help
- Add to the slide set (and/or Veteran Handout) to include local resources, including
 - Local food banks or food pantries
 - o Nutrition and cooking classes available locally
 - o Any Veteran-run gardens or local farmers' markets
 - Healthy local fast food options in the area
 - o Guidance for eating healthy in the VA Cantina
- Develop your own list of favorite resources. Ask your dietitian colleagues for theirs, too

Slide-By-Slide Guide



- and other technology, that had parts that had to be maintained them properly. For this car, every part has to be functioning for the care to work.
- The same is true with your body. It is a tool that allows you to accomplish your goals and live your life. When you eat food, that food powers the millions of chemical reactions that determine how well your body will work.



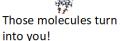
You Really Are What You Eat



Everything is broken down into molecules



Those molecules affect how your body works





• This slide is optional. Be sure to read the comic aloud since it is hard to see.

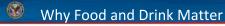
- The goal here is to emphasize that our food becomes us. Different parts of our body are re-created over a given period of time. For example, our gut lining will be made of completely different molecules about a week from now. All the water molecules in our body change in 16 days. In 6 months, we will have all-new molecules in our hearts.
- In case you want to share, the top molecule on this slide is glucose, the middle one is DNA, and the bottom one is heme, the molecule that allows our red blood cells to carry oxygen



Healthy Eating Also Helps You Feel Good

- · Blood flow
- · Brain function
- · Energy level
- Digestion
- Breathing
- · Mental health
- Pain
- · ...and many more areas of health

- You can ask them if they know that what you eat and drink can affect their health. Everyone will likely say "yes." Point out that most people know it; they just want to know the practical aspects about how to change their actions
- Can ask them to share times in their lives when they think eating made a difference to their health



Healthy Eating Helps Prevent

- Obesity
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Diabetes
- Cancer
- · Mental health
- Pain
- · ...and many more health issues



 The same is true with being not only with how you do in the present, but with how eating will affect you in the future



Small Group Exercise:

Best....Meal....Ever!

- Form groups of 2 or 3
- Choose someone to go first
- Each person takes a few minutes
- Describe one of your best meals ever
- What made it great?

- This is a fun exercise for people to do very popular in the Eating for Whole Health course
- Give them at least 2-3 minutes each to share

Large Group Discussion: **Best Meal Ever** What came up for you? - A great meal is made up

- of good food... and more
- Company
- Conversation
- The setting
- Good memories

Food & Drink connects to the other self-care circles in the Circle of Health

- Key points to make during the large group discussion:
 - Other parts of the circle come into play it isn't iust the taste of the food
 - Relationships matter
 - Setting/surroundings matter
 - How the meal made you feel also matters
- Invite a few people to share their best meals and reflections with the large group
- Remind them that with Whole Health, we always start with what really matters (MAP), so it is helpful to tie in Food & Drink to that
- Dietitians in the VA consistently ask that with our teaching, we respect that we are not trying to go against Nutrition and Food Service Policy, or ask people to go beyond their scope of practice with nutrition recommendations
- If participants have questions about any of this, dietitians can be helpful
- If people have health problems, they should talk with their care team about the role of nutrition. We'll discuss this more later

Food & Drink: **Important Reminders**

- This can be complex good to get support (dietitians)
- Pay attention to habits alcohol, binge eating, eating disorders
- · Get your nutrients
- Be cautious if you have health issues, especially things like diabetes, liver or kidney problems, stomach problems





- What are some topics people can think about as they come up with Food & Drink goals for their health plans?
- We'll move through each of these six topics in clockwise order. The goal is to give you ideas about how to set a Food & Drink Goal, which we will do at the end of this course. Jot down any ideas you have as we go
- "Creating Your Own Food & Drink Plan" is very closely tied to the "Make One Small Change" circle
- The goal is to get people thinking right away about what they can do for themselves. How can people feel empowered to make healthy changes?

Personal Food & Drink Plans:

Some "Food for Thought"

- Don't just think in terms of "diet'
- People don't follow through if it feels like a punishment
- Not all calories are created equal
- Careful about 'good and bad' labels
- Consider your budget and what you have access to



People tend to cringe at the word "diet." Use "approach to eating" or "eating style"

- While many popular diets focus on calories, where those calories come from is important too. 100 calories of vegetables has different chemicals and different health effects from 100 calories from a dessert
- That said, it isn't about saying you can never have certain things. It is about only having less-healthy foods occasionally, and healthy foods more often
- Be sure to mention that some people deal with food insecurity or live in food deserts (not desserts) and may have to be more strategic to eat healthily



Personal Food & Drink Plans:

More Food for Thought

Different Options

- Add (increase) something
- Remove (decrease) something
- 3. Change a habit



- This is just to give them some general ideas, or a framework, for right now. They'll actually create a plan (and can choose one of these options or others we'll cover) at the end of the course.
- The next slides talk about examples of each of these three approaches



The Food & Drink Plan: Adding

- When you add something, you don't have to add too many extra calories (unless you need them)
- Examples
 - More veggies and fruits
 - More fiber
 - More water
 - -More nuts



- Encourage them to make other suggestions
- Be careful with mentioning fiber needs vary. especially if people have digestive problems. Most Americans don't get enough fiber
- There is good research that a handful of nuts a day can improve lifespan and prevent heart disease (a handful, not a canful...)

The Food & Drink Plan: Removing

- · Shouldn't feel like a big sacrifice
- Examples
 - -Smaller servings
 - Cut back desserts each week
 - Drink fewer sweetened drinks
 - Eat less processed food
 - Cut back on sugar
 - Eat less animal fat



- Again, it is not about feeling deprived, but people often find they can easily get rid of one specific thing, and that can be a great starting place to creating an overall healthy lifestyle. Can be a specific food, like peanut butter, cookies, or ice cream
- With the animal fat, many experts push for 2 or less servings of red meat per week
- Be sure to recognize, though, that all of us were influenced by our childhood and our culture, and we have to decide what is and is not realistic

The Food & Drink Plan: Changes

- Simple changes can make a big impact
- Examples
 - Eat out less often, if you tend to eat less healthily when you do
 - When you eat, really focus on eating (focus on the food and not the TV, sit down, leave your work space). Talking with others is okay
 - Think about when you eat during the day, and how many meals and snacks you have
 - Eat the rainbow

• Share some ideas of your own as well!



- This slide and the next can be omitted, but eating the rainbow is a very simple and popular tip you'll hear mentioned
- Can ask them, if time allows, why this is important.
 One answer: The colors of many fruits and veggies
 are actually powerful "phyto-chemicals" that can help
 your body in many ways. Examples include beta carotene (orange, like in carrots), lycopene (red, like
 in tomatoes) and anthocyanins (purple, in
 blueberries). When we have a meal that is mostly
 white or tan, we miss out on these powerful health
 promoters



• This is usually good for a laugh. Skittles and jellybeans don't work very well either

🦥 Remember...

- Always go back and ask why healthy eating and drinking matter
- Remember, every little bit counts
- Start gently and slowly build up
- Do a combination of changes, if you like
- Work with other people who can support you – ask for help!

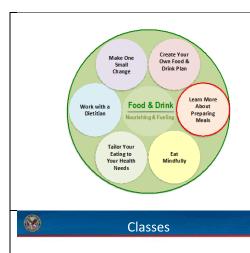
Examples:

"Starting next Monday, I am going to cut back to 1 soda a day and drink water in place of the other sodas."

- "I will go out for fast food only twice a week, instead of four times."
- "I will cut back on my salt intake to under 2,000 mg a day, like my dietitian asked me to do."
- "I will only eat half a bowl of ice cream at night, instead of a full bowl."

- Take time to cover each of these bullets, one at a time
- Read the examples, to give them a feel of what Food & Drink health plan goals could look like

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- Many people shy away from cooking for themselves, because they don't feel like they know how
- Others don't have a sense of how best to shop to get healthy food
- This course's Veteran handout features some resources that might help

- Know what is available at your site
- · Many sites have Healthy Teaching Kitchens where you can learn cooking skills
- Some dietitians teach classes on how to shop for healthy food, including on a budget
- Online classes can also be an option

You can share a list of local resources here (or, if they are helping, invite the dietitian who will be doing the demo to share as well)

Try it out!

Demonstration



Food & Drink

- If possible, this is a great time to welcome in the healthy teaching kitchen people from your site. All large VA sites have teaching kitchens
- They can either describe some guidelines for shopping for healthy food, or talk about eating well on a budget, or do a cooking demo (ideally they'll do the demo, because people enjoy this change of pace and get to sample the food too)
- Offer to help distribute the food to the audience
- There are many ways to approach mindful eating. The main key is to simply pay close attention and notice what you experience as you are eating
- If time allows, you can ask them for their definition of mindful awareness, or share yours. One definition: "Being aware, in the present moment, nonjudgmentally, with kindness."

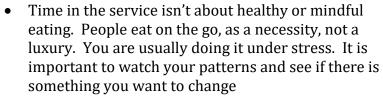


Mindful Awareness-

An Eating Meditation...



- When deployed, you probably enjoyed each bite of every delicious meal very slowly, right?
- This next activity might seem strange, but you might be surprised what you can learn
- You might notice more about what goes on in your mind (or does not) as you eat
- You will tune into your senses and, if you wish, your emotions related to food



- There is a script that can be read for this exercise included with the course materials
- These mindful awareness exercises are always optional
- Let them know they can talk about it as a group when



Let's Discuss: Eating Meditation

- · How was that?
- What did you notice?
 - Thoughts
 - Emotions
 - Sensations
- How does this compare to how you usually eat?
- Could this exercise tie in to other day-to-day activities besides eating?

- Take a pause for at least 15 seconds for people to be able to reflect
- You can vary how much time you spend (or don't spend) on each of these questions, based on time factors



This is the most complicated of the six circles, and the key here is to avoid feeling like the instructor has to have the answers based on their specific health issues

 the key is to make them aware that dietitians and others can guide them with this, but they should try to get guidance



There are many different ways to eat

- Based on types of nutrients
 - High fat, low carb
 - High carb, low fat
 - -Intermittent fasting
 - Calorie control

Note that this isn't to say you must follow one specific eating plan or approach!

- Again, don't get caught up in trying to defend one diet or another – it never goes well. Most of the research indicates that people who succeed are the ones who can stick with their chosen eating plan for a length of time
- Just acknowledge these diets are out there, and keep reminding them that it isn't 'one size fits all.' That is why Whole Health focuses on personalizing care.
 What does an individual think would help most?
- Intermittent fasting has been showing up more in the literature. For some approaches, you simply choose a specified period of time during the day to eat and fast the rest of the time

There are many different ways to eat

Popular diets:

- · Weight Watchers
- Zone
- Jenny Craig
- Paleo
- Atkins
- South Beach
- Mediterranean

Eating recommendations created by medical groups or individuals

- American Diabetes Association diets
- DASH (hypertension) diet
- · Glycemic Load
- Ornish
- Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- You can ask how many people have tried at least one of these. You don't have to know them all in depth, and don't recommend any specific ones
- Once again, don't feel you have to get caught up in individual diets. Tell them to work with their care team for that (and if there is a dietitian helping teach this course, they will be very helpful here)
- And remind them that it may be easier to make one small change, instead of totally revamping how they eat all at once



So, How Do You Decide?



- You have to ask what is sustainable for you
- Different approaches to eating work better for different people
 - Ask your health care team (dietitian) for help
 - Consider how your health issues tie in
- Start small set goals you know you can reach
- The eating plans people succeed with are the ones they keep following!
- Again, keep hammering home that they should work with their care teams and start small so that they can have good initial success that they can keep building on
- Research continues to show that people don't do so well sticking to "diets," especially if they are very different from how a person usually eats. Choose a way of eating that feels sustainable

Some Examples

- Certain foods may trigger headaches in some people
- Certain approaches to eating can help with Crohn's and colitis
- Type 2 diabetes can improve a lot based on how you eat
- How you eat affects cholesterol and weight
- Healthy eating can help prevent heart disease, stroke some cancers, and other problems
- Certain ways to eat are better for kidney and liver disease
- Ask for a dietitian to help you out!

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• These are some examples of how eating patterns might affect certain aspects of health

 Again, just share these – don't feel like you have to start solving individuals' health issues



 Speaking of dietitians....they can be a person's ally both for answering questions and for setting shared goals





- This slide is pretty self-explanatory
- If working with a dietitian, you can have them help out with this section too, if they are willing



NFS Nutrition Professionals...

- Pay close attention to the research
- Are an important part of the team
- Follow a specific care process
 - Gather info
 - Help figure out what is going on
 - Come up with nutrition plans
 - Teaching
 - Counseling and support



Can ask if anyone has ever worked with a dietitian before



- Now might be a good time to remind them that the Subtitle to "Food and Drink" is "Nourishing and Fueling."
- A discussion of other ways to be nourished or energized could be relevant here



Set a Goal!

Make One Small Change

All the topics so far can guide you

- Personal Food and Drink
 Plans
- Meal prep, classes, teaching kitchens
- Mindful eating
- Tailoring your eating to your health needs
- Seeing a dietitian
- All kinds of goals are possible
- · Add or subtract a food
- Change a pattern
- Time meals in new ways
- Only eat when hungryCook with loved ones
- Try a new food
- Go to a farmers' market
- Other ideas?

- Ask them if they have other thoughts, beyond those on this list or that we have talked about up to this point
- You can either read all of these, or just let them read them on their own as you highlight a few of your favorites

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Your Turn • Work with a partner • Take turns • Each person will come up with one thing they will do as part of their Personal Food & Drink Plan • You will be invited to share your goal with the group Photo: ckddietrecipes.

- The temptation is always to spend more time on lecture and less on experiential activities or skill-building. Give this last exercise at least 15 minutes, including discussion
- Some people may be hesitant, but encourage them to work with a partner if at all possible. If not, they can still set a goal on their own, and you can check in with them while others are working in pairs. Dietitians could also sit in on these discussions, as Veterans allow
- If there are an odd number of people, you can always jump into the mix and pair with someone yourself
- Be sure to set a timer to remind them to switch who is doing the talking/planning halfway through
- Take time for a large group discussion, and invite people to share
- *Be sure to focus on accountability how can they check in with their partner (text, coffee, email, etc.)? When? Can you as the instructor check in with them at some point? Be sure to talk about their next steps with all of this work
- You can leave this slide up while they are talking to their partner. It can help them create stronger goals
- They need not focus on every single step
- Up to you if you want to read through it or simply have them read to themselves

Food & Drink – Summing Up

1. Start with what matters

Seven steps in goal setting

4. List skills and knowledge

6. Develop a plan (SMART)⁶7. Set a timeline and next

5. Identify who can help

1. Identify the goal

3. Know obstacles

needed

2. Know the benefits

- 2. Tailor the plan to YOU!
- 3. Food & Drink can mean many things start simple

SMART Goals

Measurable

Action-based

Time-bound

Specific

Realistic

- 4. Learn about resources, community programs, classes and other options
- 5. Be safe, be realistic
- 6. Ask for help and support (dietitians, other team members, loved ones)
- 7. Keep eating enjoyable!

Feel free to modify this based on which points you choose to emphasize



- As you finish, be sure to leave time for questions and comments
- There is a general evaluation form you can have them complete for the course