Work relationships, brain health on tap for webinar series

K-State’s Living Well Wednesday series announces February schedule

MANHATTAN, Kan. – In the workplace, the Golden Rule applies: Treat others as we would want them to treat us.

But LaVerne Williamson says there’s more.

“When we think about appreciation, it is something that drives connection in the workplace,” said Williamson, an employee relations and engagement specialist at Kansas State University. “When employees feel valued and respected, and their voices are being heard, they are able to engage more and have more enthusiasm for their work.”

Williamson is a featured speaker in February’s lineup of the webinar series, Living Well Wednesday, hosted by K-State Research and Extension.

Her talk – The Five Languages of Appreciation – is scheduled for Feb. 9, followed by a Feb. 23 presentation on the MIND diet by K-State Research and Extension family and consumer science specialist Sharolyn Jackson.

Both webinars are free and will air online from 12:15 p.m. to 1 p.m. Participants must register online to gain access to the webinars.

While Williamson believes in the Golden Rule, she said one way to approach workplace relationships is to “treat others the way they want to be treated. That is so important.”

Her presentation is modeled off the book, The Five Languages of Appreciation in the Workplace, that focus on:
- **Words of affirmation.** This can be a word of encouragement when a co-worker is taking on a difficult project.

- **Quality time.** This may be one-on-one meetings to discuss a task, or perhaps going out to lunch together.

- **Acts of service.** This could be jumping in to help a co-worker with some part of a big project.

- **Tangible gifts.** This could be bringing a muffin or cup of coffee to a co-worker in the morning, or something more simple like a written note.

- **Physical touch.** This means appropriate ways to show support, such as a fist bump, handshake or pat on the back.

“We all have different languages of appreciation and it’s really a matter of being engaged with each other and actively listening to what a colleague really needs from us,” Williamson said.

She added that her presentation will not only help participants better understand their own language of appreciation, but also develop an understanding of how others around them view appreciation.

“When people feel appreciated, they can come into the workplace and be their true selves,” Williamson said. “There is such a wide range of benefits you receive when people create a culture of what it really means to appreciate others in the workplace.”

Jackson’s Feb. 23 talk combines positive aspects of two healthy eating plans – the Mediterranean diet and the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet.

“There are components of both of those diets that are particularly helpful for the mind and brain,” Jackson said.

The Mediterranean diet is characterized by foods high in antioxidants, minerals, vitamins and whole grains. The DASH diet encourages foods that are low in sodium while avoiding saturated fats and added sugars.

Jackson and co-presenter Lori Wuellner – a family and consumer sciences agent in Wyandotte County – will present “Eat More” and “Avoid” lists of common foods. As an example, she said blueberries are considered a food that is beneficial to the brain. And for good health, humans should eat dark, leafy green vegetables every day.

In addition to diet, Jackson said keys to good brain health include staying hydrated throughout the day, getting adequate sleep on a regular basis, and engaging in physical activity.

More information on Living Well Wednesday is available online or from local extension offices in Kansas. A one-time registration gives viewers free access to the entire 2022 series, as well as links to past presentations.
FOR PRINT PUBLICATIONS: Links used in this story
Living Well Wednesdays (information and registration), https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/fcs/livingwellwed
K-State Research and Extension statewide offices, https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/about/statewide-locations.html

K-State Research and Extension is a short name for the Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service, a program designed to generate and distribute useful knowledge for the well-being of Kansans. Supported by county, state, federal and private funds, the program has county extension offices, experiment fields, area extension offices and regional research centers statewide. Its headquarters is on the K-State campus in Manhattan. For more information, visit www.ksre.ksu.edu. K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

For more information
LaVerne Williamson
785-532-6277
lavernew@ksu.edu

Sharolyn Jackson
785-532-5833
sharolyn@ksu.edu

Story by
Pat Melgares
785-532-1160
melgares@ksu.edu