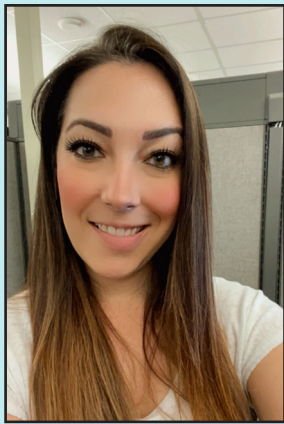


WELLNESS Champion

Stephanie Prestwich

Purchasing



We are excited to highlight Stephanie Prestwich as this month's Wellness Champion! Stephanie has worked in the Purchasing department for the last two and a half years. Outside of work, her varied personal interests include scenic photography, hiking, cooking, and reading.

Stephanie first started making personal wellness improvements back in 2019. She was tired of being consumed by negative self-talk about herself and her body. She decided to take control of her situation and choices so that she would no longer feel suffocated by feelings of anxiety and depression.

Stephanie started with small changes, both physically and mentally, to begin shifting her mindset towards one of prioritizing her well-being. Beginning in 2019, Stephanie started following a workout regimen. From there, she started paying more attention, through journaling, to how her emotions were tied to her eating habits. She worked on developing coping mechanisms besides food to help her when feeling depressed or anxious. Taking walks, listening to music, and going to the gym have become some of her new, favorite outlets if she starts to feel mentally bogged down. By working on herself physically and mentally, and practicing sitting with herself and her emotions, Stephanie has grown to become more comfortable with herself, entirely.

As mentioned, Stephanie followed a step-wise approach with her goals, rather than getting trapped in an all-or-nothing mindset. She started using a planner to schedule her week followed by scheduling in daily workout windows, allowing her to find time to exercise 4-5 days per week. She then started including daily gratitudes and morning meditation into her routine. Down the road, she added a daily water goal, and at one point even tried a 30-day no-sugar challenge.



As Stephanie started to see results, her motivation to maintain her new habits continued. She realized that the changes she was seeing, physically and mentally, were things that she alone was responsible for, which really boosted her confidence! It was also motivating when others in her life started recognizing the significant improvements she had made in taking better care of herself.

Having access to the Wellness Center has made all the difference for Stephanie's progress. Previously, she tended not to ask for help or support, but taking the leap to actually use the Wellness Center resources (such as the virtual Intuitive Eating class she attended), shifted her perspective. Especially during the pandemic, using these

resources helped her to not slip back into negative coping mechanisms, and to also recognize that it is okay to 'not be okay' sometimes.

Stephanie continues to make time for her health by scheduling in exercise time during her lunch or after work. Even if she only has a few minutes on certain days, just doing something small keeps her body and mind strong. Her quality of work has improved, her stress levels are lower, and she has better time management skills in and outside of work. Sunday has also become a day of solitude, for her to be active while enjoying the outdoors. Stephanie shared many words of wisdom for others contemplating change:

"Take the plunge and go all in. Think about the endgame and what you are trying to achieve for yourself. It isn't going to be easy. Some days you are going to feel like giving up. Some days you are going to mess up. Give yourself some grace and know that you are human—but keep pushing forward. One day isn't going to make or break you. Acknowledge it and move on. Highlight your achievements! Lean into your support system(s), and to coaches and mentors available to you. You are ultimately the one who can shift your current reality and change where you want to be a year or two from now. Be vulnerable and ask for the help when you need it because you are loved and supported!"

Thanks for sharing your personal improvements, Stephanie!

