



Anticancer
LIFESTYLE PROGRAM

Learning Circle Organizer's Manual

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR LEADING YOUR
PATIENTS OR CLIENTS THROUGH THE ANTICANCER
LIFESTYLE PROGRAM'S 9-WEEK LEARNING CIRCLE



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ACLP Learning Circle Organizer's Manual

Greetings and welcome!

This Organizer's Manual provides all the information needed to guide participants through the Anticancer Lifestyle Program's (ACLP) 9-week Learning Circle. The Circle experience provides participants with a step-by-step review of the ACLP free online course. The 9+ hour self-paced course offers the critical tools, tips, and information needed to make evidence-based lifestyle changes in the areas of diet, fitness, mindset, and personal environment.

Each Circle is guided by a facilitator. (Note: if the Learning Circle is being run as a Shared Medical Visit, it will need to be run by a medical provider. For more information, please [see this document](#) or [pdf](#)) The facilitator's role is not to contribute subject matter expertise, but to facilitate discussion, reflect and summarize participant comments, and animate the rich content contained in the ACLP online course. This guidance will be crucial in stimulating a truly transformative journey that can foster lasting healthy lifestyle behaviors.

This manual is designed to be turnkey. It contains detailed instructions about how to organize your Circle and conduct each session. You will find a treasure trove of resources that have been curated to provide all the support you need, including detailed session plans, innovative engagement strategies, and tools to create an educational yet nurturing environment.

To learn more about the value and structure of Learning Circles, please [watch this short video](#) by ACLP co-founder Nancy Kane, RN, MS, AOCN-E.

Should you require any assistance or have questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to our team at info@anticancerlifestyle.org. We are here to support you.

Thank you for your dedication to fostering a healthier, better-informed community. Together, we are not just sharing knowledge; we are empowering individuals to embrace a life enriched by positive, sustainable changes that have the potential to reduce inflammation, promote well-being, and lower the risk of cancer, cancer recurrence, and chronic illness.

With warm regards,

The Anticancer Lifestyle Program Team'

Before distributing or using this manual, please read the [ACLP Partner Branding & Attribution Guide](#) and complete the [Partner Agreement](#) if you haven't already.

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Introduction

Overview of the Anticancer Lifestyle Program

The [Anticancer Lifestyle Program](#) (ACLP) provides a comprehensive array of free resources, including tools, tips, and information designed to assist individuals in improving their diet, increasing their fitness, managing their stress, and minimizing exposure to harmful chemicals in their home environment.

ACLP's resources are doctor-recommended and focus on lifestyle modifications that can reduce the risk of cancer, cancer recurrence, and chronic illnesses. The Program is tailored for individuals with a cancer diagnosis and those interested in proactive health management. Our resources are designed to “meet people where they are” by offering a variety of ways to engage, including the online course, eBooks, webinars, blogs, recipes, kickstarts, and more.

Purpose and Goals of the Learning Circle

The Anticancer Learning Circle is dedicated to creating supportive communities, either in-person or online, where individuals can engage in shared learning and mutual encouragement while exploring the Anticancer Lifestyle Program. This collaborative environment can make the learning experience more engaging, supportive, and effective. The desired goals of a Circle are to:

- **Foster Community Learning:** Encourage active participation and group discussion; promote exchange of personal stories, resources, and learning experiences; encourage sharing of practical application of learned concepts, cultivate mutual support in adopting an Anticancer lifestyle.
- **Guide Through ACLP Modules:** Leverage the structured content of ACLP's online course, encompassing five key modules: Change, Diet, Mindset, Fitness, and Environment.
- **Educate About the Components of an Anticancer Lifestyle:** Support lifestyle choices that reduce inflammation, enhance immune function, and improve overall health, in line with ACLP principles.

- **Provide a Flexible Learning Framework:** Tailor the Learning Circle to the group's needs.
- **Create a Safe and Supportive Environment:** Ensure a welcoming atmosphere where every participant feels heard, respected, and valued, fostering a sense of community and belonging.

Overview of Topics Covered During the 9-Week Learning Circle

Week 1: Introduction and Orientation Session

Week 2: Making Lasting Change

Week 3: The Power of Mindset

Week 4: The Anti-inflammatory Diet Part 1

Week 5: The Anti-inflammatory Diet Part 2

Week 6: The Role of Fitness

Week 7: Personal Environment Part 1

Week 8: Personal Environment Part 2

Week 9: Wrap-up and Graduation

Role and Responsibilities of the Facilitator

The facilitator serves as a guide and mentor within the Learning Circle, embodying the principles of health and wellness coaching. This role is about inspiring change, fostering a supportive community, and helping participants discover and navigate their paths to a healthier lifestyle. While prior group facilitation experience isn't mandatory, a background in counseling, social work, or a related field is invaluable.

First and foremost, the facilitator will need to carefully review the entire 9.25 hour self-paced online Anticancer Lifestyle course, and look over the associated Companion Guides and Tips for each module. The greater the familiarity with ACLP resources, the more impactful the facilitation will be.

[You can view, download and print the complete Companion Guide here.](#)

The Circle facilitator role involves:

- **Guiding Learning:** Lead the exploration of ACLP modules in an engaging manner.
- **Creating a Supportive Environment:** Create a safe space for sharing and empathy.

- **Encouraging Growth:** Help participants set and achieve personal goals.
- **Facilitating Discussions:** Stimulate conversation and reflection.
- **Promoting Engagement:** Foster commitment and community involvement.
- **Adapting to Needs:** Be attentive to the group's dynamics.
- **Modeling Behaviors:** Share your journey to inspire others.

Communication and Support:

- Facilitators will be included in all communications with participants once the group is formed, ensuring a consistent flow of information.
- Email correspondence between participants and facilitators occurs as needed for clarification or when questions arise.
- In cases where mental health concerns are identified, a trained healthcare professional, established at the start of the Learning Circle, will reach out to the participant to provide appropriate support.

★ **Note:** in addition to a Circle facilitator, it is helpful to have a Circle administrator, who can assist with the promotion of the Learning Circle, recruitment of participants, managing applications, and communicating with applicants/participants before, during and after the program. Basic knowledge of Zoom (or which video platform is used) and Google Workspace (Docs, Sheets, Forms, etc.) will be useful for this role.

Getting Started: Recruitment and Preparation for First Session

The Learning Circle consists of nine 90-minute sessions. This has been found to be the ideal length for content review and discussion.

Weekly follow-up emails will include surveys, resources, and assignments. Here is a step-by-step guide on how to recruit, track, select, and organize participants before the first learning circle session. **Please note that all email templates need to be virtually copied and added to your own Google drive.** These are just offered as possible models—please feel free to adapt them as needed.

Please also complete the Partner Agreement: Before recruiting or promoting your Circle, please sign the [ACLP Learning Circle Partner Agreement](#) and review the [Partner Branding & Attribution Guide](#). This covers how to reference ACLP in your promotional materials and what's required before you go public.

1. Recruiting Participants

- **Identify Ideal Candidates:** Individuals post-cancer treatment, in maintenance mode or active surveillance; or those interested in cancer prevention. Based on experience, we recommend not mixing the two groups in one Circle, ie, recruit either cancer survivors or those interested in prevention.
- **Determine Number of Participants:** Aim for 12–15 participants. For groups larger than 15, breakout rooms are essential to ensure meaningful discussion and connection.
- **Use Promotional Materials:** Distribute the [example flyer](#), which includes a link to the [Learning Circle Interest Form](#).
- **Collect Responses:** Monitor responses to the [Learning Circle Interest Form](#), which will generate a list of potential participants. To see the list and responses in Google Forms, click the Responses tab, and then “View Sheets” in the upper right-hand corner.

2. Tracking and Selecting Participants

- **Review Applications:** Use the Google Sheet generated from the [Learning Circle Interest Form](#) to review and evaluate applicants.
- **Select Participants:** Based on the review, select participants for the upcoming Learning Circle session. Ensure a balanced and diverse group.
- **Create Waitlist:** For applicants not selected, add them to a Waitlist for future Learning Circles.

3. Organizing Participants

- **Send Welcome Email:** Send the selected participants the "[Welcome to the Learning Circle](#)" email and the [Confidentiality/Commitment Agreement](#) for them to sign and return. Remind them to please join the sessions, if virtual, from a private space if possible. If not, to use headphones to respect confidentiality.
- **Send Calendar Invites:** Send the group calendar invites with the Zoom links to make sure they hold this time.
- **Inform Waitlisted Applicants:** Send the "[Learning Circle For Waitlist](#)" email to those on the waitlist, informing them of future opportunities.

- **Gather Contact Information:** Request mobile numbers from participants for the buddy system and ensure they have the necessary technology (e.g., Zoom, access to the online course).

4. Preparation for First Session

- **Send Pre-Program Information:** Email participants the "[Important Preparations for Your Anticancer Lifestyle Program Learning Circle](#)" and "[Your Anticancer Lifestyle Program Learning Circle 9-Week Session Overview](#)" to inform them about the schedule and expectations. Timing will depend on when Week 1 starts.
- **Assign Prep Work:** Instruct participants to [enroll in the Anticancer Lifestyle Program online course](#).
- **Set Up Buddy System:** Organize the buddy system for participants, using ChatGPT or another method, to create pairings for weekly discussions. Buddy system will be introduced Session 1 and start after Session 2. [Details here](#).
- **Prepare Session Materials:** Ensure you're familiar with [all resources](#), such as Companion Guides, Module Keys, and mindfulness exercises, to be ready for the first session.
- **Schedule Subject Matter Experts (SMEs):** Confirm the availability of SMEs for sessions where their expertise is required. [Details here](#).

5. Communication and Engagement

- **Regular Updates:** Send [weekly emails](#) to participants with session recaps, preparations for the next week, and reminders to speak with their buddy.
- **Feedback Collection:** Distribute [evaluation forms](#) after each session to gather participant feedback.

6. Technical and Administrative Setup

- **Zoom and Online Course Access:** Ensure all participants have access to Zoom and are registered for the [Anticancer Lifestyle Online Course](#).
- **Administrative Support:** If available, find an administrator for assistance with participant management and communication.

7. Final Preparations Before Session 1

- **Confirm Attendance:** Send a reminder email a few days before the first session confirming attendance and providing any last-minute details.
- **Test Technology:** Ensure all technical aspects, like Zoom links and online course access, are functioning correctly. If using Zoom, you'll want to make sure you and the participants have the latest version of Zoom installed on your computers. [Instructions can be found here](#). For the best experience, we recommend joining from a laptop/desktop and turning on your video.
- **Review Session Plan:** Go over the [Week 1: Introduction and Orientation](#) Session plan to ensure all materials and activities are ready.

Securing Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)

We bring in SMEs on Diet, Mindset, Environment, Mindset to answer participant questions. They briefly present the module [Anticancer Keys](#), and the remainder of the time is Q&A with Circle Participants.

★ Note: While most facilities usually have access to these experts, it's not always easy to find someone who can answer questions about nontoxic living. We have **Environment experts** we can put you in touch with. Please let us know if you have any difficulty securing content matter experts in any area by contacting us at info@anticancerlifestyle.org.

It is important to note that all experts will have to review the relevant module they are answering questions about. Please make sure to also supply them with the **Companion Guides** (pdf link in each week) before they join the Circle. Facilitators should be involved early in the planning process to help identify and select experts whose messaging aligns with ACLP values. Their familiarity with the group dynamic and learning goals ensures better integration of expert content.

✓ Checklist for Expert Selection:

- Has reviewed relevant ACLP module and Companion Guide (pdf link located in each week's resource section)
- Messaging supports holistic, evidence-based lifestyle change

- Avoids language or examples that conflict with core ACLP values (e.g., recommending diet soda as a healthy swap)
 - Comfortable with group Q&A format
 - Embodies a warm, supportive communication style
- If you have to record a virtual session with your expert, you can ask them to review various topics related to the online course.

A 15-minute pre-session huddle between the facilitator, SME, and organizer is recommended for sessions featuring expert participation. This brief check-in should take place 30 minutes prior to the scheduled session start time to review flow, clarify roles, and ensure alignment on key messaging.

Possible Engagement Tactics

- **Virtual:** Depending on your comfort level with these techniques and the size of your group, you may want to utilize breakout rooms, whiteboards, and polls. Note that these add-ons are not at all necessary. However, it is generally advisable to [save and share chat resources](#), as participants may want them added to follow-up emails.
- **In-Person:** Involve SMEs, facilitate buddy calls, and share meals, especially in the final session.

Buddy Calls

Buddy calls are the secret sauce of our Learning Circle program. The idea is that every week, people will be paired up with someone new to talk to. We created a [list of discussion prompts](#), but we find that after the first week or two, participants are comfortable with the process and no longer require the prompts. They should feel free to share their stories if that is comfortable for them, as well as resources, barriers to change, and so forth. Ideally, participants will feel free to discuss whatever is on their minds.

How to Set-Up Buddy Calls

The best way we have found to do this is by using Claude.ai. Go to <https://claude.ai/new>. If this is your first site visit, you will need to enter a mobile phone to get a code. Once you have access, type the command below into the query box, substituting the number of participants you have, and use the names of each person

instead of letters. The “7” will stay the same as buddy calls occur over 7 weeks, after sessions 2 through 8.

Copy and paste the command below into the query box, adapting the [[number of participants]] and [[adding participant names]], :

“Create a template for a partial round-robin tournament where there are [[FILL IN THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS]] playing 7 times. Players are labeled [[Fill in the names of the participants, separated by commas, like Mary, Linda, Tom, etc.]] Players play a different person each time. Players play other individual players only once in the 7 times. Each person plays every round. **[[NOTE: if there is an odd number of participants, add the name “SKIP” to the roster to make it an even number. Then add this sentence at the end of your query: “Players are matched with SKIP only once in the entire tournament.]]** Create a table showing which pairs of players play against each other each round.”

(**PLEASE NOTE:** Scan the buddy pairs. If you notice a duplicate, point it out to Claude, and it will apologize and correct the error!)

A couple of notes about buddy calls:

- They start after the second Circle session of the Circle, and end after the eighth session, so there will be a maximum of 7 pairings.
- If there is a large number of Circle participants, participants won’t have the opportunity to have a buddy call with every other Circle member.

✔ Tips for Supporting Buddy Calls:

- Offer sample questions during the first two weeks
- Encourage use of texts or voice notes if scheduling is difficult
- Reinforce that these are casual, supportive check-ins—not assignments
- Celebrate takeaways in large group sessions

General Helpful Tips

- We recommend you **print out the week-by-week guide below** so it’s easily accessible during the session itself, in addition to any resources you’d like to have ready at hand.
- **Choose a different mindfulness exercise for each session.** The variety gives participants additional tools they can use in the future if they wish to incorporate

a mindfulness practice. In Week 1, offer to participants that they are welcome to volunteer to lead a mindfulness exercise in future sessions.

- **Stay flexible on topics covered during the session** and let the group guide the conversation. It's OK to not get to all the topics, in fact, it's nearly impossible as there are more discussion topics and activities than there is time for. We provided as many options as possible for you to choose from.
- **After each session, send out an email to the group.** Here is a template for these emails—note that they will need to be adapted to your group: [Weekly Emails After Each Session or Module Topic](#) These emails contain the evaluation form for the session; a look ahead to the next week; prep work to do during the week; a reminder about buddy calls, and resources mentioned in the class, if desired.

Shared Medical Appointments (SMAs)

Learning Circles can be reimbursed by insurance if run as Shared Medical Appointments. SMAs can be facilitated by medical providers or mental health practitioners. For more information, [see this document](#).

Resources and Materials

Anticancer Lifestyle Online Course

[Register here.](#)

Companion Guides

[All can be accessed via the ACLP Online Course.](#)

Module Keys

Used when SMEs are present. [View here.](#)

Grounding Activities

View this document [here](#) or this [pdf](#).

Question of the Week

These are ideas for a question of the week to help break the ice and warm the group up at the start of each session. If used, these are ideal to use after the [Grounding Activity](#).

- What are you already doing that felt good to recognize this week?
- What is something you enjoy about where you live?
- What brought you joy today?
- What is going well for you?
- What is something you're proud of?
- What brought a smile to your face today?
- What is something you're grateful for?
- What is something that made you laugh?
- What is something you learned about yourself this week?
- What is something that gives your life meaning?
- What is one of your values that you try to live by?

Surveys

There are three types of surveys: pre, weekly, and post. You may choose to send the survey labeled "weekly" after each week, or, at the end of each of the five modules. If desired, you can construct your own survey questions and choose the frequency. **If you use the surveys below, please make a virtual copy of this survey before distributing it. Otherwise, responses will wind up on ACLP's google drive.** To copy, click on the 3 dots located at the top right-hand side of the screen, then select "Copy." That survey will then be saved to your own Google Drive folder. ([Additional copy instructions here](#)).

- [Pre-Program](#)
- [Weekly Survey](#)
- [Post-Program](#)
- [3 Months Post-Program](#)
- [6 Months Post-Program](#)
- [12 Months Post-Program](#)

Summary of Email Templates Used

Recruitment Process

- [Learning Circle Interest Form](#) (this Google Form will generate a list of responses in a Google Sheet. You can use this Google Sheet to track applications and organize them by those accepted, not accepted, on waitlist, etc.)

- [Example flyer](#) (which links to [Interest Form](#)).

For those who have expressed interest via the interest form

- [Learning Circle Interest Email #1](#)

Once you have selected your participants

Be sure to include Facilitator's email in each email to selected participants.

- [Welcome to the Learning Circle email](#) and attachment, [Confidentiality/Commitment Agreement](#).
- [Learning Circle For Waitlist](#)
- [Important Preparations for Your Anticancer Lifestyle Program Learning Circle](#)
- [Your Anticancer Lifestyle Program Learning Circle 9-Week Session Overview](#)

After each session

- [Weekly Emails After Each Session or Module Topic](#)

Week-by-Week Guide

Week 1: Introduction and Orientation Session

Introduction (30 mins)

Welcome! Introduce ACLP, thank participants for joining then state the purpose of this first meeting.

- “The purpose of this first session is to introduce all of you to the Anticancer Lifestyle Program, familiarize you with how to register for the online course, and invite you to participate in our Anticancer Learning Circle discussions.”

Share a little bit about yourself as a facilitator, how you were introduced to the Anticancer Lifestyle Program, and why you are excited to be facilitating.

- Ask each person to introduce themselves and share a few things about themselves: name, where they live, their diagnosis if they'd like to share it, and one fun/odd fact about themselves. If it's a large group, you may want to do half the group in the first session and the second half in the next session.

Share an overview of the Anticancer Lifestyle Course:

- "The Anticancer Lifestyle Online Course is a free, expert-led program that helps you make healthy and informed lifestyle choices to reduce your risk of cancer, cancer recurrence, and chronic illness. The course is filled with evidence-based tools, tips, and information to promote well-being in the areas of Diet, Fitness, Mindset, and Environment."
- [More about ACLP and its history here.](#)

Familiarize (30 mins)

Share how beneficial community support can be when learning and making lifestyle changes.

Explain that the Learning Circle discussions will be based on the material they learn in the online course. Before each meeting, you will assign participants approximately 90 minutes of a course module to review online and the corresponding sections of the Anticancer Companion Study Guide to complete individually in preparation for the discussions.

You'll get what you put in. It's important to complete the work to see the greatest lifestyle transformation.

Explain the benefits of the buddy calls and share the buddy call template. They will be phoning a different "buddy" each week starting after Session 2. ([Instructions here](#))

Review the technology and guides being used:

- **Online course:** If everyone has not already signed up for the online course, walk them through the process during the session.
- **Mobile app:** To be used if they desire to access the course on a mobile device. On the landing page for the course, they will see the link to the mobile app.

- **Companion Guides:** These can be found under the “Resources” tab in the online course.

Review group guidelines listed in the [Learning Circle Agreement](#) all participants should have signed.

Ask group to please let facilitator know ahead of time if they have to miss a session and a reminder to show up on time as a courtesy to others. Lastly, unless there is a compelling reason not to be, ask participants to please be on camera during the sessions.

Next Steps (15 mins)

Help us learn – complete survey evaluations as part of this experience.

Review the weekly schedule and expectations.

Assign prep work for the next session (Change Module). See also the related Companion Guide questions.

Closing (5 mins)

Announce the date and time of the next meeting along with the course materials to cover in preparation for the next discussion.

Share any final resources and thank everyone for attending.

Be sure to formally end the meeting at the scheduled time to be respectful of everyone’s time.

Remind people that sessions will start and end on time, and they are welcome to join the session link 5 minutes before.

End with a short [grounding/breathing exercise \(pdf\)](#).

Have the group share one strength they will each bring to this experience.

Resources

None this week.

Week 2: Making Lasting Change

Grounding Activity and Welcome (15 mins)

Begin the meeting with a short [Grounding Activity \(pdf\)](#) and then [Question of the Week](#). Let participants know they can lead a grounding activity of their choice any week.

If you have a new participant who was unable to attend the introductory meeting, have everyone introduce themselves. Otherwise, you can begin by having everyone share a win or success they had in the past week or month related to positive lifestyle changes.

Give an overview of what participants can expect for today's meeting (topics covered, time frames etc.). Share any important announcements.

Introduce the idea of adopting an "Explorer Mindset"—approaching lifestyle change with curiosity, experimentation, and flexibility. Encourage participants to view setbacks as part of the learning journey.



Homework Check-In Prompt:

What parts of the course did you complete this week? Did you find time to block off for learning or reflection? What helped—or got in the way?

Discussion (60 mins)

Seg. 1 Making Lasting Change

- After completing the [Anticancer Wheel of Life](#), what surprised you, or what was something new you discovered?
- What area(s) did you identify as the most important change to focus on first?
- Which of your values does this align with (intrinsic motivation)?

Change is rarely easy and often requires a progression of small steps toward a larger goal. Review the stages of change you filled in on [page 6 of the Anticancer Companion Study Guide](#).

- What stage of change best describes where you are at today when it comes to making Anticancer Lifestyle changes?

- What did you learn when identifying what stage of change you're in? It is common for people to be at different stages of change in different areas of their life. For example, you may be in Action regarding exercise and in Contemplation when it comes to Diet.
- What strengths do you bring to making these changes?

To make lasting change, it is important to become familiar with the common obstacles to change and learn the best strategies for overcoming potential setbacks. This can be asked in popcorn style.

- How have barriers to change such as past experiences, existing habits, emotions and personal environment affected your ability to make desired changes?

Seg. 2 Planning For Change

Review the difference between making a values-driven decision (ie. deciding not to eat a bag of chips because it conflicts with your value of eating healthier) and an emotion-driven decision (ie. deciding to eat a bag of chips because you feel like it).

- Share an example of an emotion-driven decision you have struggled with or are currently struggling with that conflicts with your values/goals. Can you identify any barriers to achieving this goal? Remember to be gentle with yourself as you are on a journey toward making lasting change. Setbacks are not failures, but rather opportunities to learn about your barriers, figure out strategies that might help, and/or change your goals to be more realistic in your current situation.

Review the [SMART goal framework](#), (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-Bound), with the group.

- Refer to your Anticancer Wheel of Life and the core value you have decided to focus on first.
- Share a SMART goal for one of the changes you would like to make. Work through a few SMART goals as a group to help familiarize participants with all the necessary elements in establishing a SMART goal.

Seg. 3 Social Network

Your social connections can provide you with three major types of support: emotional, logistical and informational.

- Who is a part of your support team? Can you share any local resources that provide you with support?

This is a great opportunity to brainstorm with the group and create a master list of local (or national) support resources (ie. local support groups, community organizations, patient navigators, educational resources), strengthening everyone's social network.

When you are trying to change your lifestyle, it's not uncommon to run into resistance from friends and family as they may not understand or appreciate why you are making these changes.

- Can you identify areas of resistance you might face from loved ones? Are there ways you can manage these challenges while making the best decisions for yourself?

Close (10 mins)

End the session by having participants share one small step they will take in the coming week or month to improve their lifestyle. Reminder about framing that small step as a SMART goal. And or one strength they bring to the table.

Announce the date and time of the next meeting.

Distribute Email/phone list: This should be distributed the first session, so everyone has each other's contact info.

Distribute Buddy Call List: This should be shared during the first session. Calls will start AFTER the second meeting.

End with a short [grounding/breathing exercise \(pdf\)](#).

Prep work for next week: Review the Mindset module. See also the related Companion Guide questions.

- Reminder that the Mindset expert is coming next week to answer questions, so come prepared with questions. Share any final resources and thank everyone for attending.
- [Buddy Call reminder](#)
- Survey reminder

At 1:25pm, break into Buddy Group assignment rooms to exchange numbers and find a time to chat. Zoom call will end at 2pm ET if buddies decide to have their call right away.

Resources Mentioned

- [List of Grounding Activities \(pdf\)](#)
- [Change Companion Guide](#)
- [Anticancer Wheel of Life worksheet](#)
- [S.M.A.R.T goal framework \(interactive\)](#)
- [Five Change Keys for your Anticancer Lifestyle](#)

Collected Helpful Tips

[View from Online Course](#)

Week 3: The Power of Mindset

Grounding Activity, Welcome and Pre-Expert Discussion (30 mins)

Begin the meeting with a short [Grounding Activity \(pdf\)](#) and then [Question of the Week](#). Let participants know they can lead a grounding activity of their choice any week.

Give an overview of what participants can expect for today's meeting (topics covered, time frames etc.)

Buddy Call Reminder: Ask how participants are benefiting from their buddy calls and remind participants who is paired with whom.

★ Note that there will only be time to discuss 1-2 segments if you have an expert Q&A.

Homework Check-In Prompt:

What parts of the course did you complete this week? Did you find time to block off for learning or reflection? What helped—or got in the way?

Seg. 1 Stress And The Mind-Body Connection

Stress is a state of mental or emotional strain or tension caused by demanding circumstances. Your ability to make and maintain lifestyle choices that promote health and well-being starts with learning to manage your stress.

- Review the three different types of stress you wrote down on page 6 of the [Companion Guide](#). Can you share an example of when you may have experienced each type of stress?

The dialogue between the mind and body is a two-way conversation.

- How do your thoughts and emotions influence your physical health?

Seg. 2 Defining The Anticancer Mindset

- Think about a situation when you experienced great disappointment. How did you react? How could you have changed your outlook in the face of this disappointment?

Learning to create health sometimes in spite of disease is what defines an Anticancer mindset. One way to begin is through gratitude practice. Research has shown that this practice reduces depression, improves sleep quality, reduces inflammation, and lowers the stress hormone cortisol.

- Share three things you are grateful for. Make time to review, remember, and reflect on them throughout the week.

Seg. 3 How Do You Shape Your Mindset?

Review with the group the techniques for training the brain that were described in the table on page 10 of the [Companion Guide](#).

- Ask participants if they currently practice any of these techniques? If so, what benefits have they experienced? Are there any techniques they would like to try or add to their mindfulness practice?

In the Take Action section on page 11 of the [Mindset Module Companion Study Guide](#), you were asked to research the mindfulness resources available in your local area (ie. yoga classes, nature walks, and therapy centers).

- Ask participants to share these resources with the group so they can all gain from everyone's collective knowledge.
- Consider having one person create a list that can be shared with the group for reference after the meeting. For those Circles meeting in person, consider organizing a group outing to a local organic farm or nature reserve for a nature walk.

Seg. 4 The Five Mindset Keys

Think about a time when you might have judged others instead of viewing them with compassion.

- How did your mindset color and affect your response to this situation? Do you feel your mindset affected you physically?
- Reflect back on a challenging situation you experienced. How could you apply the mindset keys to this situation? How could practicing mindfulness change how you experienced this event?

Seg. 5 Mindfulness In Everyday Life

Reflect on each of the Mindset tools (Mindful Eating, Guided Imagery, Silent Walking Meditation, Five Senses Mindfulness Exercise) mentioned on pages 12 and 13 of the [Mindset Module Companion Study Guide](#).

- Ask participants which mindful activities worked best for them? How do they see these practices fitting into their current lifestyle?

Seg. 6 Managing Stress Through Mindfulness

Identify a situation in your life that has caused you stress. With curiosity and without judgment, reflect on your body's response to this stress.

- Was your initial reaction a flight-flight response or a mindful response?
- Are you allowing any of your stressors to consume the majority of your thoughts or attention?
- What other experiences in the here and now are you missing or unaware of as a result of focusing on your stressors?
- What mindfulness techniques have you learned that might help?

Seg. 7 Managing Stress Caused By Change

Think about a time when you were faced with either a planned or emergent change.

- Can you identify any habits you had to overcome?
- In what ways can you use mindful awareness to recognize times when you are resisting change?

Take some time to reflect on the changes you are currently experiencing in your life.


- How significant are they? Are they planned or emergent changes?
- What small mindful steps can you take to help shift away from a panicked or thoughtless reaction, to a more reasoned response?

Seg. 8 Integrating Mindfulness Techniques Into An Anticancer Lifestyle

Recognize and be conscious of the power you have to change your habits. Identify a change in your life that is causing you stress.

- What thoughts and behaviors can reduce your stress concerning this change?

Mindset: Ask the Expert (30 mins)

 Reminder: Before each session with a guest expert, schedule a required 15-minute huddle between the facilitator, the expert, and the organizer. This quick check-in helps clarify the session flow, review key messages, and align on timing and technology.

Introduce your Mindset expert. [Refer to Mindset Keys if helpful.](#)

Close (10 mins)

End the session by having participants share one small step they will take in the coming week or month to improve their mindset. Reminder about framing that small step as a SMART goal.

Announce the date and time of the next meeting.

Prep work for next week: Segments 1-7 of Anticancer Diet module. See also the related Companion Guide questions.

Share any final resources and thank everyone for attending.

Survey reminder.

End with a short [grounding/breathing exercise \(pdf\)](#).

At 1:25pm, break into Buddy Group assignment rooms to exchange numbers and find a time to chat. Zoom call will end at 2pm ET if buddies decide to have their call right away.

Resources Mentioned

- [Mindset Companion Guide](#)
- [East Coast Mindfulness](#)
- [Mindfulness Training](#)
- [UMass Memorial Health Center for Mindfulness](#)
- [Guided Awareness Exercise](#)
- [Gratitude Practice Tip Sheet](#)
- [Anticancer Lifestyle Program: Mindfulness Worksheet](#)
- [Anticancer Lifestyle Program: Mindful Eating Exercise](#)
- [Anticancer Lifestyle Program: Guided Imagery Exercise](#)
- [Anticancer Lifestyle Program: Five Senses Mindfulness Exercise](#)
- [Anticancer Lifestyle Program: 9 Steps for Coping with Challenging Situations](#)

Collected Helpful Tips

[View from Online Course](#)

Week 4: The Anti-Inflammatory Diet - Part 1

Grounding Activity and Welcome (15 mins)

Begin the meeting with a short [Grounding Activity \(pdf\)](#) and then [Question of the Week](#). Let participants know they can lead a grounding activity of their choice any week.

Buddy Call Reminder: Ask how participants are benefiting from their buddy calls and remind participants who is paired with whom.

Give an overview on what participants can expect for today's meeting (topics covered, time frames etc.)

Share any important announcements.



Homework Check-In Prompt:

What parts of the course did you complete this week? Did you find time to block off for learning or reflection? What helped—or got in the way?

Discussion (60 mins)

Seg. 1 Weight and Cancer

Maintaining a healthy body weight has been associated with reduced cancer risk.

Research consistently shows that obesity - often defined by a body mass index (BMI) greater than or equal to 30 - is associated with an increased risk of cancer. While scientists may not understand precisely what causes the increase in risk, they are clear that an association between obesity and cancer does exist.

A variety of factors play a role in weight gain and weight management. They include genetics, chronic stress, hormonal imbalances, medication side effects, changes in habits and mental health. Remember to give yourself grace, focus less on the scale and more on the changes you can make today to live a healthier tomorrow.

- What are possible barriers you face in achieving or maintaining your healthy weight range? What is already working well?
- What is something that was covered in the 1st part of the Diet module that you're already doing successfully and was there something new you learned that you're interested in changing?

Maintaining a healthy body weight is vitally important to your overall health. Share some small steps you can take that will help you in achieving or maintaining a healthy body weight. Then, choose one of these to implement this week.

Seg. 2 Eat Whole Food

Highly processed foods comprise roughly 50% of the calories and 90% of the added sugars in the Standard American Diet.

- How does your diet compare to the Standard American diet?

On page 9 of the [Diet Module Companion Study Guide](#) you were asked to check your pantry for common processed foods.

- What did you discover about the foods in your pantry? Was there anything that surprised you? Are there any changes you would like to make?

Seg. 3 Eat Mostly Plants, Especially Vegetables

When eating a plant-based diet, it is important to choose a variety of vegetables and fruits. The ideal daily goal is 5 servings of vegetables and 2 servings of fruit. **Depending on the time of year and where you live, it can sometimes be a challenge to find fresh produce at an affordable price.**

- Review the tips to save money on fresh produce found on page 11 of the [Diet Module Companion Study Guide](#), and share any local resources or seasonal sources you have found for fresh produce.
- Based on what you learned about eating fresh produce, what are a few small changes you can implement this week?

Seg. 4 The Benefits of Whole Grains

Sometimes people worry that choosing only whole grains versus common refined grains, such as white rice, will restrict their food choices, but there is a rich variety of whole grains to choose from. Review the list of whole grains on page 13 of the [Diet Module Companion Study Guide](#).

- How many on this list have you tried? Which are your favorites, and how do you like to prepare them? Are there any you are interested in trying?
- To get the recommended amount of fiber in your diet, ideally, you would consume 5-9 servings of vegetables and fruits per day, along with whole grains, nuts, seeds, and beans. Are you meeting your daily fiber goal? What are some small changes you can make to ensure you are eating whole grains and getting enough fiber?

Seg. 5 Why Eat Organic Foods?

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) established a system of national standards to certify that specific practices are used to produce and process organic foods and ingredients. These foods carry the label “USDA Certified Organic”.

In the United States, we are surrounded by cheap food at cheap prices. Organic foods are generally more expensive, but keep in mind that you are worth it! You are what you eat!

- Review the chart you completed on page 15 of the [Diet Module Companion Study Guide](#). What surprised you about the differences between Organic, Non-GMO, Natural and Conventional farming practices?
- What reasons do you feel it’s important to eat organic food when possible? Have you discovered any tips, tricks or local resources to make them more affordable?

Seg. 6 Treat Meat As A Condiment

Adequate amounts of protein are essential to a healthy diet and for maintaining a healthy weight.

- What is your daily protein goal? Are you getting enough protein each day? What are some small changes you can make to ensure you are eating more plant-based proteins?

Research studies have shown that the best diets for reducing cancer risk are those in which the majority of calories, including proteins, are plant-based, and derived from vegetables, fruits, and whole grains. Review the sources of plant protein on page 17 of the [Diet Module Companion Study Guide](#).

- How many on this list have you tried? Which are your favorites and how do you like to prepare them? Are there any you are interested in trying?

Seg. 7 Eat Safer Seafood

In the Take Action section on page 19 of the [Diet Module Companion Study Guide](#), you were invited to learn more about how to select healthy seafood by visiting ewg.org and reviewing the [Environmental Working Group's Good Seafood Guide](#).

- What did you discover?
- Did you try the [EWG's Seafood Calculator](#) to get your custom seafood list?
- What are some small changes you can make when adding seafood to your diet?

Build the collective knowledge of the group by sharing any insights you have on sourcing seafood locally.

- What are the best grocery stores, fish markets, etc. for buying seafood in your area? Do you have healthy options available to you?

Close (10 mins)

End the session by having participants share one small step they will take in the coming week or month to improve their diet. Reminder about framing that small step as a SMART goal.

Announce the date and time of the next meeting.

Prep work for next week: Segments 8-14 of the Anticancer Diet module. See also the related Companion Guide questions.

Reminder that the Diet expert will be attending the next session and to come prepared with questions.

Share any final resources and thank everyone for attending.

Survey reminder.

End with a short [grounding/breathing exercise \(pdf\)](#).

At 1:25pm, break into Buddy Group assignment rooms to exchange numbers and find a time to chat. Zoom call will end at 2pm ET if buddies decide to have their call right away.

Resources Mentioned

- [Diet Module Companion Guide](#)
- eBook: [Bye Bye Diets: A Guide to Intuitive Eating](#)
- Webinar: [Food and You: Gaining Control Over Out-of-Control Eating](#)
- NEDA Body Image Resources: [National Eating Disorders Association \(NEDA\) Information on Body Image](#)
- [CSPI ranks safety of food additives](#)
- eBook: [Anti-Inflammatory Diet](#)
- Webinar: [Anti-Inflammatory Diet and Chronic Illness: What You Need to Know](#)
- eBook: [The Power of Herbs and Spices: Cooking Your Way to Better Health](#)
- Webinar: [Gut Health: What Is It & How to Improve It](#)
- Blog: [Gut Health: Why It's Important](#)
- [EWG Shopper's Guide to Pesticides in Produce](#)
- [EWG's 2022 Shopper's Guide to Pesticides in Produce | Summary](#)
- eBook: [The Healthy Kitchen: Reducing Toxins and Chemical Exposures](#)
- Webinar: [The Healthy Kitchen: Reducing Toxins and Chemical Exposures](#)
- [Labeling Organic Products | Agricultural Marketing Service](#)
- [EWG's Consumer Guide to Seafood | Environmental Working Group](#)
- [Advice about Eating Fish | FDA](#)
- Webinar: [How Healthy Are Plant-Based Meats and Milk?](#)
- eBook: [Plant-Based Meats and Milks: How Healthy Are They?](#)
- [Caffeine chart | Center for Science in the Public Interest](#)
- [File:Tea processing chart II.svg - Wikimedia Commons](#)
- [EWG Tap Water Database](#)
- [EWG Water Filter Buying Guide](#)
- Webinar: [A Clear Look at Tap Water: What's In It, and What You Can Do About It](#)
- [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Oncology Nutrition Practice Group](#)
- [Farmers' Markets](#)
- [Local Harvest: US database of local farms, farmers markets, CSAs and more](#)
- [Shopping Sustainably for Food You Can Trust - FoodPrint](#)
- [Tips for Sustainable Shopping](#)
- [Some tips on freezing food](#)
- [Some seed companies we recommend](#)
- [Explore Produce with Kids](#)

- [Grocery Shopping Guide](#)
- [Anticancer Mindset module exercise on mindful eating](#)

Collected Helpful Tips

[View from Online Course](#)

Week 5: The Anti-Inflammatory Diet - Part 2

Grounding Activity, Welcome and Pre-Expert Discussion (30 mins)

Begin the meeting with a short [Grounding Activity \(pdf\)](#) and then [Question of the Week](#). Let participants know they can lead a grounding activity of their choice any week.

Buddy Call Reminder: Ask how participants are benefiting from their buddy calls and remind participants who is paired with whom.

Give an overview of what participants can expect for today's meeting (topics covered, time frames etc.)

★ Note that there will only be time to discuss 1-2 segments if you have an expert Q&A.

Homework Check-In Prompt:

What parts of the course did you complete this week? Did you find time to block off for learning or reflection? What helped—or got in the way?

Seg. 8 Not All Milk & Eggs Are Created Equal

- What did you learn about the benefits of choosing eggs from free-range hens that feed on pastures rather than other commercially-raised eggs? Do the eggs you consume have any of the following packaging labels: USDA Organic, American Humane Certified or Certified Humane Raised and Handled?
- How many different dairy products do you consume on a regular basis? What are some small changes you can make in order to add alternative sources of calcium and Vitamin D to your diet?

Seg. 9 Healthy Oils and Fats

- What did you discover about the ratio of Omega-6 to Omega-3 fatty acids in the Standard American Diet? Which foods in the Standard American Diet (SAD) lead to excess Omega-6 fatty acids (review the list you made on page 22 of the [Diet Module Companion Study Guide](#))? Do you consume any of these fats? What are some small changes you can make to replace some of the unhealthier fats in your diet?

Think about the source of fats in your diet. Read the food labels in your pantry or during your next visit to the grocery store, to see which types of fats they contain. Share what you discovered about the sources of fats in your diet.

- Are there any changes you would like to make? Have you found any healthier options you can share with the group?
- You may want to ask people to bring a couple of items from their pantry and go through the labels together.

Seg. 10 Limit Sweets

On average, each adult in the U.S. now consumes more than 60 pounds of added sugar in a year, or 12 - 5 pound bags.

- What are some ways you can avoid added sugars?

In the Take Action Section on page 25 of the [Diet Module Companion Study Guide](#), you were challenged to check the food labels on some of your favorite foods for added sugars. Share what you discovered.

- Were you surprised by how much sugar you found?

Seg. 11 Spice It Up

Review the Anticancer herbs and spices on page 26 of the [Diet Module Companion Study Guide](#).

- What was the most interesting thing you learned about their Anticancer properties and the ways you can add them to your diet?

On page 27 of the [Diet Module Companion Study Guide](#), you were asked to take inventory of your herb and spice cabinet.

- Which of the important Anticancer herbs and spices were missing, if any? Share any small changes you can make to incorporate more herbs and spices into your diet.

Seg. 12 Healthy Beverages

Share what you found most interesting about the potential health benefits of coffee and tea.

- Did you learn anything new about selecting and preparing these beverages in a healthier way?

Evaluate your daily habits when it comes to drinking beverages.

- Share any small changes you can make to incorporate healthy beverages into your diet and prepare them in a healthier way.

Seg. 13 Think Local

There are many great reasons to eat locally-grown food whenever possible.

- What are some of the benefits of buying local food? What are some small changes you can make that will help you eat more locally-grown food?

One of the many benefits of growing your own food is less food waste. Forty percent of all food in the U.S. does not get eaten and almost 70% of that food is actually still edible.

- What are some ways you can reduce your own food waste?

Review the list of Tips for Eating Locally on page 30 of the [Diet Module Companion Study Guide](#). Brainstorm together which options are available in your local community.


Seg. 14 Putting it All Together

Reflect on what you have learned in the Diet Module of the Anticancer Lifestyle Course and share and celebrate some of the changes you have already made. It doesn't matter how tiny they are—over time, small steps lead to big change!

Review the 5 Diet Keys on page 32 of the [Diet Module Companion Study Guide](#).

- Share which of the 5 keys you would like to focus on next and one change you can make this week.

Diet: Ask the Expert (30 mins)

 **Reminder:** Before each session with a guest expert, schedule a required 15-minute huddle between the facilitator, the expert, and the organizer. This quick check-in helps clarify the session flow, review key messages, and align on timing and technology.

Introduce your Diet expert. [Refer to Diet Keys if helpful.](#)

Close (10 mins)

End the session by having participants share one small step they are going to take in the coming week or month to improve their diet. Reminder about framing that small step as a SMART goal.

Alternatively, could have everyone share some recipes they are excited to try out in the coming days. If there is a webinar host/recorder, they can share these in the followup email.

Announce the date and time of the next meeting.

Prep work for next week: Review the Anticancer Fitness module. See also the related Companion Guide questions.

Reminder that the Fitness expert will be presenting in the next session and to come prepared with questions. Also, you can brainstorm Fitness questions at the end of the call.

Share any final resources and thank everyone for attending.

Survey reminder.

End with a short [grounding/breathing exercise \(pdf\)](#).

At 1:25pm, break into Buddy Group assignment rooms to exchange numbers and find a time to chat. Zoom call will end at 2pm ET if buddies decide to have their call right away.

Resources Mentioned

[Same from Diet - Week 1.](#)

Collected Helpful Tips

[View from Online Course](#)

Week 6: The Role of Fitness

Grounding Activity, Welcome and Pre-Expert Discussion (30 mins)

Begin the meeting with a short [Grounding Activity \(pdf\)](#) and then [Question of the Week](#). Let participants know they can lead a grounding activity of their choice any week.

Buddy Call Reminder: Ask how participants are benefiting from their buddy calls and remind participants who is paired with whom.

Give an overview of what participants can expect for today's meeting (topics covered, time frames etc.)

★ Note that there will only be time to discuss 1-2 segments if you have an expert Q&A.

Homework Check-In Prompt:

What parts of the course did you complete this week? Did you find time to block off for learning or reflection? What helped—or got in the way?

Seg. 1 Fitness and Health

Fitness is not about being a marathon runner or a bodybuilder. It is about maintaining good cardiovascular health and adequate strength and flexibility in order to function well in daily life and enjoy your leisure activities.

- How would you rate your personal fitness?
- After familiarizing yourself with the Anticancer Activity Pyramid, what areas of your fitness would you like to improve?

Sedentary activity is located at the top of the Anticancer Activity Pyramid, meaning that it should be the smallest component of your daily routine.

- Brainstorm as a group ways you can incorporate movement into your sedentary activities.
- Choose one of these small changes to implement this week.

Seg. 2 Cardiovascular Health

Cardiovascular exercises involve moving your body to raise your heart rate.

- Share your favorite form of cardiovascular exercise.
- Which forms of cardiovascular exercise would you like to incorporate into your fitness routine?

Share some examples of vigorous and moderate activities that you plan to incorporate into your fitness routine. Choose one of these activities to try this week.

- Which method (Talk Test, Perceived Exertion, Target Heart Rate) will you use to measure the intensity of your exercise?

Seg. 3 Strength Training

- From the list of strength training examples you created on pages 11 & 12 of the [Fitness Module Companion Study Guide](#), which ones would you like to add to your fitness routine? Share a small fitness goal you can accomplish this week.

On average, most people lose 5 pounds of muscle mass each decade after age 30. Strength training produces many benefits such as maintaining muscle mass and minimizing the side effects of cancer treatment such as weight gain, osteoporosis, and lymphedema.

- Have you experienced any of these side effects of cancer treatment?
- Has your care team talked to you about the benefits of strength training?
- Are you aware of or have you experienced any additional benefits of strength training?

Seg. 4 Flexibility and Balance

- Which behaviors do you do on a daily basis that may contribute to stiffness and soreness (ie. sitting in front of a computer all day)? What parts of your body do you feel are most impacted?
- Share one flexibility exercise you can add to your fitness routine this week.

Have everyone test their balance by trying a single leg lift. Stand with feet hip distance apart. Have a chair or table within reach if you need to stabilize yourself to regain balance. Raise the right knee to 90 degree angle. Hold for 3-5 seconds, then return foot to the floor and try again with the left knee.

- Did you notice a difference between the sides? Was it challenging or easy? Try closing your eyes (be sure to have that table or chair ready for bracing). What activities do you do to work on your functional fitness (balance, coordination, gait, agility, proprioceptive training)?

Seg. 5 Creating A Plan & Seg. 6 Implementing Your Plan

Share your SMART fitness goal.

- Are there any barriers you have identified that might make it more challenging to meet this goal?
- What is a small step you can take this week to begin to break down that barrier?


Share what you wrote down on your weekly exercise planner.

- What preparations do you need to make in advance to set yourself up for a successful week of exercise?
- How could this group support and encourage you?

Seg. 6 The Anticancer Benefits of Sleep

- Do you or your family members have any habits that negatively impact the quality of your sleep?
- What is a small change you can make to improve your sleep habits?
- What does your ideal bedtime routine look like?
- What are some of the challenges you face in establishing your ideal bedtime routine?

Fitness: Ask the Expert (30 mins)

 Reminder: Before each session with a guest expert, schedule a required 15-minute huddle between the facilitator, the expert, and the organizer. This quick check-in helps clarify the session flow, review key messages, and align on timing and technology.

Introduce your Fitness expert. [Refer to Fitness Keys if helpful.](#)

Close (10 mins)

End the session by having participants share one small step they are going to take in the coming week or month to improve their fitness or sleep habits. Reminder about framing that small step as a SMART goal.

Announce the date and time of the next meeting.

Prep work for next week: Review Segments 1-7 of the Anticancer Environment module. See also the related Companion Guide questions.

Share any final resources and thank everyone for attending.

Survey reminder and reminder: You'll get what you put in. It's important to complete the work to see the greatest lifestyle transformation.

End with a short [grounding/breathing exercise \(pdf\)](#).

At 1:25pm, break into Buddy Group assignment rooms to exchange numbers and find a time to chat. Zoom call will end at 2pm ET if buddies decide to have their call right away.

Resources Mentioned

- [Fitness Companion Guide](#)
- [Weekly Exercise and Physical Activity Plan](#)
- [ACSM Guidelines for Strength Training](#)
- [Anticancer Fitness Pyramid](#)

- [How to Lift Weights \(with Pictures\) - wikiHow Life](#)
- [American College of Sports Medicine Basic Stretching Program](#)
- [Basic Stretches Video: Hip Flexor](#)
- [Basic Stretches Video: Hamstring Stretch](#)
- [Basic Stretches Video: Quadriceps Stretch](#)
- [Basic Stretches Video: Calf Stretch](#)
- Tai Chi and Qi Gong: [Understanding the Healing Benefits of Mind-Body Exercises](#)
- [Anticancer Lifestyle Program| 30-minute Class in Seated Yoga](#)
- [Movement Matters: Standing Up to a Sedentary World](#)
- [Fit After 50: Add Days to Your Life & Life to Your Days - webinar](#)
- [Free online yoga classes: Yoga with Adriene](#)
- [S.M.A.R.T Planning for Change](#)
- [Goal-Setting Worksheet](#)
- [NIH: Track Your Activities Worksheet](#)
- [NIH: Monthly Progress Test Worksheet](#)
- [Guided Sleep Meditation](#)

Collected Helpful Tips

[View from Online Course](#)

Week 7: Reducing Toxins in Your Personal Environment - Part 1

Grounding Activity and Welcome (15 mins)

Begin the meeting with a short [Grounding Activity \(pdf\)](#) and then [Question of the Week](#).

Begin the meeting by welcoming participants and have everyone share a win or success they had in the past week or month related to positive lifestyle changes.

Buddy Call Reminder: Ask how participants are benefiting from their buddy calls and remind participants who is paired with whom.

Give an overview on what participants can expect for today's meeting (topics covered, time frames etc.)

Share any important announcements.

Homework Check-In Prompt:

What parts of the course did you complete this week? Did you find time to block off for learning or reflection? What helped—or got in the way?

Discussion (60 mins)

Seg. 1 The Problem

- What are your perceptions regarding the safety of the items you purchase at the store or online?
- Do you consider the safety of the items before you buy them?

In this segment, you watched a video by immunologist, Dr. Margaret Kripke.

- What were the preconceived notions she had about chemicals available on the market?
- Did you share any of these misconceptions before watching this video?

Seg. 2 The Precautionary Principle

In this segment, you watched the video “10 Americans” - Find out the shocking truth about toxins” by the Environmental Working Group.

- What did you learn and/or find most concerning?
- Why do scientists believe that Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals are active at very low doses?

Take a moment to reflect on the products you purchase frequently.

- How can you use the Precautionary Principle to evaluate those products the next time you buy?
- Share one small step you can take this week to reduce your exposure to toxic chemicals from your environment? Reminder about framing that small step as a SMART goal.
- Try out searching for products in real time with the group. For example, you can share your screen with [EWG's Skin Deep website](#) and ask the group to share personal products to look up.

Seg. 3 The Five Keys to an Anticancer Environment

- What did you discover by taking the Healthy Home Assessment on page 9 of the [Environment Module Companion Study Guide](#)?
- Can you identify any changes you have already made or would like to make in your home environment?

- Based on the Five Keys found on page 9 of the [Environment Module Companion Study Guide](#), what are some simple steps you can take right now to reduce your exposure to harmful chemicals?

Seg. 4 The Toxin Dive

Review the list of “The Terrible Twelve” most dangerous common categories of toxins on page 12 and 13 of the [Environment Module Companion Study Guide](#).

- Were you surprised by any of these and can you identify any examples of these in your home?

Read through the list of suggestions on where to begin when “weeding out” toxins from your home on page 13 of the Environment Module Companion Study Guide.

- Share one small step you can take this week to start creating your own Anticancer environment. Reminder about framing that small step as a SMART goal.

Seg. 5 Routes of Exposure

Your greatest exposure to toxins is through inhalation. Review the hazardous airborne toxins in the table on page 14 of the [Environment Module Companion Study Guide](#). Then, discuss some ways you can reduce your exposure to hazardous airborne toxins in your home.

Share one small step you can take this week to reduce your exposure to chemicals through inhalation, ingestion or absorption

Seg. 6 Personal Care Products and Cosmetics

According to the Environmental Working Group, the average American adult uses 9 personal care products each day containing a total of 126 unique chemical ingredients.

- How many personal care products do you use on a daily basis?
- Are there any products you can eliminate or find safer options for?

As a group, investigate some personal care products on the Environmental Working Group’s Skin Deep Database at ewg.org/skindeep.

- What is the rating of each product and did you find any safer options?
- Share a few changes you can make to the personal care products you currently use.

If meeting in person, you may want to break into smaller groups for this activity. Have at least one person in each group download the EWG’s Healthy Living App on their phone. Give the groups 5 minutes or so to research a few personal care products and then report their findings to the Learning Circle.

Seg. 7 Perfumes, Fragrances, and Air Quality

Share the list you made (page 18 of the [Environment Module Companion Study Guide](#)) of products in your household that contain fragrance.

- Are there ways you can reduce your exposure?

Review the Tips For Improving Air Quality (page 19 of the [Environment Module Companion Study Guide](#)) and share some small changes you plan to make to improve your indoor air quality.

Close (10 mins)

End the session by having participants share one small step they are going to take in the coming week or month to improve their lifestyle. Reminder about framing that small step as a SMART goal.

Announce the date and time of the next meeting.

Prep work for next week: Review Sections 8-13 of the Anticancer Environment module. See also the related Companion Guide questions.

Reminder that the Environment expert will be attending the next session and to come prepared with questions.

Share any final resources and thank everyone for attending.

Survey reminder

End with a short [grounding/breathing exercise \(pdf\)](#).

At 1:25pm, break into Buddy Group assignment rooms to exchange numbers and find a time to chat. Zoom call will end at 2pm ET if buddies decide to have their call right away.

Resources Mentioned

- [Environment Module Companion Study Guide](#)
- [Environment Keys](#)
- [President's Cancer Panel Report, 2008-9: Reducing Environmental Cancer Risk: What We Can Do Now](#)
- [HHS National Toxicology Program Report on Carcinogens](#)
- [The Terrible Twelve Grid](#)
- [Arsenic and Rice: What You Need to Know](#)
- [EWG's Guide to Sunscreens](#)
- [EWG's Skin Deep database](#)
- [EWG's Guide to Safer Cell Phone Use](#)
- [EWG Guide to Healthy Cleaners](#)

- [EWG's Tap Water Database](#)
- [Clearya app for online shopping](#)
- [NASA guide to air-filtering houseplants](#)
- [Some easy ways to reduce the use of plastics in the kitchen](#)
- [The Healthy Kitchen ebook](#)
- [The Healthy Kitchen webinar](#)
- [Tip sheet for making non-toxic household cleaners](#)
- [Consumer Product Information Database](#)
- [EMF Levels Emitted from Common Household Appliances](#)
- [Natural home pest solutions](#)
- [Natural insect pest control](#)
- [Tips for a healthier lawn](#)
- [Five Keys to an Anticancer Environment](#)
- [The Anticancer Lifestyle Program's Top Ten Environmental Action Steps](#)

Collected Helpful Tips

[View from Online Course](#)

Week 8: Reducing Toxins in Your Personal Environment - Part 2

Grounding Activity, Welcome and Pre-Expert Discussion (30 mins)

Begin the meeting with a short [Grounding Activity \(pdf\)](#) and then [Question of the Week](#).

Buddy Call Reminder: Ask how participants are benefiting from their buddy calls and remind participants who is paired with whom.

Give an overview of what participants can expect for today's meeting (topics covered, time frames etc.)

★ Note that there will only be time to discuss 1-2 segments if you have an expert Q&A.

Homework Check-In Prompt:

What parts of the course did you complete this week? Did you find time to block off for learning or reflection? What helped—or got in the way?

Seg. 8 Plastics and Non-stick in the Kitchen

Think through your daily routine.

- What plastics do you use when storing food at home or eating fast food?
- Do you already use any safer alternatives to plastic? What are they?
- Were there challenges in making the switch?
- Do you have any favorite plastic-free products that you recommend?

Have everyone bring their favorite plastic-free food storage items to the meeting for show-and-tell.

Review the list of safer alternatives to plastics and non-stick cookware (page 21 of the [Environment Module Companion Study Guide](#)).

- What strategies for safer cooking and food storage do you currently use or plan to implement?
- Do you have a favorite product or strategy you can share with the group?

Seg. 9 Dry Cleaning and Fabrics

Share an example of clothing or home furnishings you own that may have been treated with chemicals during the manufacturing process.

- What about them makes you think they may have been treated?

Seg. 10 Household Cleaners

Review your list of household cleaning products (page 25 of the [Environment Module Companion Study Guide](#)).

- Did you check any of these products for warning labels as well as signal words that seem to indicate that the product is “safe” or at least safer than others, and did you check them on EWG’s Guide to Healthy Cleaners?
- If so, what did you discover? Are there safer or natural alternatives to the cleaning products you use?

In the Take Action section (page 27 of the [Environment Module Companion Study Guide](#)) you were challenged to use the Environmental Working Group’s Guide to Healthy Cleaning and the Consumer Product Information Database to evaluate a few of the cleaning products in your home.

- What did you discover and what are a few small changes you can make?

Seg. 11 Cell Phones and Electromagnetic Fields

- How many electronic devices and appliances do you use on a daily basis that emit EMFs?

Review the tips for safe use of electronics (page 28 of the [Environment Module Companion Study Guide](#)).

- What small changes can you make to reduce your exposure to EMFs?

Seg. 12 Household Pesticides

- Do you currently use any pesticides in and around your home? If so, how and where do you store them?
- Do you know what the potential harmful effects are from exposure?
- Have you researched any natural alternatives available that you would like to share with the group?


Seg. 13 Conclusion and Review

Creating your Anticancer environment will take time. There are many ways to prioritize your changes. Some people find it easiest to start with a room in their house.

- Which room would you like to start with first?
- Which items will you “weed” out or replace to create an Anticancer environment in that space?

Review the Top 10 Environment Action Steps (page 31 of the [Environment Module Companion Study Guide](#)) and share one small change you can make this week. Reminder about framing that small step as a SMART goal.

Environment: Ask the Expert (30 mins)

 Reminder: Before each session with a guest expert, schedule a required 15-minute huddle between the facilitator, the expert, and the organizer. This quick check-in helps clarify the session flow, review key messages, and align on timing and technology.

Introduce your Environment expert. [Refer to the Environment Keys if helpful.](#)

Close (10 mins)

End the session by having participants share one small step they are going to take in the coming week or month to improve their personal environment. Reminder about framing that small step as a SMART goal.

Announce the date and time of the next meeting. Also ask them to come prepared with the following:

1. Bring something meaningful to share with the group that you've discovered through your Anticancer Lifestyle journey. This is personal and will be different for each of you. Ideas: poem, quote, book, resource, food/product
2. Refer to your Anticancer Wheel of Life from our 1st week and reflect on the progress you've made over the past 8 weeks.
3. Reflect on the Anticancer lifestyle changes that you plan to continue. Think about how you will sustain these changes. Are there barriers that could get in your way? If so, consider how you can overcome the obstacles?

Survey reminder.

End with a short [grounding/breathing exercise \(pdf\)](#).

At 1:25pm, break into Buddy Group assignment rooms to exchange numbers and find a time to chat. Zoom call will end at 1:45pm ET.

Resources Mentioned

[Same from Environment - Week 1](#)

Collected Helpful Tips

[View from Online Course](#)

Week 9: Wrap Up and Graduation

Grounding Activity and Welcome (15 mins)

Begin the meeting with a short [Grounding Activity \(pdf\)](#) and then [Question of the Week](#).

Discussion (60-75 mins)

Four parts

1. Related to Week 8, ask each person to share something meaningful that they've discovered while on their Anticancer Lifestyle journey.
2. Review participants' Anticancer Wheel of Life from Week 1 and reflect on the progress you've made and what you've learned.

3. **Question:** Reflect on the changes that you plan to continue and how will you sustain them? Are there barriers that could get in your way and how can you overcome them?
4. **Feedback and discussion about the Circle experience.** What were the highlights? What would you change? What were the benefits of learning together with others?

Discuss if there's a desire for the group to meet beyond this program, and whether there's a volunteer from the group who will organize. Some participants might find it difficult to imagine meeting without the structure provided, so the following ideas can serve as inspiration:

- Create your own book club.
- Take on research projects in areas of interest and present findings to the group.
- Invite outside Subject Matter Experts to present to the group.
- Build a Google Doc with shared resources including podcasts, TED talks, books and articles, classes, documentaries, poetry, cookbooks, online workshops, advocacy groups, and more.
- Brainstorm, problem-solve, celebrate accomplishments, tell stories, share good news, and support each other during times of stress, uncertainty, and challenge.

Also consider planning a post-session meeting four weeks later to touchbase on progress.

Share any final resources and thank everyone for attending. Remind participants to save all the post follow up emails and that they can go back and access all resources, including the online course, anytime. To renew your online course after 90 days, please contact us at info@anticancerlifestyle.org so we can reregister you.

[Survey reminder](#)

End with a short [grounding/breathing exercise \(pdf\)](#).