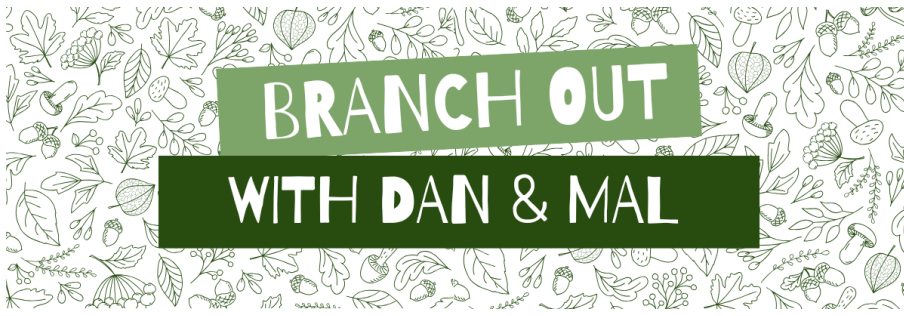




Welcome to Branch Out with Dan & Mal, a weekly newsletter on all things health, wellbeing, and wellness at Midland!

OAKay, Let's Talk...

Mallory's Report:

I'm excited to share that I passed my EMT certification exam this past weekend! After 200 hours of study, six days of hands-on training in Minnesota, and three separate exams, I'm grateful to bring these new skills to our Midland community. Next up: I'm heading to Joshua Tree for five days to complete my Wilderness EMT certification through NOLS. It's been an intensive but rewarding first semester of learning!

This week brought a wave of illness—sore throats, stomach bugs, and plenty of coughs. Our Tylenol Cold & Flu supply is running low! Fortunately, the beautiful weather means we can encourage students to spend more time outdoors, which always helps. Wishing a speedy recovery to everyone fighting off the sickness this week.

Dan's Report:

One of the most exciting aspects of being in your first year at Midland is the surprises that are revealed every time we return from each school break. The surprises exist both in the realm of the amazing people here and in the all-encompassing magical realm of nature we exist within. As a counselor, I'm often asked how I take care of myself in the midst of supporting others, and one of the most powerfully healing and restorative forces I turn to is nature. The ever-changing landscape here is erupting with soothing tones of green grass, swift-flowing water, and clusters of mushrooms, and the lively sounds of frogs, owls, coyotes, and birds! And then, these amazing students, of course... back at it again, never backing down from a challenge or responsibility. They continue to work through everything life throws at them, learning to face any challenge while doing difficult things well. So in summary, the bigger theme I'm feeling right now is the surprising transformative energy of both the land and its inhabitants (us!). Midland truly is surprising and different in some of the most powerfully positive ways I've seen in a long time!

In a Nutshell -- Deep Dive of the Week

One of the more frustrating challenges we face is that disruptive force known as procrastination. Just the word alone stirs up a reaction in many of us! With this challenge typically rooted in fear, perfectionism, exhaustion, or feeling overwhelmed, it often becomes emotionally draining and debilitating.

So what can we do about it? Here are a few of the many research-based deterrents most effectively known to help:

- **Self-awareness** is the starting point! Stop to consider what the root causes of this avoidance might be. By uncovering the mystery behind the challenge, you afford yourself an opportunity to accurately begin planning your counterattack. Procrastination usually begins as a self-protective response to something that's threatening and/or unpleasant.
- **Time management** plays another key role. Overwhelmingly long and detailed lists that take all day to tackle often lead to increased stress and anxiety causing breaks in focus. Instead, create a smaller list of achievable priorities that can be overcome in more manageable chunks of time. This can lead to increased feelings of success that produce more confidence to carry on.
- **Goal-setting** that is clear and achievable provides the map that guides our motivation to successful outcomes! When we set goals that are driven by our personal values, and not by the desires and requirements of others, we take on ownership that is deeply satisfying. Once goals are firmly set into place, be sure to seek out accountability to help you stick with it! This could be a friend, a parent, an advisor, or anyone on our Health Team.
- **Motivation** is the force that drives the entire vehicle (you)! We want to be sure the reasons empowering our motivation are productively rooted, and not based on fear of failure, or because of others' expectations, or to prove we are better than our peers. These reasons usually elicit maladaptive negative feelings and actions. Consider productive over destructive as a deciding factor in the process. The satisfaction is empowering!

No matter what, be sure to turn and face procrastination so it doesn't become a momentous force that becomes habit-forming. If you feel like it's too hard to figure out on your own, come let us know so we can help you learn how to better help yourself in overcoming this debilitating force! We are always ready and eager to help!

Acorn Ending

We are grapeful for you, and app(le)reciate the optimism and energy you bring to this special place. You're all raisin the bar every single day!

We're on your team—and we're rooting for you.



Mallory McPherson-Wehan
Health Director



Dan Petrocelli
School Counselor