



## FALL BACK

## into a Healthy Routine

### Prioritize Routine Health Checkups

Don't put off your annual health visits. Aim for at least one general healthcare visit per year—and two dental checkups annually—unless advised otherwise. Staying current on screenings, vaccines, and checkups helps catch potential issues early.

### Move More

The CDC recommends adults get at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity weekly, plus muscle-strengthening exercises two days a week. This combination enhances cardiovascular and muscular health as routines get busier this fall.

### Build Better Meals with P.F.F.C.

Want to feel fuller, longer, and fuel your body right? Just remember P.F.F.C.: Protein, Fat, Fiber, and Carbs at every meal. Opt for lean meats for protein, healthy fats like avocado or olive oil,

fiber from leafy greens and fruits, and smart carbs like oats, rice, or potatoes. Balance is the key to sustained energy and feeling your best!

### Reestablish Consistent Sleep Patterns

Aim for at least seven hours of sleep per night and get back to a consistent sleep-wake schedule—even on weekends. Removing electronic devices from the bedroom can help you wind down and maintain better sleep hygiene.

### Stay Vaccinated and Prevent Illness

Fall marks the start of flu season. The CDC strongly recommends a flu shot for everyone aged six months and older—preferably before flu season begins. Additionally, staying on top of COVID-19 or other relevant vaccinations keeps you resilient during seasonal transitions.

### Connect and Relax

Stress can accumulate as routines resume. Make time for relaxation and connection—through deep breathing, stretching, meditation, or meaningful chats with loved ones. The CDC emphasizes that unwinding and expressing gratitude are key components of overall health.

### Transition with Small, Sustainable Steps

Be gentle with yourself. Summer's looser routines can make it tough to jump back in at full speed. Re-establish healthy habits gradually—whether it's sleep, nutrition, or movement—and consider keeping a journal or setting small, achievable goals. This approach supports long-term success without burnout.

## At-a-Glance: Your Checklist

### TIP

Health Checkups \_\_\_\_\_

Move Regularly \_\_\_\_\_

P.F.F.C. \_\_\_\_\_

Consistent Sleep \_\_\_\_\_

Vaccinations \_\_\_\_\_

Relax and Connect \_\_\_\_\_

Small, Sustainable Habits \_\_\_\_\_

### WHY IT MATTERS

Early detection and preventive care

Boosts fitness and mood, reduces chronic disease risk

Remember P.F.F.C.: Protein, Fat, Fiber, and Carbs at every meal

Supports immune function, cognition, and emotional regulation

Shields against seasonal illnesses

Lowers stress and fosters mental wellbeing

Encourages lasting behavior change without overwhelm

<sup>1</sup>Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd Edition, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 2018.

<sup>2</sup>Healthy Eating Tips, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Nutrition Division, August 2021.

<sup>3</sup>How Much Sleep Do I Need? Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Sleep and Sleep Disorders, March 2022.

<sup>4</sup>Influenza (Flu) Vaccine Recommendations, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Immunization Schedules, July 2024.

<sup>5</sup>COVID-19 Vaccines, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Updated May 2025.

<sup>6</sup>Coping with Stress, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Mental Health Division, September 2022.

<sup>7</sup>Reversing Healthy Habits After Summer, Amy Morin, LCSW, Verywell Mind, August 2023.

<sup>8</sup>Cold and Flu Season Tips from Health Experts, Julia Ries, Health.com, September 2024.



# Healthier Autumn Apple Cobbler

Prep Time: 15 minutes • Cook Time: 45 minutes • Serves: 12

## Apple filling

- 6 large apples, peeled, cored, and sliced thin (Honeycrisp recommended)
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch (or arrowroot powder, for gluten-free)

## Cobbler Topping

- 1 ½ cups rolled oats
- 2 cups almond flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ⅔ cup maple syrup
- ½ cup coconut oil, melted

## Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F and grease a baking dish (approximately 11x8).
2. Peel, core and slice your apples about 1/8-inch thick. Toss slices in a mixing bowl with lemon juice, maple syrup, vanilla, cinnamon, nutmeg, and arrowroot powder (or cornstarch). Set aside while preparing crumble.
3. In a separate bowl, mix together oats, almond flour, salt, cinnamon and vanilla. Add in maple syrup and melted coconut oil. Stir until well combined.
4. Pour apples into a greased baking dish, including the liquid in the bottom of the bowl. Add dollops of the cobbler mixture onto the apples, evenly dispersing and covering as much of the top as possible.
5. Bake for 45-50 minutes, covering the top halfway through with aluminum foil if it begins to brown.
6. Serve warm — à la mode, if desired, and enjoy!

## Nutrition Information

Serving: ½ cup, Calories: 229cal, Carbohydrates: 23.8g, Protein: 2.1g, Fat: 13.2g, Sodium: 3.8mg, Sugar: 17.2g

Recipe adapted from: [erinliveswhole.com](https://erinliveswhole.com)

# Why Does Creativity Help You Process Emotions?

**Does painting, playing music, writing, or dancing help you feel better when you're "off"? It's not just the beauty of the art—it's neurobiology.**

If you haven't already, check out another recent article about the [synergistic link between creativity and mental health](#).

Have you ever had a bad day—one that just doesn't get better—but doing something even mildly creative like listening to music or consuming your favorite TV show provides a bit of comfort?

Turns out, that "comfort" makes sense. It's not the power of the song: It's the power of your brain.

Creative therapies including art, music, dance/movement, drama, and creative writing are associated with improved mental health through multiple [well-documented sources](#). Psychologists and even some psychiatrists will use the creative arts in conjunction with other treatments to improve the mental health of their patients.

## Why

These therapies facilitate emotional expression, support adaptive emotional regulation, and foster social connection. These effects, in turn, contribute to reductions in symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress across diverse populations and age groups.

Let's take it to a neurobiological level: when you engage in the creative arts, you're activating certain regions of the brain involved in emotional regulation (specifically the medial prefrontal cortex and the amygdala). The actions you take when in the creative process actually mirror those mechanisms in established emotional regulation strategies.

So, when you paint, sing, dance, write, or draw, you're actually using something called "therapeutic factors" (specifically concretization, symbolism/metaphor, and embodiment) that help you to process distress and regain a sense of empowerment. For example:

- Concretization (or the act of making something abstract into something real, specific or tactile) looks like painting anxiety as a storm, or visualizing internal emotions as tangible images.
- Symbolism/metaphor looks like singing lyrics that carry metaphorical meaning, allowing emotional expression through poetic language.

- Embodiment looks like any sort of dancing. Movement expresses emotion, trauma, and healing through the body.

As a complementary intervention within mental healthcare, creative arts make a great choice when integrated with other evidence-based treatments.

## What creativity can do for you:

- Reduce depressive symptoms
- Improve quality of life
- Promote resilience
- Foster a sense of belonging (when being creative in a group setting)

## What creativity is not:

- A solution to core psychotic symptoms like hallucinations or mania
- A first-line complementary intervention in certain anxious populations



"Creative Art Therapy for Mental Illness," Mathew Chiang et al., Psychiatry Research, March 20, 2019.

"How the Arts Heal: A Review of the Neural Mechanisms Behind the Therapeutic Effects of Creative Arts on Mental and Physical Health," Kelly Sarah Barnett & Fabian Vasiliu, Frontiers in Behavioral Neuroscience, October 1, 2024.

"Systematic Review and Economic Modelling of the Clinical Effectiveness and Cost-Effectiveness of Art Therapy Among People With Non-Psychotic Mental Health Disorders," Lesley Uttley et al., Health Technology Assessment, March 12, 2015.

Trial in Mental Health Services (The ERA Study). Trials. 2023;24(1):557. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13063-023-07232-0>