

Everyday wellness beyond Covid-19

Unisa Counselling and Career Development
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WHY WELLNESS IN CONTEXT OF COVID-19?

- To help students understand the most common ways that COVID-19 is spread
- To obtain facts on practical precautions to protect yourself and others
- To help students understand the concept of wellness
- To help students explore the eight wellness dimensions
- To provide day to day activities and coping strategies
- To reflect on your character strengths and virtues

WHAT IS COVID-19?

- Knowledge is power
- Get to understand Covid-19 and Prevention and safety precautions
- Watch these videos on the WHO website to learn more:
- <https://youtu.be/1APwq1df6Mw>
- <https://youtu.be/mOV1aBVYKGA>
- https://youtu.be/8c_UJwLq8PI

ADHERE TO SAFETY GUIDELINES

- To survive, and protect loved ones, we have to make a conscious decision and effort to change.
- Keep safe - Wear a face mask
- Cover your face with elbow when sneezing
- Wash hands with soap or sanitize
- Sing Happy Birthday while washing your hands thoroughly
- Social distance - Keep a distance from others of 1.5 to 2 metres
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- Stay at home

WHAT IS WELLNESS?

According to the National Wellness institute – wellness is:

1. a conscious, self-directed and evolving process of achieving full potential
2. multidimensional and holistic. It encompasses lifestyle, mental and spiritual well-being, and the environment
3. Wellness is positive and affirming

According to Shape magazine (March 2001), wellness is about the optimal state to which we aspire. Its about emotions, our spiritual comfort zone, health and fitness, and our general state of mind. It boils down to lifestyle, really, and getting support when things go wrong.

WELLNESS IS ABOUT...

- Self-responsibility
- Maximising potential and wellbeing
- Continuous process

- Subjective: Non-prescriptive

- Holistic and systemic
 - all spheres of life
 - interrelatedness of domains
 - recognises the importance of context



**THE 8
WELLNESS
DIMENSIONS**

PHYSICAL WELLNESS IS ABOUT...

- Caring for your body in order to stay healthy now and in the future.
- Treating any new sickness or health problems immediately.
- Choose lifestyle choices and eating habits, that are healthy.
- Focusing your efforts on boosting you immune system.
- Responsible use of substances (eg. alcohol, self-medications)
- Practising safer sex, exercise.
- Monitoring bodily functions, attending to medical check-up –reacting early (by going to clinic or Dr) (eg. breast cancer, pap smear)
- Living well with chronic conditions by taking your medications as prescribed by Dr. (diabetes, HIV, hypertension, heart, asthma) and knowing your HIV status.
- Getting sufficient sleep: requirement is average of 6-7 hours per night.
- Avoiding risky behaviours (drunk driving, alcohol, drugs, not using safety belts, smoking, etc.)
- **The new normal = ALWAYS WEAR YOUR MASK IN PUBLIC**

INTELLECTUAL WELLNESS IS ABOUT...

- Growing intellectually.
- Maintaining curiosity to learn – being a lifelong learner.
- Being open minded, open to new ideas, and new challenges.
- Thinking critically and analytically.
- Solving complex problems.
- Making sound judgement and decision.
- Responding positively to intellectual challenges.
- Expanding your knowledge.
- Being up-to-date with world, national, and local issues.
- Developing new skills, discovering your full potential.
- Creativity.

EMOTIONAL WELLNESS IS ABOUT...

- Understanding and respecting your feelings AND those of others.
- Understanding your values and attitudes – self awareness.
- Your self esteem (how you feel about self – love/ like / or don't) and improving.
- Managing your emotions in constructive and healthy manner.
- Talking to yourself (positively)- rather than using negative and destructive words
- Monitoring emotional and mental health (are you - irritable, stressed, depressed?)
- Feeling positive and enthusiastic about life.
- Learning to be assertive: respect of self AND Others; learning to say NO) : I feel Because
- Positively coping with stress (stress management).
- Developing inner strengths.
- Adapting to change (adaptability, agility).
- Developing resilience.
- Practicing emotional self care – relaxation, diary, and obtaining counselling support, etc.

SOCIAL WELLNESS IS ABOUT...

- Maintaining healthy and supportive relationships.
- How we interact with others.
- Avoiding roadblocks to effective communication.
- Embracing diversity (learning critical diversity literacy skills).
- Obtaining a sense of belonging.
- Being able to understand our own love language and identify that of others.
- Contributing to community.
- Developing new or reconnecting with old friendships.
- Caring about others.
- Building and using your social support systems – networks.
- Identifying positive role models.
- Using social media to find groups to affiliate with (e.g. Facebook/ Telegram)
- Join online interest groups, eg. on Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/MamahoodCapeTown> or Griefshare:
<https://www.griefshare.org/>)

SPIRITUAL WELLNESS IS ABOUT...

- Finding meaning and a sense of purpose.
- Believing in higher power – connecting to something greater than you (God/Buddha, ancestors/angels, etc.).
- Having faith, hope.
- Participating in activities consistent with your beliefs and values.
- Reflecting on events and finding meaning (finding purpose/ meaning in pain).
- Living in congruence with values and moral principles.
- Focusing on healing and inner peace.

CAREER WELLNESS IS ABOUT...

- Preparing for and participating in work that provides personal satisfaction.
- Finding career role models and getting career information.
- Identifying your career goals/ vision – creating a vision board.
- Contributing your unique gifts, talents, abilities, strengths.
- Developing skills and knowledge to increase competence.
- Being creative, curious, moving out of your comfort zone and learn to be multi-skilled.
- Holding a positive attitude about work and education.
- Finding work-life balance.
- Developing and updating your career portfolio.

FINANCIAL WELLNESS **IS ABOUT...**

- Awareness of personal financial situation.
- Taking financial responsibility (knowing the difference between needs and wants and prioritising).
- Budgeting and living within you financial means.
- Effectively planning and setting SMART financial goals – to reduce financial distress and anxiety.
- Saving for short term, medium and long term and for emergencies.
- Get debt free.
- Reducing high risk financial behaviours: credit cards, loans, compulsive buying.
- Keeping up-to-date with financial advise and financial literacy – by using resources (banks, financial advisors and from TV/Radio programmes, etc)

ENVIRONMENTAL WELLNESS IS ABOUT...

- Understanding how the social, natural and built environments affects one's health and wellbeing.
- Being in harmony with earth and protecting it.
- Commitment to healthy planet and saving resources.
- Looking after resources: water, energy, animals, recycling.
- Being aware of unstable state of the earth and how it affects us.
- Limiting exposure to harmful environments.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Rate your wellness on all the dimensions on a scale of 1-5 (1=very low; 5=very high).

Look at all the wellness dimensions – what is your rating for each dimension?

1. Identify 2 wellness dimensions that are areas of strength for you.
2. What helps you maintain these as areas of strength?
3. Identify a wellness dimension that is an area of growth.

FACTORS THAT AFFECT WELLNESS

- Primary determinants of health include the social, economic, and physical environments, and the person's individual characteristics and behaviors (WHO, 2015) .

Reflect on the following:

- Pandemic-Covid19
- Unemployment
- Social inequality / socio-economic status
- Media (what is emphasised/ what is neglected; Technology (+ and -)
- Culture: community, grouping, work culture (What dimensions are mostly spoken about? What are the gaps?)
- Family / where you stay
- Past habits (behaviours), and present behaviours,
- Climate changes
- Age, gender, disability
- Stigma in communities and family
- Access to resources (water, health services, electricity, etc)

DAY-TO-DAY ACTIVITIES DURING THE LOCKDOWN

- **Day 1/ Monday: Colouring in.** Enjoy the psychological benefits of colouring in: it is relaxing, encourages creativity and concentration, and it is emotionally grounding.
- **Day 2/ Tuesday:** Start a **Lockdown and beyond Diary.** Feel free to write about your thoughts, feelings, behaviors/actions, and interactions. Keep it safe/ or password protected.
- **Day 3/ Wednesday: Find a scripture or motivational quotes.** Reflecting on these. Make time to reflect on what you are grateful for. Start by writing (“Today I’m thankful for”). As an example – you may consider writing a letter to people who have supported you in your life journey.
- **Day 4/ Thursday:** “If music be the food of love, play on,” (Shakespeare). **Play music** that inspires/ uplifts you or enables you to fight back. For multiple benefits add dance or exercise to your music.

DAY-TO-DAY ACTIVITIES DURING THE LOCKDOWN

- **Day 5/ Friday: Work on a Vision board** This can be done electronically or hard copy. *Answer these questions* - 10 words to describe you –What do you like to do; what are your values (things that are most important to me), what do you believe in; what do you want from life, what do you want to achieve in your personal, studies, work, health, relationships, etc); what are your strengths, abilities, skills, and your achievements; what are your areas of growth; what positive lessons do you acquire from your role models.
- **Day 6/ Saturday: Have a laugh** Spend 2 hours watching comedy, listening to jokes, cartoons. Share a jokes with loved ones and experience the benefits of humor. You can also find lessons or get some inspiration from the storylines of movies, books, comedy shows.

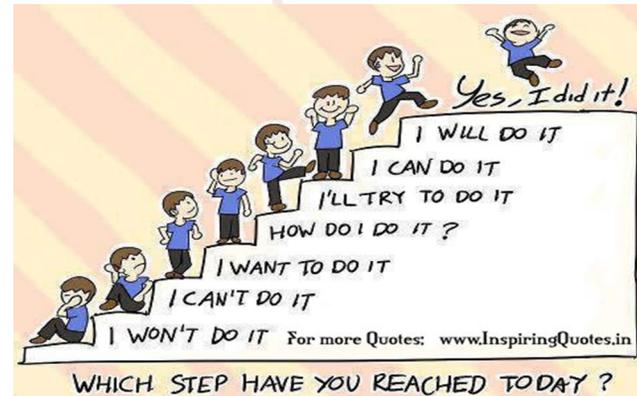
IDEAS FOR LOCKDOWN ACTIVITIES

- Connect with loved ones using video calls.
- Engage in spring cleaning and gardening – this gives order.
- Visit online libraries and get books to read.
- Enjoy sunlight and fresh air. Sit outside.
- Exercise boosts your immune system: move your body.
- Learn a new skill: beading, knitting/sewing, etc.
- Be ahead by preparing for exams: make your notes .
- **GET SUPPORT: UNISA COUNSELLING SUPPORT**

THINK POSITIVELY

- Observe and identify your pattern of thinking. Force yourself to choose an attitude of changing negative thinking to positive thinking. Be kind and caring to yourself.

NEGATIVE	POSITIVE
"I can't do this"	"I will prepare for this exam and I will do my outmost best".
"I am a failure"	"I will learn from my mistakes and do my outmost best"
"I am stuck inside lockdown"	"I can finally focus on myself".



MEDITATION

- According to Kipfer (2009) in the Native American tradition, each person has an animal spirit that serves as an ally and protector.
- Is there an animal that you are drawn to that provides a sense of protection? Eg. a lion, bear, dolphin.
- Consider this animal's qualities and strengths.
- Be aware of your animal spirit's presence within you and visualise its protective companionship guiding you whenever you feel lonely and worried.

COPING STRATEGIES

- **Identify role models and survivors of Covid-19.** Look at their coping techniques.
- **Create a routine** of tasks for the day. This gives a sense of purpose (eg. cleaning, work, cooking, etc). The period of lockdown also forces us to learn discipline.
- Use a cellphone / laptop to **search for pictures of nature and sounds** of nature. This enables an appreciation of beauty. It also allows one to be interconnected with nature and its healing powers.
- **Positive affirmations:** Life has value even in the harshest circumstances, however tough things may seem. Say YES to life in spite of everything (Kipfer, 2009).
- **Art therapy:** creative channels for expression may be encouraged, for nonverbal self-expressions will often spring from unconscious sources and do not get blocked by the rational and critical mind (Hiltunen, 1988).

ACTIVITY

1. Develop a list of your achievements and success
2. Make a list of how you survived difficulties/ challenges

SELF-REFLECTIVE ACTIVITY: CHARACTER STRENGTHS AND VIRTUES

- Go to <https://www.viacharacter.org/character-strengths>
- OR
- Use the PDF document – that has a list of 24 Character Strengths



PDF File

- a) Identify 5 top strengths and priorities them in order. Justify yourself.
- b) Identify 2 strengths that you would like to work on to improve

CARING FOR AND APPRECIATING OTHERS

- Show empathy, respect and support to people.
- Think about those infected by Covid-19 and those who have lost family members due to the pandemic.
- Make time get your mind off the pandemic for a while. Share positive stories of surviving or coping with Covid-19 or quotes to motivate others, rather than constantly focusing on the statistics.
- Avoid stigmatising and humiliating people, because Covid-19 infection can happen to anyone of us.
- Protect others by adhering to preventative measures.

LEARN FROM OTHERS

- Concentration tips:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z1UaU6O59tg>
- Relaxation exercise – focus on the deep breathing technique:
<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/relaxation-techniques-for-stress-relief.htm>
- Dance Therapy:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xs3Lz2_RAYo
- Mindfulness relaxing music for stress relief - calm instrumental background music for relaxation:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qB0Gms_GrtQ

USEFUL NUMBERS DURING THE LOCKDOWN

- Corona virus (COVID-19) 24-hour hotline: 080 002 9999
- COVID-19 connect (WhatsApp): 060 012 3456
- Suicide crisis line: 080 056 7567
- Lifeline: 086 132 2322
- Domestic violence helpline: 080 015 0150
- Childline: 080 005 5555
- Unisa Covid-19 resources and messages: [https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/myunisa/default/Announcements/Coronavirus-\(COVID%E2%80%9319\)-update](https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/myunisa/default/Announcements/Coronavirus-(COVID%E2%80%9319)-update)
- The *SA Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG)* offers online resources related to your mental health and COVID-19. Learn more about managing stress and anxiety as well as living with a mental illness on their website at <http://www.sadag.org/>.

EVALUATION

Use this link to evaluate this presentation :

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=jluayqM-mUekPIUQOY56O2t_x6pVC3JKjDjdbYYz705UQjJBVUc1QTU5QVJKT01UNIIOWjBDNE1NSy4u

GOT SOME QUESTIONS ? WANT TO SHARE YOUR INSIGHTS?

- We are available by email:

<https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/myunisa/default/Learner-support-&-regions/Counselling-and-career-development/Contact-us>

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Contact us

Visit our website for more resources to help you

<https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/myunisa/default/Learner-support-&-regions/Counselling-and-career-development/Downloads-and-podcasts>

We are available by e-mail:

- Send an e-mail to counselling@unisa.ac.za should you need to discuss any needs you may have in terms of further support.
- Contact Counselling and Career Development at a [regional centre closest to you](#).

