

Wellbeing Update - 27th January 2021

Hello everyone

This week's e-mail has some tips for maintaining positive mental health. I thought it may be useful to have some in one list. By clicking on the button below you can see a 'Health and Wellbeing diary' which I would encourage you to read and use. This great resource was put together by Ben Parfitt at Hereford Sixth Form College who has kindly let me share this with you. Please let me know if you would prefer a paper copy to work on.

[Health & Wellbeing Diary](#)

As always if you would like to talk about anything that is worrying you, your tutors are there for you, or you can contact me directly by e-mail j.ferman@wsfc.ac.uk or phone 01905 362614.

Tips for maintaining your mental health

1. Be with nature

Get outside in the garden, open a window, go for a walk, cycle, or run as your permitted exercise. Even just sitting outside for 10 or 15 minutes per day and concentrating on your surroundings can help boost your mood. Use your senses to 'be in the moment', practice some mindfulness and be calm. RSPB Birdwatch are doing the Big Garden Birdwatch survey. They are asking for volunteers to spend an hour counting the birds you see in your garden or from a balcony, then tell them what you saw. For more info click on this link [RSPB birdwatch](#)

2. Write things down

[Write things on a note pad](#), or post-its. It can be things that you have been grateful for that day, or a 'to do' list to help you feel in control. Make a list of all

the things that regularly worry you and come up with a realistic plan for tackling them.

Writing is a creative way to improve mental health. and it doesn't have to take hours to do. Having up to 20 quiet minutes every day for mindful writing will help ease your anxiety, calm down your thoughts and emotions, and bring peace to your mind

3. Have some screen-free time each day

Turn off your computer, take a break from your phone or laptop and just 'be in the moment' with no distractions.

4. Eat and drink well

Evidence suggests that as well as affecting our physical health, what we eat may also affect the way we feel. It is also very important to stay hydrated.

Click this link for info on [How to manage your mood with food](#)

5. Get enough sleep

Sleep is incredibly important to help maintain positive wellbeing. The 'Headspace' app offers a free trial and Music platforms such as Spotify have playlists to aid relaxation and sleep. The NHS app 'sleepstation' is free with a GP referral. Your tutor can also give you more information and tips about maintaining a good sleep routine.

6. Listen to music

Music can have a powerful effect on mental health and wellbeing as it triggers the release of the feel-good chemical dopamine in the brain. Make a playlist of music that you feel lifts you up and use it like therapy if you're feeling a bit low. Dance and sing for that extra feel-good boost too. Spotify do some great ready-made playlists such as 'Feel Good Friday'

7. Do something for others

Volunteering is a great way to do something for others and research shows that

it benefits people of all ages through increasing feelings of self-esteem, social connection, and wellbeing. Look at **Impact** on your student Portal or e-mail 'careers@wsfc.ac.uk' for more info about volunteering. Volunteering also looks great on your application to uni or for employment.

8. Do some exercise

Exercise provides so many positive benefits: to mood, physical health, sleep and memory. It doesn't have to be a full-on fitness class, although there are lots of online workouts available for all abilities. Exercise can simply be doing some more of the household chores, gardening, walking the dog. There are many studies which have shown that doing any kind of physical activity can improve mental health, for example;

- better sleep – by making you feel more tired at the end of the day
- happier moods – physical activity releases feel-good hormones that make you feel better in yourself and give you more energy
- managing stress, anxiety or intrusive and racing thoughts – doing something physical releases cortisol which helps us manage stress. Being physically active also gives your brain something to focus on and can be a positive coping strategy for difficult times

Click this link for [5 ways to get moving and feel better](#)

9. Connect with people

Stay in contact with your friends and family. Friendships offer a number of mental health benefits, such as increased feelings of belonging, purpose, increased levels of happiness, reduced levels of stress, improved self-worth and confidence. Engage in online lessons to connect with your college peers and teachers, and contact your tutor if you want to talk.

10. Do something for yourself

From enjoying your favourite hobby, learning something new or simply taking time to relax with a pamper evening, a warm bath, listening to music, or

watching a good film, it's important to do things that make you happy. Look after yourself and indulge in a little self care each week.

Stay safe and stay positive everyone. Take care of yourselves.

Julie Ferman

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