

Wellness Tips during the Pandemic

Diversitat Vision

To empower individuals and communities to reach their full potential.

Diversitat Values

Dignity, respect and acceptance are basic values defining our humanity and must be afforded to every individual in our society.

Welcome to Wellness Tips during the Pandemic

Globally we are feeling the impacts of a pandemic and complete change of how we live our lives, how we communicate, touch base with and connect to the things we have taken for granted.

The World Health Organisation defines wellness as the optimal state of health of individuals and groups which encompasses the individuals physical, psychological, social, spiritual and economical dimensions, as seen in the Wellness Wheel.

It's good to check in occasionally to ascertain how balanced your own wellness wheel is looking.



Wellness is a modern concept but with very ancient roots and cultures, where the tenets of wellbeing encompassed the importance of spiritual, physical and mental health all working in harmony. All ancient cultures had sophisticated ways of understanding health and staying well by emphasising and embracing the whole person.

We are a culturally diverse workplace of clients and staff so many of you may already be familiar with different aspects of wellness through the whole person.

The concept of wellness appears to have come full circle and for many of us right now, we are having to pull in all of our resilience, knowledge and strength to adjust to the situations we are facing through the Covid pandemic.

Most staff have been carrying out welfare checks with clients over the past week, and we have been reminded strongly of the importance of the dimensions of the wellness.

Many of the clients we have spoken with are drawing on their cultural beliefs and traditions.



Many have strong family and community connections and support.

They are robust and resilient in making the most of what they have in their kitchen and garden.

They are keeping as many routines as possible to feel less instability and they are as much as possibly staying active in some way or another.

The experience has not necessarily been the same for new arrivals into Australia.

For many this has been an incredibly frustrating experience with restrictions of services such as banking, Centrelink and the ability to be shown their new location as they would have normally before Covid.

Under the circumstances the staff and the clients are doing the best they can, but as we can imagine this has been another layer of complexity, frustration and vulnerability that many of the new arrivals are experiencing right now.

How are you, either as a staff member, volunteer or client been experiencing this time of Covid and isolation?

Here are some questions that you may like to consider.

- *Give a word to describe this pandemic for you.*
- *What strengths or values have you drawn on at this time?*
- *What have you missed the most from your normal life?*
- *Has anything funny or inspirational happened to you during working or staying at home?*
- *Have you created or changed any habit or learnt anything different during this time that you are wishing to stick with post Covid?*

Tips for looking after our mental health during this Pandemic.

Maintain perspective

Whilst this epidemic is of a concern, remember that the medical world is doing its best to contain the virus, as well as us all following the professional information and helping stop the spread of the virus.

Limit your exposure to media coverage

Whilst staying informed is good, too much of it can affect your mental health. Pick what you watch and when you watch it. Keeping as "normal" a routine as possible at this time is vital.

Accept that we are all in the storm but in very different boats

Just because we are all being affected by Coronavirus, don't assume that we are all be affected in the same way.

Some people will still have a job this week, but not next week.

Another person hasn't found any great difference to their daily life, whereas their neighbour is totally struggling with the changes.

One mum is loving the time with their children and being home, when for the next family, it's a challenge beyond their coping ability.

Seek support

I think there will be ups and downs for most people during this outbreak. It is normal to feel overwhelmed or distressed at times, and it is important to remember and reach out to your support networks when this is happening, and acknowledge your feelings of distress.

Seek professional support early if you're struggling.

Unburden yourself by externalising your worries: Guatemalan Worry Dolls



We have been dealing with overflowing inboxes, never ending to do lists and new routines in a Covid time. It's easy to feel your head swirling with the demands or stresses at present. Let the worry dolls ease some of your pressure.

Legend has it that when a pair of native Mayan children were overcome with fear or worry they would make a family of tiny colourful dolls. They would tell the dolls their concerns and then put the dolls under their pillow before going to sleep. The children would wake refreshed and inspired.

Sleep is important for our health and so is having somewhere to place our worries. Find some ways to relieve your busy mind by doing some craft or art that allows you to get into the flow and out of the fear. Talk to a friend or counsellor, or write down your concerns. Being able to articulate your concerns allows the weight of the world to fall away.

Mindfulness & meditation

A great little mindfulness tip is to take a 30-60 second break when transitioning from one task to another – for example before eating/ before resuming work/before bed. Just stop, close your eyes and breathe deeply and slowly in and out.

For a quick 7-minute meditation try this:

<https://gawler.org/7-minute-mindfulness-meditation/>

Having trouble sleeping or needing more energy try this Yoga Nidra:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7H0FKzeuVVs>

Make movement part of your routine

Exercise is great for physical health but it also has a positive effect on your wellbeing. You've been sitting all this time reading, so now it's time to open this link and get up and MOVE.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M1F0IBnsnkE>

Regular physical activity is a good way to help prevent or manage mild anxiety and depression. Keeping active can help you stay physically fit and mentally healthy, which is particularly important as people deal with the effects of COVID-19.

Research shows that keeping active can:

- help lift mood
- help improve sleeping patterns
- increase energy levels
- help block negative thoughts and/or distract people from daily worries

The current recommendation is at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity on most, and preferably all, days of the week. While this is slightly more complicated than usual with the closure of gyms and sporting clubs, it is still vital that people are exercising regularly in whatever ways they can

Tips to get started

Start simple

Build your confidence with basic activities such as walking, gardening or small household tasks. Just walking around the clothesline or a chair is a great achievement for many - don't underestimate the power of small steps.

Do what is enjoyable

Given the current climate, people may lose interest and pleasure in doing things they once enjoyed. Plan activities that are enjoyable, interesting, relaxing or satisfying where possible.

Include other people

Staying connected with friends and family is tricky at the moment but you can still do so virtually, which helps increase wellbeing and confidence.

Make a plan

Planning a routine can help people become more active – make sure some form of exercise is included each day. Try to stick to the plan as closely as possible, but be flexible.

Examples of activities to include in your routine

Keep fit

- Go for a walk
- Do some gardening

Pamper yourself

- Have a bubble bath
- Read a book

Socialise

- Phone a friend for a chat
- Play with your pet

Entertain yourself

- Write a letter/email
- Do a crossword/Sudoku

Around the house

- Cook something new
- Have a Zoom dinner party

Wellbeing Contacts & Websites

Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Support Service

https://coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au/?utm_campaign=hp_banner

Beyond Blue

<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>

Meditation audios

<https://gawler.org/additional-resources-events/meditation-audios/>

Lifeline

<https://www.lifeline.org.au/get-help/topics/mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>