

8 Domains of Well-Being... COVID-19 Style!

Unquestionably, these are tough days. The COVID-19 pandemic has required us to make significant changes professionally and personally, in a very short period of time, while also attending to our feelings around the disease. For many of us, we may be having trouble partaking in usual activities that support our well-being. This resource was designed to help stimulate ideas for well-being activities during COVID-19.

The idea came during our well-being discussion during the Ontario Veterinary College's Resilience Rotation for fourth year DVM students in March. (This is a 1-week elective rotation involving well-being and resilience instruction in an experiential learning format). Instead of brainstorming well-being activities during "normal times", the students and I decided to create a list of activities that could be done within COVID restrictions. The list took on a life of its own from there, as so many individuals and organizations are sharing great ideas for well-being! I would like to thank the following students for their contributions: **Alison Brennan, Jacqueline Brooks, Aime Brown, Werdah Iqbal, Clarissa O'Sullivan, Andrea Patterson, Alyssa Rice, and Salomon Schroeter**. I would also like to thank the talented **Dr. Alex Sawatzky** for her incredible artistic design and drawings.

The resource is based around Peggy Swarbrick's *Model of Wellness* (pswarbrick@cspnj.org) – it is a terrific resource for those who may be looking to learn more. I think it is really important (*especially* right now) to point out that we don't need to attend to ALL domains at once, or all proposed activities. Instead, we can choose those activities that most appeal to us and make whatever small changes are within our control. And it is essential that we be compassionate with ourselves during the process. Whatever we are able to do is great, regardless of the size of the change. Even small changes can be very powerful! They can induce feelings of positivity, personal control, and a sense of agency – and small changes can add up to something really impactful.

I hope this guide is helpful. I'm rooting for you.
Andria Jones-Bitton

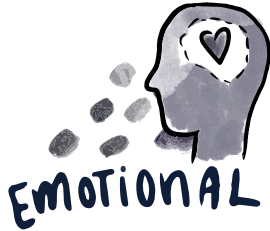
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**Disclaimer: This resource is not intended to be medical advice,
and is meant for personal educational purposes only.**



EMOTIONAL

The ability to express feelings, enjoy life, adjust to emotional challenges, and cope with stress and traumatic life experiences



SOCIAL

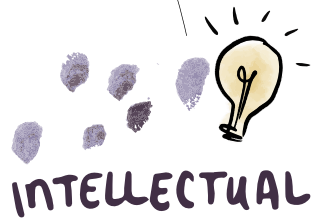
Developing a sense of connection, belonging, and a well-developed support system



SPIRITUAL

Expanding our sense of purpose and meaning in life

WELL-BEING DURING COVID-19



INTELLECTUAL

Recognizing creative abilities and finding ways to expand knowledge and skills



OCCUPATIONAL

Personal satisfaction and enrichment derived from one's work



FINANCIAL

Satisfaction with current and future financial situation



ENVIRONMENTAL

Good health by occupying pleasant, stimulating environments that support well-being



PHYSICAL

Recognizing the needs for physical activity, diet, sleep, and nutrition

Reference: [Swarbrick and Yudorf, 2015](#)

Contact: [Dr. Andria Jones-Bitton](#), Ontario Veterinary College

Artistic Design: [Dr. Alex Sawatzky](#)

EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

The ability to express feelings, enjoy life, adjust to emotional challenges, and cope with stress and traumatic life experiences* *during COVID-19*

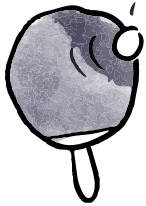


Mind-body techniques; breathing for stress reduction (e.g. [Heart Rate Variability apps](#); [HRV4Training app](#); Kathy Somers' [website](#)).



Write your own [gratitude letter](#). Learn more about gratitude from [Mindful](#).

Gratitude ping-pong – with a partner, take turns saying things you are grateful for, trying not to repeat answers, for 5 minutes. note how you feel afterward!



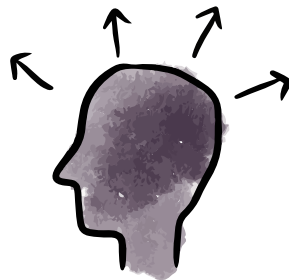
Journaling for [well-being](#).



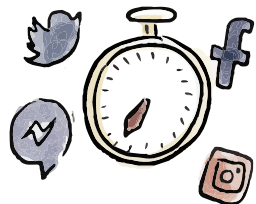
Books (e.g. Neil Pasricha's "[You are Awesome: Navigate Change, Wrestle with Failure, Live an Intentional Life](#)"; Humble the Poet's "[Things No One Else Can Teach Us](#)"; Gary John Bishop's "[Unf*ck Yourself: Get Out of Your Head and Into Your Life](#)"; anything by [Brené Brown](#)).



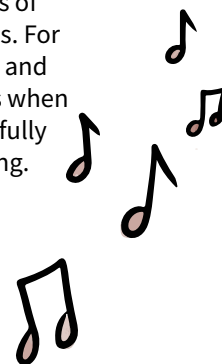
Meditation apps (e.g. [Headspace](#), [Calm](#)) or websites (e.g. [Centre for Mindfulness Studies](#), [The Awake Network](#) has a great list of free meditation resources).



Be mindful – there are lots of ways to practice mindfulness. For example, try being present and paying attention to your pets when you pet them. Or, try to be fully present when you're eating.



Setting a daily media / news limit to avoid feelings of overwhelm. Ask a friend to notify you if you're worried about missing something important.



Listen to your favourite music or enjoy a [live stream of a virtual concert](#).



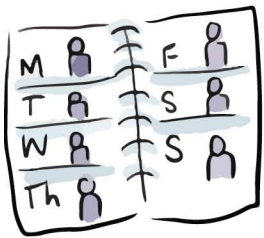
Self-compassion: recognize that we can't do everything we are used to doing; recognize that we are all in the same situation and it is okay; treat ourselves with kindness (speak to ourselves as we would speak to others). Check out [Dr. Kristin Neff](#) for self-compassion exercises, including a [free video series](#).

* [Swarbrick and Yudorf, 2015](#)

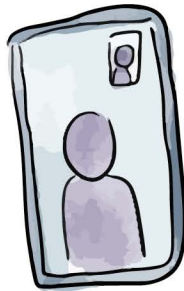


SOCIAL WELL-BEING

Developing a sense of connection, belonging, and a well-developed support system* *during COVID-19*



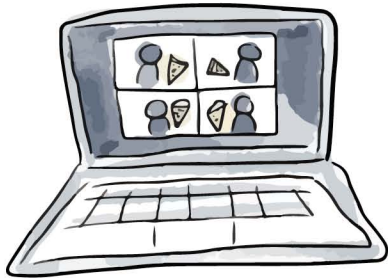
Connect with at least one friend daily (we can even catch up with those friends we may have lost touch with).



Connect via phone calls or video calls for more meaningful engagement than texting.



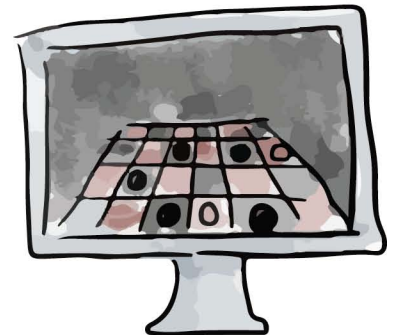
Start an [online book club](#).



Get together with friends virtually (e.g. Facetime, Zoom, Outlook Teams). Consider preparing your meals at the same time, or studying “together”.

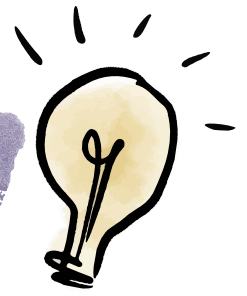


Download Chrome extension '[Netflix Party](#)' to watch Netflix with friends who are situated elsewhere.

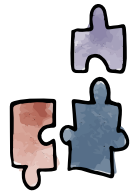


Play online games together (e.g. [board games](#); [Tabletop Simulator](#)).

* [Swarbrick and Yudorf, 2015](#)



INTELLECTUAL WELL-BEING



Hobbies (e.g. puzzles, knitting, and painting).



Go through your digital photos and make a photo album (e.g. [Shutterfly](#), [Picaboo](#)).



Reading (start that book series you've been wanting to read)! Maybe take advantage of e-books at your local library (Guelphites: see [e-books at the Guelph Library](#)).

Recognizing creative abilities and finding ways to expand knowledge and skills* during COVID-19

Learn a new song on a musical instrument.



Try a new recipe (check out Jamie Oliver's '[Keep Cooking and Carry On](#)' series and [flexible recipes](#))



Practice a new language (e.g. [Duolingo](#)).



Listen to podcasts (e.g. David Burns' '[Feeling Good](#)'; Dr. Steven Taylor's '[What Happens to Our Minds During a Pandemic](#)'; and Dr. Seja Patel's '[Are you the perfect quarantine parent? \(No, and there's no need to be\)](#)').

Check out [Broadway musicals](#) (for free!)



Online courses (many are now free during COVID-19 social distancing, including Yale's [Science of Well-Being](#), the University of Toronto's [Mind Control: Managing Your Mental Health during COVID-19](#), and Starling Minds' [Managing Stress and Anxiety During COVID-19](#)).

Online games (bonus points for doing this virtually with friends – social well-being too!)



Check out [virtual travel options](#) (including sites like [le Louvre](#) and the [Sistine Chapel](#)!) or museums like The British Museum's '[Museum of the World](#)'.

* [Swarbrick and Yudorf, 2015](#)

ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING

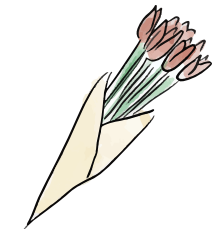


Good health by occupying pleasant, stimulating environments that support well-being* *during COVID-19*

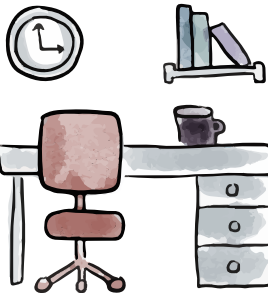
Tidy / organize at least one room at home for comfort / feelings of calm.



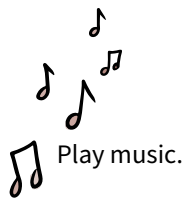
De-clutter your home or work space.



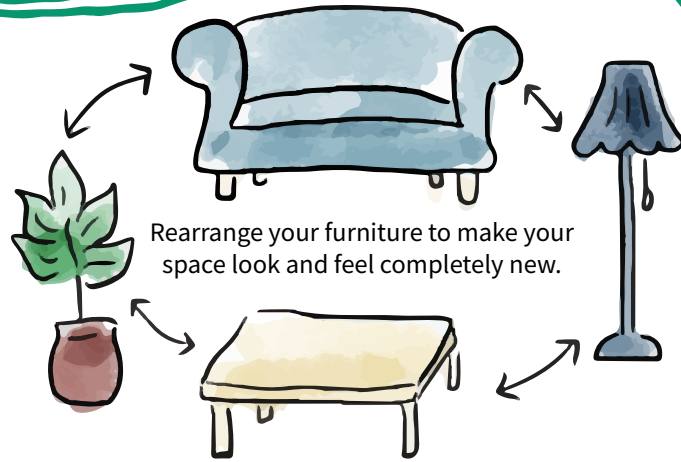
Add fresh flowers to your grocery list.



If working from home, try to create an office / work space, so you can set a work mindset and take breaks from work.



Play music.



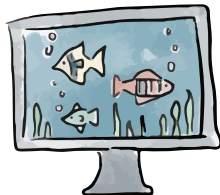
Rearrange your furniture to make your space look and feel completely new.



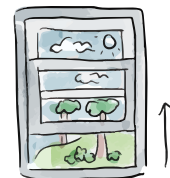
Light candles.



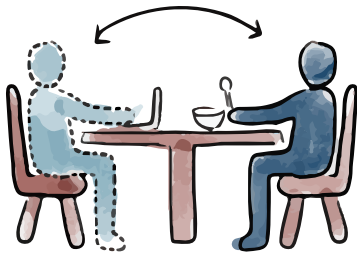
Diffuse essential oils for a pleasing scent.



Change your computer screen savers to something new and visually appealing (e.g. aquarium, fireplace, livestream a zoo).



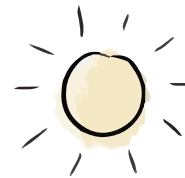
Open a window for some fresh air.



Move to different areas when studying / working (even just change which seat you sit in at the table).



Change your bedsheets.

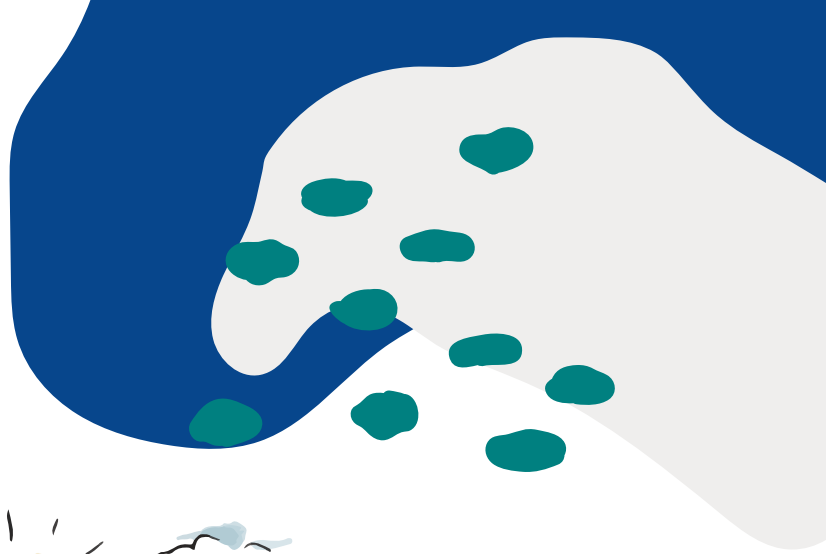


Go for a walk outside and notice the spring buds (bonus points for picking up litter!) - just remember physical distancing rules!

* [Swarbrick and Yudorf, 2015](#)



PHYSICAL WELL-BEING



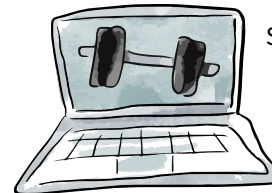
Recognizing the needs for physical activity, diet, sleep, and nutrition* during COVID-19



Take a walk outside (while attending to physical distancing and any prescribed isolation rules).



Maintain your usual daily routine (wake up at the same time, shower, dress, etc.)



See if your gym is offering online fitness classes (Check out the [University of Guelph Athletics Centre's free classes](#)).



Try bedtime stories / night-time routines on apps like [Headspace](#) and [Calm](#).

Check out an online sleep program (e.g. [Sleepio - CBT for Sleep](#); [Kathy Somers](#); [Doze app](#)).

Try online fitness videos (YouTube can help) or apps. If time is of the essence, consider "mini workout sessions" (e.g. [Seven](#), a 7-minute workout app); [Workout for Women](#) app).

Check out other health and fitness apps (e.g. [Participation](#), [Centr](#), [Nike training app](#), [Fitbit Premium](#)).

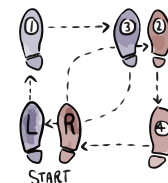


Hydrate!

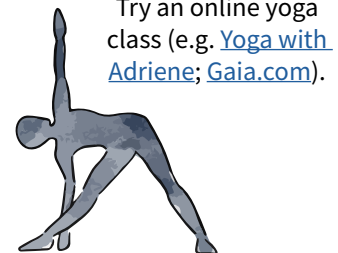
Have fun with hygiene (e.g. face masks, deep condition your hair, relaxation baths).



Eat to support well-being (see this [article](#) by University of Guelph's Lindzie O'Reilly for changing limiting thinking around food).



Learn a new style of dance (YouTube can help).



Try an online yoga class (e.g. [Yoga with Adriene](#); [Gaia.com](#)).

Take a few minutes to [stretch](#) while you are working.



Check out your office ergonomics (e.g. using this [video](#)).

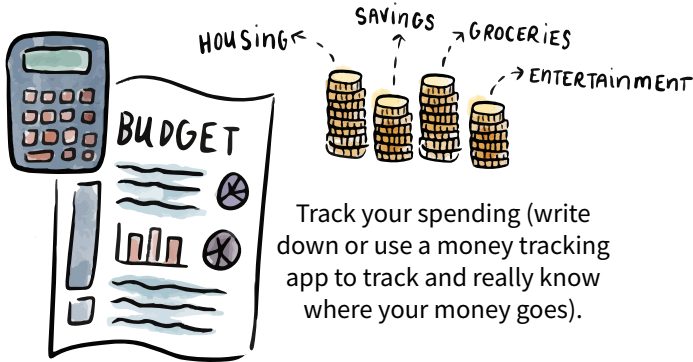
* [Swarbrick and Yudorf, 2015](#)



FINANCIAL WELL-BEING

The ability to have financial resources to meet practical needs, and a sense of control and knowledge about personal finances* *during COVID-19*

Create and maintain a [budget](#).



[Curb online shopping](#) (e.g. set a budget, leave things in cart without checking out, differentiate needs vs. wants).



Find ways to self-care that don't involve shopping (e.g. hobbies, make a favourite meal, take a bath).

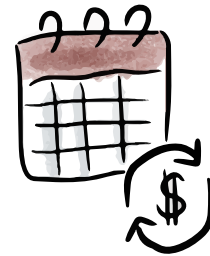
De-clutter and set aside unwanted items for later sale (e.g. consignment shops, Kijiji).



Identify your financial stressors, and make a plan to address them (a credit counsellor or financial planner might help).



Research financial planners who you may want to connect with.



Set bills to auto-pay to avoid interest charges from missed due dates.



Check out ideas to limit food waste and get the most out of your grocery dollars (The Guelph Family Health Study has a terrific cookbook: ['Rock What You've Got: Recipes for Preventing Food Waste'](#) - available free!).

* [Swarbrick and Yudorf, 2015](#)



OCCUPATIONAL WELL-BEING



Occupational (or volunteer) activities that provide personal enrichment, satisfaction, and pleasure in life, and offer a sense of meaning and purpose* during COVID-19

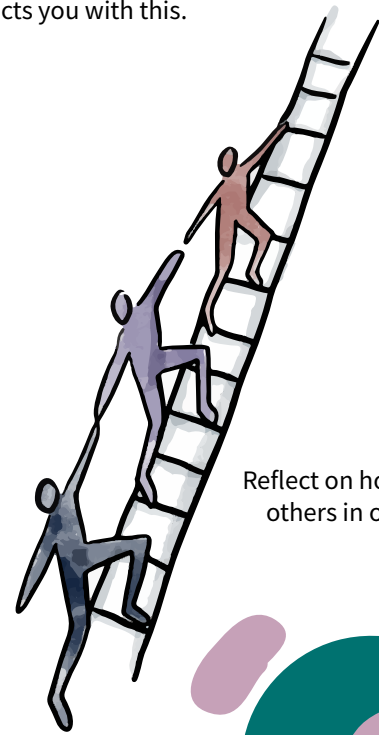
As with Spiritual well-being, reflect on what gives you a sense of [meaning and purpose](#), and try to do something each day that re-connects you with this.

Reflect on the aspects of our work that are:

- Stimulating
- Personally satisfying
- Allow us to use our talents
- Allow for personal growth.



For veterinarians: Remind yourself of the [meaningful aspects of our veterinary work](#). Read through some of the thank you cards from clients that you may have saved to remind you of the positive impact you make in people's and animals' lives.



Reflect on how we help others in our work.



For farmers: Reflect on the personal satisfaction that comes from your connection with the land and/or animals, and the meaning and purpose in producing food for the country and beyond.



For teachers: Reflect on the personal satisfaction and connection that comes in "reaching" and helping a student, and the meaning and purpose in being a part of students' learning and growth.



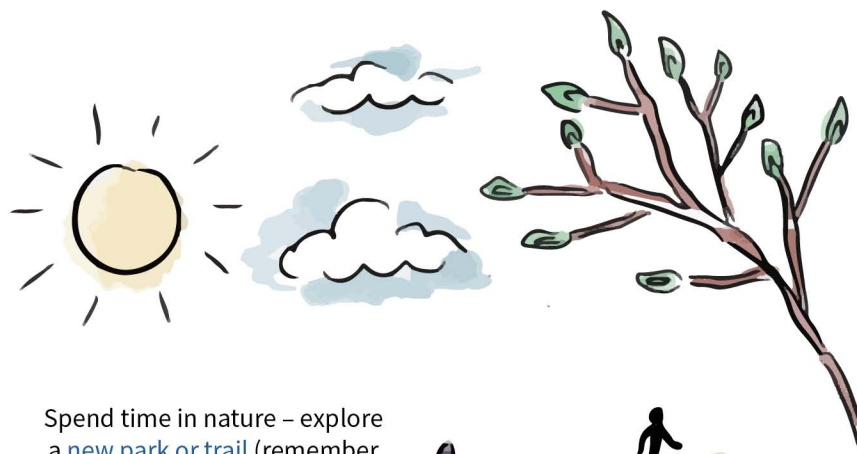
For students: Reflect on the stimulating aspects of learning, and the personal growth that comes with each passing semester.

* [Swarbrick and Yudorf, 2015](#)

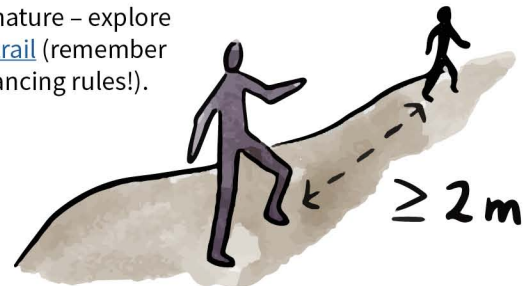


SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING

Expanding our sense of meaning and purpose, and feelings of balance and peace* *during COVID-19*



Spend time in nature – explore a [new park or trail](#) (remember physical distancing rules!).



Set your phone to airplane mode so you aren't distracted by notifications.



See if your place of worship is offering livestreaming of services.

See how you can help others in the community, such as volunteering (for more ideas to help in Guelph, see [here](#)).



Buy groceries and drop them off for an elderly/immunocompromised neighbour or someone else needing a hand.



Reflect on what gives you a sense of [meaning and purpose](#), and try to do something each day that re-connects you with that.

Engage in activities that align with your personal values and beliefs.



Pray, [meditate](#), or spend time in reflection.

* [Swarbrick and Yudorf, 2015](#)