

# From your Counselling Department-

## Maintaining Health During COVID-19

To University Hill Students,

There is no doubt that the threat and precautionary measures of the COVID-19 pandemic are causing a high level of stress and worry. As students you may have questions and fears related to this situation and, therefore, your capacity to stay calm, present, and compassionate is more important than ever.

While we are not able to meet as directly as we would like, we want to share some strategies that you can use and share with friends and loved ones....



### **Maintain a healthy routine**

- Sleep before midnight, get up before noon - flipping your sleep to being awake at night and asleep during the day can contribute to poor health and wellness.

### **Moderate screen time**

- Try to find activities that do not involve TV, phone, and computer screens – read, write, meditate, exercise, draw/paint, listen to music, craft, practice a hobby, talk...

### **Maintain a nutritious diet and drink plenty of water**

- There is an obvious link between what we ingest and how we feel, but the lack of normal movement and exercise increases this effect. If possible, try to eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, drink lots of water, and avoid fatty and high sugar foods.

### **Exercise and go outside**

- Exercise, fresh air, and maintaining a physical proximity to others are important for overall health and wellness. Be creative and try to find ways to get your heart rate up – walk, run, dance, lift a bag of rice ten times, WHATEVER! Remember, you *are* allowed to go outside, just make sure you limit it to a few hours a day and maintain physical distancing of 2 meters.



### **Stay connected to people**

- Maintaining verbal, written or virtual connection to those we care about maintains our sense of purpose and value and improves our overall health and wellness. While you can't shake hands, give a high-five or hug, you can send memes, texts, phone calls, letters, and emails.

### **Limit COVID-19 related media**

- Most news we hear about COVID-19 is either negative, uncertain or comes with "but's" and "what if's", so try to limit it to none at all or just enough to give you a sense of empowerment in understanding the situation. Things don't change much day to day so riding the news stream 24 hours a day will only stress you out.

### **Ask for help when you need it**

- This situation is tough, and it has never really been experienced in our lifetime, so it's normal to feel scared, confused, lost, or hopeless, but we can't stay there. Under normal situations we experience these feelings momentarily, but we can move on. If you find yourself stuck in these feelings, you need to talk to someone and get some help.

*With that in mind, here are some ways to climb out of those negative feelings...*

## Changing the Record

During stressful or difficult times our thinking can get the better of us. Like a record stuck on repeat, negative thoughts can bounce around our head and make us feel overwhelmed or hopeless. Often it is the frequency of these negative thoughts, rather than the situation itself, that causes us the most pain, so we need to find ways to change the record. Here are some mindful tips...



**Come back to the present moment.** With so much uncertainty all we truly have is the present moment. A simple way of coming back to the present is by using your breathing as an anchor.

*When you breathe in, say silently to yourself, “Here.”*

*When you breathe out, say “Now.”*

*Breathing in, breathing out... “Here ... Now....”*

Your mind may wonder into worries about the future and uncertainties, but even when that is happening you can return your attention to the present moment, using breathing as a “home base.” Try to maintain this exercise for 3-5 minutes.

**Experience gratitude.** While unpleasant, it’s important to acknowledge and accept a current situation. For example, right now you may be feeling grief or sadness over something that has been lost or cancelled. Even while accepting this reality, try to bring awareness to the positive realities in your life that are *still* available to nourish your wellness in the present moment.

*Try the, “This is not cancelled” Practice: Make a physical, verbal or mental list out loud of positive things you have noticed recently that has not been cancelled or changed (the sun on your face, a favourite song, fresh air, the support of friends and family).*

You can even practice this with others, either out loud (phone / online) or on social media, and it becomes a wonderful group practice and sharing!

**Daily formal meditation/mindfulness.** Maintaining a daily or as-needed meditation practice can provide you with a period of time everyday to just “be” and not have to “do”. With so much uncertainty it can seem overwhelming so pausing to centre and ground yourself resets your mind and allows you to transition your thinking. It doesn’t necessarily get rid of your thoughts, but it calms your mind so that we can process those thoughts and make rationale (rather than panicked) choices.

# MINDFULNESS RESOURCES

Mindfulness is all about encouraging awareness of oneself in the present moment, without judgment. Practicing mindfulness can help to improve our social and emotional wellbeing, and contribute to the ability to manage difficult or stressful situations.



## **Mental Health Video Library**

Watch these mindfulness videos to guide you through mindfulness practice. These short mindfulness practices can support you in becoming more present and reduce stress in your daily life. You can access all these videos on the Health Promotion Video Library.

<http://www.phsa.ca/staff-resources/health-promotion/tools-resources/video-library#Mental-Health>

## **Mindfulness Audio Recording**

Mindfulness helps you become focused and allows you to rest from constant thinking. Practice being in the present and let go of worries about the future and past.

<https://keltymentalhealth.ca/collection/guided-mindfulness-meditations> (streaming audio files)

<https://soundcloud.com/phsabc/sets/> (streaming audio files)

<http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/students/health/audio/01%20Mindfulness-10%20minute%20practice.mp3> (download audio file)

## **Mindfulness Scripts**

<https://crisiscentre.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Mindful-Breathing.website.pdf>

<https://crisiscentre.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Body-Scan.website.pdf>

## **Mindful Apps**

Apps are a great way to find peace and calmness when you're on the go. Find an app that works for you and keep it in your toolbox for the days you need it most. Whether you're looking to reduce anxiety or meditate more, apps are a great way to find peace and calmness when you're on the go (links below).

[My SSP](#)

[Mindshift](#)

[Stop, Breathe & Think](#)

[Calm](#)

[Insight Timer](#)

[BellyBio](#)

[Moodmission](#)

[Sanvello](#)

[Happify](#)

[Headspace](#)

[Healthy Minds](#)

[Breathr](#)

[The Mindfulness App](#)

[Mindfulness Meditation](#)



## **HELPFUL SITES TO SUPPORT WELLNESS**

### **CRISIS CENTER**

The Crisis Centre values the importance of community, connection and support during this current health situation. To support your mental health and wellbeing, they are expanding their mindfulness-based programs online for youth and adults.

**Anywhere in BC 1-800-SUICIDE:** 1-800-784-2433

**Mental Health Support Line:** 604 310-6789

**Youth Chat** <https://youthinbc.com/>



### **KIDS HELP PHONE**

Kids Help Phone is Canada's only 24/7, national support service. They offer professional counselling, information and referrals and volunteer-led, text-based support to young people in both English and French.

Phone counsellor 24/7 at 1-800-668-6868.

Live Chat 12:00am-7:00am <https://kidshelpphone.ca/live-chat>

Text CONNECT to 686868

Download the App



### **FOUNDRY BC**

Foundry offers young people ages 12-24 health and wellness resources, services and supports – online and through integrated service centres in communities across BC.

<https://foundrybc.ca/>



### **KELTY MENTAL HEALTH**

Living through mental health challenges is hard. Whether you are going through struggles yourself, or supporting a friend or loved one, the Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre is here for you. Their website includes information, tools and supports for yourself or a friend. If you want to talk to someone who might be able to understand what you're going through, our youth peer support workers have their own lived experience with mental health challenges and are here to support you through your struggles.

All of our services are free of charge, and you can reach us over the phone (1-800-665-1822), in person or by email ([keltycentre@cw.bc.ca](mailto:keltycentre@cw.bc.ca)).

<https://keltymentalhealth.ca/youth-young-adults>



### **APPS or ONLINE RESOURCES AVAILABLE**

- *Mindshift CBT*
- *Breathr*
- *Calm*
- *Spotify* (search: meditation, body scan, etc)



### **QMUNITY**

**Qmunity is what happens when queer, trans, and Two-Spirit folks looking for a sense of community come together. They provide personal support for queer, trans, and Two-Spirit people of all ages to live healthier, happier lives.**

**<https://qmunity.ca/get-support/youth/>**

Reach out to our Youth Specialist, Han [youth@qmunity.ca](mailto:youth@qmunity.ca), or Facebook chat, through the GAB Youth Facebook group or reach out to our Social Worker, Jennie at [jennie.mw@qmunity.ca](mailto:jennie.mw@qmunity.ca)



## VCH Vancouver Child and Youth Mental Health & Substance Use (CYMHSU)

### Remote Intake Clinics and Specialized Programs Response Plan for COVID-19

Due to the current COVID19 Pandemic, CYMHSU operations are being modified with new Remote Intake times being offered. Remote services (e.g. Zoom or phone) are available for ages 6 to 18 out of the following Vancouver CYMHSU locations. **Please call for details at:**

#### Northeast

355-2750 E. Hastings St.  
Phone: 604-675-3895; Fax: 604-675-3909  
Days/Hours:  
**REMOTE APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED  
MONDAY & WEDNESDAY:**

#### Pacific Spirit

2110 W. 43rd Ave., 3rd Floor  
Phone: 604-267-3970; Fax: 604-675-3909  
Days/Hours:  
**REMOTE APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED  
TUESDAY & THURSDAY:**

#### Raven Song

2450 Ontario St. 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Phone: 604-872-8441  
Fax: 604-675-3909

**NO REMOTE INTAKES OCCURING OUT  
OF THIS LOCATION**

#### West End

101-1128 Hornby St.  
Phone: 604-331-8908  
Fax: 604-675-3909

**NO REMOTE INTAKES OCCURING OUT  
OF THIS LOCATION**

**Please Note: *NEW* intake appointments will be conducted remotely.**

**If you want to begin seeing a Community Mental Health Worker, talk to your Counsellor, your family doctor or call the nearest health office above.**

**For most UHill students, Pacific Spirit is closest - 604 267-3970**

<b>Alan Cashmore Centre Infant Mental Health (0-5 years old)</b> <b>(604) 675-3996</b> Intake by appointment only
<b>Child and Adolescent Response Team (CART)</b> <b>(604) 874-2300</b> Appointment Required
<b>Youth Outreach</b> Call office directly at <b>604-688-0551</b> or fax referral to 604-688-0553

#### Youth Outreach

Call office directly at **604-688-0551** or fax referral to 604-688-0553