Managing Wellness in Times of Social Distancing

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With the social distancing recommendations put forth by public health officials it is imperative that we pay close attention to wellness in times of social distancing. With social distancing comes social isolation. However, there are ways to manage wellness even during times of social distancing. UNC Student Wellness follows the 8 dimensions of wellness. Here are some guidelines and tips to consider to ensure you are managing wellness in all 8 dimensions while social distancing.

Career:

In times of social distancing, consider engaging with UNC Career Services through remote access using handshake. Visit the UNC Career Services[1]website for more information. This is a great time to really take a deep dive and polish up that resume while you may have some extra time on your hands.

Emotional:

In times of social distancing, emotional wellness is likely to take a dip. With limited opportunities to engage with friends in person, consider journaling is another way to get your feelings out. Consider some good self-care routines. When socially distancing at home, it is easy to get stuck in a rut. Take time to establish a routine, even when at home.

- Get up at the same time daily.
- Get dressed in comfortable clothes and change out of your pajamas since this can change your thought patterns.
- Establish a brief meditation or gratitude practice in the morning.
- Develop a calendar with blocks for school assignments/work, breaks/meals, exercise/stretching, leisure/play, social connection via virtual means, and time in nature.
Also consider, scheduling a virtual appointment with a counselor at UNC CAPS. [2] Additionally, you may continue to engage with your wellbeing coaches at UNC Student Wellness [3] who will continue to offer virtual zoom sessions.

**Environmental:**

Consider visiting a place in nature you may not have explored before. Social distancing does not mean staying home at all times. You may want to try:

- Taking the dog for a walk
- Go for a drive,
- Take a walk in areas that are not very crowded,
- Sit in the sun on your balcony/porch/park etc.

Look to your local community government for social distancing, and stay at home orders. These orders may indicate closures of public parks, trails or other outdoor areas. Please follow your local government guidelines while taking care of your environmental well-being. Orange County- "Stay at Home" [4]

When going grocery shopping consider wiping things down before you touch them like shopping carts. Maintain at least a 4 feet to 6 feet distance between people. Limit presence in large gatherings.

**Financial:**

In times of social distancing, with establishments shutting down, hourly wage individuals will be the most severely impacted. Have the conversations with employers to get clarity on what your options are. Seek out guidance from friends and family and other offices on campus like the Office of the Dean of Students [5] to see if emergency assistance is being offered.

**Intellectual:**

Boredom will take a toll on wellness in times of social distancing. Consider really investing in a hobby or a new learning endeavor.

- Puzzles
- New language skills
- Making art
- Reading a book
All of these options are going to engage you intellectually so consider taking a break from your social media and opt for something different.

**Physical:**

It is imperative that you focus on physical health during social distancing.

- Get enough sleep and monitor good sleep hygiene by going to bed and waking up at the same time each day. Aim for at least 8 hours of uninterrupted sleep.
- Stretch regularly and maintain physical activity. A walk or a run outdoors and some light aerobics or yoga in your living room are options to keep physically active.
- Dancing is another fun way to remain active and release endorphins to feel good. Check out some online videos or online classes.

Maintaining your physical wellness will help boost your immune system and keep you from getting sick.

**Social:**

One of the great benefits that technology affords us is the ability to remain connected virtually. Consider face time and group calls and texts/chats to remain socially connected. Schedule skype sessions with friends and family and even consider skype meal times! Remember scrolling through social media is not necessarily social engagement. Set aside time for face time or a phone call. Start a distance reading or crafting group.

**Spiritual:**

Seeking meaning in a time of crisis helps provide a sense of clarity and allows us to access innate strengths. During this difficult time, finding meaning in deeper connectedness with each other and all of humanity and the world at large will really allow us to engage from our best selves with the situation at hand. Taking time to sit with yourself and self in connection with other will help stabilize us and put things in perspective.

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**Links**