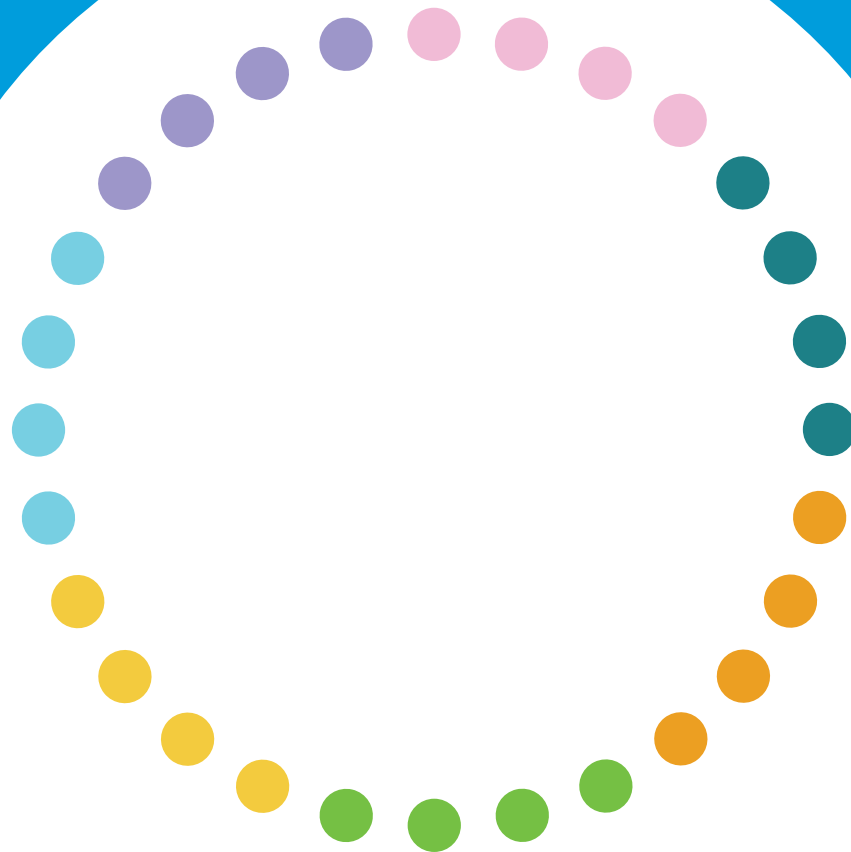


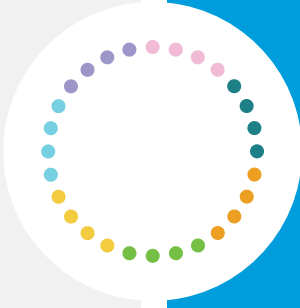


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DBSA Wellness Wheel

COVID-19 WORKBOOK



Introduction

Living in a pandemic requires a new level of resilience to maintain physical and mental wellness. Grief for what has been lost, feeling disconnected from loved ones, and anxiety around the unknown, has taken its toll. And essential workers and BIPOC communities are at higher risk of being infected, compounding an already fraught situation.

No two people react to crises the same way. Some individuals with depression or bipolar are able to adjust in unexpected ways while others are experiencing a mental health crisis. Some people who did not have a mental health condition prior to the pandemic are feeling symptoms of depression. Seeking help looks very different than it did six months ago—many who are nervous to start therapy under non-pandemic circumstances have extra anxiety around starting the therapeutic process virtually.

Because COVID-19 has had such a large effect on the whole community, we have created this workbook which includes writing prompts, exercises, and tips for you to evaluate each segment of the wellness wheel. If you haven't already, you can download the DBSA Wellness Wheel at:

DBSAAlliance.org/WellnessWheel



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Environmental

Stay-in-home orders and quarantines requires us to take a deeper look at how we can find wellness in our indoor and outdoor spaces. Because we can't predict what's going to happen during this public health crisis, it's important to stay grounded by assessing what's in and what's out of your control in your environment.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Is there a way to bring the outdoors in? If you don't have a green thumb to take care of plants, pictures of nature can also be effective!
- If you are working from home, have you found a way to separate your workspace from your living space? If you don't have that option, what are ways you can mentally separate the two? Even simple things like turning your computer off and pushing in your chair can signal to your brain that you are off work.
- Do you have an area in your home that is comforting? If not, how can you create that space?
- If you live with family or roommates, do you have a space to spend time alone and recharge? Things like taking baths or walks can offer that space.
- If you have children, what are relaxing activities that you can do together? Yoga, meditation, and spending time in nature can benefit everyone.
- Living on top of one another can cause frustration. Though we can't control a lot of our surrounding environment, there are ways to manage these irritations. For example, changing the time you take your shower or do your laundry are simple adjustments that can save a headache.
- White noise is good at masking background noises, but did you know that there are two other colors that also mask noises, as well as help you sleep? While a white noise resembles a fan, pink noise has a deeper sound that resembles rustling leaves or heartbeats. Brown noise on the other hand has higher energy at lower frequencies which creates a waterfall or thunder sound. You can purchase noise machines that offer all three, or you can look them up on YouTube and other streaming services.



WELLNESS DURING A PANDEMIC PERIOD:

Social

Perhaps the most affected area is Social Wellness. Even as restrictions are lifting, many are facing levels of isolation and loneliness that have never been seen before. Working from home, we miss out on the social benefits of working in-person with a team. “Zoom fatigue” wasn’t a common issue five months ago, but it’s a real thing, and now many are looking for other ways to stay connected with friends and family.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

FINDING SUPPORT

- Who are 3 people that provide support for your wellness? Have you been able to identify and communicate what you need from them?
- Do you have regularly-scheduled meeting times with friends and family whether online, phone, or safe, socially-distanced outings?
- Do you attend a support group? DBSAAlliance.org/Support
- Have you looked into online classes or meetups?

GIVING SUPPORT (Hint: It’s just as helpful!)

- Pick one person a few times a week to check on and see how they’re doing.
- Tell someone you’re there for them and ask how you can best support them.

PRACTICING GRATITUDE

- Write a thank-you note to someone who has helped you in the past.
- Think of someone you care about and write 19 reasons why.
- At the end of the day, think about an exchange you had with someone and journal about why you appreciated it.





WELLNESS DURING A PANDEMIC PERIOD:

Physical

Have you found yourself unmotivated to do physical activities indoors or outdoors? COVID-19 caused an upheaval in daily routines and low motivation can be a result. Feeling overwhelmed about which restrictions are lifted or anxiety about people not wearing masks or social distancing can lead to feelings of apathy. That same apathy can lead to not being mindful about nutrition and need for sleep.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Have you set a sleep and wake time to follow, even on weekends?
- What are your bedtime rituals? Are they activities that help you relax? Simple things like guided meditations or avoiding screen time 30 minutes before bed are helpful.
- Depression can make it difficult to get out of bed. Finding things to look forward to can help motivate you to start your day.
- Food affects mood. See if you can find new recipes that add nutrition to your meals. Aside from added nutrition, foods like fruits and vegetables add eye-pleasing colors to your plate!
- Slow-paced breaths can be soothing. Pair it with a mantra—breathe out what you want to release, and breathe in what you want to feel. For example: exhale for four seconds and think “worry,” then inhale for four seconds and think, “peace.”
- Set small goals to help you stay on track. Expecting to wake up and do everything perfectly is not reachable.
- Be kind to yourself and allow yourself to be human. We are all trying to do our best during these unprecedented times.



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Listen to this podcast for tips on how to manage physical wellness during a pandemic.
DBSAAlliance.org/PhysicalWellnessPodcast



WELLNESS DURING A PANDEMIC PERIOD:

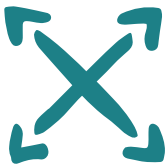
Financial

Financial Wellness is another component of the wheel that is being tested by COVID-19. Some have lost their jobs and have had difficulty reaching unemployment offices; others are fortunate to have kept their jobs, but emotional spending has heightened from the state of unrest we're experiencing. Uncertainty around the state of the economy also adds to feelings of anxiety. Although finances are not often easy or pleasant to approach, ignoring them creates even more distress.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Most people have had a huge shift in daily routine which also affects your budget. Are there things you're saving money on because of that change? Things like gas, commuting, and daily trips to the coffee shop on the way to work, all add up. Make a list of all the expenses you're saving money on.
- Assessing your spending also allows you to see the items you were spending money on that you don't use anymore. Are there subscriptions you can cancel?
- On the flip side, what are items or services you're spending money on now that you didn't have to before? Things like delivery fees and upgrading your internet service also add up.
- If you keep a budget, make sure to note these changes and see how your budget may need to temporarily shift.
- If this is too scary to do alone, do you have a friend or family member who could be with you as you work through your budget? Whether that person is there for moral or practical help, knowing that you're not alone can make the process easier.
- Communication is key. If you're not able to pay rent or are behind on bills, it's better to communicate with your landlord and service providers than wait for them to call you.
- Another way to stay grounded and be less overwhelmed is to take one thing at a time. Make a list of tasks that need to be completed and prioritize that list. You can break down that list into sublists as well. Prioritize your list and cross off the tasks as you go.





WELLNESS DURING A PANDEMIC PERIOD:

Occupational

While there are obvious factors to Occupational Wellness that COVID-19 is affecting, there are ways to navigate these challenges. Unemployment is up and people are frustrated with long hold times with unemployment offices. If you're fortunate enough to maintain working from home, are you able to separate your work life from your living space? And, being an essential worker has an even greater amount of stress and fear involved. Finding ways to focus on areas you can control will be key in reducing stress.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

WORKING FROM HOME

- If it's possible, is your workspace in an area of your home that allows you to focus?
- Working from home may shift our focus to housework and errands. For some people, a fifteen-minute break from work can be a great time to do dishes or laundry, however it can also be an avoidance tactic and lead to lack of focus, making work even harder. Create time blocks that work for you.
- If you're living with roommates, has everyone communicated with each other what they need to maintain a working environment?
- Planning breaks for meditation, a few minutes outdoors, or even a quick dance break might be helpful ways to recharge. If you have children at home, they might enjoy doing these things with you!

UNEMPLOYMENT

- Connect and network with old colleagues and classmates on LinkedIn, or think about creating an account to get started. If nothing else, you'll have a chance to catch up with them!
- Write a dream job description for yourself. Putting creativity into your downtime can help ease anxiety.

ESSENTIAL WORKERS

- The demand that has been put on essential workers during this time period has created challenges for individuals and families. What have you learned about your own resilience through this time period?
- What have you learned about your value as a worker that will stay with you in future work?



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Listen to this podcast for tips on how to manage physical wellness during a pandemic.

DBSAAlliance.org/OccupationalWellnessPodcast



Intellectual

Loss of interest or pleasure in activities is a common symptom of depression. Some people found that they tried a lot of new classes and hobbies in the beginning of the pandemic but now are feeling less motivated. It's tempting to mindlessly scroll through social media and binge-watch TV series as they can be effective ways to numb feelings, but it does nothing for your mental health now, or in the long run. It's especially important to remain curious and find creative ways to stimulate your mind during a pandemic.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Think back to when you were a child and write about what you wanted to be when you grew up.
- Look up a new word every day and find a way to use it 5 times throughout the day.
- Explore a new music station either on the radio or using your music streaming app.
- Choose a recipe from a country that you've never been to before. If you have a child, choose the recipe with them and ask them to find 3 facts on that country to share while you eat.
- Take advantage of all the free online courses being offered as well as the many music, art institutions, and theaters that are streaming free concerts and exhibits.
- Audiobooks allow you to enjoy stories and learn by using a different sense which stimulates the brain, and it's another way to step away from computer and TV screens



WELLNESS DURING A PANDEMIC PERIOD:

Spiritual

These past few months have been a time of reflection for ourselves, our family and friends, and our communities. Trying to find meaning in this unimaginable time is difficult, and that process can be scary and isolating. However, many communities have found ways to stay connected. In fact, because of limitations, we've had to be more creative than ever which made us appreciate all the more how important our spiritual communities and practices are to us in times of need.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- If you belong to a faith community, how have you been able to stay connected?
- Gratitude lists help us stay grounded when we get caught up in what we're missing. While grieving, create a list of 10 things you're grateful for.
- Can you remember the first time you ever felt a sense of belonging in this world? Write down every detail you remember—time of day, who you were with, and what you experienced with your whole body.
- Connecting your mind with your body does wonders for your mental and physical health. Do you have a movement practice that makes you feel connected to yourself? Yoga is one practice, but there are others such as dance, Qigong, and somatic practices, to name a few.
- How has the pandemic shaped your spiritual life? Make a list of negative, neutral, and positive effects. Circle the most impactful one in each column and journal about each item without judgment or having an idea to change anything—just acceptance for what is.
- Is there someone in your life who inspires you spiritually? Write down what you've observed and how it made you feel. Now journal about values that you share with that person and any other relative aspects that you relate to.

