



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/macro-photography-of-black-sunglasses-on-sand-1209610/>

Wellness E-Bulletin

Summer 2021

This edition features:

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Your contributions,
news and feedback
are welcome. To
provide your
suggestions email
whs@anu.edu.au.



“Decompressing”

The term “decompressing” has often been used to describe a sense of relief and relaxing at the end of a demanding or difficult period. It gives a sense of that long exhale of breath, of letting go, of putting down burdens and “taking the pressure off”. At the end of the calendar year, and after another unusual and demanding year, many people are needing a break that allows them time for genuine rest, and to engage in the things that restore their energy.

To set yourself up for a positive start to a new year, be thoughtful about how you spend our break times this year. Whether you have a long or a short break, consider the following:

1. Choose activities that you know will give you energy rather than take it. Being aware of your self and what things give you energy is the first step. Think about how you feel after different sorts of activities and then be deliberate in scheduling activities that lift you up. This will be different for everyone, for example, some people are energized by being around other people, some may need quiet and alone time to restore themselves; some people are uplifted by high energy sports and thrill seeking, others may find those activities draining. Observe yourself carefully and plan activities that recharge you.

2. Schedule rest and quiet times around big events. The holiday season often holds events or obligations that, even when enjoyed, are not always restful. Plan around these to minimize the drain on your energy reserves. For example if you have a big event on that you may find tiring, plan the day before and after to be “rest days” or include larger “recharge” times.

3. Make the most of time to focus on your physical health routines. Holidays can be a good time to get yourself back into a healthy daily routine including exercise and good sleep habits. Think about your food intake, and make sure you are drinking plenty of water – particularly when there is a large meal or alcohol being served. Over a short holiday (a few weeks or less) try not to let your usual sleep and wake cycle alter too much, otherwise it can make for a tough re-introduction to the alarm clock when you get back to your usual schedule.

4. Deliberately seek out and notice the good things. After a demanding or busy time, the importance of noticing the simple joys in our life is all the greater. Take time to “smell the roses” in a literal and figurative sense!



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/woman-sitting-on-brown-wooden-chair-beside-coconut-1230665/>

Resources

Beating pandemic fatigue
<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/infectious/covid-19/update/Pages/pandemic-fatigue.aspx>

ANU Information Sheet - Healthy Sleep
<http://imagedepot.anu.edu.au/whs/Information%20Sheet/Information%20Sheet%20-%20Healthy%20Sleep.pdf>

ABC – good news stories
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/good-news/>

How to enjoy a Holiday
<https://www.roberthalf.com.au/blog/jobseekers/5-simple-ways-enjoy-holiday-break-and-not-worry-about-work>

Tips for a healthy start to 2022



Resources

ANU - Preparing for a great year- 2022
<https://www.anu.edu.au/files/guidance/Working%20arrangements%20-%20resource%20guidance%20v1%2023112021.pdf>

Transitioning out of Lockdown
<http://imagedepot.anu.edu.au/whs/Information%20Sheet/Wellbeing%20during%20the%20transition%20out%20of%20lockdown.pdf>

As we start a gradual return to communal spaces and activities, and to an increasing sense of normalcy, prioritise your health and the health of those around you, continuing the kindness and community spirit that we have shown each other throughout the year.

The strategies below may help ease the transition of our graduated return to campus or in moving to ongoing, new ways of working in the coming year:

- Stay informed using reliable sources but limit your time spent checking news;
- Reflect on new habits that helped you during your time off campus or in lockdown, and consider how you might incorporate them into an on campus, or other usual work day;
- As soon as possible, start to adjust your daily routine (e.g. sleep/wake times) to suit your ongoing, or on campus work routine;
- Practice a commute (e.g. A walk around the block at your usual commuting times) to help restore daily rhythms.
- Practice being around people in safe and healthy ways such as a visit to the park or a local cafe;
- Notice your emotions with kindness and curiosity and practice gratitude;
- If you are returning to campus, make a clear plan for your first week back allowing extra time for rest and to get familiar with any new processes;
- In any situation, set aside some extra self-care and rest time; and
- Reach out early if you need support.

Sun Safety

In the heat of an Australian summer we still need to get out and about, for work and for leisure and while sun safety should be a part of any outdoor activities year round, it is particularly important at this time of year. Although it seems that we might be in for a cooler and wetter summer than last year (here's hoping!) the risk of sun burn and sun damage is still high on cloudy or cooler days as 80% of UV radiation can penetrate cloud. After the past two years with lockdowns and cancelled holidays, we may have forgotten the habits of sun safety so let's give ourselves a good reminder and ensure that we get back to our slip, slop, slap, seek and slide!

The best way to protect yourself from the sun is to stay out of it, particularly during the middle of the day. Where possible, schedule your outdoor exercise, travel or other leisure activities for the early morning or evening, consider indoor training facilities for some or all of your exercise needs and choose to do your activities in shaded areas wherever you can. If you can't avoid being out in the sun, cover up as much as possible – a broad brimmed hat, collared long sleeve shirt and long pants to cover your skin. If you spend a lot of time outdoors during the day it may be worth investing in clothing designed for the task which include plenty of vents built into the clothes to keep you cool, while still providing extensive cover for your skin. Use a sunscreen on all exposed skin with a rating of at least 30+ and remember to reapply regularly – about every 2 hours and more frequently if you're in the water. Importantly – don't forget to protect your eyes. Consider getting a good quality pair of 50+ sunglasses – ideally ones that wrap around to prevent sun exposure to the eyes.

We sometimes make light of "a bit of sunburn", and in years gone by it was almost seen as a rite of passage, to have your first proper "burn" of the season. But ANY sunburn significantly increases your risks for skin cancers, and trying to get a tan, or allowing yourself to get burnt causes significant and long term health and cosmetic damage to your skin. Very young people and people with fair skin are particularly vulnerable but anyone, even people with very dark skin tones can get burnt and can sustain skin damage from the sun.



Resources

<https://www.skincancer.org/risk-factors/sunburn/>

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/sunburn>

<https://ncci.canceraustralia.gov.au/prevention/sun-exposure/sunburn-and-sun-protection>

<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/sunburn>

<https://www.cancer.org.au/preventing-cancer/sun-protection/>



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/man-in-black-crew-neck-t-shirt-drinking-water-from-bottle-4719938/>

Resources

<https://www.fitnesseducation.edu.au/blog/health/considerations-for-exercising-in-the-heat/>

<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/hot-weather-risks-and-staying-cool>

<https://www.health.act.gov.au/about-our-health-system/population-health/summer-safety>

Healthy in the Heat

As we come into the heat of an Australian summer, we are all so excited to be able to get out and about in our magnificent great outdoors after the past 2 years of various restrictions. While getting out in nature and continuing to get exercise and movement throughout the day are healthy and important goals, it is equally important to adapt our activity to suit the weather. Exercising or otherwise exerting yourself in hot weather puts extra stress on your body that must be taken into account.

In the hotter months, consider the time of day that you will be exercising or engaging in activity. Strenuous activity should be scheduled for the early morning or evening wherever possible, when it is cooler and the body will better tolerate exertion. On particularly hot days, you may need to scale it back to ensure that your activity remains safe and sustainable. If you push your limits on a hot day, you may become unwell, and there is potential for serious health complications from overheating and dehydration. Consider rescheduling if you are planning activities outdoors and a heatwave is forecast and for your regular exercise, look at the benefits of consistent, lower level exercise over smashing out a tough session in the heat and needing a lengthy recovery time.

For those who are newer to the Aussie summer, be aware that the heat can be intense. Consider your air-conditioning options at home and on very hot days, if your home is very uncomfortable, consider a visit to a shopping centre or other public, air conditioned venue, in keeping with COVID Safety restrictions of course, during the heat of the day.

In all situations where you're managing hot weather, hydration is vital. We can lose water very quickly through sweat, even if we don't feel "sweaty" (it evaporates so quickly) so ensure that you are drinking plenty of fluids (1.5 – 2 Litres minimum) throughout the day.



International Day of Persons with Disabilities

3 DECEMBER

Resources

ANU Disability Access and Inclusion Working Group with link to the Disability Action Plan: <https://www.anu.edu.au/about/governance/committees/disability-access-and-inclusion-working-group>

Australian Network on Disability IDPD2021 - <https://www.and.org.au/news-and-events/celebrating-international-day-of-people-with-disability-2021-building-an-employee-resource-group-with-the-nrma-and-how-employers-can-help-languished-employees/>



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/woman-having-coffee-and-rice-bowl-4058316/>

The UN Theme for IDPD 2021: “Leadership and participation of persons with disabilities toward an inclusive, accessible and sustainable post-COVID-19 world.” From the UN IDPD Website – “The annual observance of the International Day of Disabled Persons was proclaimed in 1992, by the United Nations General Assembly resolution 47/3. The observance of the Day aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.”

From Australian Network on Disability – “How can you celebrate IDPD?”

- Collaborate with your Employee Resource Group and/or employees with disability.
- Demonstrate your organisation’s commitment to disability inclusion.
- Support employees with disability in sharing their stories. Storytelling is a powerful tool that connects us all.
- Show your organisation’s commitment through leadership
- Support staff to learn about disability and inclusion.” See resources list for more

At ANU we are continuing to work hard to implement the goals and objectives of the ANU Disability Action Plan 2020 - 2024. To learn more or find out how you can be involved visit the website - [Disability Access and Inclusion Working Group - ANU](#)

The Practice of Gratitude

Practicing gratitude is about taking a moment to notice and feel thankful for the good things that we have in life. This could be as simple as a nice cup of tea, or being thankful for our health, home and family. New research is showing the positive impact that a regular practice of gratitude has on our mood, sleep, approach to problems and our overall physical and mental health.

Practicing gratitude doesn’t need to be a complicated or time consuming activity, here are some simple things you can do to begin the practice of gratitude:

- Notice the small stuff, take a moment to savour a lovely cup of coffee or the smell of the eucalypts on campus
- Keep a gratitude journal. Note down one or more things you are grateful for on a daily basis.
- Set aside a time each day to reflect on things you are thankful for. Picture them in your mind and enjoy the recollection.
- Give at least one compliment daily or share your appreciation of something or someone.
- Share your gratitude with your household or family – for example at mealtime, share one thing from the day that you are each grateful for.



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/achievement-confident-free-freedom-6945/>

Resources

<https://mensline.org.au/mens-mental-health/the-power-of-gratitude/#:~:text=Just%20some%20of%20the%20benefits%20include%3A%20%20You%E2%80%99ll,around%21%20%20It%20can%20help%20reduce%20depression.%20>

<https://headspace.org.au/blog/the-impact-of-gratitude-on-your-mental-health-and-wellbeing/>

<https://www.raq.org.au/blog/benefits-gratitude>

Mind Seeds



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/white-dandelion-pore-133082/>

Our colleagues at the Research School of Psychology have recently released a series of podcasts focussed on mental health and wellbeing. The Mind Seeds podcasts may be of interest to anyone experiencing stress or going through a difficult change.

You can listen to the Mind Seeds podcasts series at any time by visiting the [College of Health and Medicine SoundCloud site](#), or by clicking on the links below, to go direct to the individual podcasts:

- [How checking your thoughts can help you deal with stress](#), with Dr Kristen Murray.
- [How emotions can help guide us in life](#), with Julia Reynolds.
- [Using mindfulness to cope with worry](#), with Dr Conal Monaghan.
- [Self-compassion, how we treat ourselves matters](#), with Associate Professor Liz Rieger.
- [Managing the challenges of uncertainty](#), with Lisa Oxman.
- [How connecting with our values can help in times of change](#), with Dr Linda Nicholson
- [Strengthening social connectedness to manage stress](#), with Professor Kate Reynolds

Resources <https://health.anu.edu.au/news-events/news/planting-seeds-better-mental-health-new-podcast-series>

ANU has gold accreditation from the Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Safe Workplaces Program and is continuing to offer this important training to our staff. New course dates for 2022 will be available soon through HORUS.

All first aid officers at ANU are now required to also hold a MHFA qualification and we are thrilled with the uptake in these courses allowing for more members of our community to be informed and feel confident in supporting someone with a mental health problem or facing a mental health crisis.

In an emergency situation you can always call 000 for assistance but you may also consider calling:

CATT (ACT Health Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team): 1800 629 354 (24 hour service); (02) 6215 1065 (Business hours);

ANU Crisis Support Line for Students 5pm-9am weekdays, 24/7 weekends and public holidays
Phone (voice calls only): 1300 050 327; SMS Text message service: 0488 884 170

Mental Health First Aid

Resources

MHFA at ANU -

<https://services.anu.edu.au/training/mental-health-first-aid-courses>

About MHFA -

<https://www.mhfa.com.au/>

Supports for staff and students



ANU Employee Assistance Programs (EAP):

Staff and their immediate families are entitled to 4 free sessions (and more can be negotiated if required) per year

Relationships Australia:

Phone (02) 6122 7100

Website: www.relationships.com.au

Assure:

Phone: 1800 808 374

Website: www.assureprograms.com.au

Assistance for managers: Managers are encouraged to approach their local Human Resources (HR) Manager for assistance initially, then HR Division and/or the Adviser to Staff. Assure also offer a Manager Support Program (MSP) on **1800 505 015**.

ANU Advisor to Staff

Phone: Chancelry (+61) - 02 6125 3616 Counselling Centre (+61) - 02 6125 2442

Email: Staff.Adviser@anu.edu.au or Gail.Frank@anu.edu.au

ANU Counselling: Free service, no referral required.

<https://www.anu.edu.au/students/health-safety-wellbeing/counselling/anu-counselling/appointments>

ANU Psychology Clinic: By referral and appointment only.

Fees apply but at a reduced rate. Ph:+61 2 6125 8498; Email: psychology.clinic@anu.edu.au

ANU Thrive: Student led programs for wellbeing

<https://www.anu.edu.au/students/contacts/anu-thrive>

ANU Chaplaincy: Multi-Faith service.

<https://www.anu.edu.au/students/contacts/chaplaincy>

Respectful Relationships Unit:

<https://www.anu.edu.au/students/contacts/respectful-relationships-unit>

Academic Skills Can assist with time management, study/workload planning

<https://www.anu.edu.au/students/contacts/academic-skills>

Access and Inclusion: For students with medical needs and/or disabilities:

<http://www.anu.edu.au/students/contacts/access-inclusion>

Coming Events

December - Decembeard



Bowel Cancer Australia's hair-raising fundraiser encouraging you to get hairy while raising awareness and funds to help beat bowel cancer. Face, head, legs, body - if it's hair - let it grow or let it go! Donate the amount you spend on shaving/grooming or by skipping your next waxing appointment. Decembeard® Australia's goal is to have a lasting impact on our health future - where no one dies of bowel cancer and all those diagnosed receive the support they need.

1 Dec – World Aids Day

The national World AIDS Day theme for Australia in 2021 is “40 years of HIV – where to next?” World AIDS Day aims to encourage Australians to educate themselves and others about HIV; to take action to reduce the transmission of HIV by promoting prevention strategies; and to ensure that people living with HIV can participate fully in the life of the community, free from stigma and discrimination. Show your support for people with HIV on World AIDS Day by wearing a red ribbon, the international symbol of HIV awareness and support.



3 Dec – International Day of Persons with Disability



The observance of the International Day of Disabled Persons was proclaimed in 1992 by [United Nations General Assembly resolution 47/3](#). It aims to promote the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in all spheres of society and development, and to increase awareness of the situation of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life. **The theme for IDPD this year is “Leadership and participation of persons with disabilities toward an inclusive, accessible and sustainable post-COVID-19 world.”**

5 Dec – International Volunteer Day

International Volunteer Day (IVD), is an opportunity for volunteer-involving organizations and individual volunteers to promote volunteerism, encourage governments to support volunteer efforts and recognize volunteer contributions at local, national and international levels. The act of volunteering is found in all cultures, languages, and religions. Each year, hundreds of millions of people volunteer their time and skills to help make the world a better place.



10 Dec - Human Rights Day



Human Rights Day is observed on 10 December, the day the United Nations General Assembly adopted, in 1948, the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (UDHR). The UDHR is a milestone document, which proclaims the inalienable rights that everyone is entitled to as a human being - regardless of race, colour, religion, sex, language, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

2021 Theme: EQUALITY - Reducing inequalities, advancing human rights

20 Dec – International Human Solidarity Day



International Human Solidarity Day is: a day to celebrate our unity in diversity; a day to remind governments to respect their commitments to international agreements; a day to raise public awareness of the importance of solidarity; a day to encourage debate on the ways to promote solidarity for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals including poverty eradication; a day of action to encourage new initiatives for poverty eradication. <https://www.un.org/en/observances/social-justice-day>

4 Jan – World Braille Day

World Braille Day is a reminder of the importance of accessibility and independence for those who are blind or visually-impaired. The reality is that many everyday establishments — restaurants, banks, hospitals — aren't equipped with braille menus, statements or bills. That means people with blindness or a vision impairment aren't given the freedom to choose their own dinner ... or to keep their finances private. World Braille Day spreads awareness about braille and other accessible forms of communication.



February – Heart Research Month



Heart Research Month raises awareness about the devastating impact heart disease has on families, friends and communities, and the importance of supporting life-saving heart research to find new ways of preventing, diagnosing and treating heart disease. Heart Research Day is celebrated on the 14 February, the “Day of Hearts”, encouraging everyone to love and take care of their heart.

20 Feb – World Day of Social Justice

2021 Theme: “A Call for Social Justice in the Digital Economy” The digital economy is transforming the world of work. Over the past decade, expansion in broadband connectivity, cloud computing, and data have led to the proliferation of digital platforms, which have penetrated a number of sectors of the economy and societies. Since early 2020, the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic have led to remote working arrangements and allowed for the continuation of many business activities, further reinforcing the growth and impact of the digital economy. The crisis has also laid bare and exacerbated the growing digital divide within, between and across developed and developing countries, particularly in terms of the availability, affordability and use of information ICTs and access to the internet, deepening existing inequalities.

