

SHIELD FOR SUCCESS

Valparaiso University's Counseling Center monthly tips for success and promotion of overall wellbeing

Introduction

In this issue:

- Introduction
- Changes across campus
- Daily exercises to promote adjustment

Valparaiso University's Counseling Center (VUCC) plans to provide the VU community with monthly emails surrounding a particular topic related to being a student. Each email will include daily exercises you can complete each week in relation to the monthly theme. Watch the video above to learn how to implement these exercises into your daily life (scale for rating your mood is below). The purpose of these emails is to promote mental health, academic success, and physical wellness. If there are any topics you are interested in seeing or learning more about please email counseling.center@valpo.edu, subject Shield for Success topic ideas.

Changes across campus

Returning to campus, or being on campus for the first time, one will notice many changes due to COVID-19. These changes include a daily health check, wearing masks around campus, social distancing, staggered passing periods, limited gatherings, and many uncertainties. Regardless of these changes, Valparaiso University strives to continue providing the college experience. It is important as we face these new challenges we continue to focus on our wellbeing and promote mental, physical, and social wellness. This month's daily exercises are in support of helping aid your adjustment to your new college life. We have compiled a list of 5 exercises to be completed 1 time per week over this next month. Reflect on which exercises you find affective and continue implementing them as we continue throughout the academic year. Next month we will provide you with 5 new daily exercises to implement surrounding a new theme.



Daily exercises to promote adjustment

- 1. Explore campus**
Take 20 minutes to walk around campus and familiarize yourself with the environment.
- 2. Attend an on campus event**
Go to an event you are interested in and interact with at least 1 new person.
- 3. Experience a new restaurant**
Eat at a restaurant you have never been to before.
- 4. Journal a positive moment**
Notice the positives throughout your day. At the end of the day chose one of these positive experience and write about it for 5 minutes.
- 5. Random Act of Kindness**
Perform 1 random act of kindness for another person (i.e. hold the door open, leave a encouraging message, say "hi" to someone new).



Created by Olivia Gorman, MA, NCC, LMHC,
and Ricardo Carrillo, MA.

A Simple Mental Health Pain Scale

thepeacefulpatient.wordpress.com

MILD		1 Everything is a-okay! There is absolutely nothing wrong. You're probably cuddling a fluffy kitten right now. Enjoy!
		2 You're a bit frustrated or disappointed, but you're easily distracted and cheered up with little effort.
		3 Things are bothering you, but you're coping. You might be overtired or hungry. The emotional equivalent of a headache.
MODERATE		4 Today is a bad day (or a few bad days). You still have the skills to get through it, but be gentle with yourself. Use self-care strategies.
		5 Your mental health is starting to impact on your everyday life. Easy things are becoming difficult. You should talk to your doctor.
		6 You can't do things the way you usually do them due to your mental health. Impulsive and compulsive thoughts may be hard to cope with.
SEVERE		7 You're avoiding things that make you more distressed, but that will make it worse. You should definitely seek help. This is serious.
		8 You can't hide your struggles anymore. You may have issues sleeping, eating, having fun, socialising, and work/study. Your mental health is affecting almost all parts of your life.
		9 You're at a critical point. You aren't functioning anymore. You need urgent help. You may be a risk to yourself or others if left untreated.
		10 The worst mental and emotional distress possible. You can no longer care for yourself. You can't imagine things getting any worse. Contact a crisis line immediately.