Helping Students Thrive: Wellness Wise Tips for Graduate Programs

Carl Hanson, PhD, MCHES
Department of Public Health
MENTAL HEALTH DUAL CONTINUUM MODEL

Serious Mental Illness

Thriving with serious mental illness

Languishing with serious mental illness

Poor Mental Health (Languishing)

No Mental Illness

Thriving with no mental illness

Languishing with no mental illness

Optimal Mental Health (Thriving)

(Mental Health Dual Continuum Model) (Keyes, 2005)
WELLNESS WISE TIPS FOR GRADUATE PROGRAMS

• Recognize and respond to languishing, distress and crisis
• Understand wellness at BYU
• Personally practice and model wellness
• Share university resources for wellness
• Integrate wellness into your program
Tip: Recognize and Respond to Languishing, Distress, and Crisis
TIP: RECOGNIZE AND RESPOND TO LANGUISHING, DISTRESS AND CRISIS
TIP: RECOGNIZE AND RESPOND TO LANGUISHING, DISTRESS AND CRISIS

Be aware of the following students
• First Gens
• Different racial/ethnic group
• Low SES
• International students
• Others?
TIP: RECOGNIZE AND RESPOND TO LANGUISHING

Common Warning Signs

- Emotional numbness, feeling indifferent or having a flat emotional state.
- Lack of motivation for daily activities.
- Low engagement in work, school, or social activities.
- Sense of stagnation or unable to make progress in life.
- Lower levels of productivity and accomplishment.

Intervention Needed

- Counseling (CAPS)
- Wellness wise strategies (Wellnesswise.byu.edu)
TIP: RECOGNIZE AND RESPOND TO DISTRESS

Depression

The PHQ-9

- Not Depressed: Score 0-4
- Mild Depression: Score 5-9
- Moderate Depression: Score 10-14
- Moderately Severe Depression: Score 15-19
- Severe Depression: Score 20-27

BYU vs. U.S.¹

- Major Depression (Score ≥ 15)
- Moderate Depression (Score 10-14)

Single students were 4.4x more likely to be clinically depressed than married students.

LGB students were 2.8x more likely to be clinically depressed than heterosexual students.
TIP: RECOGNIZE AND RESPOND TO DISTRESS

Anxiety

The GAD-7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Anxious</td>
<td>0-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mild Anxiety</td>
<td>5-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Anxiety</td>
<td>10-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe Anxiety</td>
<td>15-21</td>
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</tbody>
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Female students were 2.2× more likely to be clinically anxious than male students.

LGB students were 2.3× more likely to be clinically anxious than heterosexual students.
TIP: RECOGNIZE AND RESPOND TO DISTRESS

MEAN RESILIENCE SCORES BY MHO

Key Finding: Higher levels of resilience were correlated with lower levels of depression and anxiety.
TIP: RECOGNIZE AND RESPOND TO DISTRESS

**Common Warning Signs**
- Decline in academic performance
- Changes in sleeping and eating habits
- Increased absenteeism
- Physical ailments (headaches, GI issues, etc.)
- Persistent depression, anxiety
- Mood swings
- Withdrawal from social activities

**Intervention Needed**
- Counseling (CAPS)
- Wellness wise strategies (Wellnesswise.byu.edu)
- Help.byu.edu
- Utah Warm Line (833-SPEAKUT)
TIP: RECOGNIZE AND RESPOND TO CRISIS

Common Warning Signs

• Extreme agitation or emotional outbursts
• Intense feelings of hopelessness
• Panic attacks
• Threats of self-harm
• Significant withdrawal
• Suicidal thoughts, making plans
• Dramatic changes in appearance or hygiene

Intervention Needed

• Contact medical professionals or emergency services
• CAPS
• Crisis Hotline (988)
• QPR training can help with the signs of suicide, what to say, and do
TIP: RECOGNIZE AND RESPOND TO LANGUISHING, DISTRESS AND CRISIS

- Do NOT take responsibility for the student’s problem
- Do NOT act as a therapist
- Connect students with professionals
- Suggest options and gently encourage
- Assure them seeking help is a sign of strength
- Tell students what is leading you to refer them
- Respect their right to reject a referral
  - “It sounds like it might help you to talk with someone about this. What do you think?”
  - ”Can I walk with you to CAPS?”

REFER!
Tip: Understand Wellness at BYU
TIP: UNDERSTAND WELLNESS AT BYU

Being Wellness Wise

- Living a wellness lifestyle can help us be more resilient (bounce back from stressors), combat depression and anxiety, and thrive
TIP: UNDERSTAND WELLNESS AT BYU

Why is it important for graduate programs to be concerned about the wellness of students?

Did your graduate program care about you?
TIP: UNDERSTAND WELLNESS AT BYU

Common language and shared understanding of terms

- Wellness
- Integration
- Balance
- Dimensions of Wellness
All instruction, programs, and services at BYU, including a wide variety of extracurricular experiences, should make their own contribution toward the balanced development of the total person.

...capable of meeting personal challenge and change...bringing strength to others in the task of home and family life, social relationships, civic duty, and service to mankind.

BYU Mission Statement
“As we work together to become the university that “prophets past and present have foreseen it would become”—that is, as we “become BYU”—I hope that we will have the vision for what “becoming BYU” means for each of us in our individual lives.

In my inaugural response, I urged us to strive to become the BYU of prophecy by:

1. Strengthening the student experience
2. Retaining and strengthening a focus on undergraduate teaching
3. Reinforcing our “double heritage”—or being “bilingual”—for faculty, staff, and students
4. Developing the courage to be different
5. Building a covenant community of belonging
6. Investing in mission-inspired scholarship
7. Focusing on mission-aligned hiring
Wellness Definition

- Wellness is "the balanced development of the total person..." (BYU Mission Statement), and is holistically comprised of six dimensions, Spiritual, Physical, Intellectual, Financial, Emotional, and Social.
Balance

- “Balancing spinning plates”- Elder Bednar.
- We have all kinds of priorities, obligations, relationships, interests, and activities that compete for our time. Things that we really must do, and things that we enjoy and make us happy.
- Balance is how we prioritize time to do the things we have to do with the things we want to do.
- Balance is individual
Integration

- Wellness is more than just exercising and healthy eating. All of our actions, feelings and beliefs are an integral part of wellness and our well-being.
Tip: Practice and Model Wellness
TIP: PRACTICE AND MODEL WELLNESS

How do you personally practice wellness?

- Participate in the Employee Wellness Program (wellness challenges) and Employee Assistance Program (free counseling sessions)

How can you model wellness around students?

- Having a water bottle and drinking water periodically and encouraging students to do the same
- Discussing healthy snacks or food options and where to find them on campus
- Sharing your experiences naturally about physical activity, testimony, callings, relationships, etc.
- Asking how they care for their own wellness
- Normalizing stress. Chronic stress is the problem
- Being optimistic
TIP: PRACTICE AND MODEL WELLNESS

PERMA

Positive Emotions  Engagement  Meaning  Relationships  Accomplishments
TIP: PRACTICE AND MODEL WELLNESS

- **Exercise**
  - Minimum – **150 minutes a week** of moderate intensity activity such as brisk walking
  - Minimum – at least **2 days a week** of activities that strengthen muscles
  - 10,000 steps a day
TIP: PRACTICE AND MODEL WELLNESS

Nutrition
- **Vegetables**: 90% don’t get enough. Increase side dishes and snacks. (2-4 cups/day)
- **Fruits**: 80% don’t get enough. Increase whole fruit as snacks and with meals. (1.5-2.5 cups/day)
- **Grains**: 98% don’t get enough whole grains. 74% get too much refined. Shift refined to whole. (5-10 oz/day)
- **Dairy**: Drink more low fat and soy. (3 cups/day)
- **Protein Foods**: Include a variety. More beans, less red meat. (5-7 oz/day)
- **Oils**: Seafood and nuts. (22-44 g/day)
PRO TIP: PRACTICE AND MODEL WELLNESS

Sleep
Increased risk for obesity, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke, poor mental health, and even early death

- School Age (6-12 years): 9-12 hours per 24 hours
- Teen (13-18 years): 8-10 hours per 24 hours
- Adult (18-60 years): 7 or more per night

- Be consistent. Go to bed at the same time and get up at the same.
- Make sure your bedroom is quiet, dark, relaxing, and at a comfortable temperature.
- Remove electronic devices such as TVs, computers, and phones from the bedroom.
- Avoid large meals, caffeine, and alcohol before bedtime.
- Get some exercise.
Tip: Share University Resources for Wellness
TIP: SHARE UNIVERSITY RESOURCES FOR WELLNESS

• Wellnesswise.byu.edu
Tip: Integrate Wellness into Your Program
TIP: INTEGRATE WELLNESS INTO YOUR PROGRAM

How can your program assist students with their ____________ wellness?

Wellness Wise

- EMOTIONAL
- SPIRITUAL
- FINANCIAL
- SOCIAL
- INTELLECTUAL
- PHYSICAL
What can you do to assist students with their spiritual wellness?
TIP: INTEGRATE WELLNESS INTO YOUR PROGRAM

Spiritual Wellness

• Begin meetings/class with prayer, hymns, thoughts
• Share your spirituality with students regularly
• Encourage devotional attendance
• Help students enjoy positivity and gratitude
• Celebrate successes and strengths
• Thank students
What can you do to assist students with their physical wellness?
TIP: INTEGRATE WELLNESS INTO YOUR PROGRAM

Physical Wellness

- Make assignments due at 10:00 PM instead of midnight
- Add a wellness confirmation note to work completed “Congrats on completing XX. Spend the rest of the evening replenishing a relationship, getting to sleep, etc.”
- Mention things you do to be well
- Encourage student to participate in the student wellness program and sleep
What can you do to assist students with their intellectual wellness?
Intellectual Wellness

- Avoid deadlines on weekends and holidays
- Consider student needs regarding seating, AV equipment, note taking, and test taking
- Offer ways they can contact you and receive help
- Clearly publish program and course expectations
What can you do to assist students with their financial wellness?
TIP: INTEGRATE WELLNESS INTO YOUR PROGRAM

Financial Wellness

• Encourage students to meet with a BYU financial advisor (Financial Fitness Center)

• Provide alternative options for course/program materials that are cheaper

• Encourage students to:
  • Create a budget
  • Start building credit
  • Pursue scholarship opportunities
  • Use student discounts (Cougar Cash)
  • Pursue financial aid
TIP: INTEGRATE WELLNESS INTO YOUR PROGRAM

What can you do to assist students with their emotional wellness?
TIP: INTEGRATE WELLNESS INTO YOUR PROGRAM

Emotional Wellness

• Avoid negative or punitive language in program/course materials
• Destigmatize mental health concerns by talking about it.
• Share with them free or low-cost BYU resources:
  • WellTrack – mental health app
  • SilverCloud – online system to help with anxiety, depression, etc.
  • CAPS Stress Management Services – biofeedback, online and in person
  • Student Development (STDEV) Classes
  • BYU Comprehensive Clinic – assessment and therapy
• Add mindfulness activities to meetings/class
What can you do to assist students with their social wellness?
TIP: INTEGRATE WELLNESS INTO YOUR PROGRAM

Social Wellness

- Appreciate differences of perspective and opinions
- Respond to student emails in a timely and respectful way
- Use work in program/course materials such as “we,” “us,” “together”
- Let students introduce themselves, offer beaks during class/meetings
- Remind students about clubs, church, and other opportunities to connect
- Get off your high horse by moving among them, being authentic, and avoiding “expert dumping”
- Encourage the sharing of contact information
TIP: INTEGRATE WELLNESS INTO YOUR PROGRAM

Wellness Statement for Program/Course Materials

- During your academic journey we hope you make time to focus on your wellness. Our campus is equipped with many resources designed to support “the balanced development of the total person…” (BYU Mission Statement). Through the Wellness Wise website (wellnesswise.byu.edu), on-campus programs and services can be found. We invite you to explore the resources made available for your Spiritual, Physical, Intellectual, Financial, Emotional, and Social Wellness.
Promoting Student Wellness in Learning Environments

A GUIDE FOR INSTRUCTORS