

July 9, 2020

Dear students,

I hope you all are staying well. As the rate of COVID infections continue to rise, we are grateful that many are choosing to behave responsibly during this crisis and act as leaders and role models in your families and communities. We are grateful for your continued vigilance concerning your personal safety and wellness! If you do feel ill, please make sure to visit the Student Affairs [website](#) with information related to COVID-19 and the portal. Even if you have reached out to your clerkship coordinator and/or Student Affairs, we still ask that you fill out a COVID absence form on the website so we track positive cases.

The upcoming sessions for the Community Healing Spaces Series will include a **Mindfulness/Mental Health Panel Discussion on Wednesday, July 15 at 12:00pm**. This session will give some basic information on the correlation between mindfulness and mental health, compassion fatigue, and other relevant topics as attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions. Learn more and register [here](#).

We are pleased that CAPS will be offering another **Coping Skills Session on Thursday, July 16 at 12:00pm via WebEx**. You will receive the WebEx link today. Please plan to join us to discuss dealing with isolation, anxiety and other hardships that have arisen due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Below, please review what a few of our Wellness Leaders have been up to lately. They're always available as an additional resource if you want to connect with a peer! Wellness Leaders from each class and their contact information can be found on the [COM Wellness Program Harbor Course](#).

*Brian Jacobs (FLEX22):*

I've been experimenting with new food, reconnecting (virtually) with old friends, and spending more time outside of downtown taking in some of the Lowcountry scenery.

*Michael Byrd (Class of 2021):*

I've been studying really hard for step 2 and enjoying the summertime! My back was hurting from studying at my desk, so I made this video to help and hopefully it helps others too!

<https://youtu.be/5cAwvfG7TC4>

*Mikki Offit (Class of 2021):*

I've been working outside more (running and doing EMOMs- stands for Every Minute On the Minute). Trying to cook more: made my own granola and noodle bowl!

We know that the COVID-19 pandemic is stressful for everyone and understand that each person responds differently to stress. Developing health coping skills will make you, the people you care about, and your community stronger. To help people cope optimally with their stress, support themselves, and maintain their well-being, below are some tips on staying connected.

As we Stay Connected:

- Prioritize relationships
  - Connect with trustworthy, empathic and understanding people who can support you and check in with them frequently
  - Share your fears and anxieties with them as you are able
  - Consider different people for different kinds of support, since some family and friends struggle to “get it” emotionally but might be good people to have fun with or from whom to receive practical support
- Use technology
  - Connect socially with others through technology - physical distance does not mean you cannot socially connect with others
  - Get support from your friends, family and co-workers via phone, Facetime, WhatsApp, Skype, Zoom, Marco Polo, or WebEx
- Start new social traditions
  - Have “virtual meals”, “Cooking sessions”, “Recipe Exchange” or “group hangouts” via video
  - Start a tradition of having a “virtual happy hour” with friends or colleagues
- Be your own best advocate!
  - Ask for what you need from your support system, especially in terms of practical resources, social support, and your own mental health needs

As we move forward, please be reminded that the Office of Student Affairs is here for you! If you have any questions or concerns that you would like for us to be aware of, please contact Ms. Jordan Flynn, Director of Student Support and Wellness at [Flynnjo@musc.edu](mailto:Flynnjo@musc.edu) or Dr. Myra Haney Singleton, Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Student Wellness at [haneymk@musc.edu](mailto:haneymk@musc.edu)

Best,

**Jordan Flynn, MS**

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