

APRIL 2021

ENGWellness Staff & Faculty Newsletter



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World Health Day

World Health Day – April 7th, 2021.

On this same day every year, The World Health Organization (WHO) creates awareness around a specific health-related theme. This year's World Health Day will shine a light on building a fairer, healthier world. What does this look like?

Health inequities encompass inequalities between various groups of people and countries, which are often avoidable. One's living conditions, socioeconomic status, and other factors determine their risk of illness and access to resources. There are wide disparities in health status and life expectancy across varying social groups. Due to COVID-19, the world came to realize the vast inequity in health services. We have witnessed that people can live healthier lives and have better access to medical services, solely dependent on their environmental and living conditions, and more specifically, their geography. The goal of addressing these inequities is to strive for a more equitable health care system whereby everyone can reach

their full health potential regardless of their socioeconomic status and/or their geographical location. Everyone deserves the right to a fair and equitable health care system and resources.

Sexual Violence Awareness

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. During this month, our goal as a community is to raise awareness around the prevalence of sexual assault and educate our communities on fostering a safer environment.

Sexual violence is a widespread problem across Canada, as it violates several social boundaries and can affect people of all cultural backgrounds, genders and ages. In Ontario, 1 in 3 women experience sexual violence and 1 in 8 men experience sexual violence. Sexual violence is defined as any form of sexual activity when consent is not given. Individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ also face higher rates of sexual assault and abuse. In comparison to heterosexual individuals, in 2018, gay, lesbian, and other sexual minorities in Canada were approximately three times more likely to report being

physically or sexually assaulted in the past 12 months. According to a [new study](#), sexual minorities in Canada were also twice as likely to face inappropriate sexual behaviours in their day to day activities than heterosexual Canadians.

Being a victim of sexual violence can affect an individual's mindset, actions, and feelings resulting in short and long-term physical, mental, and emotional consequences – including trauma. Due to this, many cases of sexual violence go unreported as victims may feel ashamed, embarrassed, and fearful of reprisal. Whether you are a parent, educator or friend, you can make a vast difference in one's life [by noticing the signs of sexual assault](#) and educating your colleagues and students.

At the University of Waterloo, [The Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office \(SVPRO\)](#) assists all individuals who have been impacted by any act of sexual violence. Through various initiatives, SVPRO aims to educate and provide supportive responses to those who have experienced sexual violence, their supports, those who have witnessed, along with those who have caused harm. While maintaining a safe environment, the SVPRO assists with short term coping strategies and provides resources for extended support.

How to not 'just be a bystander': intervening to interrupt sexual violence

By Meaghan Ross, Sexual Violence Response Coordinator in the Sexual Violence Prevention & Response Office

Have you ever been in a situation – maybe in a lab, or on the bus – when you knew something wasn't quite right; for example - that someone was harassing someone else, but you weren't sure what to do about it? Did your mind spin trying to think of what to say, or worrying about how the person would react, or thinking that 'maybe it wasn't your business'? Me too!

When we see harassment, catcalling, stalking, groping, persistent flirting, hazing, or even when we hear rape jokes, it can be hard to know what to do or how to act. And it can be hard to overcome the Bystander Effect – the thought that someone else will be better able to respond in the moment.

The solution to overcoming this is a little bit like using First Aid; the more you practice your First Aid skills, the more you automatically react helpfully and effectively. The same is true for bystander intervention; the more you practice your intervention skills, the more you automatically react helpfully and effectively.

Check out [SVPRO's Bystander Intervention infographic](#) to learn about both the steps you can take to prepare yourself, and the tactics you can use to intervene next time.

When I need to intervene, I think about my 4 Dos:

- Can I be DIRECT with the person causing harm: "Stop that, it's not okay." Or with the person being targeted: "Want to come sit over here? Are you okay?" And if not,
- Can I DISTRACT the person causing harm, or the person being targeted: "Do you know where the bathroom is?", "Want to come get coffee with me?" Or,
- Can I DELEGATE by getting others' help to intervene: "Hey, I think something is weird over there? Can you help me figure out what to do?", Or
- Can I DOCUMENT by keeping an eye on what's happening or making a record of it.

To know which tactic to use, I think about whether I believe the person causing harm is receptive. In other words, is this a teachable moment or is my priority supporting the person being targeted? I also think about what goals I have: is the goal to ensure the safety of the space, or to signal norms about how we want folks to interact with each other, or to let the person harmed know I'm an ally, and so forth.

We can easily get caught up in thinking we always need to change the consciousness of the person whose harassing others, or that we always need to be outspoken when intervening. But, sometimes we can simply distract those involved and the behavior stops.

No matter what tactic we do, we need to remember that our intervention matters! By interrupting sexual violence in all its forms (harassment, online, assaults, jokes, etc.), not only are we supporting those impacted in the moment, but we're also challenging the ongoing normalization of sexual violence and the acceptance of rape culture in our communities 'as just the way things are'.

As we see from the [11th Principle's : Consent & Rape Culture Pyramid](#), when our communities and culture tolerate attitudes and behaviours that are sexually violent; the foundation for assault and other forms of harm is created and normalized. Instead, we can create a #ConsentCulture!

Interested in learning more about SVPRO's work to address sexual violence on campus? Check out @uwaterloohrei on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook!

The Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office (SVPRO) supports all members of the University of Waterloo campus community who have experienced, or been impacted, by sexual violence. We can discuss resources and provide referrals, short term coping strategies, facilitate academic accommodations, and review complaints and reporting options. Find out more [here](#).

We Love Music!

Music has always been utilized as a form of entertainment, meditation, communication, celebration, and mourning; however, there are many more emotions that music can unlock. It helps us express feelings that we may not quite understand or know how to release. There is a strong link between music therapy and mental health as it teaches us to channel some of our deeper emotions. Music therapy is a form of expressive therapy that helps enhance physical and mental wellbeing through the expression and regulation of emotion. Music can be used



as a form of communicating one's feelings and helps evoke a variety of responses to stimulate people. This can help when coping with past trauma and encouraging the healing process. Through activities such as listening to music, making music, or playing an instrument, music therapy connects us to our inner emotions. It serves as a healthy distraction for our mind and can significantly improve our mood and impact our behaviour. It can also help to improve one's self-confidence and social skills.

Check out the [ENGWellness LEARN module](#) if you're interested in learning more about music and mental health! Big thanks to Angelica, the Music Ensemble and Concert Coordinator at Conrad Grebel, for providing us with the information below.

Composer and conductor, Leonard Bernstein said: "Music can name the unnameable & communicate the unknowable." For many, music is part of everyday life. We may not realize that playing an instrument or singing in a group also supports emotional, psychological, and social well-being.

The University of Waterloo Music Department has 7 ensembles that are open to ALL students. There are also many clubs based on musical interests.

- [Music Department Choral Ensembles](#)
- [Music Department Instrumental Ensembles](#)
- [WUSA Clubs](#)

Beyond Burnout

Burnout is much more than feeling stressed and it is specific to the workplace. It is defined as a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress. It occurs when one feels overwhelmed, emotionally drained, and unable to meet constant demands. The concept originated in the 1970s, but it wasn't officially [recognized as an occupational disorder by the World Health Organization](#) until 2019. It is described as "a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed". It is a problem that affects people of various ages around the world.

In early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic made it difficult for people to work normally. By April 2020, 81% of the global workforce have had their workplace become fully or partly closed. The impacts of the pandemic were not fully recognized at the time, and many did not foresee how burnout would soon be more widely prevalent. Across Canada, most universities shifted to remote learning online, and many university staff and faculty began working from home.

Lecturers had to adapt to teaching through online platforms and workloads weren't adjusted despite extra time being needed to produce and distribute teaching material. Longer meetings, frequent emails, and tasks being delivered at all times of the day, coupled by the increased expectation that tasks should be completed because everyone was at home, led to unhealthy levels of screen time and increased stress.

In general, people's struggles in their home and personal lives have been considered only minimally, despite the world being in a state of uncertainty.

The primary causes of occupational burnout include an unsustainable workload, a perceived lack of control, and the lack of a supportive community. These are organizational or systemic issues, yet individualistic information, placing the onus on ourselves and self-care, continues to be promoted. In order to truly prevent burnout, leaders need to communicate and prepare before the next crisis hits. Upstream strategies need to be implemented and institutions need to make administrative changes that better support their staff's mental health.

Along with striving to make faculty and institution-wide changes, creating a culture of psychological safety at work is a huge and essential step to relieving high levels of burnout. To do this, individuals of all work levels can take part through educational programs and workshops.

The Working Mind (TWM) is an evidence-based program designed to promote mental health and reduce the stigma around mental illness in workplace settings.

There are three course options available:

- Employee (4 hours) - Designed to increase participants' understanding and comfort level with mental illness
- Manager (8 hours) - Gives managers, supervisors, and team leads the knowledge they need to better support their employees' mental health and wellbeing
- Train the Trainer (5 days) - Offers knowledge, skills, and certification to facilitate TWM employee and manager courses

To learn more about the courses and upcoming sessions, please click [here](#).

Burnout Recovery

Remember the three Rs on your path to burnout recovery:

➤ Re-organize

your goal hierarchy to see why you do what you do

➤ Re-frame

the way you approach vs. avoid your goals

➤ Re-balance

the types of "want-to" vs. "have-to" goals

Step 1: Exhaustion recovery

Exhaustion is often one of the first signs of burnout. Re-organize your goals efficiently to provide a clear indication of where to focus your energy. Eliminate unnecessary or ambiguous tasks that hinder progress to minimize emotional exhaustion.

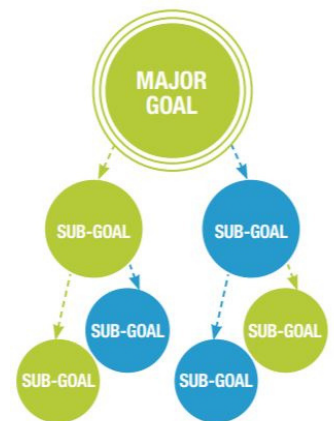
Step 2: Cynicism recovery

Reaching the point of cynicism involves being more concerned with avoiding negative outcomes rather than achieving positive ones. To recover from cynicism, re-frame your mindset by making your goals approach oriented. This allows you to see them as attainable and motivates you to work towards them.

Step 3: Inefficacy recovery

Inefficacy is about feeling inadequate and believing you're unable to complete your work. Rank your goals as 'want-to' vs. 'have-to' and restructure your task list by having a healthy balance of both. This will help you maintain self-control and focus and increase efficacy.

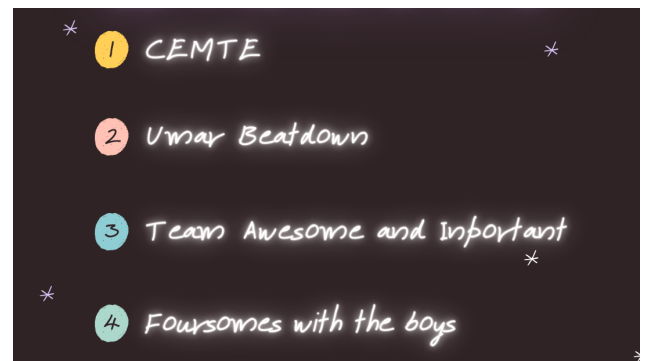
● = WANT TO	● = HAVE TO
EXAMPLES: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Go for a walk- Lunch with a friend- Scroll on my phone- Do a workout	EXAMPLES: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Have a shower- Study for exam- Go to work- Submit project



To learn more, check out the [CICMH Burnout Recovery Infosheet](#).

Foursomes Trivia Winners

The ENGWellness Foursome Trivia has officially come to an end! Here are our top contenders for this terms Foursomes Trivia. Congratulations to all winners and thank you to everyone who participated! Prizes will be sent out soon ;)



Mind Your Wellness

Our last Mind Your Wellness session for the term was provided asynchronously on the topic of exam strategies! It has been posted, along with the other sessions, in the [Content Archive](#) section on the ENGWellness website! Check your inbox for a dedicated page of tried and true study tips and strategies that you can share with students!



Content Archive

Check out our most recent fitness class on [YouTube](#)! All recorded sessions and presentations as well as previous newsletters can be accessed under the [Content Archive](#) tab on the ENGWellness website.

Stay Connected

Be sure to also follow our other social media to stay connected and updated.



@uwengwell



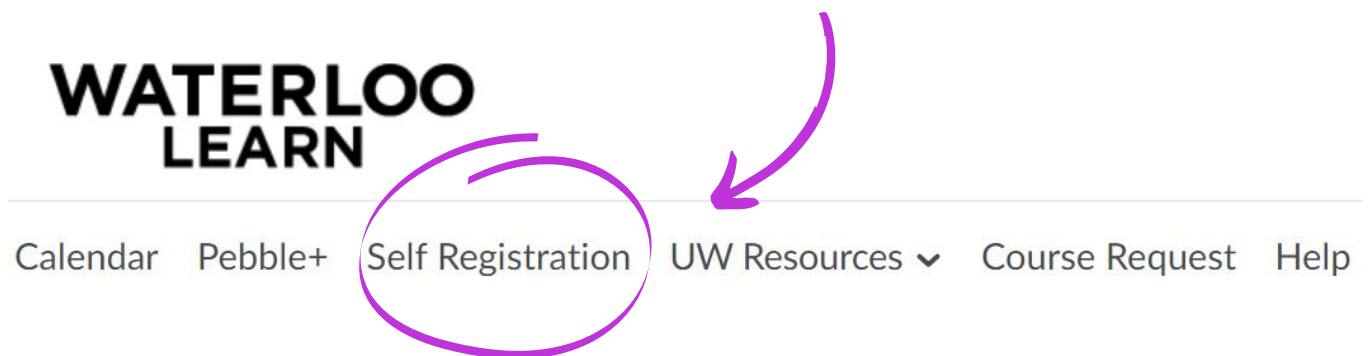
@uwENGwellness



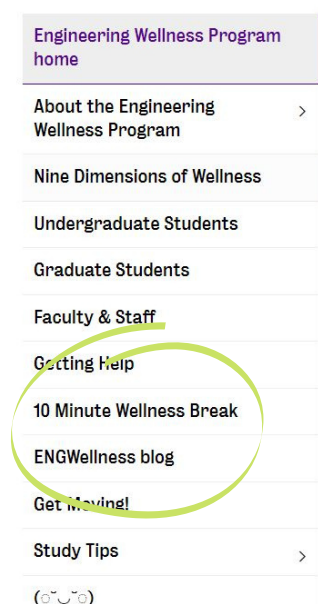
@UwengW

LEARN Group & ENGWellness Site

Get news and access to our content modules through our ENGWellness Learn 'course'! Students can enroll using the Self-Registration function within Learn.



Stay connected with our [ENGWellness Blog](#) and check out our [Wellness Breaks](#) page for ideas on how you can spend your study breaks and rejuvenate!



Welcome to the Engineering Wellness Program (ENGWellness)

The wellbeing of our students (graduate and undergraduate), staff, and faculty matters! The ENGWellness Program was created to support and promote the wellbeing of our community throughout the year.



Helpful Wellness Resources

- [Employee & Family Assistance Program \(EFAP\)](#) - A range of health and wellness services dedicated to University of Waterloo employees and their dependent family members.
- [Referral Resources for Faculty & Staff](#) - Tips for speaking to a student who may be struggling.

Other Wellness Resources to Refer to Students

- [EngSoc's Guide on Accessing Mental Health Resources at UW](#) - A no nonsense guide of the services and resources available at UW to ENG students.
- [OUSA COVID-19 Resources for Students](#) - Financial aid, learning tips, and other mental health initiatives.
- [Mental Health Commission Resource Hub](#) - Mental health and wellness during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- [Campus Wellness Group Therapy and Workshops](#) - Group therapy can be beneficial by helping you find new perspectives on shared challenges, feel inclusion and relief knowing that others experience similar challenges, and allowing you to practice new skills in a supportive environment.
- [Campus Wellness Online Workshops and Seminars](#) - Everything from managing emotions, reducing stress, and improving sleep.
- [Chaplains Services](#) - Spiritual mentors to promote the integration of academic knowledge and meaningful personal faith.
- [Canadian Mental Health Association \(CMHA\)](#) - Tips to manage your mental health during COVID-19.
- [Wellness Together Canada](#) - Mental health and substance abuse support
- [Here 24/7](#) - Offers addictions services and support groups
- [Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction \(CCSA\)](#) - Offers free online resources, tools, apps, and information to support substance use issues by connecting with peers support workers, social works, and professionals for confidential chat services.
- [Centre for Addiction and Mental Health \(CAMH\)](#) - Provides valuable information on addiction and ways to identify if help is needed and how to access it.

Contacts to book a session:

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