

WELLNESS WEEKLY

20 APRIL, WEEK 7

Wellness Tips | Upcoming Events | Win a Prize!

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Hello and welcome to this week's edition of **Wellness Weekly!**

We hope that you are all settling into the 'new norm' with ease, and that our first edition provided you with some helpful and fun tips to assist you in the process of getting through self-isolation.

We are so pleased with the amount of positive feedback we've received from our first newsletter, and we are overwhelmed by the number of you getting involved in our competitions and challenges – thank you all for the support!

As our much-needed two-week break draws to an end, we hope that you are all well-rested and ready to tackle what's left of this semester, despite all the uncertainty happening around us. We hope that you took this time to reflect, look after yourselves, and spend some (virtual) time with your friends and family! Watching the way that everyone has come together and stayed so connected, I have no doubt that we will all get through these challenging times together.

With that being said, we have another exciting newsletter in store for you, so please check out this week's new segments, activities and challenges!

Enjoy!

UPCOMING ONLINE WELLNESS EVENTS

1. BLACKSTONE ISO-CISE

Thank you to all who got involved in the first Iso-cise challenge and congratulations to our winners, **Roland Miller** and **Jasmin Papalia**!

If you missed out last week, don't worry – try your luck with the next round beginning this Wednesday! You know what to do:

1. **Post a video while doing an exercise of your choosing**
2. **Add #blackstoneisocise to your post and tag two friends**

Make sure to keep up to date with Blackstone's Instagram page for further details – don't miss out on your chance to **WIN a fitness prize!**

2. YOGA CLASS

Starting this week, we'll be launching a series of live online fitness classes. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for the details of our first session - yoga!

Workout of the Week Five-minute Body Endurance

- Jump squats (30 seconds)
- Rest (30 seconds)
- Side-to-side toe taps laying on your back (30 seconds)
- Rest (30 seconds)
- Burpees (30 seconds)
- Rest (30 seconds)
- Walking lunges (30 seconds)
- Lunge kicks (30 seconds)
- Rest (30 seconds)
- Mountain climbers (30 seconds)
- Jump squats (30 seconds)

STRESS MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

1. Dealing with anxiety

It's easy to fall into a state of heightened anxiety with the non-stop media coverage on the virus.

It's important, though, to set limits on the amount of news you are watching. Remember to take a break and focus your mind on other things. Where you do seek out information, make sure the sources are credible ones to avoid unnecessary fear stemming from misinformation. Follow the [Australian Department of Health](#) website for general updates, or the [Australian Department of Education, Skills and Employment](#) website for

student-specific information around the virus.

It may feel like wellness blogs are trying to force meditation or mindfulness on you as a go-to solution for overcoming feelings of anxiety. Instead, you could try and put things into perspective.

If you're having anxious thoughts, remember that anxiety is a natural response to a stressful, uncertain situation. Anxiety the most common mental health condition in Australia.

Next time you're feeling anxious, try to acknowledge your thoughts and emotions instead of avoiding them. Remember that these feelings

may be at their peak now, but they won't last forever. It's okay to feel anxious, and you're not alone.

Download the [Smiling Mind](#) app and try out the "Thrive Inside" initiative, specifically focused on fostering good mental health during self-isolation.

Headspace also offers a [free program](#) on their app to assist during this time. If you have the time to spare, check it out and see if it works for you!

If these strategies don't work, that's okay too. If you need to talk to someone, you can visit the [Beyond Blue](#) or [eheadspace](#)

online chat forums for support.

2. Sleeping problems

During times of uncertainty, it's not unusual for our minds to be plagued with worrisome thoughts. This becomes particularly problematic when we are trying to fall asleep – it may be difficult to 'shut down' our overactive minds (I can personally attest to this one!).

Regular sleeping patterns are incredibly important for our mental wellbeing. Quality sleep allows us to concentrate better, manage our emotions and enhances our ability to learn and be creative. If you're having difficulties with sleeping, here are some things you can do:

Write out your thoughts

Your first thought might be, "ugh, how LAME!"

But actually, studies suggest that journaling your thoughts can help you fall asleep quicker. Often it's the things that we haven't done yet that weigh heavy on our minds.

Physically writing out a to-do list helps you offload worries you may have about unfinished tasks – it's therapeutic! In fact, studies have shown that the more specific you are in your to-do list, the quicker you are likely to fall asleep!

Getting up and doing something else

It's always frustrating when you're in bed, so desperate to fall asleep, but you just can't. You lie awake tossing, turning and ruminating on your thoughts.

This can create an unhealthy link in your mind between your bed and falling asleep. Instead of feeling sleepy when you get

into bed, your mind may associate your sleeping environment with being alert.

If this is you, get up, go to another room and occupy yourself with something else. Ideally this will be something relaxing like reading.

Eventually, when you start to get tired again, go back to bed and give it another shot.

Winding down

With such busy lives and busy minds, it's no wonder falling asleep isn't easy.

Establishing a pre-sleep, winding down routine can assist us in de-stressing and preparing our minds for bed.

This may involve reading a book, following a guided meditation or having a warm bath or shower 1-2 hours before bed. Beyond relaxing your muscles, research suggests that a warm bath assists in bringing your body to the right temperature necessary for a good sleep.

Next time you hop into bed, try listening to a sleepcast or a guided winding down exercise to get started with establishing your pre-sleep routine!

Things to avoid

There are simple things we can avoid to make falling asleep easier.

It'll come as no surprise that anything with caffeine in it is a no-go before bed. Remember, this isn't just limited to tea and coffee!

Other stimulating activities should be avoided too, for example: exercising, gaming, watching TV or scrolling through social media. I think most of us are guilty of these – the last one especially! But these things keep our brain engaged,

making it harder for us to wind down.

The light from our devices suppresses the release of melatonin, the hormone responsible for helping us fall asleep.

At the very least, dim the lights on your device to give yourself a fighting chance!

3. Feeling cooped up

It may feel suffocating to spend most of your time confined to your home. You may feel demotivated, bored or frustrated – and you wouldn't be the only one!

It's important to learn ways to minimise these feelings as we try to get through this difficult time. The best way to do this, of course, is to get outside and exercise (while still adhering to safe distancing measures!).

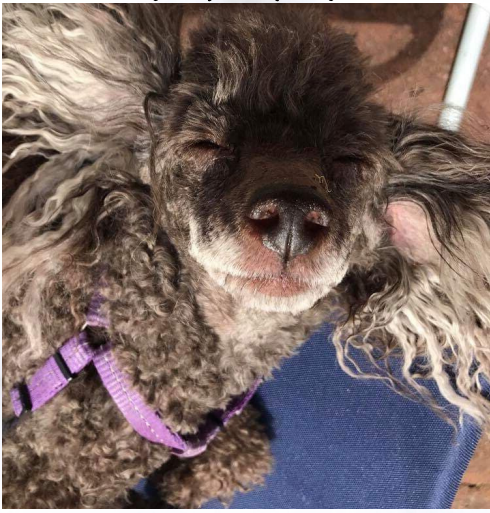
Beyond this, though, there are other simple things you could try. While you're at your desk doing work, open up a window for some fresh air. Take a break, go outside and spend some time in your garden.

Surround yourself with nature. Research suggests that being around nature can be therapeutic, lowering levels of stress and anxiety. Can't find anywhere nearby? Enjoy a virtual nature walk instead! Finally, make sure you set aside some time for periodic stretching and breathing exercises – refresh yourself and only then return to your work.

If you would like information on particular wellbeing issues to be included in the next edition, please contact wellnessofficer@blackstone.asn.au with any requests.

MEET BELLA...

Bella and Mishka love going for walks, chasing their ball and being cheeky!



Thanks for sending in these adorable pictures of your fur babies, Gen!

AND MISHKA!



Send us a photo of your furry friend for next week's edition!

Riddle me this...

Congratulations to last week's winner, Michael Lee.

Get in QUICK for your chance to win a prize this week! Email your answer to wellnessofficer@blackstone.asn.au

What spends all of its time on the floor but never gets dirty?

Cooking Corner

VEGETARIAN LINGUINE

1. Boil uncooked linguine water in pot, add salt and cook
2. Separately, heat butter and olive oil in a frying pan on medium heat
3. Add zucchini and mushrooms and fry **(4-5 minutes)**
4. Then add the tomato, onion and garlic, and season with salt and pepper
5. Stir ingredients together
6. Reduce the heat and leave it to simmer with the frying pan covered **(3 minutes)**
7. Drain linguine and now add it to the frying pan with the vegetables
8. Add all cheese and basil and stir

**You're ready to serve!
Now just decorate with a
sprinkle of Parmesan cheese
and some basil!**



Ingredients

- **170g** Uncooked linguine
- **224g** Mushrooms, sliced
- **2 tsp** Butter
- **1 tsp** Olive oil
- **2x** Zucchini, thinly sliced
- **1x** Large tomato, chopped
- **2x** Spring onions, chopped
- **1x** Garlic clove, minced
- **2 tsp** Fresh basil, minced
- **1/4 tsp** pepper
- **1 cup** Shredded provolone cheese
- **3 tsp** Shredded Parmesan cheese
- Salt and pepper

QUARANTUNES

For this week's **Quarantunes**, we have a [playlist](#) kindly brought to you by none other than Meredith Blake herself!

The list contains some of her favourite songs, carefully selected for the special meaning they carry in the context of this global pandemic.

Head to [Spotify](#) now and see if you can pick up on any of them! In the meantime, here's a taster of what's in store for you.

1. **Peter Gabriel** – Solsbury Hill
2. **Counting Crows** – Big Yellow Taxi
3. **Snow Patrol** – Chocolate
4. **Pink** – Raise your Glass
5. **Earth, Wind and Fire** – September
6. **The Verve** – Bitter Sweet Symphony
7. **M People** – 'Search for the Hero'
8. **Don McLean** – 'American Pie'
9. **Everything But the Girl** – 'On Place'
10. **REM** – Shiny, Happy People
11. **John Farnham** – You're the Voice

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Sleep by Headspace](#) for sleepcasts and sleep music
- More [tips on how to sleep better](#)
- [Checklist](#) to see if you've been affected by anxiety or depression
- [Online tour of the Louvre Museum](#) in France
- [Virtual tour of NASA's Langley Research Center](#)

 **BLACKSTONE SOCIETY**

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