

# Health and Wellness Guide for Students



## What is Wellness?

Wellness is an active, lifelong process of becoming aware of your choices and making decisions that will help you to live a more balanced and fulfilling life.

Everyone's optimal wellness will be different, depending on your own needs, experiences, personality, and circumstances. Different aspects will fall in and out of balance as you make your way through life, however, we can try our best to maintain a balance.

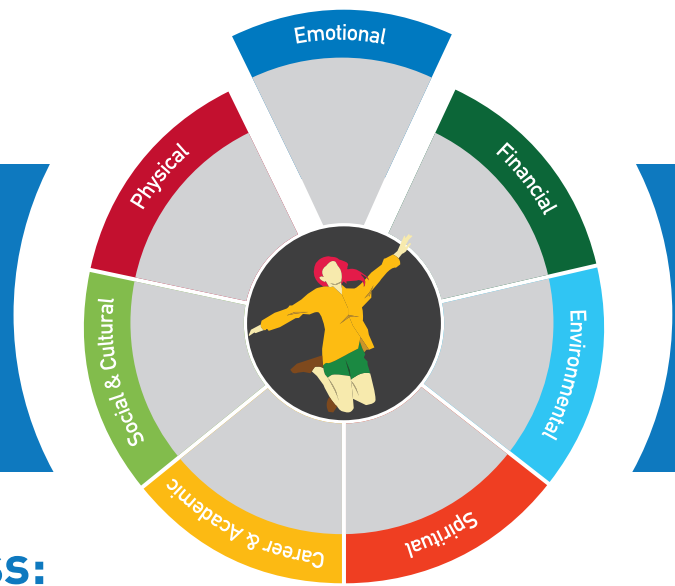
Many factors can influence your health and well-being. There are 7 different interacting dimensions of wellness.

## The 7 dimensions are:

- Emotional
- Financial
- Environmental
- Spiritual
- Career and Academic
- Social and Cultural
- Physical

# Emotional Wellness

Emotional Wellness involves accepting and exploring who you are, enhancing your inner resources to reduce stress and maintaining a positive outlook on life.



## Examples of Emotional Wellness:

- Accepting yourself for who you are
- Valuing self-exploration & improvement
- Having a generally positive outlook
- Taking care of yourself
- Being willing to ask for help
- Recognizing & managing stressors

## Strategies to Enhance Your Emotional Wellness

Learn how to manage a busy schedule:

- Focus on the present moment and what you are able to control
- Practice five or ten minutes of mindfulness meditation each day
- Strive for balance by making time for things you enjoy and family and friends

Keep your self-esteem high:

- Volunteer for something you care about and share your skills and knowledge with others
- Surround yourself with supportive and caring friends
- Create a list in your mind or on paper of all of your strengths and accomplishments

Learn how to deal with worries about exams, relationships, work or unexpected hurdles in your life:

- Ask for help when you need it. There are many people and resources on campus that can help
- Increase your physical activity. Whether its running, yoga or walking with a friend, being active will help you manage those stressful moments
- Make sure you're getting enough sleep – lack of sleep has a major impact on your ability to cope with worries and stress
- Try to maintain a positive outlook

For resources to support your emotional wellness visit:

<http://www.sfu.ca/students/health/resources/wellness/emotional.html>

# Financial Wellness

Financial Wellness means being aware of your financial situation and managing it wisely.



## Examples of Financial Wellness:

- Developing long & short term financial goals
- Tracking your spending
- Budgeting effectively
- Limiting overspending
- Recognizing & managing financial risks
- Using credit wisely

## Strategies to Enhance Your Financial Wellness

Try to limit unnecessary expenses and debt and live within your means:

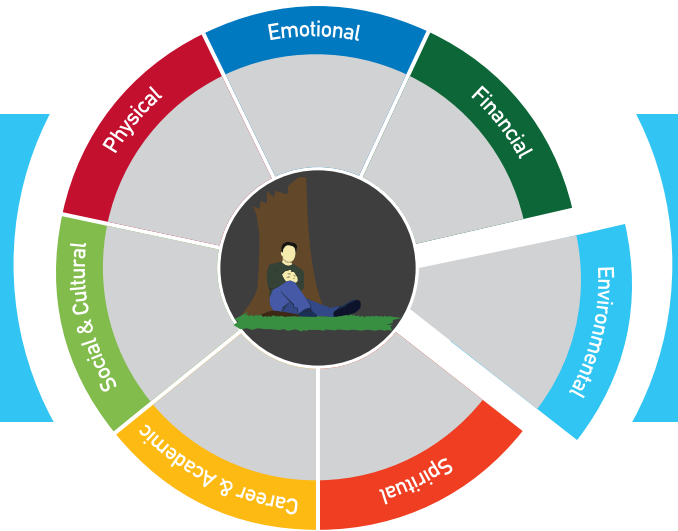
- If possible, use your debit card or cash rather than a credit card for making purchases
- Try to use on and off campus resources to help create and maintain a reasonable budget for yourself
- Eat nutritiously on a budget. Take your lunch, snacks and drinks with you to school or work

For resources to support your financial wellness visit:

<http://www.sfu.ca/students/health/resources/wellness/financial.html>

# Environmental Wellness

Environmental Wellness is about creating a safe, supportive, inclusive and sustainable community that recognizes the impact of personal and social environmental decisions.



## Examples of Environmental Wellness:

- Being respectful, inclusive, kind and supportive to others
- Being aware of risks in your surroundings
- Being aware of the impact of your decisions
- Taking personal responsibility for your actions
- Working to improve your community
- Reducing, reusing & recycling
- Using sustainable transportation

## Strategies to Enhance Your Environmental Wellness

Surround yourself by supportive family, friends, and resources

- Form study groups with peers and support each other with course work and assignments
- Make an attempt to meet your professors in office hours, advisors, and other learning resources.
- Spend time with friends and family

Be cautious about your personal security when drinking and out with friends:

- Be aware of who is around you and leave with the same people you came with
- Buy your own drinks and keep your drink in sight at all times
- Keep condoms and other contraception with you when you go out

Live an eco-friendly lifestyle on a daily basis:

- Use transit and leave your car at home when you can
- Recycle plastic, paper and glass containers
- Print less, try reading online or sharing reading materials with classmates

Eat locally produced food:

- Visit the SFU Pocket Farmer's Market
- Try to purchase food and beverages that are grown and produced locally as an alternative to imported products

For resources to support your environmental wellness visit:

<http://www.sfu.ca/students/health/resources/wellness/environmental.html>

# Spiritual Wellness

Spiritual Wellness means developing the mind-body connection to foster personal growth and support mental and emotional wellness.



## Examples of Spiritual Wellness:

- Having an overall sense of peace & well-being
- Developing the mind-body connection
- Understanding your own values
- Feeling part of a larger community
- Recognizing that spirituality is a personal experience
- Respecting the values & beliefs of others

## Strategies to Enhance Your Spiritual Wellness

Manage stress and anxiety through mindfulness:

- Look for opportunities to practice mindfulness throughout the day, for example, while eating a snack or waiting for the bus
- Focus on the present moment and your physical and mental experience in that moment
- Be aware of your breathing and concentrate on the breath itself as it moves in and out

Reflect on your own values and beliefs, and learn how you can be spiritually aware:

- Participate in activities that connect the mind and body such as yoga
- Follow your creative impulses and act on them. For example try keeping a journal, paint or draw, listen to or create music
- Give back by volunteering, helping others or by performing a random act of kindness

Respect the beliefs and values of others:

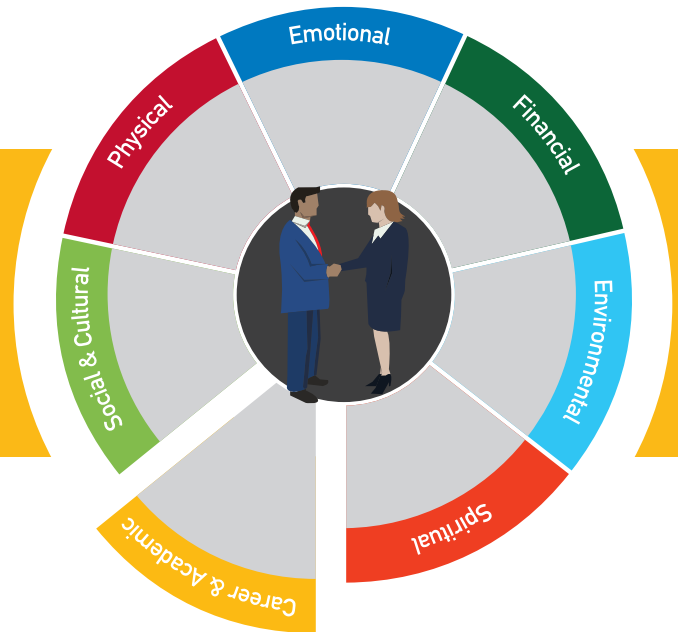
- Practice compassion if you meet others whose values differ from your own
- Know your own beliefs and values through personal reflection
- Be curious about others and ask questions in a respectful and open-minded way

For resources to support your spiritual wellness visit:

<http://www.sfu.ca/students/health/resources/wellness/spiritual.html>

# Career and Academic Wellness

Career and Academic Wellness is about expanding knowledge, creating networks, and continually challenging your mind.



## Examples of Career and Academic Wellness:

- Seeking out resources to help make decisions
- Challenging yourself to new life experiences
- Having a well-developed sense of self
- Setting career & academic goals
- Having friends & peers who can support your goals
- Creating professional networks

## Strategies to Enhance Your Career and Academic Wellness

Manage anxiety before exams:

- Schedule your study time in advance rather than cramming the night before
- Try to be physically and mentally balanced prior to exams by eating nutritious foods, getting enough sleep and being active
- Work hard before the exam but plan a reward for yourself such as connecting with friends

Find a sense of direction and motivation for life after university:

- Create a list of goals for yourself which are positive, meaningful, realistic and specific
- Reflect on your passions in life. Which ideas excite and motivate you? Pursue your passion, while being flexible and open to change and new opportunities
- Visit Career Services as early as possible in your academic path

- Do your research. Use the internet, services on campus and networking with new people to help chart your course

Course planning & academic supports

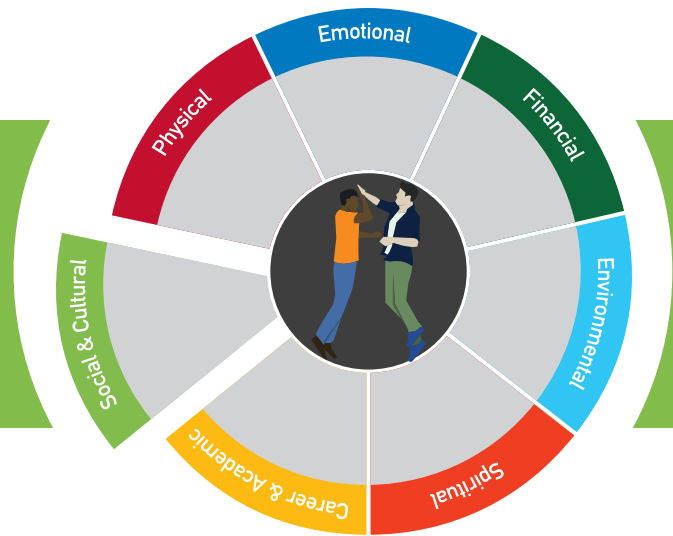
- Meet early with an advisor if you have concerns about your course schedule or degree/program path.
- Take advantage of academic supports offered through your courses, departments, or the Student Learning Commons
- Form study groups with peers and support each other with course work and assignments
- Make an attempt to meet your professors in office hours, advisors, and other learning resources and ask questions when you need clarification.

For resources to support your career and academic wellness visit:

<http://www.sfu.ca/students/health/resources/wellness/career-and-academic.html>

## Social and Cultural Wellness

Social and Cultural Wellness means developing and maintaining healthy relationships with those around you, and supporting the diversity of our communities through knowledge, acceptance and understanding.



### Examples of Social and Cultural Wellness:

- Developing healthy relationships with family & friends
- Respecting & understanding other individuals
- Respecting the cultural identities of others
- Effectively managing unhealthy relationships
- Spending time with loved ones
- Feeling self-confident alone or with others

### Strategies to Enhance Your Social and Cultural Wellness

Be willing to meet new people and make new friends:

- Be assertive but friendly by smiling, introducing yourself and being open to meeting others
- Sign up for courses or activities on campus which genuinely interest you
- Take up offers that come your way and look for new experiences. Unfamiliar situations can be opportunities for personal growth and meeting new people

Manage challenging relationships with friends, colleagues, romantic partners or family members:

- Try to resolve conflicts through compromise. Consider the other person's perspective and respect their point of view
- Be yourself and respect your own thoughts and feelings

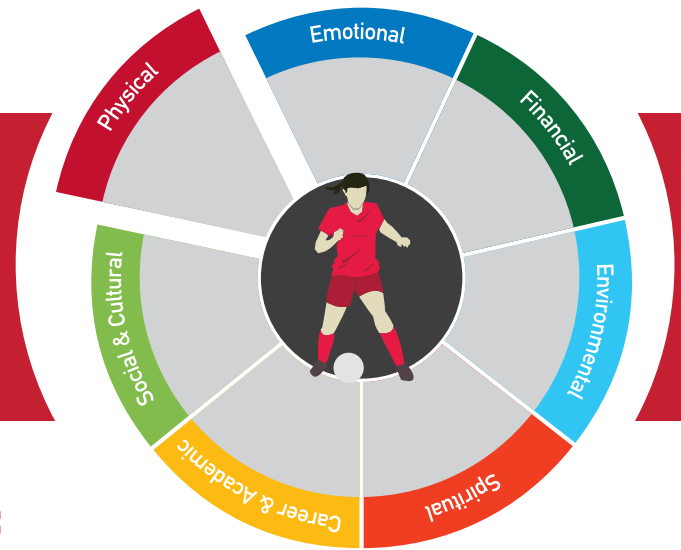
- Focus on your feelings and share your perspective instead of blaming others. Use "I" statements when communicating and be clear about your needs ('I feel hurt')

Develop your intercultural skills:

- Be open-minded and appreciative of diversity
- Challenge your assumptions and discomfort around the unknown
- Be aware of how your individual culture influences how you perceive others
- Be curious and look for opportunities to learn new things

For resources to support your social and cultural wellness visit:

<http://www.sfu.ca/students/health/resources/wellness/social-and-cultural.html>



## Physical Wellness

Physical Wellness is about creating opportunities for healthy eating, active living and self-care practices that will support your health and wellness.

### Examples of Physical Wellness:

- Maintaining an active lifestyle
- Eating nutritiously
- Seeing a doctor for regular check-ups
- Limiting alcohol & tobacco use
- Sleeping enough to feel rested
- Practicing safer sex

### Strategies to Enhance Your Physical Wellness

Find time in a busy schedule to be active:

- Set small goals. Go for a quick walk during your class or study breaks
- Sign up for yoga, fitness, sport or other recreation programs offered on campus that you can attend before or after class
- Schedule an activity with a friend so you can support each other in being active

Be clear about safer sex:

- Communicate with your partner if you have questions or concerns
- Meet with a health care provider on campus to talk one-on-one in a safe environment
- Look for resources online to help answer your questions

Maintain healthy eating habits:

- Compare your intake against Canada's Food Guide to help you stay on track
- Eat a balanced breakfast daily to fuel your body and mind

For resources to support your physical wellness visit:

<http://www.sfu.ca/students/health/resources/wellness/physical.html>