



Providence Health Care

Mission: Forward
Strategic Plan 2019–26



PEOPLE-FORWARD
Inspiring People & Teams

PHC Wellness Toolkit

Wellness activities to add to your day!



Brought to you by the PHC Wellness Team,
as part of PHC's Staff and Medical Staff Wellness Plan

wellness@providencehealth.bc.ca

missionforward.ca

Table Of Contents

Introduction & Use	1
Stretching	2
Gratitude Journal	4
Gratitude Jar	5
Values In Action (Via) Strengths Survey	6
3 Good Things Journal	7
S.T.O.P. Mindfulness	8
Mindfulness Routine	9
Self-compassion Break	10
5-4-3-2-1 Stress Reduction	11
Mountain Meditation Visualization	12
Positive Reframing	14
What Is It? How Do You Do It?	14
Exercise	15
Common Negative Thoughts	16
Acupressure Points	18
Personal mantras, affirmations of values or prayers	19
Other Helpful Wellness Activities	20
Prayers and Poems	21

Wellness Toolkit

Introduction & Use

The Wellness Team at PHC invites you to use the exercises in this toolkit to improve your wellness at work and at home. This toolkit aligns with PHC's strategic plan, **Mission: Forward**, and the **National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace**, which PHC implemented in 2017.

We recognize that there are many factors that influence your mental health and wellness – such as staffing, workload, safety, and other elements of your work environment – that exist at a department and organizational level.

This toolkit is designed to provide efficient, evidence-based activities (to be done alone or with a group) to help with your mental health and wellness on an individual level, while we work at making helpful changes at the departmental and organizational levels.

Evidence for these activities suggest that the longer you do them, the more benefits you should reap. While these activities are researched and based on best practices, we cannot guarantee that you will see the benefits listed within. Maximum benefits will depend on consistency of use, your attitude and external factors such as work design. We encourage you to share your experience of doing these activities, both with us and with your colleagues.

The activities in this toolkit have multiple origins. Gratitude practices stem from many religious, spiritual, or health and wellness practices across the world. Meditation and mindfulness have roots in Eastern spiritual practices, especially Buddhism. Gratitude, meditation, and mindfulness practices have been brought to the forefront of the field of positive psychology in recent years. Acupressure's origins are directly from Chinese Traditional Medicine. Stretching for health benefits can be traced back to ancient Greece and Rome (note: stretching differs from the spiritual and physical practice of Yoga, which originates from ancient India). All the activities included have been researched and shown to be beneficial.

Stretching

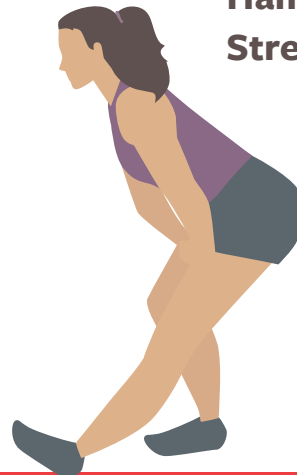
- 1 Hold each stretch for 30 seconds.
- 2 Stop if too uncomfortable or painful.
- 3 Do both sides.

Benefits:

- Improve blood flow
And flexibility
- Improve mood
- Relieve stress



Quadricep Stretch



Hamstring Stretch



Calf Stretch
(place your hands on a wall)



Hamstring Stretch

Stretching

- 1 Hold each stretch for 30 seconds.
- 2 Stop if too uncomfortable or painful.
- 3 Do both sides.

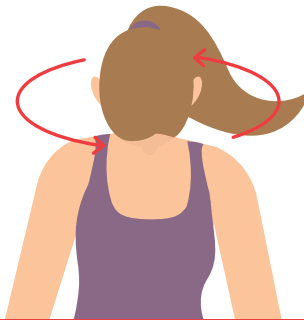
Benefits:

- Improve blood flow
And flexibility
- Improve mood
- Relieve stress

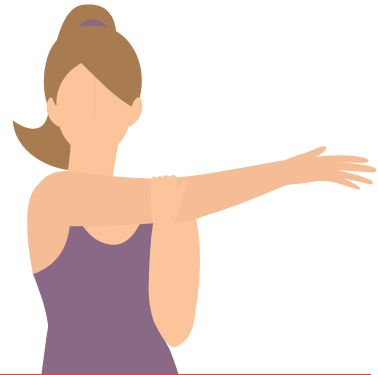
Side Stretch



Neck Stretch (360° rotation)



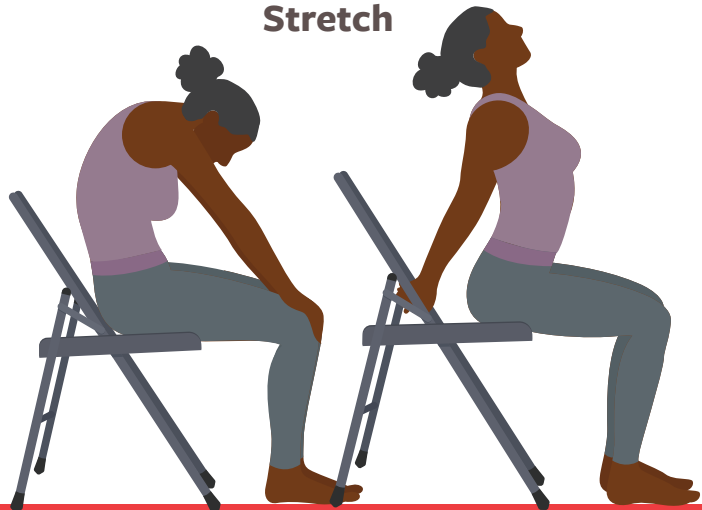
Shoulder Stretch



Back Stretch



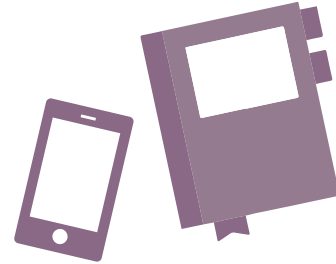
Back and Shoulder Stretch



Gratitude Journal

- 1 Take time each day to write out something you are thankful for.**

You can use a paper journal or start an entry on your phone.



- 2 Start with 1 week**

The longer you do this, the greater the benefits.

Benefits:

- Reduce depressive symptoms
- Increase happiness



Your entry can be as simple as one sentence.

You can choose to add detail and describe why you are grateful, or the impact the thing you are grateful for has on your life.

- 3 If you find yourself feeling down, look back on previous entries in your journal for a pick-me-up.**

Inspiration:

- ♥ Nature
- ♥ Loved Ones
- ♥ Your Health
- ♥ Your Skills
- ♥ Your Values
- ♥ Your Work

Gratitude Jar

A great team activity!

1 Take time each day to write out something you are thankful for on a slip of paper.

2 Fold your paper in half and put it into your gratitude jar.



As the jar fills you will be able to see how many things you have to be grateful for.

3 If you find yourself feeling down, look back through the entries in your jar for a pick-me-up.

4 Start with 1 week

The longer you do this, the greater the benefits.



Benefits:

- Reduce depressive symptoms
- Increase happiness

Inspiration:

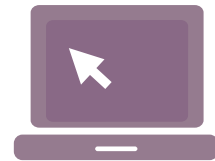
- ♥ Nature
- ♥ Loved Ones
- ♥ Your Health
- ♥ Your Skills
- ♥ Your Values
- ♥ Your Work

Values In Action (VIA) Strengths Survey

1 **Visit:** authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/testcenter



2 **Take the VIA Survey of Character Strengths.**



3 **Note your top five strengths.**



4 **Try to use one of your top strengths** in a new and different way, every day.

5 **Start with 1 week**

The longer you do this,
the greater the benefits.

Benefits:

- Reduce depressive symptoms
- Increase happiness



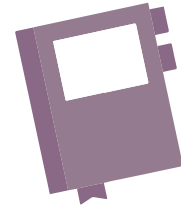
Some examples of the strengths are:

- | | | |
|-------------|--------------|------------|
| ◆ Bravery | ◆ Leadership | ◆ Teamwork |
| ◆ Love | ◆ Zest | ◆ Hope |
| ◆ Curiosity | ◆ Honesty | ◆ Justice |

3 Good Things Journal

① Before you go to bed write down 3 good things that happened to you that day.

② Write down what you think caused the good things to happen.



You can use a paper journal or start an entry on your phone.

Your 3 good things can be small or big.

③ **Start with 1 week**

The longer you do this, the greater the benefits.

Benefits:

- Reduce depressive symptoms
- Increase happiness



Examples:

- ➔ Having a good cup of coffee in the morning.
- ➔ You nailed a new skill you've been practicing.
- ➔ You landed the promotion you wanted.
- ➔ Your favourite band dropped a new song.
- ➔ Your partner cooked supper for you.

S.T.O.P. Mindfulness



Stop

Stop what you are doing. Close your eyes if you want to.

Take a breath



- Breathe in for 3 seconds through the nose, and out for about 5 – 8 seconds through the mouth.
 - Take a few breaths.
 - Gradually move to natural breathing.
-



Observe

Observe your thoughts, feelings, emotions, body (internal), and physical sensations (external), or as many of these as you have the time for.



Proceed with more awareness

Move through your day being more mindful of the present and how you feel in it. Do not judge your thoughts and feelings. Let them occur, then let them pass.

Mindfulness Benefits



Increases:

- Well-being
- Life satisfaction
- Happiness
- Self-esteem

Decreases:

- Symptoms of anxiety and depression

Mindfulness Routine

Focus your attention fully when going about your usual routines.

1 Choose a routine activity in your day.

Examples: eating, getting dressed, brushing your teeth, etc.



2 When doing the activity observe your body movements, sights and sensations.



3 Do not double-up activities (e.g., eating and reading)

When distractions arise, including your thoughts, allow yourself to notice them, and then let them pass, and re-focus on your routine activity.

Mindfulness Benefits



Increases:

- Well-being
- Life satisfaction
- Happiness
- Self-esteem

Decreases:

- Symptoms of anxiety and depression

Self-Compassion Break

Self-compassion is simply showing yourself kindness, the way you would do for a friend who was suffering.

Try this at moments you feel stressed or upset. Get a couple of minutes to yourself. Take a deep breath, and let the air out slowly.

1 Acknowledge your discomfort (try not to judge yourself).

It could be thoughts, feelings, and/or physical tension.
Say to yourself: “This hurts” or “This is stressful.”

2 Remind yourself that you’re not alone – that to suffer is to be human.

3 Give yourself kind words that you need to hear.
E.g., “I trust it will work out” or “May I accept myself as I am” or “I am getting through, one day at a time.” Do some small thing that makes you feel better.

Benefits



- Reduces depression, anxiety, and over-thinking
- Increases self-confidence and self-worth
- Helps us to care for others






5-4-3-2-1 Stress Reduction

This grounding technique is designed to help you calm down when your thoughts are racing due to stress.

Start with a few breaths.

Breathe in for 3 seconds through the nose, and out for about 5 – 8 seconds through the mouth.

Say out loud:

- ⑤ Things you see 
- ④ Things you feel 
- ③ Things you hear 
- ② Things you smell 
- ① Things you taste 

You can do this in your head rather than state out loud if that makes you more comfortable.

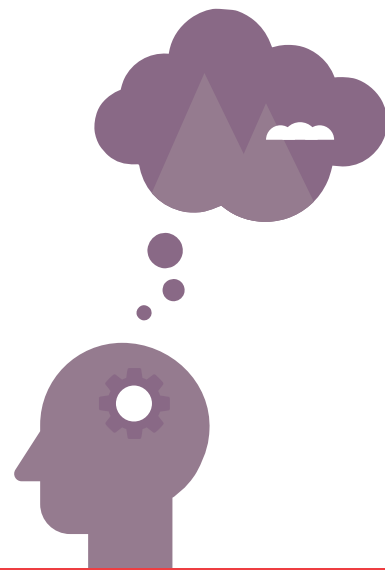


Mountain Meditation Visualization

1 Get into a comfortable position & take three deep breaths.

2 Visualize a mountain in your mind and observe its shape, terrain, and size. Take your time visualizing this.

3 Visualize taking the mountain into your body so you become the mountain (your head is the peak, your legs and feet are the base, your arms are the slopes). **Feel the strength of the mountain.**



4 Set the intention to use your interior mountain as a source of calm and stability in the face of changes in your life.

We are constantly experiencing changes in our mind, body, and environment. We experience a range of emotions from joy to frustration to sadness.

Like a mountain, we can be strong and stable amid our changing environments.



Mountain Meditation Visualization

5 Throughout the day, **focus on keeping the mountain within yourself.**



6 **Experience and feel the changes in and around you** without reacting in extremes.

Weather does not affect your mountain.

Notice how your external environment (your “weather”) simply passes you by.



7 **Take three more deep breaths as you set your intention.** Open your eyes and reflect on how you feel.



Mindfulness Benefits



Increases:

- Well-being
- Life satisfaction
- Happiness
- Self-esteem

Decreases:

- Symptoms of anxiety and depression

Positive Reframing

What is it? How do you do it?

Positive reframing “involves thinking about a negative or challenging situation in a more positive way.”



- 1 Examine what is causing you stress.
- 2 Focus on what you can control.
- 3 Focus on the positive outcomes.
 - A problem becomes an opportunity.
 - A weakness becomes a strength.
 - An impossibility as a distant possibility.
 - A distant possibility as a near possibility.
- 4 Identify the negative thoughts you are associating with the stress.
- 5 Look for the humour.
- 6 Steer away from catastrophizing.

Benefits:

- Reduce stress
- Open the mind to new opportunities
- Increase resilience
- Increase positive thoughts
- Increase life satisfaction
- Improve relationships

Positive Reframing

Exercise

- 1 Think back to a stressful scenario you have recently experienced.
- 2 Identify the negative type of thought you had associated with it.
- 3 Challenge your negative thought: Think of and write down alternatives that might be more realistic. See the common negative thought traps below, and use them to help challenge your thoughts.
- 4 If you are comfortable, pair up with someone and share your examples. Try to brainstorm new ways that you could have reframed the experience into a positive one.

See the list of common negative thoughts on the next pages.



Example: A friend whom you haven't seen for a couple months walks past you without saying hello:

X

Thought: "Why didn't they say hi to me? They must not like me anymore."

Feeling: You feel sad and rejected.

Behaviour: You don't reach out to them.



Thought: "They must not have seen me. Wow, I've really missed seeing them."

Feeling: You feel motivated to reconnect.






Behaviour: You send them a message about having just seen them and wanting to catch up.

Positive Reframing: Common Negative Thoughts

- ① **All-Or-Nothing Thinking:** You see things in black-and-white categories. If your performance falls short of perfect, you see yourself as a total failure.
- ② **Overgeneralization:** You see a single negative event as a never-ending pattern of defeat.
- ③ **Mental Filter:** You pick out a single negative detail and dwell on it exclusively so that your vision of all reality becomes darkened, like the drop of ink that discolours the entire beaker of water.
- ④ **Disqualifying the Positive:** You reject positive experiences by insisting they “don’t count” for some reason or other. In this way you can maintain a negative belief that is contradicted by your everyday experiences.
- ⑤ **Jumping to Conclusions:** You make a negative interpretation even though there are no definite facts that convincingly support your conclusion:
 - **Mind Reading:** You arbitrarily conclude that someone is reacting negatively to you, and you don’t bother to check this out.
 - **Fortune Telling:** You anticipate that things will turn out badly, and you feel convinced that your prediction is an already-established fact.



Positive Reframing: Common Negative Thoughts

-  **Magnification OR Minimization:** You exaggerate the importance of things (such as your goof-up or someone else's achievement), or you inappropriately shrink things until they appear tiny (your own desirable qualities or other person's imperfections).
-  **Emotional Reasoning:** You assume that your negative emotions necessarily reflect the way things really are: "I feel it, therefore it must be true."
-  **Should Statements:** You try to motivate yourself with "should" and "shouldn't" as if you had to be chastised before you could be expected to do anything. "Musts" and "oughts" are also offenders. The emotional consequences are guilt. When you direct "should" statements toward others, you feel anger, frustration, and resentment.
-  **Labelling and Mislabelling:** This is an extreme form of overgeneralization. Instead of describing your error, you attach a negative label to yourself e.g., "I'm a loser." When someone else's behaviour rubs you the wrong way, you attach a negative label to that person, e.g. "They're conceited." Mislabelling involves describing an event with language that is highly coloured and emotionally loaded.
-  **Personalization:** You see yourself as the cause of some negative external event, which in fact you were not primarily responsible for.



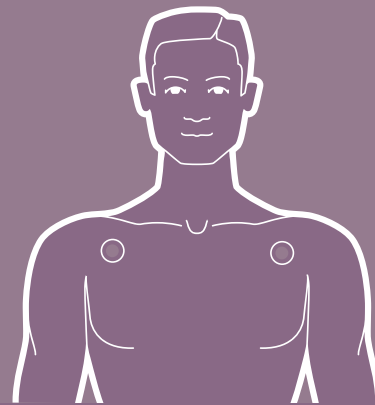
Acupressure Points

It is recommended to do some simple stretching and breathing exercises before an acupressure session.

Central Treasury

Press for 1 min:

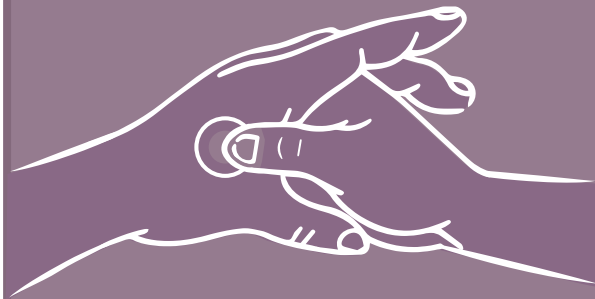
Increase blood circulation and help balance unstable emotions.



Union Valley

Press for 3 min:

Relieve stress and tension.



Three Mile Point

Press for 1 min:

Regulate energy flow, increase concentration and relieve fatigue



Personal mantras, affirmations of values or prayers

These can help you face challenging and stressful moments.

1

Start with 3 minutes, at least twice a day.

E.g., when you wake up and when getting into bed.

You may wish to stick a Post-it Note on your mirror as a reminder.

2

Repeat each affirmation 10 times.

Focus on the words and believe them to be true.

3

Find 2-3 affirmations that resonate with you and use them consistently for a while to see an effect.

Some examples:

- “it’s ok to feel this”
- “all feelings pass”
- “one step at a time”
- Any line or short prayer in your particular faith, that helps you feel supported and hopeful – e.g., “The Creator carries me through hard times.”

Benefits:

- Helps reduce unhelpful rumination after a set-back or failure
- Reduces the physiological stress response
- Can improve academic performance in some individuals



Other Helpful Wellness Activities

While it may be difficult to achieve when at work, evidence suggests that immersing yourself in nature and getting physical activity throughout the day are also helpful in promoting well-being.

- 1 Try to go for a walk in nature** at least once a week, and get fresh air whenever possible.



- 2 Choose to sit by windows** and enjoy daylight whenever possible.

- 3 It is recommended to get at least 30 minutes of physical activity per day.** This can be walking, running, lifting weights, dancing, playing a sport and so on.



- 4 Engage in a cultural activity or tradition** that you find comforting or rejuvenating.

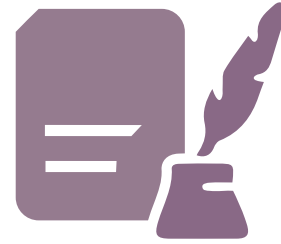
Not only does this help your physical health, but exercise has been shown to improve mental health and wellness as well.



Prayers and Poems

May you be well.
May you be cleansed and purified
Of all that isn't health.
May every cell in your body
Wake up and fight.
May the powerful light of healing
Move into every part of you.
May you return to being purely you.
May you be well.

- *By Joanna Fuchs*



A blessing for health care leaders

May you walk among the people you serve,
May you be one with them.
May others see your care,
May they catch your gift.

May your soul be nourished by the work you do,
The service you perform.
May your heart be lifted in the struggles you endure.

May you know the mission
In your very bones.
May it challenge you and sustain you.

May you risk all that is secure for you,
That you may reach all that is central to you
And find goodness there.
May courage befriend you,
Integrity sustain you,
Hope call you forward.

- *A Roman Catholic Prayer*



**Take care of your mind,
your body will thank you.**

**Take care of your body,
your mind will thank you.**

- Debbie Hampton



If you have an activity you think would be a good fit for this toolkit feel free to reach out to the Wellness Team and let us know at:

wellness@providencehealth.bc.ca