

AVTE 2023 Annual Conference

WELL-BEING: WHAT
EDUCATORS &
VETERINARY
PROFESSIONALS NEED
TO KNOW TO SUPPORT
STUDENTS NOW & AS
THEY ENTER THE FIELD



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FORT VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
EMPOWER *the* POSSIBLE.

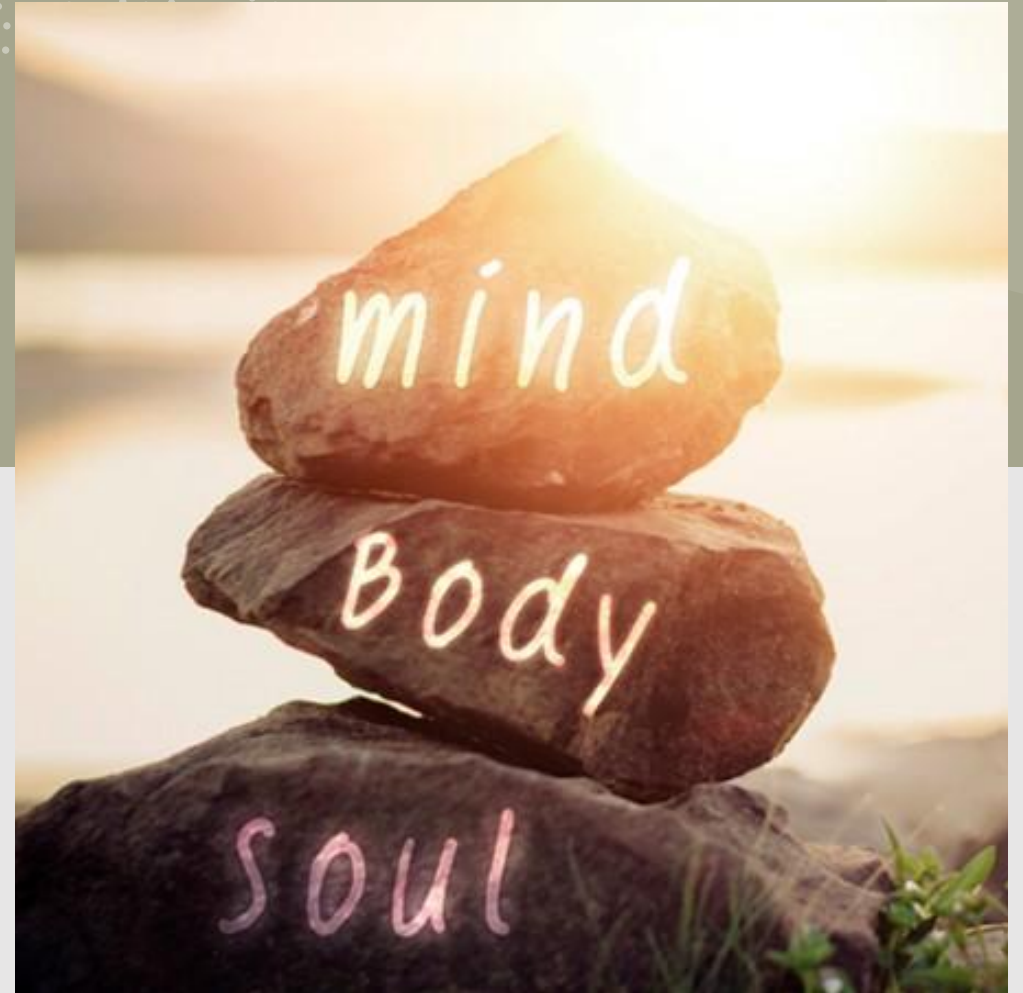
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Objectives

1. Define well-being & how it relates to educating college students & future veterinary professionals
2. Identify mental health challenges & warning signs
3. Resources to promote well-being, mental health support, & additional training





“The state of being happy, healthy, or prosperous.” – Merriam-Webster Dictionary¹

Well-being (noun)

“A state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” – WHO²

Expanding the Definition to Include³:

Emotional
well-being

Physical
well-being

Workplace
well-being

Social
well-being

Societal
well-being



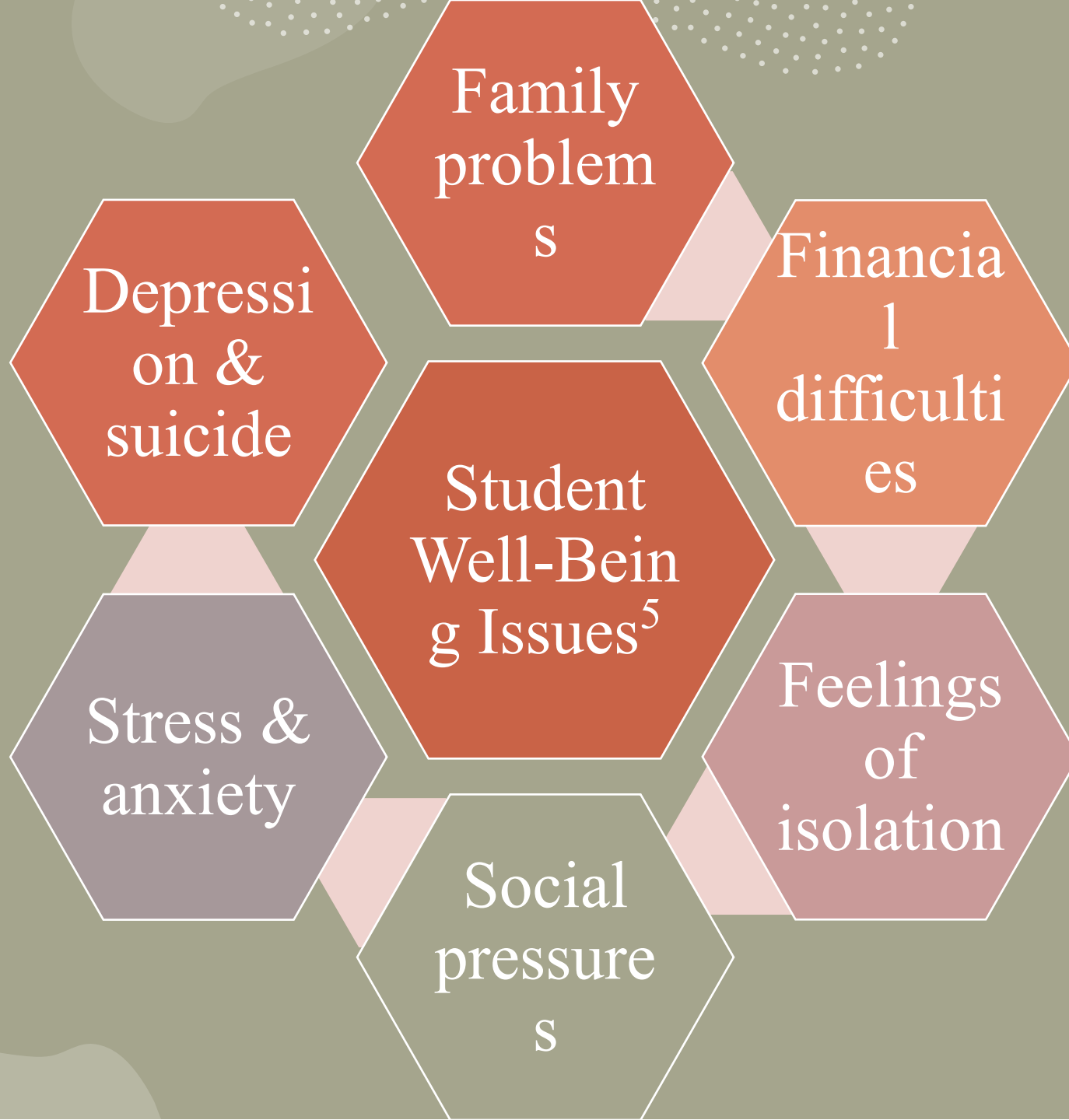
Healthy Stress⁴

- Helps the learning process
- Accountable to deadlines
- Standard for quality work

Unhealthy Stress⁴

Interferes with ability to:

- Concentrate
- Function
- Engage w/material or peers
- Complete assignments



Student Stressors⁶

coursework

57%

to well at college

47%

to money

46%

to school & work

41%

to school & family

27%

to finding a job

26%

to Ukraine/other international conflicts

17%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60%

Source: Inside Higher Ed/College
Pulse Survey

Impact of Poor Mental Health on Learning⁷

Decreased concentration & difficulty focusing

Shortened attention span

Difficulty making new memories or storing info

Unable to recall previously learned material

Difficulty prioritizing tasks

Taking longer to complete assignments

Healthy Minds Study⁴

42% of students report:

- Thoughts of suicide **OR**
- Symptoms of likely diagnosis of depression, anxiety, an eating disorder, or non-suicidal self-injury

77% of students report:

- Emotional or mental difficulties hurt their academic performance one or more days in past 4 weeks



Merck Animal Health's Wellbeing Study⁹

92% of respondents

- Reported increased stress as one of top mental health challenges

88% of respondents

- Cited student debt & risk of suicide as leading stressors

49.6% staff &
30.5% veterinarians

- Reported high levels of burnout

Academic Signs of Mental Health

Repeated Challenges:

Repeated
absences,
tardiness,
missing
appointments

Repeated
requests for
accommodations

Submission of
work
w/troubling
topics

Decline in
academic
performance



Student Voice Survey⁶

22%
responded

- Poor overall mental health

34%
responded

- Fair overall mental health

9%
responded

- Excellent overall mental health

Faculty Actions to Support Well Being:

Include statement on mental health in syllabus

Be open about your own challenges & successes

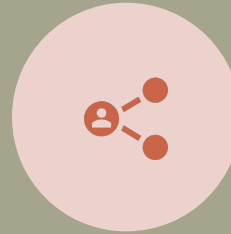
Be ready to recognize, respond, & refer students

Promote well-being, social connectedness, & growth mindset

Supporting Student Well-Being¹¹



As simple as
reaching out and
asking if everything
is ok



Just show you care
& know where to
refer a student



Referral to or setting
an appointment with
counselor



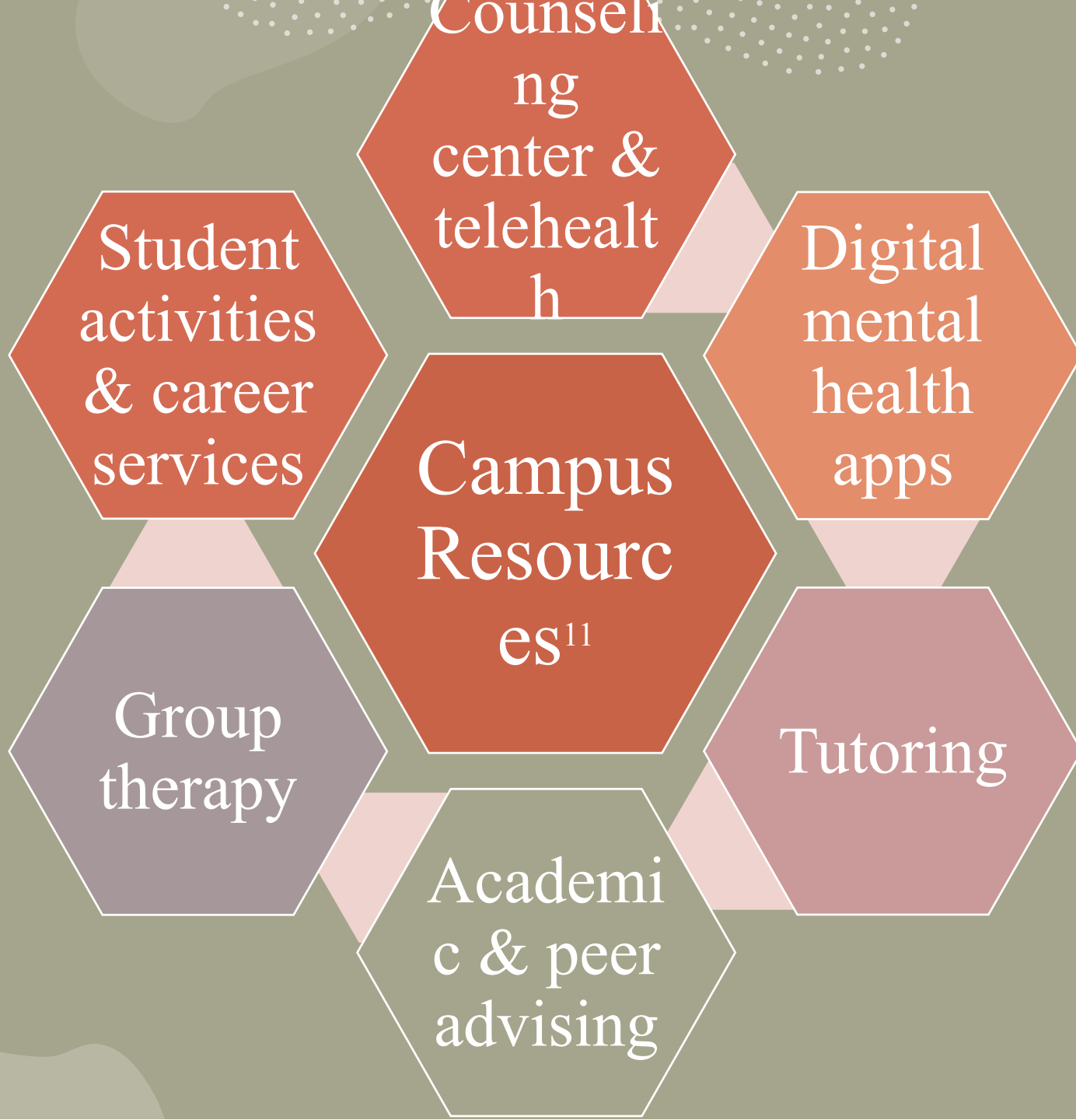
Acknowledge
difficult events in
class



Allow 7-day
window to submit
assignments



Built in mental
health days



Faculty Members Role in Mental Health & Well-Being

2021 Report¹⁰ by
Boston University School of
Public Health, the Healthy
Minds Network, & the Mary
Christie Foundation

College Mental
Wellness Advocacy
Coalition & Ipsos
Survey¹²

Erudera.com
reports¹²

- 8/10 professors had 1 on 1 conversations w/students about mental health in past 12 months
- <30% of faculty members were trained for such discussions
- 4 in 10 students in US/Canada reported poor mental health & most agreed they need mental health support (18,169 respondents)
- 59% struggling w/mental health issues are uncomfortable discussing their mental health b/c they fear judgement



Faculty Responsibilities

- Relied on as “first responders” to help identify students in distress — American Psychological Association¹¹
- “We are not licensed mental health or human health professionals.” — AAVMC Wellbeing⁷

My Mental Health: Do I Need Help?

First, determine how much your symptoms interfere with your daily life.



Do I have mild symptoms that have lasted for less than 2 weeks?

- Feeling a little down
- Feeling down, but still able to do job, schoolwork, or housework
- Some trouble sleeping
- Feeling down, but still able to take care of yourself or take care of others



If so, here are some self-care activities that can help:

- Exercising (e.g., aerobics, yoga)
- Engaging in social contact (virtual or in person)
- Getting adequate sleep on a regular schedule
- Eating healthy
- Talking to a trusted friend or family member
- Practicing meditation, relaxation, and mindfulness

If the symptoms above do not improve or seem to be worsening despite self-care efforts, talk to your health care provider.



Do I have severe symptoms that have lasted 2 weeks or more?

- Difficulty sleeping
- Appetite changes that result in unwanted weight changes
- Struggling to get out of bed in the morning because of mood
- Difficulty concentrating
- Loss of interest in things you usually find enjoyable
- Unable to perform usual daily functions and responsibilities
- Thoughts of death or self-harm



Seek professional help:

- Psychotherapy (talk therapy)—virtual or in person; individual, group, or family
- Medications
- Brain stimulation therapies

For help finding treatment, visit nimh.nih.gov/findhelp.

If you are in crisis, call or text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988 or chat at 988lifeline.org, or text the Crisis Text Line (text HELLO to 741741).

Reverse Traffic Light

Assessing Current Status



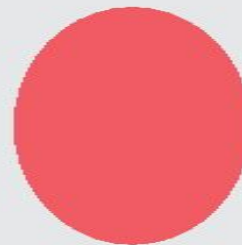
Level 1— Concern

- Distressed but not of a serious, lasting nature
- Need listening ear & connection to resources



Level 2— Urgent

- Persistent symptoms lasting more than a week
- Connect them to counseling student services



Level 3— Emergency

- Threat of harm to self or others
- Need immediate attention, high-level supports

Source: AAVMC
Wellbeing⁷

Basic Wellness Habits



Healthy Diet



Better sleep



Regular
exercise



Relaxing
activities



Socialize



Advocate for
yourself

Building Well-Being Skills³

Emotional

- Happiness
- Mindfulness
- Positive thinking
- Resilience

Physical

- Healthy diet/nutrition
- Good exercise habits
- Detox & correct nutritional deficiencies

Workplace

- Work-life balance
- Finding purpose
- Living our values

Social

- Practicing gratitude
- Kindness
- Building meaningful connections

Societal

- Support our environment
- Building stronger communities
- Making positive impacts

How Students Support Their Mental Health

Listen to music

Spend time w/friend or family

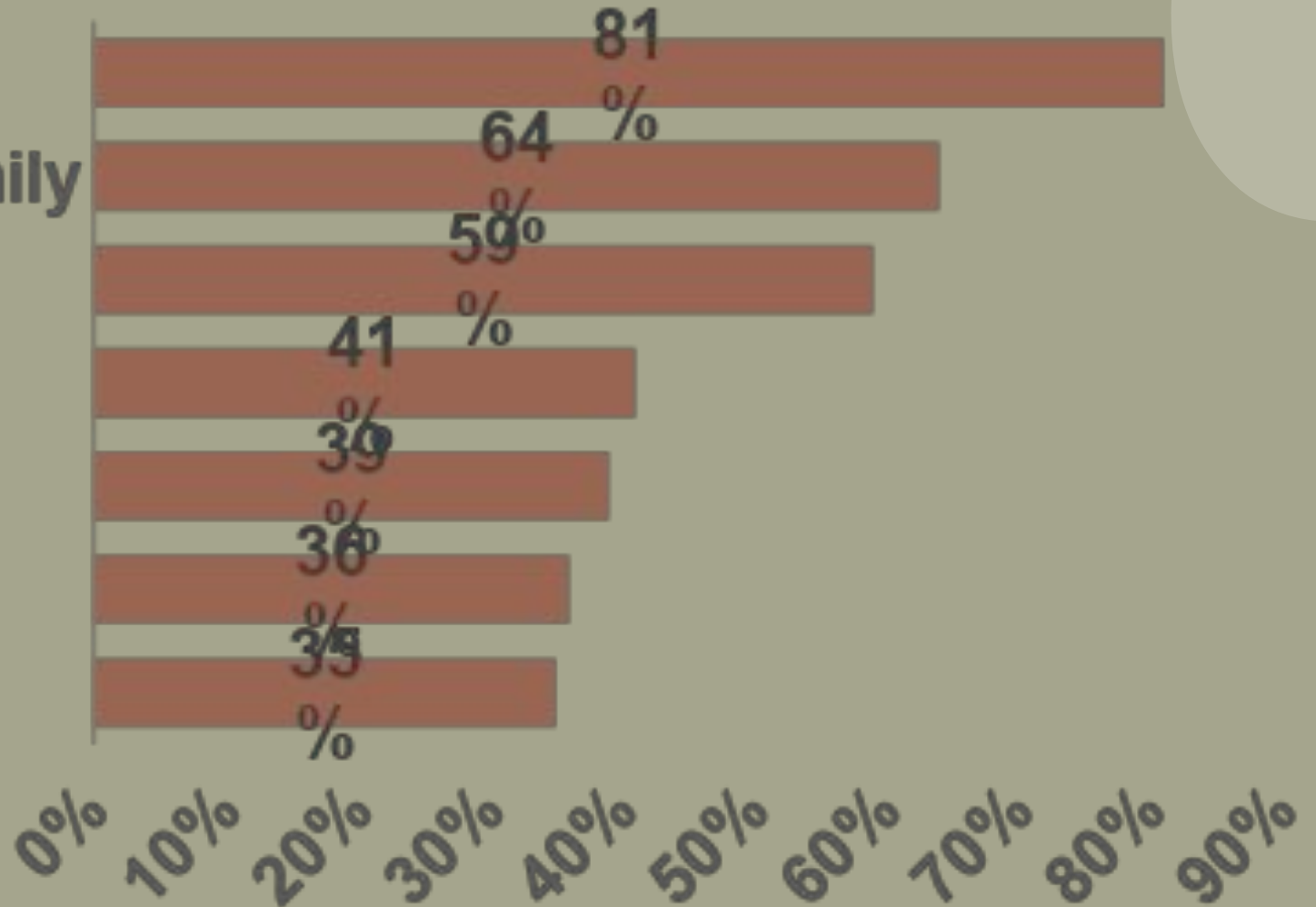
Watch tv/movies

Spend time outside

Getting good sleep

Exercising

Health eating



Source: Erudera/Ipsos poll¹²



SELF CARE

“Taking time to do things that help you live well & improve both your physical & mental health.”¹⁴

- Manage stress
- Lower risk of illness
- Increase your energy





Veterinary Professionals Self Care¹⁶



Work-life balance



Engage in non-work activities



Financial advisor



Health Insurance



From a US national research authority >

Be GREAT



GRATITUDE



RELAXATION



EXERCISE



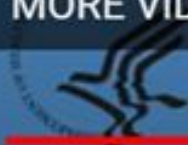
**ACKNOWLEDGE
FEELINGS**



**TRACK
THOUGHTS**

GREAT was developed by Dr. Krystal Lewis, a licensed clinical psychologist at NIMH.

MORE VIDEOS



National Institute
of Mental Health

www.nimh.nih.gov/stressand anxiety



MENTAL



HEALTH

Gate Keeper Training

“Programs designed to enhance an individual’s skills to recognize signs of emotional distress in other people & refer them to appropriate resources.”¹⁰

- Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR Institute)
- Mental Health First Aid (National Council for Mental Wellbeing)
- At-Risk for University & College Faculty (Kognito)

Universities Support of Student Mental Health⁵



Remove the stigma
& raise awareness



Hire more
counselors



Focus on resiliency
& stress
management



Online
communities



Conduct surveys &
assessments



Measure success

National Resources

Immediate
Help

- 911 (if you or someone else are in danger)

Suicide
Prevention
Lifeline

- 1-800-273-TALK
- suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Crisis Text
Line

- Text hello to 741741
- crisistextline.org

Lifeline Crisis
Chat

- www.crisischat.org

SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE

If you believe you're in crisis—
or know someone who is—

THERE IS HOPE.

PLEASE GET HELP NOW.

Trained counselors are
available around the clock.

DIAL 988

AVMA Resources²



Brave Space Certificate Program



Workplace Well-Being
Certificate Program



My Vet Life



Well-Being Resources



Work & compassion fatigue

Outcomes of Greater Sense of Well-Being^{2,5}



Increased academic performance



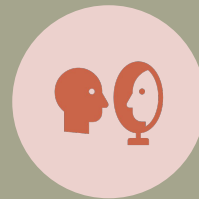
Increased retention



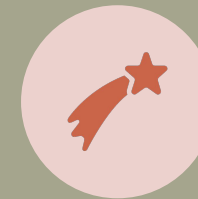
Increased graduation rates



Higher motivation



Increased self-confidence



Increased engagement & achievement



Enhanced critical thinking



Increased community service



Conclusion

- “Teaching students about personal & community well-being impacts how they interact w/themselves & others throughout their careers.” — AAVMC⁷
- “Well(being) is an active process through which people become aware of, make choices toward, a more successful existence.” — National

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The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing. – Walt Disney



Thank you

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Berkeley Well-Being Institute³

Take the Well-Being
Quiz

