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Connecting With Yourself and Others

This month's focus is connections and emotions. Topics include increasing emotional intelligence, how to break up with emotional eating, and exploring the mind-body connection.

Check out Bernalong's July playlist: <https://well.burnalong.com/playlist/3178>



thankful

Gratitude Builds Resilience and Emotional Well-Being

Did you enjoy your hot mug of coffee this morning? See a beautiful sunrise? Studies suggest that regularly noticing what's going well in your life could have health benefits. Taking time to feel gratitude may improve your health, and one study finds that gratitude was linked to fewer signs of heart disease.

Make starting with gratitude your regular habit in July. You'll notice moments of positivity even when you are stressed.

Take a moment to jot down three things you are grateful for before closing your eyes each night. This small habit can help you boost your mood, discover hope in a moment of chaos, and provide the opportunity to reframe your day while supporting emotional wellness.

Meditate. Share in a small act of kindness. Find more ways to build resiliency in the [Emotional Wellness Toolkit](#) by the National Institutes for Health.

Continue reading at <https://inside.collin.edu/wellness/connection.html>.

Connection Pillar

During the "Shaping Your Summer" challenge, complete 120 minutes of Bernalong classes (on any topic) by Aug. 10 and be entered in a drawing for a \$50 voucher toward district bookstores or cafés.

Join the challenge: <https://well.burnalong.com/challenges>.



Mindfulness and stress reduction are hot topics these days, and the number of wellness classes, books, gyms, trainers, and products on the market are enough to make anyone feel more stressed! Thankfully, the Wellness Committee is here to demonstrate how you can fight stress and be more mindful using something simple, your breath.

Breathing exercises have been used for thousands of years and continue to be used today by everyone. Breathing exercises activate the parasympathetic nervous system and the body's rest response. There are many benefits to breathwork, including lower cortisol levels, reduced stress, and increased focus.

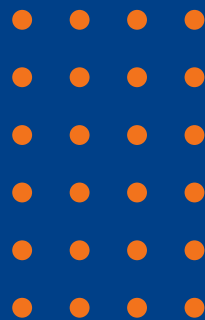
In ashtanga yoga practices, breathing exercises are known as *pranayama*, roughly translated as "life-force control." The following is a simple pranayama you can perform just about anywhere. Its yogic name is *antarbahir kumbhaka* or "breath retention;" however, it also goes by box breathing, 4-4-4-4 breathing, equal breathing, and many other names. It is even introduced in the Leading for Excellence Academy, an Employee Success and Talent Development program.

Enrichment Pillar

Practice Breath Retention

The exercise is simple and takes about two minutes.

1. Find a comfortable seated (or standing) position.
2. Eyes can be closed or open. If open, look toward a fixed object, not a digital screen.
3. Exhale completely.
4. Inhale slowly and with control while mentally counting to four.
5. Pause at the top of your exhale, again counting to four.
6. Exhale slowly for a count of four.
7. Pause after your exhale for a count of four.
8. Repeat three to four (or more) times.



Six Tips to Stay Hydrated This Summer

1. **Be aware of weather** - Even if cloudy or breezy, high temperatures can still cause water loss.
2. **Consider the level of activity** - if you exercise or engage in any activity that makes you sweat, you need to drink extra water to compensate for fluid loss. An additional 1.5 to 2.5 cups of water should suffice for short bouts of exercise, but intense exercise lasting more than an hour requires greater fluid intake.
3. **Drink plenty of liquids** - While water is the best overall source of hydration, milk and juice are composed mostly of water. After extended periods of exercise, some minerals and electrolytes need to be replenished.
4. **Avoid caffeinated beverages** - Because of the diuretic effect of caffeine, these beverages may cause an increase in water loss through the urine.
5. **Eat foods with high water content** - Complement fluid intake by eating foods with high water content.
6. **Dress wisely** - Cotton clothing allows air to circulate, making the heat more bearable.

Physical Pillar

time to hydrate

Do you have a friendship story at Collin College to share?

Tell us by completing [this form](#). Your story may appear in an upcoming Wellness newsletter!

Strengthen Emotional Connections



According to Dr. Dianne Grande's article in *Psychology Today* online, people often have misguided ideas about how to get their emotional needs met. Too often, we expect a partner or close friend to know what we're feeling and what type of comfort we need. This is unrealistic.

Many of us were raised with messages such as "Don't express feelings," "Don't be vulnerable," or "Don't let them see you cry." We may have even been ridiculed for having feelings.

The better message to tell yourself is "Have courage and trust that your partner/friend loves you" or "S/he wants the connection as much as you do." There may be times when the other person's attention is focused on other matters, but be patient and reach out in a loving way.



Emotional Pillar



Discover five ways to strengthen connection to yourself and others:
<https://inside.collin.edu/wellness/emotional.html>.

Money and Your Emotions

Why are we so emotional about money? Personal financial decisions can be filled with questions and answers driven by our emotions.

Life during the pandemic increased stress and anxiety for many with financial concerns. Barriers like shame and stigma around financial struggle often keep people from seeking help. If fear comes from a lack of understanding, educating yourself can empower you with the knowledge to make more confident decisions.

To learn more about your emotional responses to finances, check out this brief article from the Harvard Business Review:
<https://hbr.org/2021/08/why-are-we-so-emotional-about-money>

Financial Pillar

De-escalating Tense Situations

In this post-pandemic world, employees are experiencing more emotionally charged interactions with stressed out students, customers, and team members.

July 20, 9-11:30 a.m.
Frisco Campus
Conference Center

The Employee Success and Talent Development Team invites you to attend an interactive training to learn tools for effective de-escalation of tense situations. This free in-person session is open to all employees.

Advance registration is required: <https://de-escalating-tense-situations.eventbrite.com>

