But First: From Melissa

Melissa Cumbia works at Virginia Tech as an Academic Advisor for the College of Natural Resources and Environment. On the WBAR Steering Committee, she is on the Research subcommittee and the Region 2 liaison.

I have been in academic advising for nine years. I started advising at Wake Forest University in 2014 and transitioned to Virginia Tech (my alma mater) in 2017. Before becoming an advisor, I worked as a graduate assistant in a university tutoring center and as a high school special education aide.

Well-being is striving to thrive, not just survive. Well-being requires us to maintain sustainable practices and implement self-care in ways that align with our individual goals and values so that the various facets of our lives (e.g., physical, emotional, professional, spiritual, relational, financial, environmental,) are balanced, rewarding, and meaningful. On how others should approach their own well-being, consider what energizes you and what depletes you. Try to find a balance in which you can thrive, doing what energizes you as much as possible and setting boundaries around what drains you. Connect with others who will encourage you to practice self-care, self-compassion, and self-advocacy towards your well-being.

A Cup of Wellness ☕

One way to fill your cup is through restorative rest. Did you know that we all need seven different types of rest?

Below are some ideas to incorporate each type of rest into your life:

- Physical rest: sleeping, naps, yoga, stretching, and massages
- Mental rest: short breaks throughout the day, meditation, silence, journaling
- Sensory rest: closing your eyes for a minute, turning off devices and screens, being in quiet
- Creative rest: reading, walking in nature, enjoying the arts, decorating your workspace
- Emotional rest: journaling, talking with trusted people, therapy
- Social rest: connecting with friends, taking a break from socializing
- Spiritual rest: prayer, meditation, community involvement

So, in the words of Eliza in Act II of the Broadway musical “Hamilton”, take a break! (And rest).

Learn more about the 7 types of rest here.
Wellness Wednesday Updates

In the past four months, we had so many attend our Wellness Wednesdays, which we’re so grateful for. We’ve discussed Personal Wellness, including the book, The Awesome Human Project. It taught us how to have the courage to talk back to your brain and to instead be the editor of our own thoughts. In discussing how to cope with the busy summer season, we learned about “active rest” such as taking a break from tasks stressing us out to do other tasks that are low stressors. We also focused on Occupational Wellness and how admins and advisors can work together towards a community of care. We discussed establishing boundaries and practicing self-care, while also communicating topics between admin and advisors, such as discussion about burnout, salary increase, remote work, etc. One of the biggest takeaways was what one of the panelists said: Inclusion means everyone’s well-being looks different. There was discussion about how Universities can support staff through wellness programs and how staff can advocate for more programs/benefits that support wellness.

All Wellness Wednesdays are scheduled the first Wednesday of each month at 2PM CDT for 2023 through October – you can register for each month or specific ones by clicking on this link.

In search of topics for August & September Wellness Wednesdays. If you want us to focus on a specific topic or you and/or your AC wants to collaborate with us, let Olivia Miller know at olivia.r.miller@umkc.edu.

What We’re Reading

Articles and Pieces about Wellness and Retention We’ve Liked:

- How to say no to others (and why you shouldn't feel guilty).
- Well-being of students in higher education: the importance of a student perspective
- How to Support Your Staff Beyond the Pandemic

WBAR is starting a book club! If you are interested in joining, contact Elysa Smith, elysa.smithefranklin.edu

NACADA Annual Conference

There will be several opportunities at the annual conference (Oct. 4-7) to meet-up with the WBAR AC. Here are the tentative events:

- WBAR AC Meeting - 10/6, 2:45-3:45pm
- Community Social - breakfast together on 10/7
- WBAR HOT TOPIC: Sustaining the Magic of the Advising Profession - 10/7, 11:15am-12:15pm
- 30 total sessions in the Health & Wellness Track including our two community sponsored sessions “Advisor Retention: The Golden Ticket! Barriers, Challenges, and Strategies to Increase Persistence” (Thursday 10/5, 9:15-10:15am) and “Advising with ADD/ADHD: Discussions for Neurodivergent Advisors by Neurodivergent Advisors” (Saturday 10/7, 8:45-9:45am)

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