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SOCIAL WELLNESS

This newsletter is a part of the Open Campus (OC) Wellness Programme for staff and students. The objective

of this newsletter is to share information on the interconnected dimensions of wellness and highlight other OC wellness initiatives in the hope that we can be better educated on the full circle of living well and be our best

The world is opening up in many ways even though we are still in a pandemic. Some persons would have suffered various levels of social anxiety as a result of being locked up inside for the better part of 2 years. "Those that chose to socially distance themselves or were encouraged to complete school or work from home became comfortable with those shifts in their behaviors" says Dr. Hillary Ammon, assistant professor of clinical psychiatry in the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania (Welsh, 2022). As an Open Campus staff member or student you may be accustomed to a virtual environment but the pandemic pushed things to a drastic degree. Many adjustments had to be made and we were operating in a "new normal." You may have created different routines and developed new habits to cope with the new environment.

selves.

Ways in Which Social Anxiety Manifests Itself

 Most obvious feelings - severe discomfort in social situations and the choice to avoid social outings

When the brain is preparing for something new the body tends to produce a stress response (Smith, 2022).

 Physical feelings - racing heart, sweating, headaches, nausea, irritability/agitation, dizziness, and feeling flushed in social situations.

It may seem strange that you are feeling such symptoms, especially if you had no previous episodes of anxiety, but know that this is a normal response. After acclimatizing to less sociable ways of life, another shakeup is happening. With the lifting of covid measures and mandates you may be feeling out of sorts.

No More Covid-19 Mandates...Yay?

Pre-pandemic hugs, handshakes, closer physical spacing and no masks were commonplace in social settings. Now you may be wondering if it is safe to go back to those practices, especially in public spaces with strangers and acquaintances. You may also wonder if your own hesitation or apprehension about these things will be problematic to the person on the other side of the interaction, especially if they don't share your views.

Strategies for Dealing with Social Anxiety

- Start small Take baby steps and slowly reintegrate into social settings.
- Connect with other people Join a club of an activity you enjoy e.g. walking, hiking, dance. Reach out to people. Ask for help and offer to help as well.
- Try breathing exercises Deep breaths can help calm the mind and body.
- Practice mindfulness be present and pay attention to your thoughts and feelings
- Be compassionate to others and to yourself. Change takes time and you/others may not be responding as quickly as you imagine.
- Get help from a licensed professional if needs be There's no shame in that.

Source: https://www.healthline.com/health-news/why-youmay-experience-social-anxiety-as-you-emerge-from-thepandemic

Dayna Smith

Sports Activity Development Officer

SPIRITUAL WELLNESS

For some persons, spiritual wellness involves participation in organized religion. Religious tolerance refers to the ability to appreciate differing spiritual values, beliefs and practices from your own. The Caribbean region can be described as a melting pot of cultures with religion playing an integral role in Caribbean society. Some islands have more of a mix of faiths than others and persons may be more informed and accepting of doctrines other than their own.

April 2022 found multiple religions celebrating holy days or religious holidays. They include but are not limited to Ramadan (Islam), Vaisakhi (Sikhism), Passover (Judaism) and Easter (Christianity). In an effort to embrace the differences among us, let us familiarise ourselves and take a look at some facts about these organised religions, some you may or may not know.

Ramadan

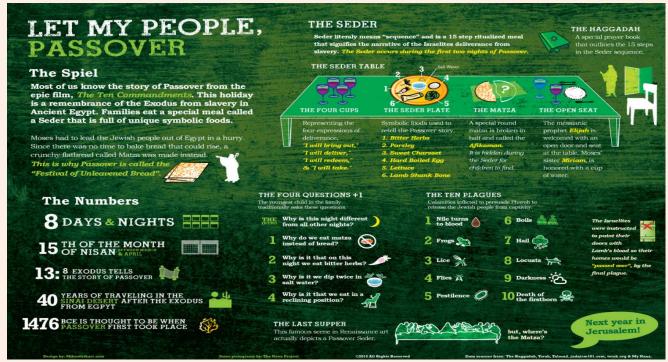


Vaisakhi

Usually celebrated on the 13 th or 14 th of April every year which is also regarded as the start of the farming year.	Vaisakhi is a happy time in the Punjab as this is where farmers harvest their crops and reap the benefits a year of hard work.	Vaisakhi 1699 was a very special day for the Sikhs because it is on this day that the Khalsa was created. The Khalsa is the	Celebrations	
		army of saint-soldiers that were created to bring peace, happiness		The Nishan Sahib (fla outside the Gurdwar represents freedom, ju
PUNJAB	The country was under the	and to protect the downtrodden. The tenth Guru of the Sikhs, Guru Gobind Singh tested the Sikhs to see if they would live up to the ideals of the Sikh faith by sacrificing everything. Five Sikhs passed the test and their names also had very special meanings. Dava (compassion), Himmat		and food and support fo needy. The commun usually cleans it and rep the cloth on Vaisakh
the Sikhs, Guru Gobind Singh called for all Sikhs to	tyrannical rule of the Mughal mpire. The Guru created a new aint-soldier army to protect the downtrodden and uproot evil	(effort), Dharam (righteousness), Mokham (determined and strong) and Sahib (Mastery and Leadership). The Guru initiated the Sikhs with a new ceremony and then asked the 5 Sikhs to initiate Him into the Khalsa too. This is an unparalleled act from the	They will sing praises of God in the form of "Keertan" and will listen to discourses of historical events relating to Vaisakhi. Processions in streets also take place called "Nagar Keertans".	All food offered in the Gurdwa free for all and there are spe efforts made to cater for th thousands of Sikhs and oth communities who attend
sacrifice their lives. Those five were initiated through the "Amrit" ceremony and this	te army was named the "Khalsa" or the "Pure Ones". They were ken a new identity with sovereign umames of "Singh" for men and au" for wormen. They were also give the five K's as uniform	leader of a faith and it further instilled the fortitude required by the Sikhs to uproot the tyranny and exil that was occurring during this period. Sikhs do not follow traditional Indian rituals such as bathing at acred rivers, praying to delites or in certain directions, fasting etc. They believe in One God and the Sikh Scripture called Guru Granth Sahb Jee is the 11 st and eternal Guru who will be their guide forthe future.	EMOTIONAL MEMORIES On 13° April 1919, British troop fired on an innocent crowd in Jallianwala Bagh; that had gatheref for a peaceful protest. 1000 were misacred and 1500 were minured. The day is a very sad reminder for	Uncut hair covered with Turban/head
Men and Boys	SIKH Head Covering	and Girls	SHARE RE Charity	reminds Sikhs

Source: https://twitter.com/DrTonyKainth/status/1381920468433788928/photo/1

Passover (Pesach)



Source: https://visual.ly/community/Infographics/lifestyle/let-my-people-passover

Easter



Source: https://facts.net/easter-facts/

PHYSICAL WELLNESS

This is your signal to take a break and move! Step away from the computer screen and get your body moving using the following guide to get some deskercise:

DE STRESS MONDAY Happy New Week! **6 WAYS TO 'DESKERCISE'**

Sitting at a desk hour after hour and day after day can take a toll on your body. Here are some simple exercises you can do to get your muscles working and your blood flowing (which can also get ideas flowing).



Grip a non-rolling chair on both sides and slide to the front edge. Start with your arms straight and legs extended, then dip by bending your arms. Push yourself up, then dip again. Your back, neck, and shoulders deserve a break from sitting, especially if you've been staring at a screen. Stand up and stretch from your fingertips to your toes.

Source: https://www.pinterest.com/pin/263671753167260248/

vour toes.

Stand up and sit down without

using your hands. Make sure to

allow your knees to cross over

stick your backside out and don't

CAREER WELLNESS

April 28, 2022 is Girls in ICT Day



mage course. <u>mtps.//bit.ly/oewwbbz</u>

International Girls in ICT Day is commemorated annually on the last Thursday of April. The days was created to "encourage and empower girls and young women to consider studies and careers in the growing field of ICTs, enabling both girls and technology companies to reap the benefits of greater female participation in the ICT sector." (Caricom.org, n.d.) With technology becoming more and more integrated into all industries, job opportunities will increasingly require technology and innovation skills from candidates. According to UNWomen.org (n.d.), "65[%] of children entering primary school today will have jobs that do not yet exist." So, early access to technology will better set up young people to compete in the job market, especially in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers. However, the following statistics show the glaring inequalities that exist:

- nearly 25% fewer women than men have access to the Internet across the developing world.
- less than 30% of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) professionals are women.
- Globally, in tertiary institutions, there is approximately half the number of girls studying STEM subjects compared to boys.
- 48% of women versus 55% of men you the internet daily globally.

It is no wonder that "Access and Safety" is the 2022 theme of Girls in ICT Day.

Questions to Ponder, Discuss and Create Plans For

- How can unequal access affect girls in STEM/ICT and what can we do to change this worldwide?
- How can we make our programmes and STEM/ICT related studies and workplaces more accessible and inclusive?
- What type of gender stereotypes and toxic workplaces have they experienced? How can we change these environments for the better? What is the role of an encouraging workplace?
- Are our online spaces created to make girls and women feel safe and prevent unpleasant online experiences for them?

These questions and discussions require multi sectoral and stakeholder engagement, action and support to empower young girls and women through technology. Youth must be invited to the table to lend their voice to strategies and implementation of activities to close the gap between men and women in ICT.

Sources:

https://caricom.org/projects/girls-in-ict/

https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/international-girls-in-ict-day

https://www.itu.int/women-and-girls/girls-in-ict/international-girls-in-ict-day-2022/

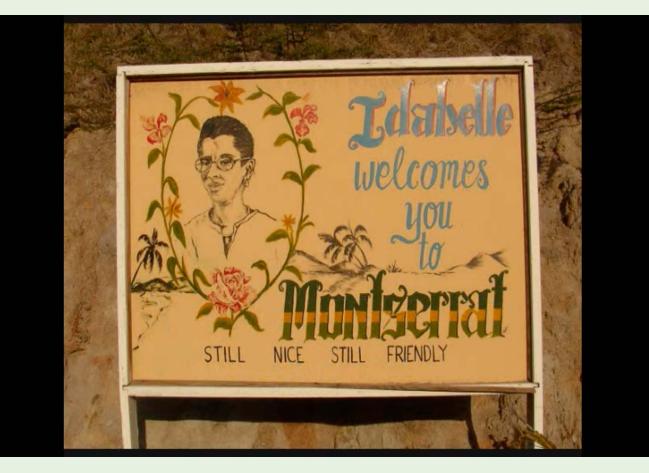
Dayna Smith

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CREATIVE WELLNESS

Montserrat English

Click to listen to the Mighty Arrow: Montserratian Soca and Calypso Musician



Source: <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gtGOInhvMz4</u>