



STORYBOARD

CAPACITY TO CONNECT: SUPPORTING STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS (Faculty and Staff)

BCcampus Mental Health and Wellness Projects

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Accessibility Statement

This self-paced version of [*Capacity to Connect: Supporting Students' Mental Health \(Faculty and Staff\)*](#) has been developed in the [Articulate Rise](#) course authoring system. This course has been designed with accessibility in mind by incorporating the following features:

- All content can be navigated using a keyboard.
- Images have alt-text provided.
- Videos have captions and a transcript is provided.
- Information is not conveyed by colour alone.

Note: Users can zoom in, but the user experience may be compromised.

Known Accessibility Issues and Areas for Improvement

While BCcampus strives to ensure that this resource is as accessible and usable as possible, we might not always get it right. Any issues we identify will be listed below.

Accessibility Standards

[Articulate Rise publishes an Accessibility Conformance Report](#) identifying the degree of conformance with accessibility standards, including [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0](#) level AA.

This Rise course follows all guidelines found in the [BCcampus Accessibility Toolkit \(2nd ed.\), Appendix A: Checklist for Accessibility](#)

The development of the toolkit involved working with students with various print disabilities who provided their personal perspectives and helped test the content.

Course Overview



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/balance-macro-ocean-pebbles-235990/>

In this course, you will learn how you, as a faculty or staff member, can support students' mental health and well-being. You will explore different mental health and wellness models and consider ways to promote resilience. You'll also learn how to recognize and respond to a student in distress and how to

refer a student to supports on campus or in the community. The course also looks at the importance of maintaining boundaries and the value of self-care.



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/a-stacked-of-rocks-on-the-beach-6555589/>

Welcome

In the video below, Jewell Gillies (they/them) and Malusi Mabeleka (he/him) provide an introduction to this course.

[Embed Introduction video]

Land Acknowledgement



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Opabin_Lake_Reflections.jpg

We start this training by acknowledging the Indigenous territories and the traditional stewards and peoples on whose lands we reside, work, live, and prosper.

We encourage you to be open to traditional ways of knowing and being as well as to honour your own perceptions, needs, and abilities to support good mental health and wellness.

Some questions to consider as you acknowledge your territory:

- What do you do as a good guest here?
- What can you do in your personal and professional roles to contribute to reconciliation?

About This Course

Life as a post-secondary student is a time of change, uncertainty, and challenges. Students frequently experience stress as they:

- Balance busy academic schedules
- Live away from home, often for the first time
- Manage their finances
- Figure out their interests and future careers

At times, these stresses can become overwhelming.

Knowing how best to respond and when and how to connect a student to services and resources, such as counselling or other student services on campus, can be critical factors in supporting a student in distress.

This course will help you develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence to support students' mental health and wellness.

Course Objectives

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Describe what mental wellness is, including the role of resilience.
- Define and describe the difference between mental health, mental health problems, and mental illnesses.
- Recognize the different ways students may express distress.
- Respond to a student with a mental health concern in an empathetic way.
- Refer a student in distress to appropriate resources.
- Explain the need for boundaries when supporting others and the importance of self-care.

What This Course Does Not Include

This course provides foundational training in mental health and does not cover suicide awareness, which is a very serious issue that requires more in-depth training. However, you will learn how to refer a student who is facing a mental health emergency or crisis to appropriate resources.

BCcampus has developed a resource called Let's Talk About Suicide: Raising Awareness and Supporting Students (<https://opentextbc.ca/suicideawareness/>). You may be able to take this training at your institution.

Course Structure

- This course has three modules and will take approximately 60 minutes to complete.
- Each module includes ungraded, short quizzes as well as reflection questions.

Everyone is human and is touched in some way by the topics in this course. At any time, you can pause, take a break, stretch, and ground yourself. You will find other ideas and suggestions in the self-care video in Module 3.

Resources

In the Resources section at the end of the course, you will find links to:

- A handout of the Wellness Wheel, which includes descriptions and examples of the nine dimensions of wellness.
- A handout on how to respond to students who are overwhelmed or in distress.
- A handout with scenarios to help you apply what you've learned in the course.

Understanding Your Role






<https://unsplash.com/photos/JZMdGltAHMo>

As faculty or staff, you interact with students frequently, and are often in a position to recognize when a student is in distress. By responding empathetically and referring them to the most appropriate support services, you can make a big difference to the student.

However, you are not expected to act as a counsellor and should never try to diagnose a mental health problem or illness. Your role is to connect students to support services on campus or in the community. You may have concerns about your role and boundaries.

Review the images below for more information.

 <p>https://www.pexels.com/photo/confident-black-businesswoman-sitting-at-desk-in-modern-workplace-5669604/</p>	<p><i>Does this training make me responsible for solving students' problems?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are not expected to take responsibility for students' well-being, and you do not have to solve their problems. • You can play an important role in supporting students, but only if you feel comfortable doing so. This course explores your role and how you can maintain professional boundaries.
 <p>https://www.pexels.com/photo/serious-woman-working-on-laptop-at-home-7015287/</p>	<p><i>I tried to help a student and it went badly.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's difficult to continue supporting students if you feel your efforts were not successful. • Through this course, you may discover other ways of supporting students while keeping good boundaries.
 <p>https://www.pexels.com/photo/group-of-multiracial-students-studying-in-library-with-teacher-5940829/</p>	<p><i>What about the support for the mental health and well-being of faculty and staff?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may face your own challenges around mental health and well-being, and support is available for faculty and staff. • Don't hesitate to seek support as needed through campus and community resources or, if needed, a crisis line. • The self-care video in Module 3 may also be helpful.

Module 1: Mental Health and Wellness



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/water-falls-in-the-middle-of-the-forest-3836292/>

Introduction

This module will explore the concepts of mental health and mental illness, and it looks at different mental health states. You'll learn about the Wellness Wheel, which is based on Indigenous holistic perspectives of wellness, and you'll learn about the role of resilience in mental health and wellness.

You'll also consider the mental health experiences of marginalized groups and the barriers many students face when seeking help.

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Define mental health and wellness, including the role of resilience.
- Use the Wellness Wheel to explore and support mental health and wellness.
- Define and describe the difference between mental health, mental health problems, and mental illnesses.
- Explain how factors like race, sexual orientation, disability, gender, and other life experiences can affect mental health and the care people receive.

Getting Started: What Do You Know?

This short quiz will help you consider what you know about mental health. Your answers aren't graded and won't be seen by anyone but you.

1. Mental health is a fixed state that stays stable over a lifetime.

True (Incorrect answer)	False (Correct answer)
-------------------------	------------------------

Correct Feedback: That's correct. Our mental health is influenced by many different factors and changes throughout our lives. We can all work to restore our mental health and wellness.

Incorrect Feedback: That's not quite right. Our mental health is influenced by many different factors and changes throughout our lives. We can all work to restore our mental health and wellness.

2. Every year, how many people will experience a mental health problem or illness?

- a) About 5% of people
- b) About 10% of people
- c) About 20% to 25% of people (Correct)
- d) More than 50% of people

Correct Feedback: That is correct. About 20% to 25% of people will experience a mental health problem or illness each year.

Incorrect Feedback: That's incorrect. About 20% to 25% of people will experience a mental health problem or illness each year.

3. People with a mental illness only experience poor mental health.

True (Incorrect answer)	False (Correct answer)
-------------------------	------------------------

Correct Feedback: That's right. People with a mental illness can and often do experience good mental health.

Incorrect Feedback: That's not quite right. People with a mental illness can and often do experience good mental health.

4. When are people at highest risk for developing mental illness?

- a) In their middle school or early high school years
- b) In their late teens and early twenties (Correct)
- c) In their mid-thirties
- d) In their sixties

Correct feedback: That's correct. People in their late teens and early twenties are at highest risk for developing mental illness.

Incorrect Feedback: That's incorrect. People in their late teens and early twenties are at highest risk for mental illness.

What is Mental Health?



<https://unsplash.com/photos/RMweULmCYxM>

The Public Health Agency of Canada defines mental health this way: “The capacity of every individual to feel, think, and act in ways that enhance their ability to enjoy life and deal with challenges. It is a positive sense of emotional and spiritual well-being that respects the importance of culture, equity, social justice, interconnections, and personal dignity.” (Public Health Agency of Canada, n.d.)

Mental health is essential to overall health and influenced by many different factors. We can all work to restore our mental health and wellness.

What Contributes to Mental Wellness?

Many factors influence our mental wellness as the Wellness Wheel model below illustrates. The Wellness Wheel aligns with many Indigenous traditional perspectives that view individuals holistically, recognizing that wellness means balancing the physical, emotional, academic/career, social, creative, spiritual, environmental, financial, and intellectual aspects of your life.

The Wellness Wheel, created by Jewell Gillies from the Kwakwaka'wakw First Nation in B.C., can be used in different ways. You may choose to explore all nine aspects now or select a few to consider. You may continue with the course and return to it later. You may also download a copy from the Resources section. There are no right or wrong ways to use it.



[Wheel with hot spots]

Select each + button on the wheel to explore the different dimensions.

Physical wellness: Taking care of your body through physical activity, nutrition, sleep, and mental well-being. For example:

- Engaging in some form of physical activity every day for at least 30 minutes
- Eating a variety of healthy foods
- Getting an adequate amount of sleep every night (7–9 hours)

Emotional wellness: Making time to relax, reduce stress, and take care of yourself. Paying attention to both positive and negative feelings and understanding how to handle these emotions. For example:

- Practising mindfulness
- Starting a gratitude journal
- Paying attention to self-talk and shift toward positive self-talk
- Tracking emotions daily to look for patterns and possible triggers

Academic/career wellness: Expanding your knowledge and creating strategies to support continued learning. For example:

- Setting up academic goals
- Creating a study schedule and plan ahead
- Connecting with a mentor to further your understanding of career ideas
- Reviewing your short- and long-term career goals regularly to make sure you are on track

Social wellness: Taking care of your relationships and society by building healthy, nurturing, and supportive relationships and fostering a genuine connection with those around you. For example:

- Making an effort to keep in touch with individuals who are supportive
- Practising active listening skills
- Joining a club or an organization to meet new people
- Being mindful of commitments you make – knowing your limitations (don't spread yourself too thin)

Creative wellness: Valuing and actively participating in arts and cultural experiences as a means to understand and appreciate the world around you. For example:

- Playing an instrument or make music
- Engaging in the visual arts
- Trying creative writing
- Engaging in creativity through movement (dance)

Spiritual wellness: Taking care of your values and beliefs and creating purpose in your life. For example:

- Volunteering
- Meditating
- Expressing gratitude
- Practising forgiveness and compassion for yourself and others

Environmental wellness: Taking care of what is around you. Living in harmony with the Earth by taking action to protect it and respecting nature and all species. For example:

- Spending time in nature
- When possible, travelling by walking, riding your bike, or taking public transportation
- Recycling and composting
- Using reusable water bottles and shopping bags

Financial wellness: Learning how to successfully manage finances to be financially responsible and independent. For example:

- Creating and maintaining a budget
- Paying your bills on time
- Packing your lunch to limit how often you eat out

- Meal planning before grocery shopping

Intellectual wellness: Being open to exploring new concepts, gaining new skills, and seeking creative and stimulating activities. For example:

- Trying a new activity at school or in the community
- Exploring things that you are curious about
- Reading and writing for pleasure

Using the Wellness Wheel

In this video, Jewell and Malusi discuss different ways you can use the Wellness Wheel to support your health and well-being.

[Embed Wellness Wheel video]

The Role of Resilience



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/people-holding-hands-7111462/>

Resilience means being able to adapt to life's challenges and setbacks.

Resilience is	Resilience is not
Being able to adapt to challenges and setbacks	Avoiding difficult situations
Noticing when stress appears and taking steps to manage it	Ignoring the challenges we face

When something is out of balance in our lives or we're experiencing stress, resilience helps us to shift back toward balance and mental wellness.

The Wellness Wheel can help us recognize what might be causing stress or pressure in our lives. It also reminds us of our own resilience and strengths; while we may be struggling in one area, we may be doing well in many other areas.

Traditional Healing Practices

In this video, Jewell shares some traditional healing practices of the Kwakwaka'wakw Nation (Ukwana'lis, Kingcome Inlet, B.C.).

[Embed Intro to Traditional Healing Practices video]

Mental Health and Mental Illness



<https://unsplash.com/photos/dGxOgeXAXm8>

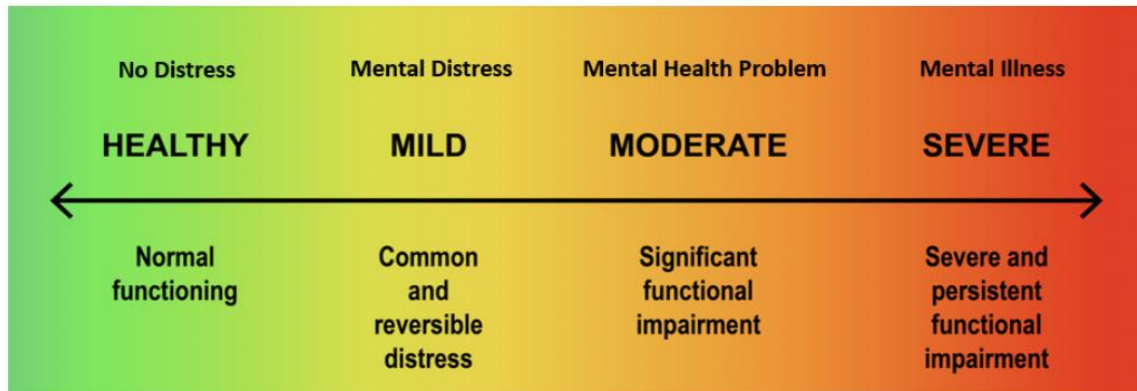
When we talk about mental health and mental illness we often use words loosely and interchangeably and they can start to lose their true meaning.

Below are two mental health models that illustrate different mental health states. It's important to understand these different states because they will be managed or supported differently.

Mental Health Continuum

The Mental Health Continuum is one way to think about our mental health. We all experience changes in our mood, and changes in our level of anxiety – from life stressors or from crises – and those changes can be considered on a spectrum or a continuum.

Select the + button to learn more.



Text for hotspots

Healthy (No distress)

- We have times when our health is good, we can cope with whatever comes our way, and we can do the things we need or want to do. We would describe that as healthy functioning.
- Thinking back to the Wellness Wheel, this is when everything is mostly in balance in our lives.

Mild (Mental distress)

- We all have times when we feel down, stressed, angry, or overwhelmed. These feelings are common and to be expected at various times.
- These feelings usually pass – they are reversible.
- A person may just need someone to talk to and to be reminded that they are resilient and have other strengths, even though they may be struggling in one part of their life.

Moderate (Mental health problem)

- Mental health problems arise when a person faces a larger stressor than usual. This might be the death of a loved one, a relationship breakup, or financial pressures.
- A person with a mental health problem experiences a disruption in their ability to function: trouble sleeping or eating, withdrawing, having negative thoughts about life.
- This person may need extra help, such as counselling and support from family, friends, and their community.
- Medication or long-term psychotherapy is usually not necessary.

Severe (Mental illness)

- Mental illness arises from a complex interplay between a person's genetic makeup and their environment.
- A mental illness (also called a mental disorder) is a medical condition diagnosed by a trained health professional using internationally established diagnostic criteria. For example: anxiety disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- People with mental illnesses will require care from properly trained health care providers.

Dual Continuum Model

Mental health is more than the absence of mental illness. It includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being.

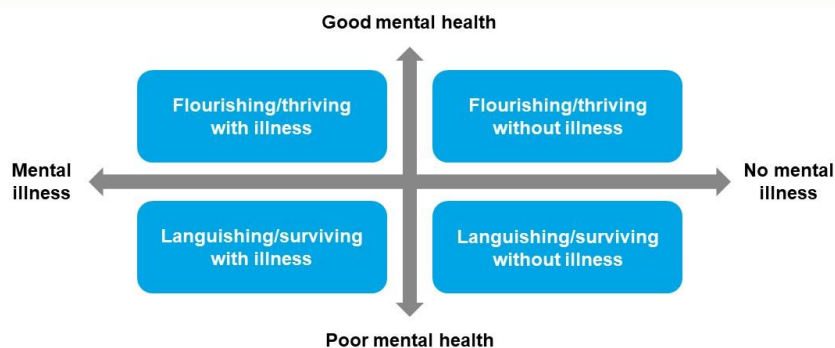
It is influenced by many factors, and it affects how we handle the normal stresses of life and relate to others.

The Corey Keyes Dual Continuum Model below illustrates the intersections of mental health and mental illness.

It shows how a person diagnosed with a mental illness can have good mental health and be flourishing and thriving. Likewise, a person can be languishing or experiencing poor mental health but not be diagnosed with a mental illness.

Select the + button on each quadrant to learn more.

Corey Keyes' Dual Continuum Model



Text for hotspots	
People flourish or thrive while living with mental illness.	People flourish or thrive while living without mental illness.
People languish or survive while living with mental illness.	People languish or survive while living without mental illness.

Mental Health Statistics



<https://www.flickr.com/photos/26346696@N02/33898761790/in/photolist-243Avfr-213DfWz-u1x5T-Kz5bL3-23CVjUW-ZHALBS-YRLUuW-2koMDXn-23ELqUZ-2jach2T-25sSUuQ-TokDpb-4Tjki4-24g9mu8-bvcFs7-guWBQg-Zjp5Zf-2hAjVoQ-EapdV2-575Qpz-24HEPpt-28Me4cs-D6dXGZ-2jB8geN-2ek13qG-Hu5Ltx-Hu5LAB-2mAfNGh-MnngDD-2jy8nXp-YuaPYC-75toHv-YsaVrR-dk5WzT-G2Zv86-icgCFN-TDw1Sb-4JhPQ6-2axtS1B-2g4jEDP-ydhd-89w12F-hZdFP-7rec9K-2Q2CWy-2maw8gG-2g9v1QP-2g9v1PX-2g9vsxw-2g9v46T>

Every year, about one in five people will experience a mental health problem or illness. (Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2012)

[Quote imposed over picture if possible]

People in their late teens and early twenties are at the highest risk for mental illness; in these years, first episodes of psychiatric disorders like major depression are most likely to appear (Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2012).

According to the Mental Health Commission of Canada, only one in three people (and only one in four children or youth) who experience a mental health problem or illness say that they have sought and received services and treatment.

There are many people who need treatment and support who are not seeking help.

Marginalized Groups and Mental Health



<https://unsplash.com/photos/ABGaVhJxwDQ>

When we talk about mental health, we also need to be aware of factors like race, sexual orientation, social class, age, disability, and gender and the unique life experiences and stressors that accompany them.

Some students face inequality, discrimination, and violence because of their race, gender orientation, or disability, and students who are marginalized often experience greater mental health burdens and face more barriers to accessing care.

As well the ongoing trauma that marginalized groups experience in their everyday lives and through institutions and services may affect how, when, and where they choose to look for support. For example, Indigenous people have historically had negative experiences with education and healthcare services due to residential schools. For this reason, they may be hesitant to access this kind of support.

When we become aware of systemic discrimination and the oppressions that marginalized groups face, we can work to provide a culturally safe environment for all students, where they feel respected, valued, and heard.

International students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are living far from family and friends. • May have very high tuition fees and be struggling financially. • May feel pressure to succeed academically. • Could struggle with language and adjusting to a new culture. • May be from a culture in which mental illness is stigmatized and very rarely discussed. • Do not always know of the support systems available to them.
Indigenous students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are often living away from a community that shares the same culture and spiritual beliefs. • Have likely faced racism and discrimination. • May be the first generation to pursue post-secondary education. • May miss their home, family, Elders, and community. • May live with the impacts and ongoing trauma of residential schools and other colonial policies. • May lack trust in educational and health care institutions due to negative or traumatic experiences.
LGBTQ2S + (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirit) students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May experience homophobia, transphobia, negative stereotypes, and rejection when they openly express who they are. • May have unique and complex health needs. • Often lack trust in health care institutions due to negative or traumatic experiences. • Are at a much higher risk for mental health disorders, substance abuse, and suicide (U.S. Department of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, n.d.). • May experience increased stress navigating mundane and daily experiences such as safely using the

	bathroom or being referred to by the correct pronouns.
Students with a disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face challenges because people are often not aware that disabilities include physical, cognitive, sensory, mental health. • Often experience barriers and difficulties with accommodations and accessibility. • May have to combat negative stereotypes, bias, and discrimination.
Racialized students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have likely faced racism and discrimination multiple times in their lives. • Often experience microaggressions or subtle, everyday interactions that demean or put down a person. • May lack trust in educational and healthcare institutions due to medical racism and negative or traumatic experiences.
Socio-economic status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students from lower-income families are especially vulnerable to financial uncertainties and pressures. • Many are frequently juggling work with classes and can't rely on financial support from their families. • High costs of rent make it hard to find appropriate accommodation so worry about being homeless is a significant concern. • They may be the first person in their family to attend a post-secondary institution and may have very little knowledge of the resources available.

Module 1: Knowledge Check

1. Mental health is: (Select all that apply)

- a) The absence of mental illness. (Incorrect)
- b) Essential to overall health. (Correct)

- c) Influenced by many different factors. (Correct)
- d) A fixed and constant state that doesn't change. (Incorrect)

Correct feedback: That's correct. Mental health is essential to overall health, is influenced by many different factors, and changes over time. It is more than the absence of mental illness.

Incorrect feedback: That's not quite right. Mental health is essential to overall health, is influenced by many different factors, and changes over time. It is more than the absence of mental illness.

2. The Wellness Wheel: (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Helps people identify mental illness. (Incorrect)
- ☐ Aligns with Indigenous traditional practices that view individuals holistically. (Correct)
- ☐ Identifies a person's temperament. (Incorrect)
- ☐ Helps visualize areas of life that are in and out of balance. (Correct)
- ☐ May remind people of their strength and resilience (Correct)

Correct Feedback: That's correct. The Wellness Wheel aligns with many Indigenous traditional perspectives that view individuals holistically, recognizing that wellness means balancing many aspects of our lives. It can help us see areas of balance and imbalance but also reveal our resilience. It's not a diagnostic tool for mental illness or a person's temperament.

Incorrect Feedback: That's not quite right. The Wellness Wheel aligns with many Indigenous traditional perspectives that view individuals holistically, recognizing that wellness means balancing many aspects of our lives. It can help us see areas of balance and imbalance but also reveal our resilience. It's not a diagnostic tool for mental illness or a person's temperament.

3. Most people who have a mental illness receive treatment and services.

True (Incorrect answer)	False (Correct answer)
-------------------------	------------------------

Correct feedback: That's correct. Only one in three people (and only one in four children or youth) who experience a mental health problem or illness say that they have sought and received services and treatment.

Incorrect feedback: That's not quite right. Only one in three people (and only one in four children or youth) who experience a mental health problem or illness say that they have sought and received services and treatment.

End of Module 1

In this module, you learned about concepts of mental health, mental illness, and resilience as well as different models of mental health. In this section, you will review the key concepts learned. You'll also find some reflection questions we encourage you to consider before moving on.

You must select the boxes on the left to continue to the next module.

- ☐ Mental health is the capacity of every individual to feel, think, and act in ways that enhance their ability to enjoy life and deal with challenges.
- ☐ Resilience means being able to adapt to life's challenges and setbacks.
- ☐ The Wellness Wheel aligns with many Indigenous traditional perspectives that view individuals holistically, recognizing that wellness means being in a state of balance across many dimensions.
- ☐ Mental health models, like the Mental Health Continuum and the Dual Continuum, help us to differentiate between different mental health states. It's important to understand these differences because different mental health states should be managed or supported differently.
- ☐ People living with mental illness may have good mental health and people with no mental illness may have poor mental health. The Dual Continuum Model helps us understand how mental health, mental illness, flourishing, and languishing interact.

Reflection



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/balance-macro-ocean-pebbles-235990/>

- What thoughts have come up as you learn about the impact of mental health issues on students? On faculty and staff?
- How do you see your role in creating culturally safe environments for everyone at your institution?

Module 1: References and Attributions

References

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Attributions

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“Traditional Healing Practices” © Jewell Gillies is licensed under a CC BY 4.0 license. (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

Dual Continuum Model © BCcampus is based on the conceptual work of Corey Keys and a diagram created by Canadian Association College University Student Services and Canadian Mental Health Association is licensed under a CC BY-NC 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>) license.

Mental Health Continuum model is based on the University of Victoria continuum of mental health, which is adapted from Queen’s University continuum of mental health and the Canada Department of National Defence continuum of mental health.

Module 2: The Three Rs Framework



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/asphalt-balance-blur-close-up-268018/>

Introduction

This module introduces the Three Rs Framework, which can help you recognize students in distress, respond empathetically, and refer students to support services. The module also looks at what to do if a student refuses help and what your responsibilities are.

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Identify signs of student distress, including signs that a student may be considering suicide.
- Describe how to respond empathetically to a student in distress.
- Identify support services on campus and in the community where you can refer a student..
- Explain what to do if a student won't seek help.



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The First R: Recognize Signs of Distress

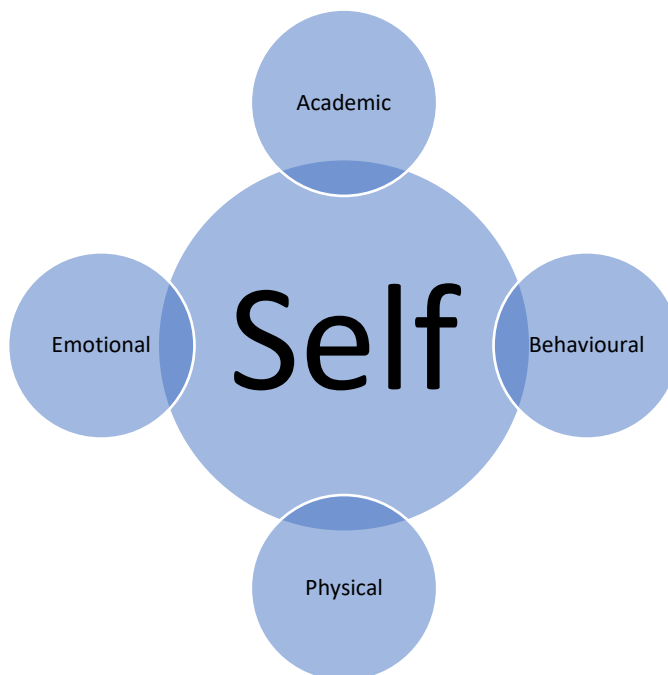


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How do we recognize when someone is distressed and struggling?

Students often give us clues about the state of their wellness through either their words, body language, or actions.

Select the + to learn more about common signs of distress.



Academic signs

- Significant decline in the quality or quantity of classroom/research work
- Change in attendance

- Repeated lateness, missed appointments or deadlines
- Missed assignments or exams

Emotional signs

- Exaggerated emotional response (e.g., intense anger, sobbing, persistent worry)
- Overly confident and enthusiastic
- Absence of emotion – appearing flat, disengaged
- Lack of motivation or interest

Physical signs

- Falls asleep in class
- Noticeable decline in hygiene or looking uncharacteristically unkempt
- Significant change in energy level
- Appears drunk or high
- Visible bruises, cuts, or injuries

Behavioural signs

- Describes difficult circumstances or experiences (e.g., loss, conflict, trauma, assault)
- Sends ranting emails
- Disregards rules or authority
- A peer reports concerns about, or discomfort with, a student

The Second R: Respond with Empathy



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Think back to times when you were mildly or moderately distressed and reached out to others for support. What did you find helpful in their responses?

When reflecting on this question, you may discover that empathy is key to a helpful response. The role of an empathetic listener is not to “fix” the person or tell them how to respond. Instead, it is to listen and try to help them find appropriate support.

This short video from well-known sociologist Brené Brown demonstrates how to respond in a helpful, compassionate way.



[<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw>]

Responding Empathetically

There are no scripts for responding empathetically. Rather you can strive to:

- Be yourself and be authentic – and this can include being honest when you're not sure what to say.
- Listen without judgment. Often it's not the things we say that make the difference, it's the things that we allow others to say that makes room for life-affirming options to come forth.
- Know that just being there, giving support, and offering a listening ear can help create a turning point for a student who is struggling.
- Find an appropriate balance of desire to help and provide solutions with respect for students' autonomy and their own capacities.

Ideas for Empathetic Responses



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/crop-cheerful-diverse-female-students-talking-on-pavement-5537928/>

These responses focus on in-person conversations. If you are reaching out online, consider how you can respond and follow up with the student as necessary. Before you talk to a student, make sure you are in a private place to have the conversation and then:

- Give the student your complete attention. Listen without judgment and let them talk without interruption.
- Acknowledge the student's thoughts and feelings with compassion and empathy.
- Try using an "I" statement to start a conversation to express your concern. For example, "I've noticed that you haven't handed in the last two assignments and have missed a lot of classes lately, and I'm concerned."
- Repeat their statements to clarify and ensure that you understand what the issues are. For example, you could say, "I want to be sure I understand what you are saying. Is this what you meant?"
- Let them know you are concerned and want to help them find the right resources.
- Remember your role is not to "fix" the student, nor are you expected to act as a counsellor.

The Third R: Refer to Support Services



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Often a few minutes of effective listening are enough to help a student feel cared about.

If their distress is more significant and they are open to accessing more support, there are several services that can help. Knowing what these services are and how to contact them will help you in your role.

Below are some of the services available at most campuses. Your institution may have a list of campus support services with phone numbers that you could keep in a convenient place.

Campus Support Services	Provincial Support and Crisis Lines	Provincial Supports for Indigenous Students
<p>Counselling services help students manage personal, academic, and life concerns.</p> <p>Campus security helps coordinate responses to student emergencies and crises.</p> <p>Indigenous student centres offer programs, mentorship, and a gathering place. They may have an Elder available to talk to students.</p>	<p>Mental Health Support Line: 310-6789 (no need for area code)</p> <p>Here2Talk: 1-877-857-3397 (a 24-hour phone and chat counselling support for B.C. post- secondary students.) Services are also available through their website and their app.</p> <p>Crisis Services Canada: 1.833.456.4566 (24 hours; no long-distance charge) or text</p>	<p>KUU-US Crisis Response Services: 1-800-588-8717 (1-800-KUU-US17) – provides culturally safe support, 24/7, for Indigenous people in B.C.</p> <p>The First Nations Health Authority website lists Indigenous resources.</p>

<p>Health services offer health and mental health care for students.</p> <p>International student services help students with personal or academic issues, study and work permits, and visa applications.</p> <p>Accessible learning centres provide services, coordinate academic accommodations and act as a resource for the community.</p> <p>Pride centres provide support to LGBTQ2S+ students.</p> <p>Financial aid helps students needing financial support for their education.</p> <p>Campus crisis line – Some larger campuses may have a crisis line; otherwise, see the provincial crisis lines listed in the next column.</p>	45645 (available 4 p.m. to 12 a.m. ET)	
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Students may feel intimidated about visiting a healthcare professional for the first time. Here are some ideas you can share with them about what to do before an appointment.

Appointment with a Counsellor

- Before you go to your first appointment, spend some time thinking about your goals and what you would like to work on in the session. It's okay if you don't know what you want to work on. Your counsellor can help you figure it out.
- Here are some sample goals for the session:
 - Learn new ways to cope with anxiety
 - Explore ways to manage stress
 - Improve communication in relationships
 - Explore meaningful career paths

Appointment with a Doctor or Nurse (Health Services)

For your first appointment, make sure you bring the following:

- Your BC Services Care Card or other provincial health care card if you have one (if you're a Canadian student)
- Insurance documents if you have them (if you're an international student)
- Your vaccination history if you have it

- Any other relevant medical documents

If you are concerned for a student's immediate safety

If it's an emergency, such as the student has taken pills, is experiencing psychosis, or is a danger to themselves or others, call 911 and campus security or follow the procedures required by your institution.

If it's not an emergency, but you are concerned about another student, you could offer to help the student access support services. You may also offer to walk them to counselling services or provide information about provincial support and crisis lines.

Practice Scenarios

Scenario 1: Student Needing Leave Time



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/women-having-a-meeting-4063860/>

Jordan, an Indigenous student comes into your office and is very upset. They disclose that a close relative has just died unexpectedly, and they are stressed about how to ask their instructors for leave to go home for the ceremony and funeral, which are elaborate and can take up to a week or more to complete. They feel overwhelmed and express feelings of hopelessness during the conversation.

What Would You Do?

Here are some ideas for supporting this student. Select those that you would try. (There are no wrong answers.)

- ☐ I'll try to connect the student with Indigenous services for additional support.
- ☐ I can explain the process for requesting leave and help the student get started on it.
- ☐ I'll listen empathetically and see if the student can figure out the next steps.
- ☐ I'll see if they are open to visiting counselling services for support with the hopelessness they are feeling.

What Would You Say?

The cards below show different responses that people might give to the student. Decide if the response is helpful or less helpful. Then select the card and move it to the appropriate section.

- Dealing with grief while trying to manage other responsibilities can be so challenging. (H)
- Can I connect you with Indigenous services for cultural or emotional support? (H)
- I can help with the process of asking for extensions on coursework. (H)
- Good luck with getting extensions. My colleagues aren't always very sympathetic. (LH)
- Sorry about your loss, but can't you do some of your coursework away? (LH)

Making a Difference

Students may feel so overwhelmed at times by the stresses and demands in their lives that they lose sight of their own capacities to problem solve. Helpful responses for this scenario focus on acknowledging the feelings expressed and suggesting support services. It's less helpful to say that colleagues won't be sympathetic. As well, try not to question the need for an extension or leave – the student knows best their own situation, abilities, and limits.

Jordan might need a reminder of the Indigenous services available on campus. In addition, if you know the process for requesting leave, it might be helpful to explain it to them.

Scenario 2: Student Worried About Disappointing Their Family



<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OysLI-TIZrccKIKDbvFws7IL0OwCdmQh/view>

Cobie is the first member of their family to attend a post-secondary program and their parents and grandparents have invested most of their money to pay the tuition. Cobie visits your office in a panicked state and on the verge of crying.

Cobie explains they've failed a major assignment that counts for most of their grade. They're quite sure they'll fail the class now. Cobie says that they feel guilty for wasting their family's money and are embarrassed to tell them that they failed. They say they feel helpless and stuck, with no way out of the situation.

What Would You Do?

Here are some ideas for supporting this student. Select those that you would try. (There are no wrong answers.)

- ☐ I'll listen and validate Cobie's feelings; maybe they can start to figure out some options available to them.
- ☐ I'll reassure Cobie that their parents and grandparents care about them; that's why they have helped them with school fees.
- ☐ Maybe I can help them with strategies for talking to the instructor about redoing the assignment.
- ☐ This student is expressing a lot of hopelessness. I could suggest visiting counselling services for additional support.

What Would You Say?

The cards below show different responses that people might give to the student. Decide if the response is helpful or less helpful. Then select the card and move it to the appropriate section.

- You are a hardworking student, and this one grade does not define you. (H)
- Could you talk to the instructor? Maybe they'll let you redo the assignment? (H)
- If you're feeling overwhelmed, there are counselling services for support. (H)
- Of course your family will be disappointed, but they'll get over it. (LH)
- If you're failing, you should be looking at your time management skills. (LH)

Making a Difference

Students often feel pressure to achieve high grades, and they may not have developed skills for coping with setbacks. Listening to and validating their feelings is an important first step. Helpful responses for this scenario focus on reminding the student that one grade doesn't define them and offering ideas for accessing support services. It's less helpful to minimize the student's worries or to suggest they aren't managing their time well.

It's possible that Cobie may be able to develop their own solutions, especially if you can provide suggestions for support services. However, if a student seems quite overwhelmed, you may want to suggest they talk to a counsellor.

Scenario 3: Student Who is Homeless and Missing Classes



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/female-talking-with-psychologist-during-session-7176296/>

Kyle, a student in your seminar, has stopped attending class regularly. When Kyle does show up, their appearance is dishevelled, and they seem to have a hard time concentrating. Kyle stops by your office, and you take that opportunity to ask how they are doing. Kyle confides that they have been evicted from their apartment and must live in their car for a few weeks until they can afford a deposit on a new place. They explain that it's hard to find a quiet and comfortable place to study or sleep. They also tell you that they feel a lot of stress and shame about the situation.

What Would You Do?

Here are some ideas for supporting this student. Select those that you would try. (There are no wrong answers.)

- ☐ I'm hearing Kyle express a lot of shame. They may need reassurance that I won't judge them.

- ☐ Because homelessness carries such stigma, I'll be sure to say that I will maintain confidentiality about their situation.
- ☐ I can let them know about different support services available, including financial aid, as well as community services like the local food bank.
- ☐ I can let Kyle know about a few quiet places on campus where they could go to study.

What Would You Say?

The cards below show different responses that people might give to the student. Decide if the response is helpful or less helpful. Then select the card and move it to the appropriate section.

- I understand it must be a stressful situation, and I will respect your privacy. (H)
- You have nothing to be ashamed of; financial hardships can happen. (H)
- Can I try to connect you with services, like financial aid, that might help you? (H)
- Oh my gosh, I can't believe you're homeless! That must be so scary. (LH)
- Have you thought about selling some of your stuff on eBay to raise money? (LH)

Making a Difference

If a student is blaming themselves and feeling stigmatized, they are less likely to get support and find solutions. Helpful responses for this scenario focus on acknowledging the shame and loneliness Kyle is feeling and reassuring them that it is not their fault. Kyle may also need to hear that you will respect their privacy. It's less helpful to express shock at their situation or to suggest they should be selling their belongings.

Because lack of housing can affect so many parts of a student's life, Kyle may need to access several different support services including financial aid for scholarships, bursaries, and assistance programs that could help financially or counselling services for managing the stress. Kyle may also need to know about food bank programs and shelters in the community.

Scenario 4: Student Facing Discrimination and Isolation



<https://genderspectrum.vice.com>

Jamie, a student who has disclosed to you in the past that they are transgender, approaches you in tears. They explain that during a recent visit home, they came out to their family. Jamie tells you their

parents made hurtful and derogatory comments during the discussion. Jamie makes statements like “This is so difficult. I can’t keep going like this,” and “I don’t know why I even try anymore; my own parents don’t love me or accept me for who I am.” Jamie also mentions that they are feeling lonely and hopeless.

What Would You Do?

Here are some ideas for supporting this student. Select those that you would try. (There are no wrong answers.)

- ☐ I’ll suggest Jamie visit the LGBTQ2S+ services for more support on living as their authentic, transgender self.
- ☐ Jamie’s lack of hope worries me. I’m going to ask if they need help connecting to a counsellor.
- ☐ I’m not sure what community services are available, but I can offer to find out so they can find other connections and support.
- ☐ I’m going to let Jamie know that they are a valued member of our community.

What Would You Say?

The cards below show different responses that people might give to the student. Decide if the response is helpful or less helpful. Then select the card and move it to the appropriate section.

- Can I walk you over to the LGBTQ2S+ service if you haven’t visited it before? (H)
- It sounds very hard to not have the support or acceptance of your family. (H)
- Would you be open to talking with a counsellor? (H)
- Just don’t talk to your parents about being transgender. Problem solved! (LH)
- I’m curious if you are taking hormones or considering surgery? (LH)

Making a Difference

Transgender students may face rejection and ridicule when they live openly. Faculty and staff can play a role in validating and supporting their gender identity as well as helping them to connect to culturally safe services.

Helpful responses for this scenario focus on addressing Jamie’s feelings of sadness and lack of hope as well as offering to connect them to LGBTQ2S+ friendly services. You could suggest Jamie consider counselling services, especially as they are expressing such hopelessness and distress. It’s not helpful to ask questions about their transition process or suggest that Jamie hide their authentic self.

Scenario 5: Single Parent Struggling with Studies and Childcare



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/woman-wearing-blue-top-beside-table-1181712/>

Alex, a student who is a single parent, drops by your office. Alex looks unkempt and has dark circles under their eyes; they look like they are about to cry and seems very stressed. Alex explains they have been unable to find reliable childcare for their toddler. Alex has no family in the area, and friends are unable to help as they either work or go to school themselves. Final exams are coming up, and Alex tells you they have been trying to study while their toddler sleeps but cannot keep it up for much longer because they are so sleep-deprived.

What Would You Do?

Here are some ideas for supporting this student. Select those that you would try. (There are no wrong answers.)

- ☐ I'll try to focus on Alex's problem-solving abilities and the resilience they've shown raising their daughter as a single parent.
- ☐ I can discuss ways to approach other instructors for more flexibility around assignments and tests.
- ☐ I'll suggest we brainstorm ideas about where to search for childcare on campus or in the community.
- ☐ I don't know what campus services might be most helpful, but I can offer to help Alex explore the available options.

What Would You Say?

The cards below show different responses that people might give to the student. Decide if the response is helpful or less helpful. Then select the card and move it to the appropriate section.

- I admire your resilience and ability to balance your studies and parenting. (H)
- I know you've tried to find childcare, but could we brainstorm ideas together? (H)
- Can I help you map out ways to discuss this challenge with your instructors? (H)
- Being a single parent is so hard; I don't know why people do it. (LH)
- It's too bad your friends aren't more willing to help you. (LH)

Making a Difference

Whether you know much or very little about the childcare options available, you can still support Alex by listening with empathy and showing that you understand why they are feeling so overwhelmed. Helpful responses for this scenario focus on recognizing Alex's resilience as well as giving them opportunities to consider alternatives. It's less helpful to speculate how people cope or to criticize the social support available to the student.

Just having someone listen and validate their challenges may be enough to remind Alex that they have the capacity to make decisions about their next steps. However, you could offer suggestions about campus services that might be able to offer help.

Scenario 6: International Student Overwhelmed by Studies and Work



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/colleagues-working-together-with-documents-7752877/>

Salem is an international student who drops by your office visibly distressed with dark circles under their eyes. You know that Salem arrived in Canada three months ago and is struggling with the English course materials. They explain that grades in their culture play a large role in defining one's self-worth and status. Salem says they are working three jobs to support their family back home, so have limited study time. A big exam is coming up and Salem is frightened they will do poorly. They mention a lack of appetite and add they aren't communicating with their loved ones right now.

What Would You Do?

Here are some ideas for supporting this student. Select those that you would try. (There are no wrong answers.)

- ☐ I'd like Salem to know I see and admire their resilience and strength in managing life and studying far away from home.
- ☐ I can help them figure out ways to approach their instructors about extensions on coursework.

- ☐ I'll suggest they reach out to the international student services for more support.
- ☐ It sounds like finances are tight. Perhaps I can suggest tapping into some community resources like food banks.

What Would You Say?

The cards below show different responses that people might give to the student. Decide if the response is helpful or less helpful. Then select the card and move it to the appropriate section.

- I admire your resilience and perseverance in this difficult situation. (H)
- I'd be happy to help you navigate the many student services on campus. (H)
- I can help you with ways to request an extension on assignments. (H)
- Maybe cut back on your spending and then stop working three jobs. (LH)
- You don't have to support your family; they'll manage without you. (LH)

Making a Difference

International students often face many challenges as they complete their post-secondary degrees. They are far from home and community, may struggle with English, and often don't know of the services available to them. Helpful responses for this scenario focus on emphasizing Salem's resilience and suggesting support services and ways to request an extension. It's less helpful to suggest that they aren't managing their money well or questioning the student's complex relationships to family living outside Canada.

It might be helpful to let Salem know about international student services, financial aid, and local food banks. Salem may also need help approaching other instructors about flexible deadlines for submitting coursework.

When a Student Doesn't Want to Seek Help



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/woman-wearing-brown-shirt-inside-room-3029699/>

Sometimes a student may not want to see a counsellor or isn't interested in seeking help. Here are some steps to take:

1. Consider safety: Is anyone (the person refusing help, other students, members of the community) at risk of immediate harm?

If yes, seek help through campus security, 911, or other emergency services available on campus. You can also share your concerns with a counsellor or someone who can help ensure safety.

2. If there is no risk of immediate harm, keep in mind that ultimately it is the individual's right to choose whether to seek help. Your role is to listen empathetically and if appropriate, help the individual to identify culturally appropriate services they might want to access later. Recognize and respect that an individual's experiences of trauma and marginalization may affect where they feel comfortable seeking support.

Finally, remember that individuals are resilient and often come to their own solutions or find their own supports when they are ready.

Ensure you are supported! Talk to friends, family, other instructors, an Elder, or a counsellor to share your concerns and decide how to proceed.

Privacy



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/diverse-couple-with-colorful-dyed-hair-7389096/>

Everyone has a right to health care privacy. If you refer a student to counselling services, you won't be notified of what has happened.

Module 2: Knowledge Check

1. An empathetic response requires you to help solve a student's problem or concerns.

True (Incorrect answer)

False (Correct answer)

Correct feedback: That's correct. Responding empathetically means listening carefully and letting the person know they are being heard.

Incorrect feedback: Actually, responding empathetically means listening carefully and letting the person know they are being heard.

2. You are talking with a student who seems in great distress. There is no risk of immediate harm, but you are concerned. What steps can you take to support this student? (Select all that apply):

- ☐ Offer to walk with the student to counselling services.
- ☐ Ask if they would like help contacting support resources (e.g., international student services, a LGBTQ2S+ service, or another appropriate student service).
- ☐ Give them information about provincial support and crisis lines.
- ☐ Call 911 or campus security.

Correct feedback: That's correct. If there is no immediate risk, you do not need to contact 911 or campus security. However, it may be helpful to offer to contact support services, walk them over to counselling services, or give them information about provincial support and crisis lines.

Incorrect feedback: That's not quite right. If there is no immediate risk, you do not need to contact 911 or campus security. However, it may be helpful to offer to contact support services, walk them over to counselling services, or give them information about provincial support and crisis lines.

End of Module 2

In this module, you learned about the Three Rs Framework for recognizing, responding, and referring students who are in distress. In this section, you will review the key concepts learned. You must select the boxes on the left to continue to the next module. You'll also find some reflection questions we encourage you to consider before moving on.

- ☐ Faculty and staff play a role in recognizing when students are in distress. These students may show changes in their academic work, emotional life, physical appearance, or behaviours.
- ☐ Responding empathetically to a student in distress means listening with care but without judgment. Your role isn't to fix or counsel a student, but rather to listen and try to help them find appropriate support.

- ❑ There are many services on campus and in the community where you can refer students for support. You might want to keep a list of numbers in a convenient place.
- ❑ Students in distress have a right to refuse help. If there is a risk of immediate harm or it's an emergency, contact 911 and campus security. Otherwise, remember that students are resilient and often figure out their own solutions.

Reflection



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/balance-macro-ocean-pebbles-235990/>

- Do you feel comfortable putting the Three Rs Framework into practice? Is there any discomfort?
- Where can you seek support or advice for any questions you might still have?

Module 2: Attributions

Brené Brown on Empathy is an RSA short:

<http://www.thersa.org>

Voice: Dr Brené Brown

Animation: Katy Davis (AKA Gobblynnne) www.gobblynnne.com

Production and editing: Al Francis-Sears and Abi Stephenson

Scenario: Student worried about disappointing their family

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Scenario: Indigenous student needing leave time

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Scenario: Student who is homeless and missing classes

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Scenario: International student overwhelmed by studies and work

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Scenario: Transgender student facing discrimination and isolation

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Scenario: Single parent struggling with studies and childcare

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Module 3: Maintaining Boundaries and Practising Self-Care



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/waterfall-in-forest-1493832/>

Introduction

In this module, you'll consider how to maintain your own boundaries and be aware of your limits when you support students. You'll also think about the role of self-care in supporting mental health and wellness.

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Identify signs that you may have overstepped your boundaries and need to pull back.
- Explain the importance of consulting with others if you are unsure about a situation with a student in distress.
- Describe the role of self-care in helping to maintain balance and wellness.

Maintaining Your Own Boundaries



<https://www.pexels.com/search/person%20alone%20outdoors%20water/>

When helping students, it is important to maintain your own boundaries. That means recognizing what you can and can't do given the limitations of your role, and being clear with others about what you are able to do for them.

It's not always easy to establish boundaries and set limits. The list below describes feelings you might have when you've taken on too much while trying to support a student in distress.

As you read this list, think about which of these resonates with you.

- You feel overly responsible for the student.
- You often think about how to solve the student's problems.
- You think the problems the student brings are more than you can handle.
- You feel stressed out by the student's issues or behaviour.
- You feel pressure to solve the student's problems.
- You feel uneasy or have a gut feeling that the student is not okay despite the student denying it.
- You see a pattern repeating itself in your interactions with a student.
- You find yourself avoiding the student.
- You feel anxious or angry when the student approaches you.

When you notice any of these responses within yourself, it may be time for you to consult with others and access your own support. Know your limits and ask for help if you are overwhelmed; you are not responsible for solving the person's problems on your own.

Consulting with Others

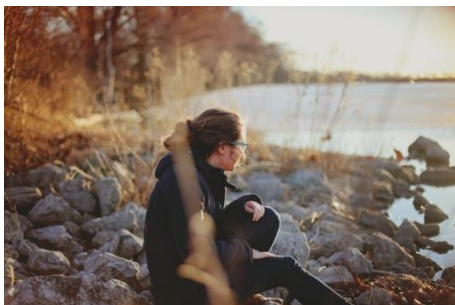
You can consult with campus counsellors, support services, or faculty and staff if you're unsure about how to handle a situation. You can also call a crisis line if you have serious concerns about a student.

You should consult others when you:

- Are concerned about another student's safety or well-being but are unsure how or whether to intervene.
- Are uncertain about how to respond to a student who you think may need help.
- Continue to be concerned about a student who has declined help.

Reach out to colleagues, your supervisor, chair, or dean, or others whom you trust. Counsellors can meet with staff and faculty, or you can call a crisis line if you have serious concerns about a student.

Taking Care of Yourself



<https://www.pexels.com/search/person%20looking%20at%20water%20rocks/>

Take a minute to think about the Wellness Wheel introduced in Module 1. The wheel can help you identify what parts of your life are in or out of balance. It can also help you consider ways to take care of yourself.

Supporting students in distress, and even thinking about mental health in general, may bring up complex thoughts or feelings. This video discusses how to take care of yourself whenever the need arises – after supporting a student, when you feel overwhelmed, or when your life feels out of balance.

[Embed Self-Care Video]

Module 3: Knowledge Check

1. What are signs you may not be maintaining good boundaries when helping a student (Select all that apply):

- ☐ You feel pressure to solve the student's problems. (Correct)
- ☐ You feel anxious or upset when the student approaches. (Correct)
- ☐ You keep thinking about the student's problems outside of work hours. (Correct)
- ☐ You find yourself in a pattern of trying to help the student. (Correct)

Correct feedback: That's correct. All these are signs that you may need to step back, consult with others, and practice self-care.

Incorrect feedback: That's almost correct. All these are signs that you may need to step back, consult with others, and practice self-care.

2. Faculty and staff must always help a student with a mental health problem, even if they are uncomfortable doing so.

True (Incorrect answer)	False (Correct answer)
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Correct feedback: Faculty and staff are not responsible for the mental health of all students and are not expected to be counsellors or fix students problems. Faculty and staff can play a role in supporting a student who is struggling with their mental health, but only if they feel comfortable doing so. All campuses have counselling services and student services, and it can be helpful to remind students of these services. Note: If a student is a threat to themselves or others, faculty and staff will need to call 911 and notify campus security.

Incorrect feedback: Actually, faculty and staff have a role to play in supporting students, but only if they feel comfortable doing so while maintaining their own boundaries. If a student is a threat to themselves or others, faculty and staff will need to call 911 and notify campus security.

End of Module 3

In this module, you learned about the importance of maintaining boundaries and signs that you've taken on too much when supporting a student. In this section, you will review the key concepts learned. You must select the boxes on the left to continue to the course summary. You'll also find some reflection questions we encourage you to consider before moving on.

- ☐ Maintaining boundaries means recognizing what you can and can't do (given the limitations of your role) and being clear with others.
- ☐ Signs that you may be taking on too much include feeling overly responsible for the student, worrying about them often, feeling pressure to solve their problems, and feeling angry or upset when the student approaches you for help.
- ☐ Always refer students as appropriate and access your own support when needed.
- ☐ Remember that self-care is an important part of mental health and wellness. It's difficult to support another person if you are feeling out of balance or overwhelmed.

Reflection



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/balance-macro-ocean-pebbles-235990/>

- Can you recognize the signs when you've taken on too much trying to help a student? These signs are different for each person.
- How can you move back into balance and maintain good boundaries?
- What self-care practices support your own mental health and wellness?

Course Summary



<https://pixabay.com/photos/waterfall-forest-river-lake-wild-5336674/>

In this video, Jewell and Malusi talk about how mental health and wellness are the foundation for our capacity to connect with our students,

[Embed Course Summary video]

Resources



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/photo-of-river-with-calm-waters-1578749/>

You may find the handouts below useful when supporting a student in distress.

Handout 1 is a two-page PDF of a Wellness Wheel that you can share with students who are experiencing stress and feeling overwhelmed. It shows the Wellness Wheel and gives descriptions and examples of the nine dimensions of wellness.

Wellness Wheel: (https://opentextbc.ca/capacitytoconnect/wp-content/uploads/sites/343/2021/04/BCcampus-wellness-wheel-worksheet-final-colour.pdf)

Handout 2 is a resource to help you support students in distress. It provides information on recognizing signs of distress and tips on how to refer a student in distress for further assistance.

Handout 2: Supporting Students in Distress

Handout 3 includes six scenarios of students in distress and suggested scripts for how to respond to these students and refer them to support services.

Handout 3: Scenarios

Acknowledgements



The self-paced Capacity to Connect: Supporting Students' Mental Health and Wellness (Faculty and Staff) course was developed under BCcampus's Mental Health and Wellness Projects from funding by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training and guidance from an advisory group of students, staff, and faculty from B.C. post-secondary institutions. The purpose of the projects is to provide access to education and training resources to support postsecondary students' mental health and wellness.

This resource is one of a series of open education resources on mental health (<https://bccampus.ca/projects/wellness/mental-health-and-wellness/>) for the B.C. post-secondary sector.



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This self-paced course is based on BCcampus's resource *Capacity to Connect: Supporting Students Mental Health and Wellness*. For more information about the authors, contributors, and advisors of that training resource, see <https://opentextbc.ca/capacitytoconnect/back-matter/appendix-3/>.

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Acknowledgements for the Self-Paced Course

This self-paced course was adapted, developed, written, and reviewed collaboratively by the Project Development Team. Members of the Project Advisory Group also reviewed the materials and provided feedback on using the materials in an online, self-paced format. Three of the practice scenarios were originally authored by post-secondary students who participated in other BCcampus Mental Health and Wellness Projects. The Pilot Project Team provided opportunities for faculty and staff to pilot the completed modules and give feedback.

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The members of the Project Development Team are located throughout British Columbia and Canada, and they wish to acknowledge the following traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories from where they live and work, including Algonquin Anishinabeg Territory in Ottawa, Ontario; xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlilwətaʔ/ Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) territories in Vancouver, B.C.; Syilx Okanagan Territory in Kelowna B.C.; Lekwungen/Songhees territories in Victoria, B.C.; and the Kwikwəłəm (Kwikwetlem), xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Stó:lō and Səlilwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil- Waututh) Nations in Port Moody, B.C. We honour the knowledge of the peoples of these territories.