

Yep welcome to live well be well a podcast where we speak candidly about all things health and well being my name is Lauren young I'm Carlos quinonez and we're well being pure educators here at UC San Diego.

On this episode of live will be will will be discussing mental health. May is mental health awareness month. mental health is an aspect of life that many people forget about. mental health is part of total health. in this episode we will speak on ways to help improve your mental health and combat the struggles of pandemic and college life. So we hope you get inspired we hope you feel connected and we hope you discover new ways to live your best life let's get started.

Recent studies have shown as the pandemic relentlessly persists we're seeing the highest levels in anxiety and depression reported since the pandemic hit the US in March. this is a troubling trend being filled by loneliness and isolation we're also seeing alarming numbers of children reporting thoughts of suicide and self harm. the 2021 state of mental health in America report confirms the trend that mental health in the US continues to get worse and many states are ill prepared to handle this crisis and policy makers at every level of government need to act immediately. mental health disorders are a wide range of conditions that affect your mood thinking and behavior the quality of life seemingly goes down when suffering from a mental disorder for long periods of time. some of these include clinical depression anxiety disorder bipolar disorder OCD schizophrenia and others. college students are among the demographic with rising mental disorders nearly 30% of college students have felt so depressed in the past year that was difficult to function and more than 50% have felt overwhelming anxiety making it hard to succeed academically according to the American College health Association. Simply put every college student struggling with a mental health issue you are not alone and there is no reason to suffer in silence. mental health conditions can be treated successfully research suggests that early interventions may improve treatment success and less in long term disabilities associated with mental health disorders so how can we combat this current health issue with self care.

So what is self care? the World Health Organization defines self care as the ability of individuals families and communities to promote health prevent disease maintain health and to cope with illness and disability with or without the support of a health care provider practicing self care is crucial in preparing our bodies and minds for the inevitable challenges that await us and play major roles in determining our ability to bounce back. from adverse circumstances such as the covid pandemic self care can be practiced in many different ways. self care can be split into four general categories physical social emotional and spiritual .

social self care can include activities like spending time with loved ones such as family and friends for support. it can also be seen in activities such as being supportive to others seeking out others for social activities establishing healthy boundaries with others especially when others are too demanding of your time and energy and even being aware of your feelings of loneliness. humans were designed to communicate and interact with one another. biologically humans get energized and happier when interacting with others. every person is different and some people are introverted or extroverted so the amount of social self care needed varies. emotional self care focuses on the importance of developing

coping skills that can help us deal with emotions that may be uncomfortable things like anger anxiety or sadness. this includes activities that help us acknowledge and express our feelings on a regular basis whether it be talking to a friend or family member about the emotions you're experiencing getting help early on if you are feeling overwhelmed or listening to music that soothes you. emotional self care allows us to practice the relaxation skills that work best for us on a day to day basis. these activities can help us stay in tune with how we feel help us process our emotions and help us recharge when we may be feeling worn out. spiritual self care includes activities that help those feel good deep down in our souls. this can include activities such as meditation connecting with nature creating art like drawing painting or using Photoshop listening to music or volunteering for A cause that you love. physical self care. your whole body is connected so taking care of yourself physically can help you mental. some physical self care tips can be sleeping more getting regular physical exercise eating balanced meals taking a break to practice breathing stretching after sitting for long periods of time reducing consumption of alcohol and caffeine. I recommend going on walks multiple times a day they don't have to be long walks or intense walks just going outside and moving the body a little will help with your mental and physical health. so Lauren what what do we do for self care. one of my favorite forms of self care is hanging out with friends or in covid's case, zooming with friends sometimes my friends and I will play games over zoom will watch movies over zoom or we'll just talk a resume we can even study over zoom sometimes. I also love grabbing coffee or getting takeout breakfast with a friend hitting the park and staying social distance while we catch up it's a super fun way to socialize and stay connected while also remaining covid safe. how about you guys your activities sound like tons of fun Lauren. I also do I definitely love hanging out with my friends it's something I definitely have to do multiple times a day whether it be things small to just texting them or even things that we love to do we love playing video games since it's cold right now we can't really see each other so we'll pop online at night play video games and even though you're not there in person with your friends it's still great to hear their voice joke around with them specially after a long day of school word other times we also love going to like play basketball stuff like that it's just a great way to relax yourself get away from the stresses of school another life task and just great way to just and help your soul out essentially. other forms of self care that I do is working on the schedule sad to admit this but it's my third year of college but I finally found a technique that works for me at the beginning of the week on a Sunday I'll get all my tasks duties and commitments I have on the piece of paper I'll split it up Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday so on and then others have all my tasks are to be overwhelming at times looking at that seeing how many tasks you have to get done but the feeling once you get a test done you scratch it off and add then the week optimally you have all the tests than this feels good to know that you did so much during the week when during kovit isn't feel like you do much but seeing all your task in front of you is a great way to do that now I do the same thing Carlos. I'm super organized with my commitments just because it makes me feel much more put together for school so at the beginning of the quarter I always make a 10 week quarter plan and fill in all of my homework deadlines exam dates and so forth in the boxes of the ten week lesson quarter plan. so usually you can find a 10 week Lesson plan in your course syllabus which is extremely useful this prevents any deadline from sneaking up on me and allows me to stay on top or even ahead of my work considering all of my activities tasks commitments I need to get done are all laid out in front of me. Additionally I'll go in with a weekly calendar like you Carlos and list my activities for the week and dedicate specific time blocks for homework assignments meetings etc then I can go back in and fill in

those open blocks with self care time this allows me to stay on top of my mental health and forces me to take a break from school[CDQ1]. That's great great to hear you sound very very organized learn some other techniques I do probably one of my favorite ones is exercising unfortunately 'cause they covid all the gyms have been closed but my family we have a little one at home set up got you can just go over walk to the beach just amazing to go over there do that and I feel like just boost my day gets me off to a great start and once I'm awake and up I'll just get moving throughout my day if I don't workout I feel like I'm just gonna be lazy and just not get a jump on the day so exercising definitely great for the body essentially also helps the mind and just also helps me out daily. I 100% agree colors physical exercise and activity is my favorite form of self care starting off the day with a run helping feel energized for a long day of classes and it gets my body moving before I'm sitting down at my desk all day going to zoom University. I also like taking a short walk between my classes just to kind of help me re energize when I'm starting to feel sluggish during the afternoon after. I've been studying and attending class for a few hours yeah there's some great ways that mean Lauren practice or self care but here are going to give you some other resources on campus and off that'll help you with self care activities so if you or someone you know is struggling with self care self love or mental health caps at UC San Diego is a great resource they offer both counseling and psychological services. caps provides individual group couples and family psychotherapy to registered undergraduate and graduate students services are confidential and free of charge to currently enrolled students who have paid their registration fees in response to the covid pandemic they are currently offering online health appointments to find out more information you can visit their website at caps.ucsd.edu another another self care tool that the school offers to UCSD students is that UCSD has given UCSD students free headspace pro accounts. head sprays pro gives you access to the meditation app and the headspace app is just great it's a meditation app designed for people who are beginners media and more advanced they have different topics such as fitness focusing breathing sleeping pretty much encompasses all the aspects you need of mental and physical health and they have some great celebrities on their list giving you motivation I listen to one from Kevin Hart about fitness that was pretty cool pretty funny kind of like getting an inspirational speech from Kevin Hart himself. there's tons of other great celebrities on there and the app itself is very friendly user interface and just overall great if you want to whether your advanced person for beginner person student a meditation. as meditation is just a great tool for yourself care and then now we're going to go into different ways to approach to help people a few see someone that is struggling a bit you suspect that they may be helping so here are some phrases to help start a conversation if you want to help a friend or a loved one that you suspect might be going through issues some phrases to start a conversation if you want to help is do you want to talk about it I'm always here to help you this question is great way to let a person know that you care about them and are a resource for them and other phrases. that sounds really difficult how are you coping that question acknowledges how someone is feeling and makes it validated make some feel comforted and allows the other person to open up more to you some other tactics could be asking them let's go for a quiet walk her talk somewhere else and then just the fact that you're outside walking moving can help someone feel more relaxed especially if someone's feeling very anxious or stressed out doing an activity like walking or being outside helps them get grounded and just helps hopefully alleviate some of the stress and anxiety there feeling one other phrase that you could probably use as what can I do to help or are you looking for my perspective or would you rather write listen offering help allows individuals to set boundaries in the conversation in some cases people may

just be looking for someone to listen rather than looking for advice there are also some phrases that are important to avoid when approaching people tell these phrases could include why aren't you seeing a therapist this intention may be kind hearted and caring but it may come off as accusatory instead suggested therapist like I heard therapist help with whatever they're going through another phrase could be you wouldn't feel this way if... This could place the blame on that person and lead to unnecessary stress for the individual which could make them hesitant to open up about their feelings with you in the future Yep overall self care is very important and we hope you learned a lot about self care here so that concludes this episode of live well be well if you like what you heard and would like to learn more about the topics related to health and well being there's so much more to come be sure to follow us on Instagram and Facebook under at UCSD wpe and stay tuned for our next episode of live well be well until next time be kind be true be you and remember to be well is to live well