FOSTERING ACADEMIC TENACITY: MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY

In recent research, post-secondary students at a Canadian institution reported negative attitudes towards help-seeking and interest in learning about symptoms of declining mental health and coping strategies (Armstrong & Young, 2015). There is value in embedding context specific, Mental Health Literacy (MHL) content in regular classes, delivered by the regular teacher (Kutcher et al., 2015, 2016). One component of MHL is teaching about coping strategies which are key for navigating stress, cognitive motivation, and achievement (Hsieh et al., 2012).



PLAN

Embedding mental health literacy in your teaching practice can be done in a variety of ways.

- How can you teach mental health literacy in your course?
- What kind of technology and activities are students familiar with?

IMPLEMENT

When embedding this strategy, consider the student life-cycle and how you will deliver the content.

- What are the key times in your course?
- What kinds of content can be both meaningful for your students and make sense within the context of your learning environment?





REFLECT

As you try this strategy, make time to reflect on your practice.

- How has the strategy been working for you?
- How has it been working for your students?
- What might you try next?

Scan here to view this toolkit online.



PLAN

As you consider how you would like to embed mental health literacy in your course and what tools and activities might work best, consider the following.

WHAT

- Reflect on your understanding of <u>mental health</u> literacy <a>C
- Would you like to encourage mental health literacy explicitly or implicitly?
- If you are introducing the concept of mental health literacy to students, consider also sharing why you are talking about this topic what could you say?
- If you are integrating activities to promote mental health literacy without calling it by name, how can you frame activities so students still see the value?

WHEN

- Would you like to introduce this content at one, some, or many points in the term?
- When is one key time that you could introduce this content?
- Are there additional times that you would like to introduce this content?

HOW

- Would you like students to engage with an activity or learn about resources?
- Would you like students to engage with activities independently or collaboratively?
- What kinds of activities might prompt meaningful reflection or discussion?

IMPLEMENT

Implementing a new approach for the first time is an experiment. As you consider how you will embed mental health literacy in your course, drawing on these sample activities, may help you determine ways to embed mental health literacy in your teaching and learning environment.

Before the Term Begins Familiarize yourself with teaching and learning resources for supporting student wellbeing.

- This <u>reflection tool</u>

 is a great place to start thinking about how your teaching practices can relate to student wellbeing.

Beginning of the Term

Introduce students to resources on campus.

• Sharing this screencast to your course Canvas page for completing as a class or individually is one way to introduce students to campus resources.

Throughout the Term Introduce the stress response and strategies for coping with stress.

- A module, based on Kelly McGonigal's TED Talk, How to Make Stress Your Friend , is available for including on your course Canvas page. This module can be found in the Canvas commons by searching "Student Wellbeing: How to Make Stress Your Friend." You can share this on your course Canvas page for students to access at their convenience.
- Students can explore their path to mental health through Thrive. While you can engage with the campaign each November, research and resources are available on the Thrive website year round.

REFLECT

As you consider how this strategy is working for you and your students, consider gathering feedback to inform what you might try next.

FEEDBACK

How are students engaging with the activities?

Reviewing responses:

• Submitted reflections.

Asking students:

- How relevant have you found these activities to your:
 - Academic life?
 - Personal life?
- Would you recommend these activities to future students?
- Which strategies have you found work for you in managing challenging situations?
- What advice might you give a new student starting in this course next year?

How are students developing academic tenacity?

Academic Tenacity

 Academic Buoyancy (Martin & Marsh, 2009)

Social Belonging

 Undergraduate Experience Survey -Belonging subscale (UBC, 2018)

Self-Regulation

• Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (Pintrich et al., 1991)

Mental Health and Wellbeing

 Undergraduate Experience Survey -Wellbeing subscale and Coping Strategies subscale (UBC, 2018)

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