

Attending to our Students' Well-being

Level: Intermediate +

Age: 12 +

Time needed: 60 minutes

Lesson aim:

- To encourage learners to share their thoughts and acknowledge their feelings about having to stay at home during a public health crisis
- To help learners understand how healthy lifestyles, social connections, mindfulness, altruistic acts and a motivation to learn can all contribute towards their well-being

Skills: Speaking, reading, writing

Materials needed: Worksheet

Before discussion

1. Put the learners in small groups. Ask them to imagine not being able to leave the house for two weeks and always eating the same food. They need to look at the five different menus and choose the house they'd like to stay in during the quarantine. Ask learners to present their choice to the class and to explain why. Help learners talk about the importance of healthy food choices and how they can impact on their physical and mental well-being.

For stronger classes, you can look at the difference between the types of food being offered (e.g. Fast food/Asian/French/Vegan/Latin). For classes that need more support, you can simply discuss what the learners like or dislike.

The exercise can be used as a light-hearted lead-in to what could be a heavy topic. It can lead to a conversation about the kind of food they have been eating while in quarantine. Ask them if they have been cooking and allow the discussion to develop for a few minutes.

Discussion tasks

2. Ask the learners to read the information about someone called Javi who is having problems looking after his physical and mental well-being while he is at

home in quarantine. This form of text is called a critical incident, which is a good way to bring controversial scenarios into the classroom and engage learners without directly being personal. Put the learners in pairs to rank the five different challenges from Javi's situation. They should write the letter of each difficulty in order from the one which has the smallest impact on his well-being to the one which has the biggest impact. Compare the answers from the different pairs.

3. Ask the learners to work with their partners and discuss what they think of Javi's situation and how he could improve his physical and mental well-being. After comparing ideas, ask the class for the different ways we can look after our well-being.
4. Introduce the list of ways to maintain physical and mental well-being. Have learners discuss the list in groups and answer the following questions:
 - a. How many of these things have you done today?
 - b. How many do you do daily?
 - c. How could each item help your well-being?

As they discuss the questions, remind and encourage the learners to use the useful language provided. For classes that need more support, model and practise the pronunciation of the phrases. Monitor and correct the learners as they discuss. For stronger classes, you could extend the discussion by asking the learners if they could add any other items to the list. You could also consider setting the list as homework and getting learners to do different items on the list every day and talk about the results in their next class.

After discussion

5. Explain the idea of top ten lists and ask learners to choose one of the themes for a top ten list. Tell them to brainstorm and prioritise what goes on the list. As they brainstorm ideas, monitor and correct. To support learners, you can suggest ideas as you monitor. If you're teaching a big class, encourage different groups to take on different lists. By sharing ideas and prioritising what is important, learners might find new and innovative ways that help them with different aspects of their well-being. When learners are presenting their lists to the class, encourage them to reflect on their choices. As a homework challenge, you can have learners pick one of the lists and do five of the items on that list before the next lesson.