



EMPLOYEE WELLBEING at CORNELL

June 1st Update
[Past editions](#)

Jump to:

- [Physical Wellbeing](#)
- [When You Disagree About Social Distancing](#)
- [Financial Wellbeing](#)
- [Parenting](#)
- [Elder/Adult Care](#)
- [Dog Lovers](#)
- [Helping Others For Managers](#)

OUR COMMUNITY

The Work/Life, Wellness, and Faculty and Staff Assistance Program teams have been sending this email regularly to acknowledge the wellbeing-related issues that are surfacing in our community during COVID-19 and to connect faculty and staff with resources and support services that are available. More than resources, though, we must show up in our community to support the safety and wellbeing of our fellow Cornellians – particularly those that are experiencing undue or disproportionate impact. It is important to recognize the pain individuals may be in, which can come from personal experiences as well as [historical and generational trauma](#).

Over the past week many in our nation have mourned and protested the outrageous killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, MN, and others before him. As President Pollack [stated](#), the amount of pain in the Black community is unfathomable. The backdrop of the pandemic creating additional stress and pain with its disproportionate impact on communities of color makes it even more devastating.

Our Cornell community consists of individuals from different races, backgrounds and perspectives and we seek to be a caring community that is inclusive, respectful and responsive to the wellbeing needs of our colleagues. Anytime we feel unsafe or are in crisis it can be very difficult to focus on work. Our brains will prioritize the things we need to do to keep ourselves safe and the rest can be difficult to attend to. It is not helpful or productive to assume we can continue as normal when we are in crisis (which can include emotional trauma).

If you are experiencing trauma and want support, or, if you want to learn about marginalized identities or better understand how to be an ally, below are some resources that you may find useful.

- [Report an Incident of Bias, Discrimination, or Harassment](#)
- [Inclusive Excellence Podcast](#) (listen and discuss what you learned with a colleague)
- Instructors - participate in the June 15th workshop, "[Let's Get Real: Invisible Equity Issues in Remote Teaching](#)."
- Cornell Faculty and Staff Assistance Program (fsap@cornell.edu, 255-2673 – available virtually)
- ENI Confidential Counseling Services (1-800-327-2255, first 3 sessions free – available virtually)

Cornell “Pick A Healthy Habit” Challenge

Join Cornell Wellness and Recreational Services for a 3-week event that's open to the entire Cornell community! You do not need to be a Wellness member to participate.

Runs June 8 - June 28

[Registration](#) is open until June 4, 5pm

Participants choose one Healthy Habit to work on for 3 weeks. The 4 Healthy Habits you can choose from are:

- **Increase Your Vegetable Intake** - Choose this challenge to first become aware of your vegetable intake and learn why increasing it is important. Then learn some tips & tricks for making it a habit to include them in your regular diet.
- **Move Your Body More** - Throughout these three weeks you will become aware of your typical movement patterns and tendencies. We will then help you establish habit building strategies to increase your physical activity.
- **Improve Your Sleep Behaviors** - Pick this one to increase your awareness of the sleep you are currently getting, learn about the importance of sleep, receive healthy sleep habit suggestions to try, and by the end create your own pre-sleep wind-down routine.
- **Explore Ways to Manage Your Stress** - Throughout this challenge you will learn how to identify stressors, heighten awareness around your response to stress and navigate healthy plus sustainable ways to cope.

Cornell Wellness staff will provide you with ideas, strategies, resources to help you lean into and grow your new habit. You'll be asked to report in once every week to share with us what you did and a reflection from the week.

Grow your own vegetables with container and small-space gardening

Bobbie Kuhlman, horticulturist at Cornell Botanic Gardens, shares some of the many vegetables and herbs that thrive in containers. She also takes you inside Cornell Botanic Gardens' Plant Production Facility in a short video to demonstrate her tips and tricks for growing vegetables in a space as small as 14 inches wide!

There is a great sense of security and pride that comes with providing food for your family, and a large space isn't necessary to enjoy the beauty and bounty of a garden.



When You & Your Family/Friends Disagree About Social Distancing



As regions and states move into phases of reopening, new challenges are emerging among friends and families about health and safety guidelines and how they will interpret/comply with social distancing, face coverings, and other measures. Judgement, fear, anger, and guilt are bubbling up in relationships where individuals disagree.

*Grandparents may be needed to help provide child care, but is it safe for them to travel?
Friends want to have an outdoor picnic, but potential attendees have mixed feelings about masks.
Your college-age daughter keeps inviting friends over and you feel badly about stopping her.
You believe that your husband is excessively worried about the pandemic and would like him to relax.*

There are some core communication principles and strategies that may help you have productive discussions about these issues. Consider sharing them with the person you are communicating with and mutually agree to abide by them.

- Review current information from reliable sources, such as [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#)
- Prior to having a conversation, name what is occurring/bothering you and figure out why it is an issue for you
- Seek to understand other individuals through genuine listening and nonjudgmental questions
- Remember that you are addressing issues *with* a person – not confronting someone
- Be clear about your boundaries and respect the boundaries of others
- Refrain from accusatory and aggressive interactions
- Pause the conversation if the disagreement takes a sour turn and revisit it when calm

FINANCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL WELLBEING

[3 Ways to Go Solar Workshop](#)

Tompkins County, Cornell Cooperative Extension
June 2, 6:30-7:30pm or June 7, 2-3pm. New to solar, on the fence, or want to learn more? Is there a difference whether you rent or own? Will you actually save money? Learn about each option and be empowered to pick out the right one for you!



PARENTING

[Books Honoring the Contributions of Women and Girls to the Civil Rights Movement](#) (A Mighty Girl)
These fiction and non-fiction selections include many biographies of female leaders of the struggle for racial equality. For inspirational stories of African-American women's history from colonial times through present day, visit the [African-American History](#) section.

ELDER/ADULT CAREGIVERS

Powerful Tools for Caregivers – Summer 2020 Virtual Series

Thursdays, June 18 – July 23, 2-4pm. This six-week educational program is designed to help you reduce stress, improve self-confidence, better communicate your feelings, balance your life, increase your ability to make tough decisions, and locate helpful resources. It is offered free of charge to those caring for spouses, parents, or other adult relatives/friends. For questions or to register, contact the Tompkins County Office for the Aging at 607-274-5482.

DOG LOVERS

[How to Prepare Your Dog to Be Left Home Alone \(Again\)](#) – New York Times

Experts including Katherine A. Houpt, Professor Emeritus of Behavior Medicine, College of Veterinary Medicine, offer advice on preparing dogs for more alone time as the humans return to work.

HELPING OTHERS

Cortland County Food Cabinets

Locations: 5 Pierce Street, behind Town Hall in Truxton, and Cortland Estates. Drop off items at any of the three food cabinets. Food cabinets are organized by [Cortland County Mutual Aid Group](#).

The Cancer Resource Center of the Finger Lakes Walk-A-Thon

The Annual CRC Walk-a-thon will be held as a Virtual Walk & Run on July 3rd, 4th, and 5th. Now EVERYONE can participate, regardless of where you live... and you have a whole weekend to do it! [Click here](#) to find out how it works, sign up or donate. Musicians and other talented individuals are also needed for [3-minute entertainment segments](#).



FOR MANAGERS: PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY AT THE WORKPLACE



Individuals need to feel secure and safe in their workplace in order to do their best work. Throughout the pandemic our feelings of security and safety have been rattled and there continues to be many unknowns. The strategies for fostering psychological safety at work can be especially helpful during times of crisis and transition. A few suggestions:

- Create a shared understanding of the work and encourage input. During times of uncertainty, be honest about the areas where input is needed and valued.

- Break the “Golden Rule” – instead of treating others as you’d like to be treated, treat them as *they’d* like to be treated. Take the time to ask them what they need to be effective. With the fast transition to remote work, needs and styles have evolved and need to be revisited.
- Nurture and welcome curiosity by encouraging and asking questions. Role model this, especially in times of uncertainty.

Articles:

- [Help Employees Feel Psychologically Safe](#) (Harvard Business School)
- [7 Ways to Create Psychological Safety in Your Workplace](#) (Jostle Blog)

About the Wellbeing Update:

Information provided by Cornell Work/Life, Cornell Wellness, and the Faculty and Staff Assistance Program.

Explore [past editions](#) or email wellbeing@cornell.edu to ask questions, request assistance, or suggest a resource.

Visit [HR Resources](#) for more details. Resources shared do not indicate an endorsement by Cornell University.