



TAKE 5 CAFE

MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING

Photo credit: Heart Lung Innovation

DEPARTMENT

Centre for Heart Lung Innovation

CAMPUS

St. Paul's Hospital

FUNDING YEAR

2017

ABOUT HWIP

The Healthy Workplace Initiatives Program (HWIP) is an annual fund available to UBC departments and units to support grassroots activities that promote wellbeing in the workplace. The program provides start-up funds and support for health-related, sustainable initiatives.

www.hr.ubc.ca/hwip

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Centre for Heart Lung Innovation is a research centre located at St. Paul's Hospital in Downtown Vancouver. In 2017, it launched a series of events called "Take 5 Cafe" where team members explored different ways to deal with daily stress and improve their mental wellbeing. Activities ranged from group puzzle and colouring sessions to playing games that facilitated conversations around mental health and alternated between physical and sit down activities.

The monthly "Take 5 Cafe" events were complemented by an Awareness of Mental Health at Work workshop from the Canadian Mental Health Association and a Conflict Theatre Skills Development workshop by UBC HR and Department of Theatre and Film. Mental health tips and resources were also shared on Health and Wellness boards around the centre.

TAKE 5 CAFE TOPICS & ACTIVITIES

- Relaxing Music
- Exercise
- Puzzles & Colouring
- Pet Therapy Dog
- Pumpkin Carving
- Tea & Chill
- Balloon Sword Fight
- Individual & Organizational Mindfulness
- Tree of Gratitude
- Community Service Project

VALUABLE OUTCOMES

This initiative brought together Principal Investigators (PIs), students, and staff and started a culture of creating space and time for social and wellbeing activities at the Centre.

The Centre is now known for having these kinds of events and a culture that cares about its people, values everyone in every lab, and fosters collaboration.

KEY TO SUCCESS

Key to the success and sustainability of this initiative have been a dedicated group of people who organize and promote the events.

As a subcommittee of the Training, Environment, and Education Committee, this group gets ideas, support, and a small amount of funding from the larger committee.

“The initiative made us think about our mental wellbeing and started a conversation among colleagues about taking care of ourselves not only physically but also mentally.”

SUSTAINABILITY

The Take 5 Cafe events have evolved from gatherings of around 10 people at the start to now being held in the biggest meeting room in the Centre, which holds about 40 people.

Each year, new ideas, activities, and topics are included in the events. Recent events have included topics such as culture, equity, and inclusion.

UBC WELLBEING
STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK
PRIORITY AREAS

Mental Health &
Resilience

Social Connection

wellbeing.ubc.ca/framework

“One the best things I like about UBC is this fund. It’s imaginative and very supportive. And it’s for everybody. It’s not just for PIs, or staff, or for students. It’s for everybody who works here.”



ADVICE FOR FUTURE HWIP GRANTEES

It can take time and perseverance to get something new off the ground. Keep at it!

Getting endorsement from leadership can help team members feel that it is both permissible and worthwhile to spend work time attending wellbeing events.

“We advocate for leadership to promote and support attendance at the events. We nudge PIs at meetings to encourage their labs to attend. And once some people attend, others see and hear about it, and they start to attend, too.... Don’t give up! Keep doing it and at some point, it will become expected and part of the culture.”