



**COLORADO
COLLEGE**

Office of Human Resources

☎ (719) 389-6421

✉ (719) 389-6926

14 E. Cache La Poudre St.
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Colorado College Employee Wellness – May 2022 Newsletter

May is Mental Health Awareness Month



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Make time for self-care.

Caretaker, parent, teacher, student, employee. Many of us juggle different responsibilities and roles in our lives, leaving not much “me time” left in the day. This can lead to burnout, stress, and higher risk of illness.* So, in honor of Mental



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Health Awareness Month, here are five ways you can, and should, start practicing more self-care.



Be happy with you.

Try not to compare yourself to others or their lifestyles. Focus on positivity and challenge unhelpful thoughts.



Do more of what makes you happy.

Whether it's cooking, reading, meditating, or working out, find that activity that's just for you and make it a priority – even if it's just 15 minutes a day.



Stick to a sleep schedule.



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Program your alarm for bedtime and wake-up time and stick to it. When it's time to sleep, minimize sleep disruptors such as lights, phones, and television.



Eat to feel great.

Help improve your energy and focus each day by eating a balanced diet, drinking plenty of water and limiting caffeinated beverages.*



Know when to say no.

To be your best self, you have to set boundaries. That means making your health and happiness a priority, even if it means sometimes politely saying no to other requests or obligations.

The exercise effect.

Studies show that a consistent exercise routine is an effective way to reduce anxiety and depression.* It improves brain function, making you feel better – physically and emotionally. Let your team in on this healthy habit.

Everyone knows that exercise is great for you physically – protecting your body against a host of diseases and ailments. It's also great for you mentally. Regular exercise can help combat depression, anxiety, and everyday stress.*



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When we exercise, we release endorphins, and a high-intensity activity, like running, is what gives people that euphoric feeling, or a “runner’s high.”

But the key to a consistently better mood is actually low-intensity exercise that’s done routinely. Aim for 30 minutes three to five times each week.

Need ideas to get started? Try these out.

Walk and talk Grab a coworker or neighbor and go for a brisk walk. Create a meeting reminder and keep each other accountable.

Get into gardening. Choose a few easy-to-grow veggies and plant a garden. Maintaining it will help keep you active and outdoors.

Say yes to yoga. Gentle yoga classes are a great way to promote relaxation, reduce stress and create that mind-body connection.

Also, attached is a flyer on additional information on how the food you eat can affect your sleep.

Family Life: The Juggling Act

Cigna Life Connected® Seminar Series

Working, raising kids, balancing extracurricular activities and family commitments... are you trying to keep too many “balls” in the air? In this seminar we will take a fresh look at some of the pressures that drive this juggling act. We’ll talk about what kids really need and how to refocus priorities. You’ll learn strategies to add balance, reduce stress, and manage your obligations more effectively.

This seminar will be hosted by **Dr. Rick Conforto**, a licensed psychologist with over 40 years experience providing clinical services to adults and families.



Cigna Life Connected® Seminar Details:

Date: Wednesday, May 11, 2022

Time: 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Register Today



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Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

EAP is a benefit the college provides to all benefits-eligible employees. You can access information online, including a variety of webinars at www.guidanceresources.com (web ID is CM589) or phone them at 800-272-7255 to discuss individual issues.

TIAA May Webinars

Upcoming Financial Essentials Live Webinars

Below is the itinerary of all currently scheduled webinars. You may access these webinars at TIAA.org/webinars. Recordings are available for replay on demand for 90 days following the live webinar date.

Topic	Date	Time
The Starting Line: Beginning to save for retirement	May 11	10 a.m. MT
The Power of Savings	May 11	1 p.m. MT
Estate planning considerations	May 12	10 a.m. MT
Lifetime Income: Marketproof Your Retirement	May 12	1 p.m. MT
The New Nest Egg: Why an HSA can be an important component to your retirement savings strategy	May 18	1 p.m. MT

Gallagher Wellbeing Newsletters

Gratitude is an effective tool for building successful teams and organizations. Choose one actionable way to express gratitude each week.

Attached is the Gratitude Newsletter that includes information on Gratitude Journaling and Your Health, 6 Ways to Express Gratitude, What is Toxic Positivity? and a healthy recipe.



Hello and Happy Spring!

May is a big deal at Nationwide pet because it's "National Pet Month!" Our furry family members bring us joy all year long, so it is only right that we take some time to celebrate them.



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CELEBRATE NATIONAL PET MONTH

Every May, pet lovers across the country celebrate the benefits that our fluffy, scaly and feathered pals bring to our lives.

Our pets are more than just the best cuddlers and wet-nosed kissers—studies show they can actually improve our physical and mental health. Here's how:

Your fur-sonal trainer

Pet ownership is good for the heart—in more ways than one!

The Human Animal Bond Research Institute (HABRI) studies how the interactions between humans and pets impact the health outcomes of both. **Their research suggests that pet ownership keeps people active, which correlates to better overall heart health:**

- The researchers found that pets—especially dogs—can be very effective for reducing blood pressure and stress and may slow the progression of hypertension in older adults who live with pets.
- A study of over 2,400 cat owners concluded there was a significantly lower relative risk for death due to cardiovascular diseases, including stroke and heart attack, compared to non-owners after 20 years.

There's more:

- Cat ownership is shown to speed up recovery after a heart attack.
- Dog owners show a significantly lower risk for coronary artery disease.

Recent studies have demonstrated similar beneficial effects on cardiovascular stress responses among goat, fish and snake owners.

The power of snuggles

HABRI has extensively studied the role of pet ownership and human-animal interaction for improvements in mental health. They found that human-animal bonds can reduce overall anxiety and stress and could offer relief from symptoms of depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Their research shows that:

- Human-animal interactions help protect against a variety of other negative feelings and emotions.
- Pet ownership has been found to play a role in helping people manage long-term mental health conditions.
- Pets can buffer people against high stress moments and reduce how stressful those moments feel.

Plus, caring for a pet can improve the way we think about ourselves: People tend to feel better when they can identify as a "good pet owner."

Workplace wellness

Turns out the office dog has been hard at work all this time! Studies have found that employees are healthier and less stressed when pets are allowed in the workplace.

When surveyed, employees at pet-friendly offices reported:

- Good mental health (98%)
- Good physical health (97%)
- Engagement in their work (91%)

Want to show extra love this month?

Let's celebrate our pets for all the great benefits they bring to our lives. **Here are some fun ways to remind**

your pet how much joy they bring to your life:

- Extra play time and tummy rubs.
- Make a special meal for your pet to enjoy.
- Do a photoshoot (see our Instagram @NationwidePet for filters to mix things up).
- Explore all the smells at a new trail, park or pet store.
- Spoil them with a special toy or treat (be sure to check out our member perks for ideas and discounts).

Don't forget to share a snuggle from your friends at Nationwide!

Celebrate National Pet Month by keeping your pet as healthy as you! Start protecting your pet today.

Learn more at [PetsNationwide.com](https://www.petsnationwide.com)

Visit habri.org for more information on these studies and other social and health impacts of human-animal bonds.