

Working Well

Finding Space for Movement, Self-Care, and
Community at the Brock Library

Introductions

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We would like to share:



- Highlights of our experience with staff and student wellness initiatives
- Tips for building mindfulness into library programming, space and services

A short meditation



Staff Wellness

Staff Wellness

- Fall 2021 open call to all staff
- Virtual meet
- Weekly over teams
- Short 5-10 minute guided meditation
- Shared responsibly

No goals, no pressure, no performance

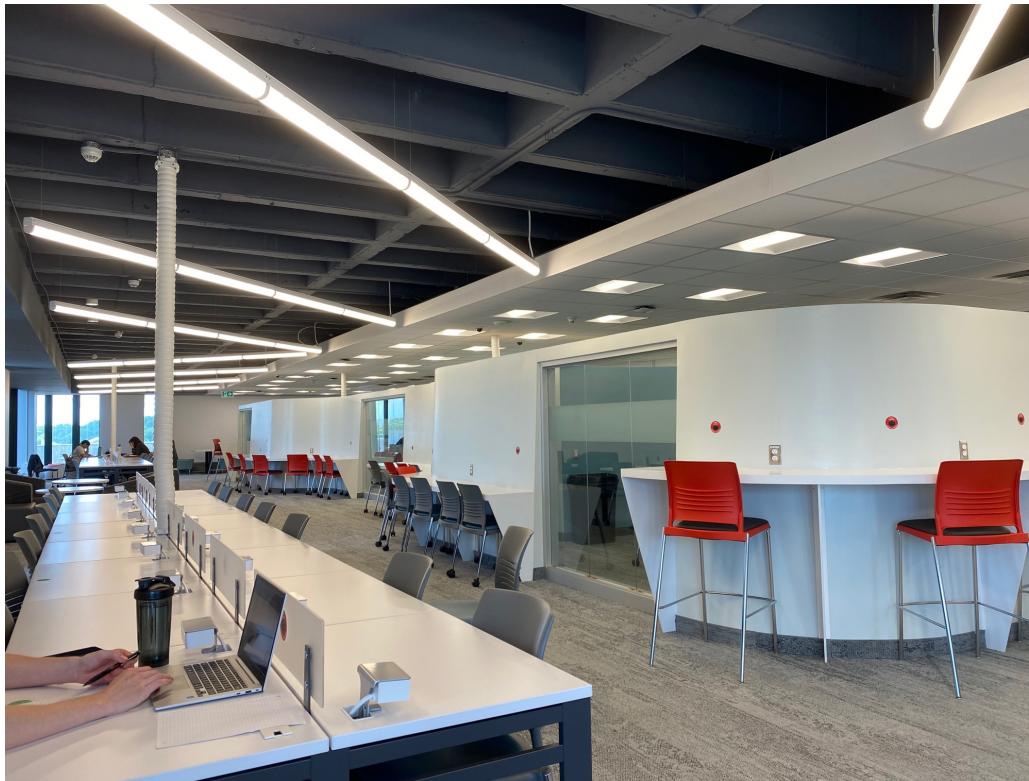
Just show up

Student Wellness

Our Spaces: A Wellness Defense of Quiet



Our Spaces: Cafe-Style



Quiet as a Scarce Resource

Consider :

Shopping malls

Hospital & doctor office waiting areas

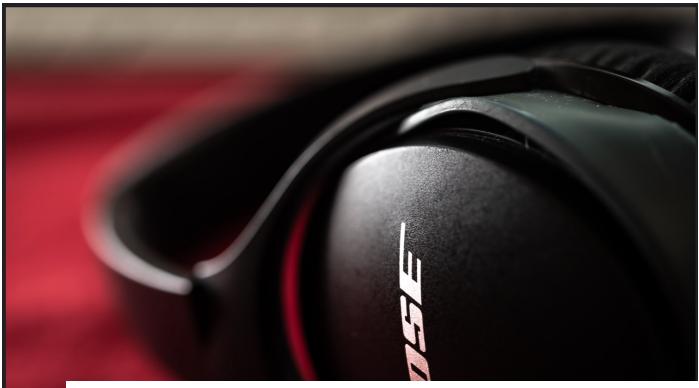
Restaurants

The dentist

"Areas of silence in our society are systematically being colonized by big business...."

Sim, Stuart. 2007. *Manifesto for Silence: Confronting the Politics and Culture of Noise*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press.

Quiet as a Commodity



Protecting Quiet

“This is my favorite place to study and get work done. Because I’d actually study and get work done. If I go home, I’m a little distracted. And I want to get stuff done.”

Garner, Martin, and Joel Tonyan. 2021. 'Library as Place: Understanding Contradicting User Expectations'. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*. 47 (5): 102391.

Our Spaces: The Case for Quiet

- Improves concentration
- Stimulates creativity
- Stimulates brain growth
- Reduction of stress hormones
- Replenishes mental resources

“The cognitive functions most strongly affected by noise are reading attention, memory and problem solving.”



Beris, Rebecca. Science Says Silence is Much More Important to Our Brains Than We Think. *International Alliance of Healthcare Educators*
[https://www.iahe.com/docs/articles/Science_Says_Silence_Is_Much_More_Important
To Our Brains Than We Think.pdf](https://www.iahe.com/docs/articles/Science_Says_Silence_Is_Much_More_Important_To_Our_Brains_Than_WeThink.pdf)

Library Yoga

Wednesday, Dec. 2
Wednesday, Dec. 9
12:15-12:45 PM



Library Yoga 5-Minute Study Break

Chair Yoga for the Neck,
Shoulders, & Upper Back



Library Yoga Midterm Edition!

Let's take a
mindful
movement
break!

Wednesday, Oct. 28
Wednesday, Nov. 4
12:15-12:45 PM



Library Yoga 2-Minute Study Break



Library Yoga 3-Minutes of Breathing Room



Library Yoga

Wed., Jan. 13 / 20 / 27
12:15-12:45 PM

A mindful start
to the new year
& new studies!



Library Yoga 4-Minute Full-Body Chair Yoga Study Break



Library Yoga

The Final Stretch!
Wed., Mar. 31 / Apr. 7
12:15-12:45 PM

Library Yoga 2 Minutes of Mindful Movement



Why practice yoga in the library?

We've all probably had the following experiences:

You're doing research and getting frustrated at not finding exactly what you're looking for right away. It's getting hard to focus because you are feeling overwhelmed.

You have been working for hours and can hardly focus your eyes on the computer screen any more.

After a long class or meeting, you're surprised to find that your shoulders and neck are sore.

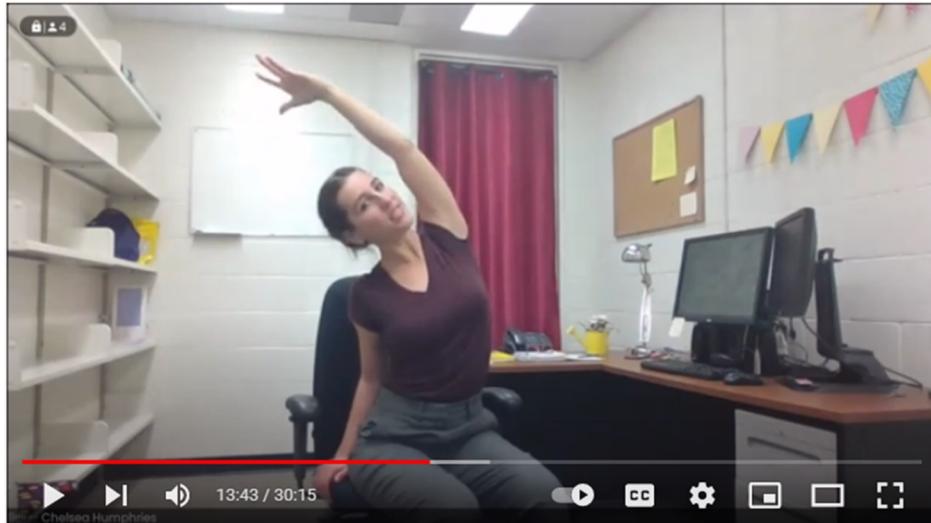
Yoga and mindfulness practices offer a necessary break from our work and studies.

Mindfulness practices that incorporate movement, like yoga, also provide the tools to release some of the signs of stress that come with our work and studies.

The goal: Encourage students and researchers to take care of themselves while they conduct their work. Share the information and expertise we have in the library, and set the tone for a healthy approach to studies on campus.

What's involved?

- A virtual yoga program hosted during lunch hours, designed to be done in any kind of space and in any kind of clothing.
- Simple postures and sequences are shared by a certified instructor, intended to alleviate the stress and strain of long hours seated at a desk and looking at screens.
- Virtual programs are recorded and shared publicly on the library's YouTube channel.



Library Yoga: Upper-Body Tension Relief

80 views... 1 2 DISLIKE SHARE DOWNLOAD CLIP SAVE ...



Library Yoga

37 videos • 804 views • Last updated on Apr 6, 2022



Why practice yoga in the library? Yoga and mindfulness practices offer a necessary break from our work and studies. Mindfulness practices that incorporate movement, like yoga, also provide the tools to release some of the signs of stress that come with our work and studies. We've all probably had the following experiences:

– You're doing research and getting frustrated at not finding exactly what you're looking for right away. It's getting hard to focus because you are feeling overwhelmed.

- 4 
Library Yoga: A Stealthy Chair-Yoga Study Break
Brock University Library
- 5 
Library Yoga: 2-Minute Study Break!
Brock University Library
- 6 
Library Yoga: 5-Minute Study Break for the Neck, Shoulders & Upper Back
Brock University Library
- 7 
Library Yoga: 3 Minutes of Breathing Room
Brock University Library
- 8 
Library Yoga: What can I relax right now?
Brock University Library
- 9 
Library Yoga: Finding Balance
Brock University Library

Explore the playlist at bit.ly/LibraryYoga

Mindful Research

Thursday, April 1

Thursday, April 8

12:00-12:45 PM



What are Mindful Research workshops?

- Co-curricular workshops introducing students to the concept of mindfulness and mindfulness practices, highlighting ways in which mindfulness can be brought into the library research process.

Take a moment to reflect...

→ Have you noticed a difference in the quality of your work when you are:

- Tired?
- Hungry?
- Stressed?
- Upset?
- Worried?

It can be challenging (even impossible!) to separate your physical and emotional experiences from your academic work. This is why it's important to recognize how we enter our research.

Approaching work mindfully, and taking mindful breaks

- reflecting upon and remaining aware of your physical, mental and emotional state while working
- being rooted in the present moment (no distractions!)
- approaching work non-judgmentally and remaining open to discovery

- meditation
- a short walk
- journaling on your experiences
- having a snack
- whatever you need in the moment! Anything can be done mindfully.

Mindful connections

- Attendance was small but mighty! The workshops were a unique opportunity to connect with a small group of students on a more personal level than more traditional research-focused workshops and consultations.
- We shared wellness resources available through the library and elsewhere on campus to holistically support the whole student – not just their academic work.



Investigating the Influencer Workshop

- *a different way of teaching critical thinking skills*
- Addresses misinformation (health claims, fitness advice) on social media channels

[Read more and grab the slides here](#)

Virtual Workshop

INVESTIGATING THE INFLUENCER

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14♥
12PM - 12:45

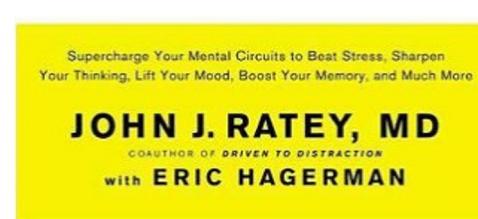
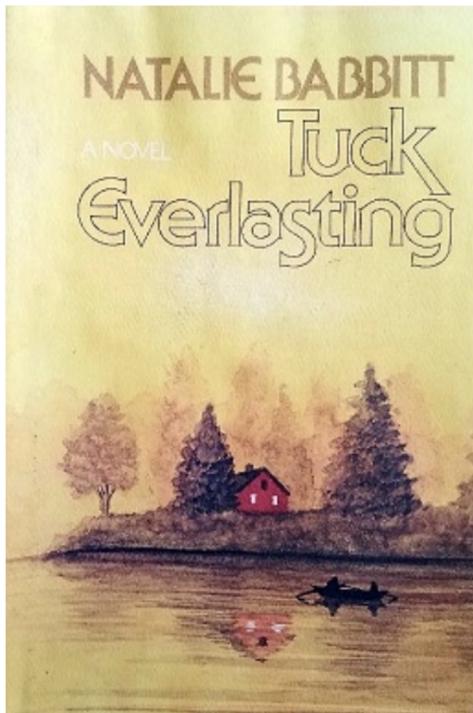


Do the people you follow truly know what they are doing?

Join us to discuss:

- how to verify wellness claims
- the impact of algorithms
- credentials
- affiliations, marketing, etc.

The Wellness Book Club - bibliotherapy & community



The Wellness Book Club

Knowing that recreational reading can...

- Reduce stress
- Increase empathy
- Improve sleep
- Enhance resiliency

...a virtual “Wellness” book club was held in fall 2021 and Winter 2022, coupled with an investigation of reading on students’ perceived stress levels.



About the Wellness Book Club

Autumn:

- Fiction book: “Tuck Everlasting”
- 4 participants
- 2 meetings

Winter:

- Nonfiction book about exercise and mental health: “Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain.”
- 22 participants
- 8 meeting options to choose from

Some initial feedback:

I really enjoyed participating in this book club! The subject matter of the book was motivating and interesting to read. The opportunity to have conversations with fellow students made me feel more connected to people in a similar situation as myself. Since the book was about the benefits of exercise, I found myself really taking in the messages and applying them in my daily life. I started exercising again after a few months hiatus, knowing the benefit it will have on my mind, mood, and stress levels. **(1st year student)**

It was a great experience, to be able to have time to read for pleasure and also discuss with others who were interested in the same ideas. It definitely helped me to prioritize (in some respects) my mental health and overall wellbeing over school. **(3rd year student)**

Feedback:

Reading the book gave me a break from my usual studies and allowed me to educate myself on a topic I didn't know much about. Our discussion online was fresh and interesting and allowed me to further understand my own struggles and see how common they really are. (3rd year student)

Future Plans:

- An in-person book club in fall 2022
- Refine survey and include an incentive for survey completion
- Incorporate movement and more community building in the Club

References

Beris, Rebecca. Science Says Silence is Much More Important to Our Brains Than We Think. *International Alliance of Healthcare Educators*.
[https://www.iahe.com/docs/articles/Science Says Silence Is Much More Important To Our Brains Than We Think.pdf](https://www.iahe.com/docs/articles/Science%20Says%20Silence%20Is%20Much%20More%20Important%20To%20Our%20Brains%20Than%20We%20Think.pdf)

Garner, Martin, and Joel Tonyan. 2021. 'Library as Place: Understanding Contradicting User Expectations'. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*. 47 (5): 102391.

Moniz et al. (2015). *The Mindful Librarian*. Chandos Publishing.

Sim, Stuart. 2007. *Manifesto for Silence: Confronting the Politics and Culture of Noise*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press.

Tukhareli, Natalia. "Read to Connect: Reading to Combat Loneliness and Promote Resilience." *Bibliotherapy*, edited by Liz Brewster and Sarah McNicol, Facet, 2018, pp. 77–92.