

MAY 2021

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Happy Wednesday!

In today's newsletter, you can check out these great articles and information:

- pay it forward with a voucher today
- your brain needs a break from video meetings
- 'lunch and learn' sessions
- mindfulness practice - study opportunity
- supercharge your immunity
- UniSports group fitness sessions

We encourage you to continue taking the time to identify ways you can support your ongoing self-care and wellbeing.

Stay well and have a great Wednesday.

Pay it forward with a voucher today

One good deed might not seem like much, but if everyone did something good for someone else, then the cycle of generosity and kindness can spark us to become better people. The 'pay it forward' initiative aims to create a ripple of kindness to be felt across our world.

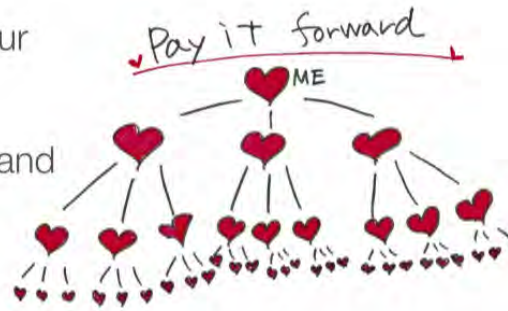
This week, you are invited to embrace the 'pay it forward' initiative and take the opportunity to buy a voucher that can be posted on a pay it forward board at campus cafés. The vouchers can be used by students and can make an enormous difference to someone, making their day a little bit brighter.

You can 'pay it forward' from Monday, 3 May to Friday, 7 May at the following locations:

- Mt Helen Campus: **The Hub and Ruby's Café**
 - Berwick and Gippsland campuses: **Café La Kiss**
-

Pay it forward in 3 easy steps

1. Buy a pay it forward voucher to your chosen value
2. Write a message on your voucher and pin it to the pay it forward board
3. Make someone's day



Your brain needs a break from video meetings

For many people, back-to-back video meetings are a hallmark of the pandemic era. One conversation ends, another begins, and too often there's no chance to stretch, pour a glass of water, or just clear your head.

In a new Microsoft study of brainwave activity, researchers confirmed what many people sense from experience: Back-to-back virtual meetings are stressful. But the research also points to a simple remedy - short breaks.

As part of the study, 14 volunteers each participated in two different sessions of meetings. On one day they attended blocks of four half-hour meetings. On another day, the four half-hour meetings were interspersed with 10-minute breaks. Instead of hurriedly jumping from one meeting to the next, participants meditated with the Headspace app during the breaks.

The research showed three main takeaways:

1. breaks between meetings allow the brain to 'reset,' reducing a cumulative build-up of stress across meetings;
2. back-to-back meetings can decrease your ability to focus and engage; and
3. transitioning between meetings can be a source of high stress.

Strategies for overcoming meeting fatigue

Because making space for breaks is easier said than done, Microsoft have collated research-backed tips on carving out time to pause, getting the most from moments of respite, and making meetings more effective and energising.

- **Shift your mindset.** While it might feel more productive to power through back-to-back meetings, research shows the opposite is true. View breaks away from your computer as an essential part of your workday.
- **Find break activities that calm your mind.** Meditation is one effective way to relax and recharge between meetings, but other studies show that physical activity such as walking is also beneficial. This will help you feel refreshed and recharged when you start your next meeting.
- **Make meetings more intentional.** The best - and often shortest - meetings are more intentional. Best practices like creating and sending an agenda ahead of time,

time.

[You can learn more about this Microsoft study in the article 'Research proves your brain needs breaks'](#)

[Watch a practical time management video on how you can use a feature in Outlook to take a break between meetings.](#)

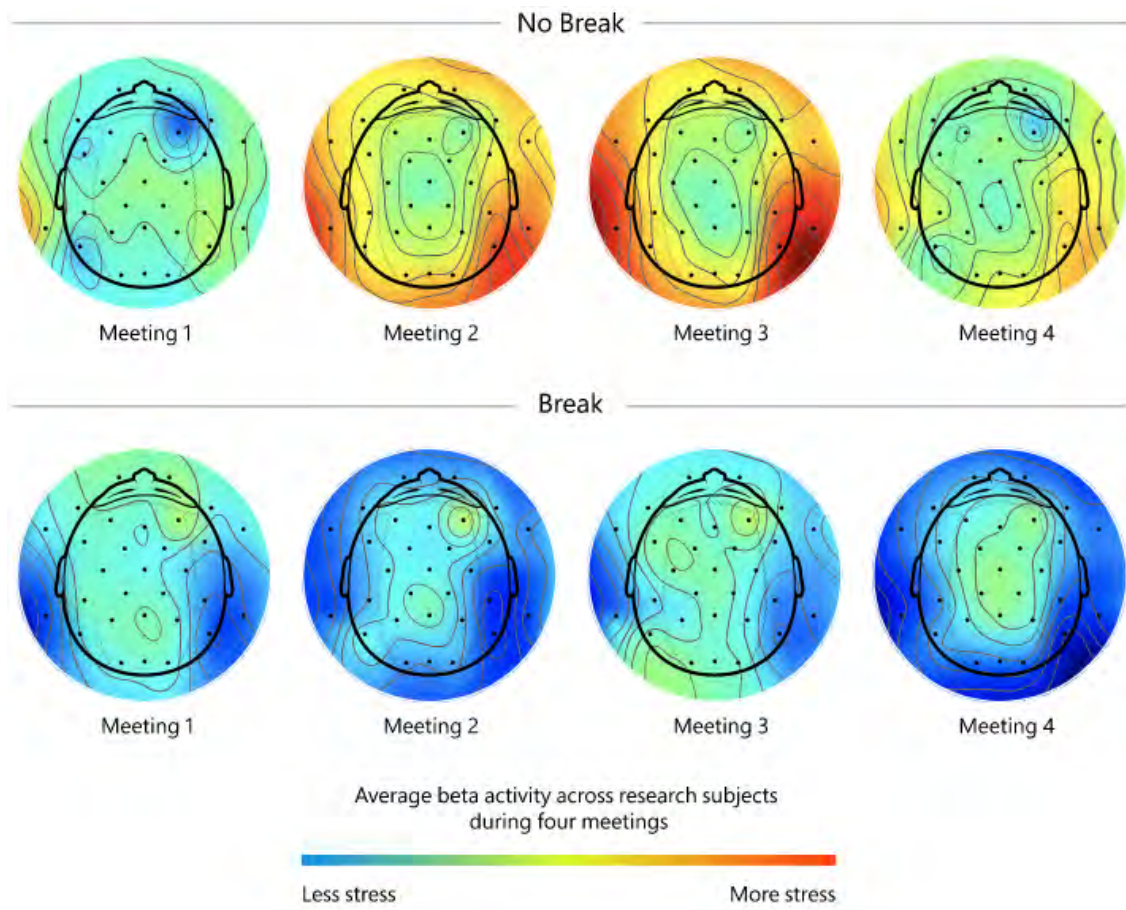


Image: Microsoft - your brain works differently when you take breaks

Lunch and learn sessions

The 'lunch and learn' sessions are designed to provide staff with information and assistance in a range of areas that support their personal and professional needs and interests.

We encourage you to check out and register for the upcoming sessions below.

[Register here for any 'lunch and learn' session.](#) A Microsoft Teams link will be sent following registration.

Upcoming sessions include:

13 May 2021

The science behind mindfulness and wellbeing

27 May 2021 **National Reconciliation Week - Understanding Victorian Aboriginal Languages**
12:30pm – 1:15pm

Katrina Beer, Manager, Aboriginal Education Centre

Missed one of the 'lunch and learn' sessions, or simply want to refresh your memory? You can access the recordings via the 'lunch and learn' section on the Human Resources [Health and wellbeing page](#).



Mindfulness practice – study opportunity

Mindfulness means maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment, through a gentle, nurturing lens.

Mindfulness also involves acceptance, meaning that we pay attention to our thoughts and feelings without judging them - without believing, for instance, that there is a 'right' or 'wrong' way to think or feel in a given moment. When we practice mindfulness, our thoughts tune into what we're sensing in the present moment rather than rehashing the past or imagining the future.

To experience the practice and benefits of mindfulness, you are invited to take part in a study being conducted by School of Science, Psychology and Sport. The study aims to look at the effects of an online mindfulness program on wellbeing. You are invited to participate if you are 18 years or older and fluent in English.

What does the study involve?

iMindTime, our online mindfulness program, is a comprehensive, but brief, six-session digital health program delivered over three weeks. It is free of charge and accessible via desktop, mobile or tablet.

Each session of the program is designed to increase your awareness of moment-to-moment experiences. You will be provided with all the tools that you will need to undertake mindfulness practice in your own time. The six sessions will cover:

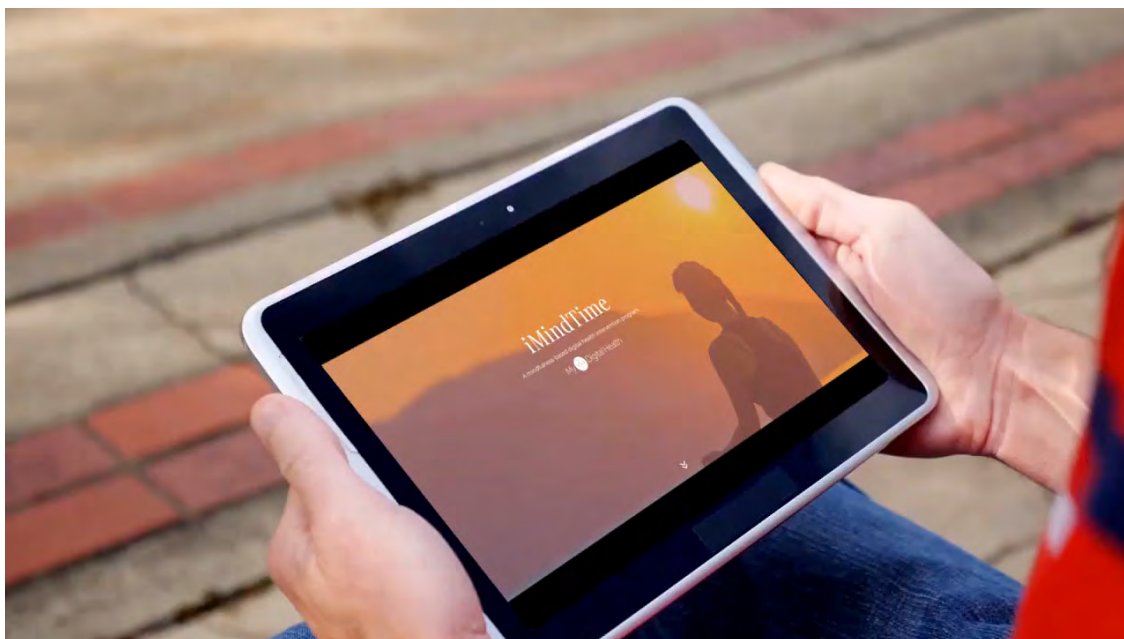
3. Mindfulness of Bodily Sensations
4. Mindfulness of Sounds
5. Mindfulness of Thoughts
6. Loving Kindness Meditation

Interested in signing up for the program?

- [Watch this short video on the iMindTime program \(1-minute video, 11MB\)](#)
- [Visit the My Digital Health website to sign-up to the program.](#) You are welcome to also share the link with your family and friends!

Other resources to assist you in learning more about mindfulness include:

- [Register here for the 'lunch and learn' - *The science behind mindfulness and wellbeing* - to be held on Thursday, 13 May and presented by Dr Lynne Reeder, Adjunct Research Fellow, School of Science, Psychology and Sport, and National Director of the Australian Compassion Council \(ACC\).](#)
- [The ELMO module - 'Mindfulness and wellbeing for peak performance' to increase awareness of the science and benefits of mindfulness.](#)



Supercharge your immunity

Your immune system is a complex network of cells, tissues and organs that work together to defend your body against infection.

With winter fast approaching, now is the perfect time to optimise your immune function to ensure you are in the best shape possible. And while the experts say there is no 'magic pill' solution, they have these top tips to take your immunity superpowers up a notch.

Focus on food

'Better Brain Food' author, Ngaire Hobbins, says fuelling your body with the right food

nuts, seeds and oily fish, Ngaire says.

Chronic inflammation can impact your immune system, and when it comes to food, it's those which have undergone more change from their original form that are most likely to create issues.

Your immune system needs the right fuel to work at its optimum capacity. Pinpointing these key nutrients may help:

- **Zinc** – helps with wound healing, and is found in meat, fish, poultry, legumes and seeds.
- **Selenium** – found in brazil nuts; helps your body regulate oxidative stress in your body.
- **Vitamin C** – supports various cellular functions, and is found in citrus fruits and dark-green leafy vegetables.
- **Vitamin D** – associated with an increased production of certain immune cells, and is found naturally in fatty fish, egg yolk, fortified margarine and mushrooms kept in sunlight.

Snooze, don't lose

Another key player in supercharging your immune system is sleep, along with good old water. You should aim to do everything you can to reduce chronic stress and inflammation in the body and brain. Physical activity is an effective method to combat this, but dehydration and chronic lack of sleep also cause psychological stress, which can impact the immune system.

Move it

Exercise is also a natural immune booster, and what better time to move your body than as the weather is getting cooler. Whole body dynamic cardiorespiratory exercise (walking, jogging, running, cycling, swimming, aerobics, etc) can be associated with lowering inflammation in the body and mobilising immune cells.

Stay active, eat and drink well, and give your body and brain the rest they need to keep your immune system at peak performance.

For practical tips and advice on diet and nutrition, you can watch 'lunch and learn' sessions presented by Kelsey Weight, Dietician and Course Coordinator, School of Science, Psychology and Sport, Federation University:

- [Improving mental health through diet and nutrition \(44 minute video, 83MB\)](#)
- [Gorgeous guts – exploring the link between diet and gut health \(47 minute video, 86MB\)](#)



UniSports group fitness sessions

The UniSports team are excited to have resumed in-person group fitness classes at the Mt Helen Campus for 2021. All classes run for 30 minutes and are suitable for all fitness levels.

The timetable of classes includes:

- **Monday**, 12:00pm - Balance and Stretch*
- **Tuesday**, 7:00pm - Water Aerobics
- **Wednesday**, 12:00pm - HIIT*
- **Thursday**, 12:00pm - Pilates
- **Friday**, 12:00pm - Water Aerobics

** these sessions are available both on campus and online via Zoom.*

[Go to the UniSports website for more information or contact the team for Zoom access details.](#)



Quick Links

[Mental health and wellbeing - information guide](#)

[Health and wellbeing resources](#)

[COVID-19 support for staff](#)



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