

# Wellness Workshop



## Ice breakers

You have gathered a group of veterinary students to focus on the importance of Wellness - **yay!** Some of your participants may not be well acquainted with the subject matter, or may feel slightly nervous. Let's break the ice with exercises that promote bonding between participants.

- **Stretch!** We gather tension along the day, week, month etc. let's let that go! Use the basics you know from sports: you can gently roll your head from side to side; reach for the ground and then slowly rise back up, letting your head hang; you can stay on the ground, stretch your legs out and reach for each foot. We're sure you'll come up with plenty!

Encourage **large movements** that occupy a lot of space since this is proven to help people feel comfortable and confident. Plus, it offers a nice change from small lecture hall or library chairs.

## Guidelines

### Exercises

- To dive straight into the subject of wellness, **sit in a circle** with your participants and have everyone share a highlight and a "lowlight" of their week. You can make short, supportive comments after each participant speaks, encouraging others to do the same.

*Example:* "I met up with some friends and our dogs and we took a long walk by the lake - the weather was great and it was so refreshing!" "A dear friend of mine is in the hospital and I'm having trouble concentrating in class."

**Open a discussion** about stress in veterinary education. Let your participants talk and **exchange ideas**. What causes the most stress to them? What provides relief? How could we solve some issues at our schools?

Check out our **Wellness Toolkit** for more ice breakers, exercises, and other resources - choose your favorites to share with your participants!

### Some Issues to Consider

- **Competition between students**  
Why does this occur and how does it affect you? How could you combat it?
- **Counselors**  
Do you have accessible counseling at your university?
- **Is mental illness taken seriously?**  
Is it recognized as a disease in your country and at your university?
- **Lack of sleep**  
Stress the importance of sleep! It is near impossible to maintain balance, productivity, and wellness without it.

