



University
of Glasgow

Ensuring Learner Safety and Wellbeing When Teaching Sensitive Topics.

Dr Julie Langan Martin

Senior Clinical Lecturer in Psychiatry and Honorary Consultant Psychiatrist

1st October 2021





University
of Glasgow

The mental health and wellbeing of students is of upmost importance

Students at universities in the UK are experiencing more mental health problems such as anxiety and depression.

Some estimate that up to 1 in 4 students may experience a mental health problem (YouGov). Some universities have observed an increase in students dropping out and a number of student suicides have occurred.





University
of Glasgow

With the pivot to remote teaching and learning that has occurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring the mental health and wellbeing of students, is crucial.

We have experience of teaching a number of potentially distressing and/or triggering topics remotely on platforms such as Moodle and FutureLearn. Such sensitive topics include child abuse and neglect, torture, gender-based violence and suicide.

In recognition of the sensitive content that has been delivered online, we have developed a number of strategies to promote the well-being of our students and ensure as much as possible that the learning environment remains safe.



POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT

GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH MSc/PgDip/PgCert



Subjects ▾ Courses ▾ Using FutureLearn ▾



Sign in

Register

Online Courses / Psychology & Mental Health



Understanding Suicide and Suicide Prevention Strategies in a Global Context

7,888 students

★★★★☆ 4.6 (73 reviews)



Support

Online Courses / Psychology & Mental Health



Mindfulness: A Focus on Adolescents

★★★★☆ 4.8 (58 reviews)

Get a hands-on introduction to mindfulness and its benefits.

4,030 students

Join course for free

Online Courses / Psychology & Mental Health



Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in the Global Context

★★★★☆ 4.8 (61 reviews)

Learn how to identify, assess the risk for, prevent and treat PTSD in a range of contexts.

Join course for free

3,282 students

What is self-care?

‘Self-care’ refers to activities that can be done to ensure physical and mental fitness. Self-care is an important part of every individual’s overall health.

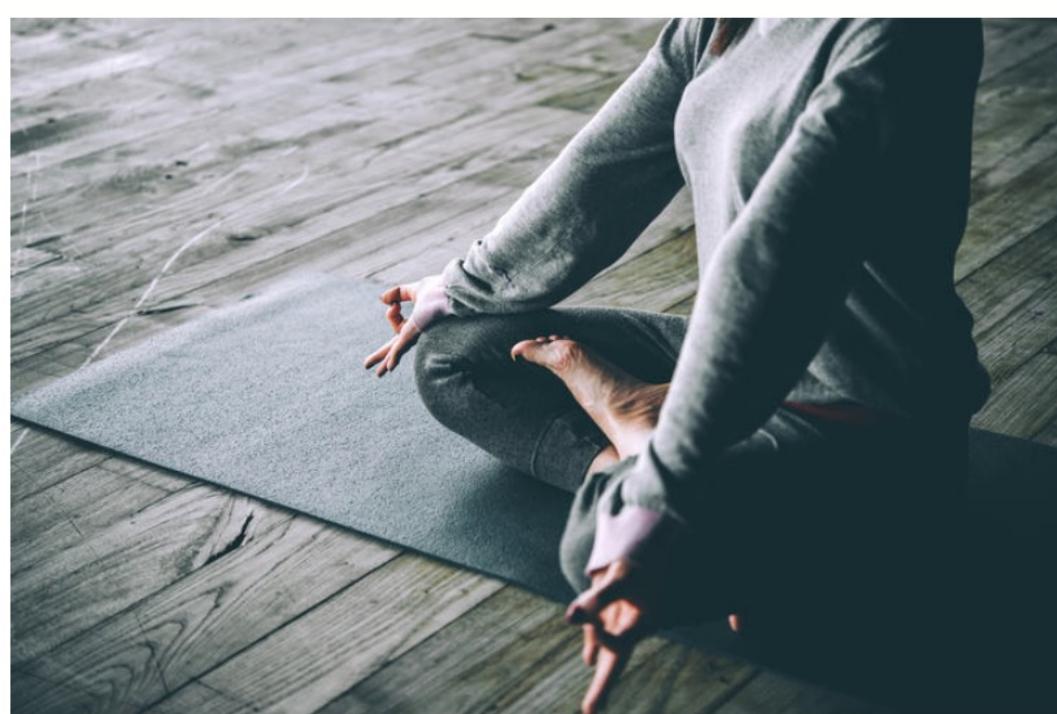
Self-care can be as simple as eating and sleeping well through to practical activities to help tackle emotional challenges.

You can find self-care tips through a number of websites.



This is our daily self-care
#Day529





© Shutterstock



Self-Care Activity

How to Relax: 8 Relaxation Tips for your Mental Health (5 minutes)

The U.K. mental health charity, [Mind](http://www.mind.org.uk) (www.mind.org.uk), offers 8 relaxation tips for your mental health: [How to relax | 8 relaxation tips for your mental health](#).

- [How to Relax: 8 Relaxation Tips for your Mental Health](#)

Self-Care Websites

Self-care tips are available through the following websites: [Blurt It Out](#) and [Take 5 to Save Lives](#). Review the self-care tips and think about how you would rate your current self-care and consider implementing one of the self-care tips into your routine. Applying mindfulness is another approach to self-care that some people find useful; [Pocket Mindfulness](#) provides exercises to demonstrate how mindfulness can be applied to your daily life.

Staying well when working or studying remotely.

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/anywhere/wellbeing/#tipsformaintainingyourhealth%26wellbeing>

• Mental Health Support:

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/anywhere/wellbeing/#tipsformaintainingyourhealth%26wellbeing,keysupportforhealth%26wellbeing>



University
of Glasgow

Student feedback

Absolutely first class course and would highly recommend. Thought-provoking, enlightening and I learnt a lot which I will incorporate into my work. It felt like a very professionally organised course, where there was an awareness of the sensitive and distressing nature of subject matter and consequently stressed the importance of self care while studying.

An excellent course."



‘This timely course was presented in a straightforward and easy to follow manner. Content wise it was wide ranging without being overwhelming. Lots of useful and interesting detail with absorbing recollections from those with first hand experience. Also, there were very useful references for those learners who themselves may be personally affected by issues raised on the course. Another excellent course.’





Summary

- With guidance and support, sensitive content can be safely delivered online or remotely.
 - We have found that embedding self care resources is helpful when delivering distressing and/or triggering topics remotely.
-
- With thanks to: Dr Laura Sharp, Dr Dimitar Karadhov, Ms Amanda Smith, Ms Laura McNaughton, Mr Matthew Weldon and Mr Julien Le Jeune D'Allegeershecque

