

Thank you for spending time with me during the webinar. As a companion to the information I shared, here are some places that we can do Individually, with our colleagues, and more broadly as a veterinary community.

For Ourselves:

- Considering your sleep, nutrition and exercise needs and the ways that you can even incrementally attend to them a little better.
- Practice mindfulness to reduce stress and increase access to nervous system regulation.
- Creating space to recognize how exhaustion shows up for you.
- Dedicate time to activities you enjoy outside of work to be silly, have fun or relax and rejuvenate.
- Learning to say no and set boundaries to protect your personal time and energy.
- Seek counselling or therapy when needed to address mental health concerns.

Pssst... If interested, here is an optional activity to start the process of self-reflection

- ❖ *What are the early signs that indicate I am starting to feel overwhelmed or stressed?*
- ❖ *Which activities or practices help me relax and recharge, and how can I incorporate them into my daily routine?*
- ❖ *Who are the people in my support network that I can turn to when I need help or someone to talk to?*
- ❖ *What boundaries do I need to set in my personal and professional life to maintain a healthy balance?*
- ❖ *How can I regularly assess and adjust my workload and responsibilities to prevent feeling overburdened?*
- ❖ *What are CLEAR indicators that I (or others) would notice in my thoughts, feelings, affect, or behaviours that will indicate when I am unwell?*

For Our Colleagues:

- Foster an environment where colleagues feel comfortable discussing their mental health and stressors.
- Offer a listening ear and support to colleagues who may be struggling.
- Participate in team-building activities to strengthen relationships and create a supportive work culture.
- Acknowledge and appreciate the hard work and contributions of your colleagues.

- Participate in mental health training and workshops to increase awareness and support. (Both [ASIST](#) and [Mental Health First Aid](#) are excellent places to start)

For the Profession:

- Advocate for mental health awareness and resources within the veterinary profession.
- Promote practices that support healthy work-life harmony.
- Support new colleagues and professionals and reduce feelings of isolation.
- Create and maintain formal and informal support networks within our work to share experiences and advice.

Here are some of the additional resources I talked about in the webinar and some databases where you can find additional support information:

- [Mental Health Awareness Resources | Canadian Veterinary Medical Association \(canadianveterinarians.net\)](#)
- [Professional Wellness Guidelines - WSAVA](#)
- [Wellbeing resources for veterinary professionals | American Veterinary Medical Association](#)
- [Wellness for Veterinary Professionals - AAHA](#)

Here is the link to the 3-minute body-scan in case you wanted to try it a second, third, or fourth time. Perhaps you want to play with your own resistance to mindfulness-based stress techniques and cultivate some curiosity about whether you notice any changes each time you try?

<https://soundcloud.com/mindfulmagazine/3-minute-body-scan-meditation> (MARC, 2019)

If there was **ONE thing** I wish we could all do to improve our health and wellbeing, it would be to **challenge ourselves to focus on our own needs for 5% of our day**. Every investment we make in ourselves is an attempt at supporting our own health and well-being.

Warmly,

Erin



Erin Wasson (MSW, RSW)
 Veterinary Social Work
 University of Saskatchewan
 Western College of Veterinary Medicine
 Saskatoon, SK
Vet.sociawork@usask.ca