



Your Wellness Is Our Business



# The Start of Something New

Because of COVID, we have all experienced the following as a collective for the past 3 years: a disrupted sense of normalcy and daily life pattern, being under a constant state of health anxiety, and feeling isolated at home under quarantine with exercising and social life curbed. Alas! As the governmental social distancing mandate finally lifted, let us all take this opportunity to establish new habits and goals in order to make 2023 a year free of illness!



## Physiological Aspect

Rest, exercise, and diet are the 3 most fundamental bodily needs we must take good care of: Scheduling several 5-minute breaks across your day not only can recharge your brain and energy, but it also improves your work efficiency. You may even take a little stroll away from your seat to appreciate the scenery outside the window to relax your sore eyes; Secondly, you might also take the stairs instead of the lift and do some stretching at the office. The former is proven scientifically to improve one's cardiorespiratory function while the latter helps alleviate your muscle and back pain; Lastly, you might want to reward yourself once in a while by treating yourself to your favourite food regardless of nutritional value - mind you, for the rest of the time, you should always peruse the nutrition labels to pick the healthiest food for your body!



## Psychological Aspect

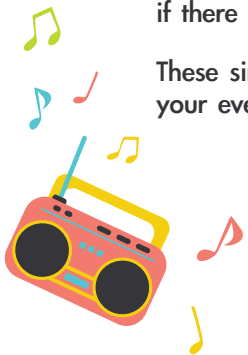
What you think about and how you feel during each second of the day amalgamate to determine our psychological state. This is also why thinking positively especially in the face of challenges and setbacks is so important for your mental wellbeing. Try to take the following advice to spend 5 minutes per day silently accounting 3 things you did well and soon you may feel the difference in terms of your enhanced self-confidence! Examples could be how you finished a task despite its difficulty, or when you opinionated bravely, or patiently catered to clients' demands. Besides, you may also consider utilising wellness books or apps for "chicken soup for the soul" to help us soldier through difficult times. However, you must remember not to overuse your phone before bedtime. In lieu of playing with your mobile gadget, the 5 minutes before your sleep could be spent on meditation or breathing exercises to calm our nerves - that's key to falling asleep swiftly and a good night's sleep.



## Social Aspect

Finally, don't forget to keep in touch and share your love with people you care about! It can be in all sorts of formats, such as doing chores for your family or buying snacks for your colleagues. Even if there are geographical constraints, you could always mail them little gifts.

These simple suggestions about your biopsychosocial functioning are easy to follow and practise in your everyday life, do try them out and we wish you a fruitful year of 2023!





## Love yourself

# It all begins with self-appreciation and listening to thyself

As the clock strikes midnight on New Year's Eve, people often review their past 12 months while setting up resolutions and goals for personal development for the year ahead. Yet, we might easily run into the pitfall of focusing only on what we failed to achieve and overlook our efforts, merits, and accomplishments. Surely you have worked hard enough in 2022, don't you deserve some credit and perhaps even a token of thanks from yourself?

As the saying goes: change is the only constant. Plans may not always pan out the way we imagine and are sometimes met with contingencies and unexpected circumstances, which might also be the reason why we were not able to achieve some of the goals we had last year. Life is not about marching forward all the time. If you ever feel trapped in a predicament or "bottleneck", do try slowing down for a bit to grant yourself time for taking care of the "here and now": this includes your present emotional state, feeling, and needs. From there, you may gain insight into how you could steadily advance towards your goal.

In FDC, we believe that true power lies upon being true to ourselves, openly and non-judgmentally listening to our raw thoughts and authentic feelings. Such self-honesty coupled with self-appreciation in effect breeds the resilience which equips us with the armour to face whatever we might encounter in life.



## Liven Up Your Soul

According to legends, in a land far away there once was a mythical village where Elves resided. Anyone who prayed sincerely enough shall be greeted and graced with blessings by these mystical creatures. One day, a little girl was thrilled to find that 3 Elves had shown up at her doorstep. Enthralled, she invited the visitors into her house. However, one of the Elves replied, "You are only allowed to let one of us in - my name is Health; to my right is Success and to my left, Wealth".

The exhilarated girl went in and told her parents about the surprise guests. Mum quickly decided, "let's show Wealth in for sure! We finally don't have to worry about finance when we become rich!" Dad nonetheless had a different view, "I think we should extend the invitation to Success instead. With success comes power and respect for our family."

"Isn't Health most important of all?" asked the daughter. "With healthy bodies, we can travel wherever we want and enjoy life to its fullest!" Her parents gladly responded, "you are definitely right, my love. Let's invite Health in."

Back at the entrance of the house, the girl politely asked, "may I please have the honour to invite Health in?" As Health-the-Elf entered the cottage, the girl was bewildered to find the other two Elves also following. The two explained, "Had you only invited one of us in, our blessing spell would have worn off pretty quickly since nothing could last without Health. Here's a little secret only for you: we follow wherever Health goes."

In life, we often prioritise wealth or success. What's ignored by most is that health is the foundation of happiness. Without health, how could man enjoy anything even if he is given tremendous fortune?



Three years on since the pandemic, “WFH” (Working From Home) has become the new normality. Whilst it is true that this new mode of working saves us considerable transportation time, it also blurs the boundary between work and personal life at the same time, thereby compromising our sense of work-life balance.

Let’s take client Ms. Wong as an example. She displays the personality traits of perfectionism, agreeableness, and altruism. As a result, she demands 120% effort from herself even in the most trivial matters; she also never says no to co-workers’ demands for help, which aggravates her workload. To make things worse, WFH funnelled her office tasks into her home, somehow invading her personal life. Now, she has expressed that she can no longer pull herself away from work as she feels constantly drowned in the sea assignments from her job. She feels the perpetual need to keep on pushing herself to finish just a little more before she eventually gives herself rest.

This very pattern of thinking ultimately tilted her work-life balance and caused her physical health to collapse. According to her physician, her somatic symptoms had stemmed from work stress, and she had been advised to take months-long sick leave to recuperate. She took this window to seek counselling with our EAP service.

During the psychotherapy, our counsellor helped Ms. Wong understand that her stress did not arise externally from work but rather internally from her own unrelenting standards for herself. What came with her agreeable and altruistic personality was a lack of assertiveness to reject extra work outside of her scope of responsibility. It was no wonder that she felt exponentially more stressful than others when she was doing twice or thrice the work! In later sessions, our counsellor tried to facilitate an internal dialogue to help Ms. Wong listen to the source of these voices of self-demands. Soon, she realised that these might have come from her grandma who was very harsh to Ms. Wong during her childhood. Her grandma had always entailed achievement and success in Ms. Wong and Ms. Wong also wanted to impress her in return. The standards imposed on her by grandma had been gradually internalised by Ms. Wong and incorporated into her “Superego” in the form of self-criticism over time even though grandma had long passed away.

In the end, this exercise has helped Ms. Wong understand herself more and more importantly, to identify these voices of self-criticism as mere opinions instead of “objective facts”. She is now more able to accept imperfections in her job performance and willing to pragmatically trade-off time cost with overall benefit. As she no longer forces herself to devote 120% to virtually everything, the delicate balance between work and life has once again been found.





## News Feed

The world has been going through unprecedented change over the recent few years. The future is imbued with a sense of uncertainty originating from stress and anxieties towards health, safety, global economy, and personal finance - these all culminate as an immense toll on our emotional health. Therefore, now more than ever, it is vital that HR personnel are imparted with the knowledge and sensibility to responsively spot out and care for colleagues who are troubled by mental health issues, provide them with appropriate resources and tending. Not only does it benefit individual workers but the organisation as a whole as it promotes positivity and wellness in the workplace while stimulating productivity. Having identified such need in the business, FDC has held the “Mental First-aid Certification Course” on 21 and 28 October, 2022. Mental First-aid was first conceived in Australia, whose psychologists reckoned that when accidents unfortunately happen, it would be nice if any laymen had at least some basic understanding about psychological health. Apt support and help could then be delivered in a timely manner to prevent tragedies from happening. The idea was to guarantee personal safety and take care of the issue on the spot before it brews into anything worse.

Participants were taught the “ALGEE” action plan in the 2-day course, an acronym which stood for “Approach/Assess, Listen (non-judgmentally), Give (resources and support), Encourage Appropriate Professional Help, and Encourage Other Supports”. They also learnt about the most prevalent psychological illnesses such as Mood Disorders, Anxiety Disorders, Substance Abuse, other major Psychotic diseases, and the corresponding ways to offer suitable help. Here are some highlights of the feedbacks we have received:

More programmes about mental health or issues are most welcomed

Excellent in terms of content and there are ample examples to facilitate our understanding

I now have a deeper understanding about mental first-aid and I'm confident that I can be helpful to my family and people around me if such need arises

Terrific because there were theories + examples + video, which were illustrative

Very interesting and helpful

In the upcoming year, more programmes are to follow, which are the “Motivational Interviewing Certification Course” and “Empowering Neurodiversity in the Workplace” seminar. Please stay tuned at our most up-to-date promotional materials for more details if you are interested.

If you have any enquiries about the course,  
please contact Ms Wong at 2731 6239 or by email at [marketing@fourdimensions.org](mailto:marketing@fourdimensions.org)



## Company Information

Four Dimensions Consulting Limited (FDC) is a private limited company set up by Hong Kong Christian Service (HKCS) in 2005. Employee Development Service (EDS) of HKCS is the first EAP provider in Hong Kong since 1991. We offer total solutions to assist employees with work/life issues, develop strengths/potentials, increase work engagement and positivity at work, which ultimately enhance organizational excellence and sustainability.

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