

# ***COPING WITH COVID-19:***

## ***Group Program Manual***

### ***STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT HEALTH & WELL-BEING***



School of  
**Rehabilitation**  
Science  
REACHING FURTHER



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*Handouts and worksheets are included in the Appendix at the end of the manual.*

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## INTRODUCTION

This program manual was developed by two second year occupational therapy students completing a role-emerging Level 3B fieldwork placement in a community setting during the summer of 2020. *Coping with COVID-19* was run as a 5-week pilot program in a large social housing residence for seniors in downtown Hamilton, Ontario. This population faces a number of occupational issues that have been exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic: social isolation, occupational deprivation, food insecurity, mobility issues, poverty, limited access to reliable information regarding the pandemic, and more.

For many of us, the coronavirus pandemic has drastically reduced opportunities for occupational engagement as we spend more time at home to protect ourselves and our communities (Larivière, 2020). This can lead to negative impacts on health and wellbeing, which may be intensified for older adults with limited access to resources and social supports. The group sessions outlined in this manual aim to address some of the challenges associated with the coronavirus pandemic, offer strategies for adapting to these challenges, and provide a safe and supportive space where participants can connect and share their experiences of occupational disruption. As Larivière (2020) points out, the impacts of the pandemic are not wholly negative. Although our activities have been greatly limited, the pandemic may also bring “an opportunity to rediscover that daily life has a richness that is often overlooked or minimized in ‘normal’ times” (Larivière, 2020, p. 1). In *Coping with COVID-19*, participants were encouraged to reflect on activities or activity patterns that enhance health and wellbeing, and others that are less supportive.

The Do Live Well health promotion framework formed the theoretical basis for our program. Because our group was not specific to any one diagnosis, disability, or occupational issue, Do Live Well was broad enough to be relevant to all group members (Moll et al., 2015). The key message of DLW, that “what you do everyday matters,” was useful in framing the role and scope of occupational therapy to group members who were not familiar with the profession. Rather than imposing a predetermined notion of healthy “balance” or “routine,” the framework affirms that there is no one correct or healthy way of spending your time. DLW offers the flexibility to address a variety of challenges relating to the disruptions and transitions experienced during and after the pandemic, while allowing participants to personalize the group experience to meet their own needs. Lastly, the consideration of “personal and social factors” in the framework was important for our population, as it allowed us to acknowledge that there are many health-influencing factors outside of the control of our participants, many of whom are experiencing poverty and other forms of socioeconomic inequality.

The session plans included in this manual have been revised from the original pilot based on our experiences facilitating the sessions as well as feedback from group participants. While the program was developed specifically to address issues related to the coronavirus pandemic, it could easily be adapted to use in a variety of contexts. The activities and worksheets are useful in reflecting on changes to everyday life during any time of occupational disruption or transition, such as retirement, moving into a new home, the onset of illness or disability, and so on. We hope that this manual can inspire future programming, whether related to the pandemic or otherwise.

## GROUP PROTOCOL

**Title:** Coping with Covid-19 – Strategies to Support Health & Wellbeing

**Purpose:** *Coping with COVID-19* is a 6-week group program designed to support older adults adapting to occupational disruption related to the coronavirus pandemic. Strategies will emphasize the use of meaningful activity to promote health and wellbeing when faced with disruptions to everyday life.

**Theoretical Framework:** Do-Live-Well Framework

Do-Live-Well (DLW) is a Canadian health promotion framework created by Occupational Therapists (OTs). The key message of the framework is “what you do everyday matters” (Moll et al., 2015, p. 11). The framework has four key components: (1) dimensions of experience; (2) activity patterns; (3) health and wellness outcomes; and (4) personal and social forces. The first two components refer to *what you do* and *how you do it*, respectively. DLW posits that participating in activities that provide a range of experiences in a way that is personally meaningful contributes to positive outcomes in health and wellbeing. Intersecting personal and social forces, including age, gender, race, dis(ability) and socioeconomic status, in addition to physical, social, cultural and institutional environment impact opportunities and abilities to participate in a range of meaningful activities. These factors in turn influence health and wellness outcomes.

DLW is rooted in occupational therapy and occupational science literature and informed by evidence demonstrating the relationship between activity, health and wellbeing (Moll et al., 2015). By collaborating with interdisciplinary health care professionals, health promotion experts, and members of the community, DLW was developed to be used across disciplines and populations. Both clinicians and researchers have identified the relevance and resonance of the DLW framework among older adults (J. Chahal & S. Moll, personal communication, July 23, 2020).

Although the DLW framework does not give specific recommendations for guiding practice, Moll and colleagues (2015) state “the framework could be used to develop tools that prompt reflection on patterns of time use and increase understanding of the opportunities and challenges for participation,” particularly during times of occupational transition or disruption. This program manual uses concepts from DLW to facilitate reflection on everyday activities and routines. Additionally, each session introduces a strategy to support health and wellbeing through integrating health promoting activities (e.g. relaxation, physical activity, social connection), adjusting activity patterns (e.g. creating new habits or routines, increasing sense of occupational balance) or adapting the environment (e.g. self-assessment of home safety).

**Group Objectives:**

1. Participants will appreciate the link between everyday activities, health, and wellbeing as described in the Do-Live-Well model.
2. Participants will reflect on changes in everyday life (activities and routines) experienced during the pandemic and identify impacts on health and wellbeing, whether positive and/or negative.
3. Participants will be exposed to several different strategies to cope with occupational disruption (e.g. developing a morning routine).
4. Participants will identify and implement at least one strategy learned in the group.

**Method:**

- The group is led by two facilitators (Student Occupational Therapists or other health care professionals).
- Group sessions are led in a facilitative style (e.g. offering frequent opportunity for input from participants on group content and process).
- Session designs are informed by Kolb's (1984) theory of experiential learning. Kolb's adult learning cycle consists of four stages: experience, reflection, generalization, and application (McNamara & Straathof, 2017). Coping with COVID-19 session outlines roughly follow the template designed by McNamara and Straathof (2017) in their program manual *Coping Strategies to Promote Occupational Engagement and Recovery*.
- Concepts from DLW Framework will be introduced using visual and verbal explanations. Abstract concepts will be clarified using plain languages and examples to meet participant abilities.
- Activities include brief lectures to explain new concepts or share information (maximum five minutes), rich group discussions, independent or paired reflective activities, relaxation and strength training exercises, worksheets, and goal setting.
- In addition to learning new strategies, the group also provides social support and connection. Session outlines are flexible, and emphasis should be placed on promoting positive interactions between participants over completing session activities. Worksheets can be completed independently by participants at home if not finished during sessions.
- Handouts and worksheets are provided to attendees at each session, in addition to any other required materials (e.g. strength training exercise guide, pencil crayons).
- All participants receive a telephone call reminder approximately two hours before the group session each week.

**Group Membership & Size:**

- 4-8 participants
- Inclusion:
  - Community dwelling older adults (60+)
- Exclusion:
  - Severe mental illness and/or cognitive impairment if resulting in significant disruptive behaviours or inability to participate in group activities.
- Support persons welcome to accompany participants

**Outcome Criteria (See Appendix B for outcome measures):**

- Pre-post rating scale regarding satisfaction with everyday life will be completed to track progress
- Anonymous feedback survey during the final session

**Materials:**

- Chart paper and easel or whiteboard
- Markers
- Handouts and worksheets
- Pens and pencil crayons
- Tables and chairs
- Access to projector or TV monitor (optional)

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR USING THIS MANUAL

### Running Groups with Older Adults:

- Set group norms – to create a safe, open environment
- Be aware of participant abilities to assist in tailoring sessions as needed
  - Differences in cognitive, social, literacy capabilities
  - Socio-economic status: be aware of the cost of suggested activities, try to provide materials as needed
- Be cognizant of hearing and vision impairments
  - Can opt for more written handouts, chart paper as appropriate
  - Using a pocket talker, having those with difficulty hearing seated closer to the middle of the group or seated closely to the speaker
- Focus on both group content and process
  - Observing group dynamics helps to facilitate participation from all group members, appropriate seating, conflict management
- Less is more
  - Aim for rich group discussion where possible, content is important but can also be given in the form of handouts if time is limited
  - Take advantage of the social connections that the group sessions provide
- Provide community resources for participants who need additional support
  - Some participants may need additional support to make adaptations to their lifestyle and/or environment. Provide information regarding community resources (e.g. how to access community OT; falls prevention classes, etc.) to enable participants to follow-up on what they have learned in the program

### Using the Do-Live-Well Framework:

- Modify language as needed to meet the abilities of the audience
- Do not overwhelm individuals with introducing the entire framework at once, build on concepts gradually to illustrate connections
- To support accessibility and knowledge translation, design sessions and activities considering physical & mental health, literacy, communicative barriers, hearing and vision impairments
- Consider applications beyond “Coping with COVID-19” as DLW is applicable in addressing a variety of occupational disruptions and transitions
- DLW has developed a number of resources which are accessible on their website at no cost: <http://dolivewell.ca/tools-resources>



### Overview of Worksheets & Handouts Recommended for Each Session:

Session	Topic	Resources
1	What You Do Everyday Matters	<p>What You Do Everyday Matters! Worksheet</p> <p>Relaxation Techniques:  <a href="https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/relaxation-techniques.pdf">https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/relaxation-techniques.pdf</a></p> <p>Relaxation Scale</p>
2	Reflecting on Balance in Everyday Life	<p>Dimensions of Experience Worksheet</p> <p>Balance Wheel Worksheet</p>
3	Movement to Support Health & Wellbeing	<p>Movement to Improve Health &amp; Wellbeing Worksheet</p> <p>Chair Based Strength Exercises: <a href="http://allactive.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Chair-based-strength-exercises-no-equipment-AllActive-Information-Guide.pdf">http://allactive.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Chair-based-strength-exercises-no-equipment-AllActive-Information-Guide.pdf</a></p> <p>Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines For Older Adults—65 Years &amp; Older:  <a href="https://www.activeagingcanada.ca/assets/pdf/healthy-living/posters/Posters-CPAG/poster-1_CSEP-FINAL-ENG.pdf">https://www.activeagingcanada.ca/assets/pdf/healthy-living/posters/Posters-CPAG/poster-1_CSEP-FINAL-ENG.pdf</a></p>
4	Reflecting on My Home Environment	Reflecting on My Home Environment Worksheet
5	Social Support & Connection	<p>Social support (first page only):  <a href="https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/social-support.pdf">https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/social-support.pdf</a></p> <p>Circle of Support Worksheet</p>
6	Maintaining Positive Change	<p>Building New Habits:  <a href="https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/building-new-habits.pdf">https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/building-new-habits.pdf</a></p> <p>Habit Plan: <a href="https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/habit-plan.pdf">https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/habit-plan.pdf</a></p> <p>List of local resources (See Appendix C for example)</p>

Copies of handouts and worksheets can be found in Appendix A.  
 Additional resources can be accessed through provided links.

## Session 1: What You Do Everyday Matters!

**Learning Point:** Everyday activities and routines impact health and wellbeing.

**Learning Objective:** Given guided relaxation exercise, participants will identify impact of activity on how they feel by rating level of relaxation before and after activity on 5-point Likert scale.

**Materials:** Chart Paper/Whiteboard & Markers, Pre-Program Survey, Handouts; [Progressive Muscle Relaxation Script](#) OR TV Monitor/Projector (What You Do Everyday Matters! Relaxation Scale, [Relaxation Techniques](#)), Pens

Time	Learning Stage	Actions
15 minutes	<i>Introduction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Orient participants to the room, where to sit</li><li>• Ask them to fill out survey before group gets started</li><li>• Facilitators introduce themselves, their role (e.g. Student OT), and overall purpose of group</li><li>• Invite group to introduce themselves &amp; share why they came to group</li><li>• Establish group norms collectively</li><li>• Say: Occupational therapists support people with their everyday activities. The purpose of this session is to understand the connection between everyday activities and how we feel. We will be talking about changes we're experiencing in our everyday lives related to the coronavirus pandemic and how we are coping with them. Many people have experienced lots of changes to their everyday routine. Today we will be talking about those changes and how they impact our health and well-being.</li><li>• Introduce Do-Live-Well. Say: Throughout this program, we will be referring to something called "Do-Live-Well". Do Live Well is a framework created by Canadian occupational therapists to help us understand how our everyday activities impact health and wellbeing (Moll et al., 2015)</li></ul>
10 minutes	<i>Warm-Up</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Invite group members to share how their routines have changed during coronavirus pandemic (Larivière, 2020)</li></ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What has been going well for you? What has been more challenging?</li> <li>○ What activities have you started/continued/stopped?</li> <li>○ What do you miss doing from before?</li> <li>○ What have you been able to do that you didn't have time for before?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Use chart paper to note participants response</li> </ul>
10 minutes	<i>Experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce Progressive Muscle Relaxation. Say: Now we will do an exercise to demonstrate the link between what you do and how you feel. Many Canadians are experiencing increased levels of stress and anxiety related to COVID-19. We are going to show you a relaxation exercise that can help to manage these feelings. It is called Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR). Completing relaxation exercises like PMR have many benefits to your health and wellbeing, including decreased stress, anxiety, pain and fatigue. (Hassanpour-Dehkordi &amp; Jalali, 2016; McCallie, Blum &amp; Hood, 2006).</li> <li>• Before starting, ask participants to rate their current level of relaxation on the scale provided (orient group members to Likert scale).</li> <li>• Facilitator to read <a href="#">progressive muscle relaxation script</a>; OR</li> <li>• Play <a href="#">PMR video</a> from YouTube</li> <li>• Ask participants to rate their level or relaxation after PMR</li> </ul>
5 minutes	<i>Reflection</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How did that activity make you feel?</li> <li>○ Did you notice a change in your level of relaxation?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
5 minutes	<i>Generalization</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What types of activities in your everyday life impact how feel?</li> <li>○ Do you notice that certain activities make you feel good (physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually) and others do not?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
10 minutes	<i>Application</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orient to <b>What You do Everyday Matters!</b> worksheet and have group members complete first line based on relaxation exercise.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask participants to pay attention to their everyday activities over the next week. Write down a few activities they do (or want to do) on the worksheet. Encourage them to identify how the activity impacts health and wellbeing, or how they feel (physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually) when engaging in that activity.</li> <li>• Share Relaxation Techniques Handout</li> </ul>
5 minutes	Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share one activity you will be doing over the next week</li> </ul>

### References

Hassanpour-Dehkordi, A., & Jalali, A. (2016). Effect of progressive muscle relaxation on the fatigue and quality of life among Iranian aging persons. *Acta Medica Iranica*, 430-436.

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Statistics Canada. (2020). "Canadians' mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic." *The Daily*. May 27. Statistics Canada catalogue no. 11-001-X. p. 1-5. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/200527/dq200527b-eng.pdf> (accessed August 28, 2020).

## Session 2: Reflecting on Balance in Everyday Life

**Learning Point:** Having a balanced range of experiences in everyday life has positive impacts on health and wellbeing (Moll et al., 2015).

**Learning Objective:** Participants will reflect on balance in their current activity patterns and will identify one activity that could be modified to increase perceived sense of balance, as evidenced by completing the Balance Wheel Worksheet.

**Materials:** Chart Paper/Whiteboard & Markers, Handouts (Dimensions of Experience, Balance Wheel), Pencil crayons, Pens

Time	Learning Stage	Actions
10 minutes	<i>Intro</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Orient participants to the room, where to sit</li><li>• Review group norms.</li><li>• Invite participants to share what they noticed over the previous week about the connection between activities, health and wellbeing.</li><li>• Introduce session theme: “At our first session, we discussed the link between activities, health and wellbeing. This week, we are going to look more closely at our daily routines.”</li></ul>
5 minutes	<i>Warm-Up</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask: What does “balance” mean to you in the context of your everyday life?</li></ul>
20 minutes	<i>Experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Say: Research has shown that participating in a range of different meaningful activities is important for health and wellbeing (Moll et al., 2015). The Do-Live-Well framework groups these activities into eight different “dimensions of experience.</li><li>• Orient participants to <b>Dimensions of Experience</b> worksheet.</li><li>• Introduce 3-4 dimensions of experience on flipchart/whiteboard and have the group generate example of activities they do/have done/want to do for each dimension.</li><li>• Say: Now that we have talked about different experiences and activities, we would like to introduce the concept of balance. Occupational balance refers to when you have the right amount and level of variation between the things you do. A balanced lifestyle will look</li></ul>

		<p>different for everyone, and that's ok! (Moll et al., 2015; Wagman, Hakansson, &amp; Bjorklund, 2012)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refer clients to <b>Balance Wheel Activity</b> worksheet and pencil crayons.</li> <li>• Say: The purpose of this activity is to reflect on balance in our everyday lives. The worksheet will help us to identify which dimensions are satisfying and which ones could use some attention.</li> <li>• Give 10 minutes to fill in worksheet.</li> </ul>
5 minutes	<i>Reflection</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pair and Share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Say: Discuss your balance wheel with your neighbor.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
5 minutes	<i>Generalization</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pair and Share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Say: Now, discuss with your partner how you could increase balance. You might identify one Dimension where you are least satisfied.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
10 minutes	<i>Application</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Say: Take a few minutes to think about one activity related to the dimension you identified. What could you change to increase satisfaction in that dimension (e.g. do more, do less, do differently)? Write down what you come up with. For example, if you were unsatisfied in <i>Connecting with Others</i>, you might think about increasing phone calls to friends or family.</li> <li>• Give time for participants to write.</li> </ul>
5 minutes	<i>Summary</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go around the room and share the activity change we would like to make over the next week.</li> </ul>

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- Moll, S. E., Gewurtz, R. E., Krupa, T. M., Law, M. C., Lariviere, N., & Levasseur, M. (2015). "Do-Live-Well": A Canadian framework for promoting occupation, health, and well-being: «Vivez-Bien-Votre Vie»: un cadre de référence canadien pour promouvoir l'occupation, la santé et le bien-être. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 82(1), 9-23.
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### Session 3: Movement to Support Health & Well-being

**Learning Point:** Regular movement and physical activity contributes to positive outcomes in health and well-being.

**Learning Objective:** Having participated in group movement activity, participants will identify how likely they are to incorporate movement/exercise/physical activity into everyday life as evidenced by completion of 5-point Likert scale.

**Materials:** Chart Paper/Whiteboard & Markers, TV monitor/projector (optional), Handouts (Movement to Improve Health & Wellbeing, [Chair Based Strength Exercises](#), [Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines](#))

Time	Learning Stage	Actions
10 minutes	<i>Intro</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Orient participants to the room, where to sit, hand sanitizer, masks</li><li>• Review group norms.</li><li>• Say: Last week we looked more closely at our daily routines to understand how we can optimize our health and wellbeing through living a balanced lifestyle.</li><li>• Invite participants to introduce themselves and share the change you made over the week</li><li>• Introduce session theme: The theme of this week is movement to support health and wellbeing. We will be talking about some of the benefits of movement (e.g. exercise, physical activity) and then doing some strength training exercises together.</li></ul>
5 minutes	<i>Warm-Up</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussion questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ What types of movement and/or physical activity do you currently do?</li><li>○ What beliefs do you have about movement and/or exercise?</li><li>○ What makes exercising difficult?</li></ul></li></ul>
20 minutes	<i>Experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discuss benefits of physical activity (Taylor, 2014; Tremblay et al., 2011; Sherrington et al., 2020; Heinzl et al., 2015), referencing <b>Movement handout</b>:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Improved ability to complete everyday activities</li><li>○ Improved mood</li><li>○ Reduced risk of falls</li><li>○ Improved cognitive function, reduced risk of developing dementia</li></ul></li></ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Improved sleep quality</li> <li>○ Improved bone density</li> <li>○ Reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke, some types of cancer, diabetes</li> <li>• Review safety precautions (Panton &amp; Loney, n.d.)</li> <li>• <b>Warm-up Activity:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Walk for 5 minutes at a moderate pace; OR</li> <li>○ 5 minutes of light seated movements (e.g. arm circles; seated marching) OR;</li> <li>○ Play a <a href="#">warm-up video</a> from YouTube</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Seated Strength-Training exercises (15-20 mins):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Demonstrate 4-8 exercises from Chair Based Strength Exercises handout, group members follow along; OR</li> <li>○ Play an <a href="#">exercise video</a> from YouTube</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
5 minutes	<i>Reflection</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How did the exercises feel?</li> <li>○ What did you like and what didn't you like?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
5 minutes	<i>Generalization</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show the group a list of the DLW Dimensions of Experience (written on whiteboard or chart paper)</li> <li>• Discussion question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Which dimensions relate to movement/exercise/physical activity? (Can be more than one)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
10 minutes	<i>Application</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orient participants to <b>Movement handout</b></li> <li>• Give time to fill in questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How likely to incorporate physical activity into day to day life? (1-5 Likert scale)</li> <li>○ Support/barriers to incorporating activity</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
5 minutes	<i>Summary</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go around the room and share how we plan to incorporate movement into our routine this week</li> </ul>

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### Session 4: Reflecting on My Home Environment

**Learning Point:** Our environment impacts our ability to engage in meaningful activities, and in turn, our health and wellbeing (Powell et al., 2017).

**Learning Objective:** Participants will reflect on home environment (e.g. apartment) and identify one thing that could be modified to increase home safety and/or ability to engage in meaningful activities.

**Materials:** Chart Paper/Whiteboard & Markers, TV monitor/projector (optional), handouts (Reflecting on My Home Environment), pens

Time	Learning Stage	Actions
10 minutes	<i>Introduction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Orient participants to the room, where to sit, hand sanitizer, masks</li><li>• Review group norms.</li><li>• Invite participants to introduce themselves and share one type of movement (physical activity) they did over the past week.</li><li>• Introduce session topic: During our first 3 sessions, we've mostly focused on reflecting on ourselves – our routines, habits, and goals. Today, we are going to shift our attention outwards to look at our environment.</li></ul>
5 minutes	<i>Warm-Up</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussion questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Ask: What does the word 'environment' mean to you?</li></ul></li></ul>
20 minutes	<i>Experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Say: Occupational therapists often suggest changes clients can make to their environment to support them to do the activities they want to do or need to do. Your environment is everything around you – your apartment, the building, the community, and the city. In the Do-Live - Well model, factors in our environment are referred to as <i>social forces</i>.</li><li>• Prompt discussion about the ways in which our environment can function as a facilitator and a barrier to engaging in meaningful activities (Lawton, 1982).<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ How does your environment support you or prevent you from doing the things you want to do?</li></ul></li></ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Example: Elevators in the building: help facilitate attending the group for those who cannot use stairs; also function as a barrier to getting to the group on time when you must wait a long time to get on the elevator.</li> <li>• Note facilitators/barriers on chart paper.</li> <li>• Say: For the rest of the session, we are going to focus on our home environment. Many things in our home environment support our ability to do the things we want to do. However, some things in our home might also cause safety risks, which can reduce our ability to participate in meaningful activities. For example, some things in our home may increase our risk of trips or falls. Now, we are going to do an activity to look at things in the home that might cause you to trip or fall.</li> <li>• Activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Project <a href="#">images of rooms with trip hazards</a> onto monitor; OR</li> <li>○ Hand out printed images of rooms.</li> <li>○ Ask group members to identify potential hazards in images</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
5 minutes	<i>Reflection</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Did you learn anything new from that activity?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
5 minutes	<i>Generalization</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Can you identify anything in your own home that might cause you to trip or fall?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
10 minutes	<i>Application</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orient participants to <b>Reflecting on My Home Environment</b> worksheet.</li> <li>• Give time to complete</li> </ul>
5 minutes	<i>Summary</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share one change you would like to make to your home environment.</li> </ul>

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## Session 5: Social Connectedness

**Learning Point:** The types of social support, importance of social connectedness and its impact on well-being. Ways to connect with others will also be explored (in person, phone, virtually).

**Learning Objective:** Participants will identify one way they will connect with others over the following week while following pandemic precautions as evidenced by completion of worksheet.

**Materials:** Chart Paper/Whiteboard & Markers, Handouts ([Social Support](#), How to Connect with Others)

Time	Learning Stage	Actions
10 minutes	<i>Intro</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Orient participants to the room, where to sit, hand sanitizer, masks</li><li>• Review group norms.</li><li>• Invite participants to share if there has been any follow-up on changes regarding home safety they have made around the apartment and any facilitators and any barriers they experienced planning or making this change.</li><li>• Introduce session topic: Today, we will be spending some time talking about social support and connection.</li></ul>
5 minutes	<i>Warm-up</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussion Question:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ How has your social life changed during the pandemic?</li></ul></li></ul>
10 minutes	<i>Experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Say: <i>Connecting with others</i> is one of the dimensions of experience described in the DLW model. When we connect with others, we both receive and provide social support. Social support, it includes the help provided by family, friends, groups or communities that fulfill different needs."</li><li>• Work through handout on <b>Social Support</b> (use first page only):<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Explain the benefits of social support (Holt-Lundstad, Smith, &amp; Layton, 2010; Newman &amp; Zainal, 2020)</li><li>◦ Facilitator can name and define the types of social support and ask participants to provide examples - e.g. "Tangible support includes offering help to practical problems, such as</li></ul></li></ul>

		<p>helping someone with household chores such as cleaning. Can anyone think of other examples?"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Review ways to build social support, again asking for participant input prior to sharing the information on the handout to elicit group discussion</li> </ul>
5 minutes	<i>Reflection</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pair &amp; Share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Discuss with your neighbour the types of support you have in your life</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
10 minutes	<i>Generalization</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orient to “<b>Circle of Support</b>” worksheet, explaining different levels</li> <li>• Give time to complete worksheet</li> </ul>
10 minutes	<i>Application</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go through <b>How to Connect with Others</b> Handout</li> <li>• Group members invited to set intention of trying 1 new way to connect with someone over next week (ask to write down): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Introduce self to neighbour</li> <li>○ Call a friend</li> <li>○ Call a support line</li> <li>○ Go online</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
10 minutes	<i>Summary</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go around the group and discuss potential plans for the week (e.g. “I will call my friend” “I will introduce myself to my neighbour”)</li> </ul>

### References:

Holt-Lunstad, J., Smith, T. B., & Layton, J. B. (2010). Social relationships and mortality risk: a meta-analytic review. *PLoS medicine*, 7(7), e1000316.

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## Session 6: Maintaining Positive Change

**Learning Point:** There are a number of strategies you can use to help maintain positive lifestyle changes.

**Learning Objective:** Having participated in discussion on changing habits, participants will create a plan to start/change one habit as evidenced by completion of Habit Plan worksheet.

**Materials:** Chart Paper/Whiteboard & Markers, Handouts ([Building New Habits](#), [Habit Plan](#), Resource List)

Time	Learning Stage	Actions
10 minutes	<i>Intro</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orient participants to the room, where to sit, hand sanitizer, masks</li> <li>• Invite participants to introduce themselves and share if there has been any follow-up on changes regarding connecting with others over the past week. As well, any facilitators and any barriers they experienced during these social interactions.</li> <li>• Review group norms. Introduce session topic: As this is our last session, we will be spending our time focusing maintaining positive change in the future!</li> </ul>
5 minutes	<i>Warm-Up</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask: What comes to mind when you hear the word “change”?</li> </ul>
15 minutes	<i>Experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Say: We hope you have all learned some new strategies in this group (highlight –routine, importance of physical activity, social supports, relaxation), and we want to support you to continue to use these strategies in your life after the group ends.</li> <li>• Say: Let’s talk about change. There are certain things that can help you change and build a new habit, and there are also challenges to making a change.</li> <li>• Go through handout on <b>Building New Habits</b> – invite each participant to read one point and expand into discussion and examples as appropriate. Write down examples on chart paper.</li> </ul>
5 minutes	<i>Reflection</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pair &amp; Share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ With your neighbour, discuss one strategy from the list that you would find the most helpful or be the most likely to use.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

5 minutes	<i>Generalization</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pair &amp; Share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Now think of one habit you would like to change. It might be something you learned in this group – incorporating relaxation, socializing, remembering to wear your mask when around others, reducing clutter, going to bed at a certain time. Discuss with your partner how you would use the Habit Change strategy for that specific habit.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
10 minutes	<i>Application</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain <b>Habit Plan</b> worksheet</li> <li>• Complete worksheet independently</li> </ul>
10 minutes	<i>Summary &amp; Program Wrap-up</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go around circle and share the one (strategy, tool, idea, habit) from the group they will be most likely to use in the future.</li> <li>• Thank participants for attending the group sessions and provide a way for them to follow-up if need be (e.g. facilitator contact information support worker in a retirement home)</li> <li>• Share relevant community resources (see Appendix C for example).</li> <li>• Administer post-program survey and feedback form</li> </ul>

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## **Appendix A**

### *Worksheets & Handouts*

**Relaxation Scale**

Circle level of relaxation:

<b>Before</b>	tense	1	2	3	4	5	relaxed
---------------	-------	---	---	---	---	---	---------

<b>After</b>	tense	1	2	3	4	5	relaxed
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**Relaxation Scale**

Circle level of relaxation:

<b>Before</b>	tense	1	2	3	4	5	relaxed
---------------	-------	---	---	---	---	---	---------

<b>After</b>	tense	1	2	3	4	5	relaxed
--------------	-------	---	---	---	---	---	---------

**Relaxation Scale**

Circle level of relaxation:

<b>Before</b>	tense	1	2	3	4	5	relaxed
---------------	-------	---	---	---	---	---	---------

<b>After</b>	tense	1	2	3	4	5	relaxed
--------------	-------	---	---	---	---	---	---------

## What You Do Everyday Matters!

### What activities do I do?

Hint: Think about how you spend your time each day.

1. Relaxation exercise

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

***Dimensions of Experience & Activity Patterns***

### How do they impact my health and wellness?

Hint: How do your everyday activities make you feel physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

***Health & Wellness Outcomes***

Research has shown that having a range of different experiences in your day to day life has positive outcomes on health and wellbeing (Moll et al., 2015). The Do-Live-Well framework organizes experience into eight categories:

1. **Activating your body, mind and senses:** Activation can take many forms, from physical exercise (activating one's body) to completing crossword puzzles (activating one's mind) to listening to music (activating one's senses).
2. **Connecting with others:** Activities related to socializing, friendships, and relationships. Connecting may take many forms (face-to-face versus virtual) and involve a range of "others" (family, friends, neighbours, coworkers, acquaintances, and even animals).
3. **Contributing to community and society:** Getting involved in community groups, volunteering, and political engagement.
4. **Taking care of yourself:** Taking care of your physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual needs. May include a range of activities, such as exercising, eating well, taking medication, spending time with loved ones, and taking time to relax.
5. **Building security/prosperity:** Achieving financial and social security. Examples include managing your budget, securing safe housing, and taking care of your apartment.
6. **Developing and expressing identity:** Interests, preferences, values, personal strengths, culture and other characteristics make up your identity. Activities related to identity might include participating in cultural events, reflecting on your values, or spending time with people who share your identity.
7. **Developing capabilities and potential:** Gaining or improving skills, knowledge, and abilities. It involves challenging yourself and setting goals.
8. **Experiencing pleasure and joy:** Activities that bring experiences of enjoyment.



## Dimensions of Experience

Think of one or two activities that fit in each category. These could be things you are currently doing, things you have done in the past, or things you would like to try. It's ok to leave some categories blank if they are less relevant to you.

Activating the mind body and senses:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Building security/prosperity

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Connecting with others:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Developing and expressing identity

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Contributing to community:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Developing capabilities and potential

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Taking care of yourself

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Experiencing pleasure and joy

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

## Balance Wheel Activity

Instructions: Colour in each section of the wheel based on your current level of satisfaction in each category. Put a star next to the category where you would most like to make a change.





## Movement to Improve Health & Well-Being

### Benefits of Exercise

PHYSICAL	PSYCHOLOGICAL
Increases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strength to help maintain or increase independence</li><li>• Energy</li><li>• Balance - may reduce risk of falls or reduce severity of a fall</li><li>• Ability to perform daily activity (combing hair, getting dressed)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enhances mood</li><li>• Improves quality of life &amp; feelings of well-being</li><li>• Improves sleep</li><li>• Decreases depression</li><li>• Decreases stress</li></ul>

### Safety First:

- Activities inducing or increasing pain should be avoided
- Feel tired or severe discomfort – slow down and take it easier
- Before stretching, warm-up to increase heart rate and loosen up the muscles
  - 5-10 minutes of walking or other light movement
- Start slowly, progressively build up activity

How likely are you to add resistance exercises to your routine?

*Very Unlikely*      1      2      3      4      5      *Very Likely*

What <b>supports me</b> to incorporate physical activity into my routine?	What <b>limits me</b> with incorporating physical activity into my routine?

Panton, L. B. & Loney, B. S. (n.d.). Exercise for older adults: Health care provider edition. Retrieved from:  
[http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/dmh/216745\\_ExerciseforOlderAdultsHealthCareProviderManual.pdf](http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/dmh/216745_ExerciseforOlderAdultsHealthCareProviderManual.pdf)





## Reflecting on my Home Environment

Factors in our environment impact *what* we do and *how* we do it. In the Do-Live-Well model, these factors are referred to as *social forces*. Use this worksheet to identify factors in your home environment that support and/or detract from your health and wellbeing.

1. What about my home helps me participate in the activities that are important to me?

---

---

2. What about my home makes it challenging to participate in activities that are important to me?

---

---

3. Are there any changes I could make to my home environment to make it easier to do the activities I want to do or need to do?

---

---

---

Is it possible to make this change? (*Circle One*)

Yes      No      Not sure

Do I need help to make this change? (*Circle One*)

Yes      No      Not sure

4. List the steps needed to take to make this change (e.g. contact someone, purchase something, get rid of clutter). Simple changes might only take one step, bigger changes might require multiple steps to complete. Asking for help might be your first step.

- ---
- ---
- ---

## Connecting with Others: My Circle of Support





## How to Build Connection with Others

“Connecting” with others (family, neighbours, pets) can be done face to face or virtually. The type and depth of the relationship can vary between people.

*The quality and quantity of the connection can predict health and well-being, and research shows connecting with others is GOOD for you!*

### Recommendations to prevent spread of COVID-19 while socializing

- Continue to practice physical distancing whenever possible (stay 6 feet/2 metres away from others)
- Wear a mask when you are unable to physical distance
- Socializing outdoors is safer than indoors
- Practice good hand hygiene
- Avoid handshakes and hugs with people outside your close circle

### Connecting in Person

- Spend time with others outdoors
- Introduce yourself to your neighbours
- Be a good listener – show interest in other people’s lives
- Respect the personal space of others (stay 6 feet/2 metres away)
- Attend programs and/activities when available

### Connecting Over the Phone

- Reconnect with people you already know through a phone call or text message
- Volunteer for a friendly caller program
- Call a support line or community agencies

### Connecting Virtually

- Send emails to friends and family
- Connect with others via free apps and/or websites:
  - Facebook – <https://www.facebook.com/>
  - Skype – <https://www.skype.com/en/get-skype/>
  - Zoom - <https://zoom.us/>
- Check if your place of worship offers virtual services

**This week** I will connect with \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Appendix B**

### *Sample Outcome Measures*

## **Coping with COVID-19: Pre-Group Survey**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please respond to the following statements (Check the box):**

	<b>Never</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Usually</b>	<b>Always</b>
I am satisfied with my daily routine.					
I am satisfied with my ability to take care of myself (mentally, physically, emotionally and/or spiritually).					
I have experiences that bring me happiness and joy.					
I am satisfied with my friendships and relationships.					
I can cope with the changes in my everyday life related to the coronavirus pandemic.					

### Coping with COVID-19: Post-Group Survey

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please respond to the following statements (Check the box):**

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Always
I am satisfied with my daily routine.					
I am satisfied with my ability to take care of myself (mentally, physically, emotionally and/or spiritually).					
I have experiences that bring me happiness and joy.					
I am satisfied with my friendships and relationships.					
I can cope with the changes in my everyday life related to the coronavirus pandemic.					

### **Coping with COVID-19: Post Program Survey**

Did you learn any new strategies in this program? If yes, state which one.

---

---

---

Will you use any strategies you learned in this program in the future? (Circle One)

Definitely      Probably      Maybe      Probably Not      Definitely Not

What did you enjoy most about this program?

---

---

---

What could have been better?

---

---

---

## **Appendix C**

### *Sample Resource Package*



# **Coping with COVID-19: Community Resource List**

## **Home Safety**

### **Safety at Home Program – St. Joseph’s Homecare**

- Free individualized home assessment with a summary of recommendations promoting independence and mobility
- Referral to other services
- Support for accessing and installing equipment such as grab bars
- Available to all Hamilton residents over 55
- To self-refer, contact by phone or email
  - Phone: 905-522-6887 ext. 2237
  - Email: [smatinyarare@stjhc.ca](mailto:smatinyarare@stjhc.ca)

### **Home Maintenance Program – St. Joseph’s Homecare**

Clients must be 60 years of age or older to be eligible for this service.

Service available:

- Minor plumbing, electrical, and carpentry
- Heavy cleaning including fridge and stove
- Organizing closets, basements, and garages
- Help to get ready for a move or downsizing
- Contact:
  - Phone: 905-522-6887 ext. 2252
  - Email: [akenderic@stjhc.ca](mailto:akenderic@stjhc.ca)

### **First Place Pharmacy (117-350 King St. East, Hamilton, ON L8N 3Y3)**

- Bathroom equipment (raised toilet seat, bath bench, and much more!)
- Adaptive equipment (sock aid, reacher, etc.)
- Mobility aids (walkers, canes, etc.)
- Hours:
  - Monday-Friday - 9:00-6:00
  - Saturday - 10:00-4:00
  - Sunday - Closed
- Contact by phone or visit in person (don't forget to wear a mask!)
  - Phone: 905-845-8999

## **Food Programs**

### **First Place Food Cupboard (Main Lobby, 360 King St E, Hamilton, ON L8N 3Y3)**

- Monday 9:00-12:00
- Wednesday 1:00-4:00

### **St Matthew's House Emergency Food Program**

- Phone: 905-523-5546 ext.240
  - Email: [admin@stmatthewshouse.ca](mailto:admin@stmatthewshouse.ca)
- 

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

### **Catholic Family Services of Hamilton**

The *Socially Isolated Seniors Support Program* is looking for peer volunteers!

- The Seniors volunteer program is a social support network for seniors by seniors. Seniors are given the opportunity to talk by telephone with volunteers in their own age group who are trained in informal counselling, effective listening, communications and problem-solving skills, exploring alternatives, the referral process and community resource.
  - Requirements:
    - Volunteers must be 50+, provide weekly phone contact to assist seniors 60+ in our community by providing guidance, assisting in connecting with appropriate resources and non-professional counselling on a one to one basis
    - Commit approximately 2-3 hours per week for this position
  - Training provided
  - Contact: 905-527-3823 ext. 279
  - Website: <https://www.cfshw.com/senior-volunteer-opportunities>
- 

## **Mental Health & Social Isolation**

### **Talk 2 Nice (non-crisis phone line)**

- A free and friendly outreach support line that offers brief counselling services for older adults and persons with disabilities.
- To contact:
  - Phone: 1-844-529-7292 (Available 10AM-10PM)
  - Request a phone call for yourself or someone you know:  
<http://www.nicenet.ca/talk2nice>

### **A Friendly Voice (non-crisis phone line)**

- Trained volunteers provide empathetic support to seniors who may be feeling lonely or isolated.
- Phone: 1-855-892-9992

### **Crisis Outreach and Support Team (COAST)**

- Mental Health Crisis Line
- Available 24/7 - may not be able to answer every call, leave a message or try again in 10 minutes
- Phone: 905-972-8338
- **If you or someone else is in immediate risk of serious harm, call 911**

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## **Activities & Recreation**

### **Senior's Centre Without Walls**

The Seniors' Centre Without Walls provides free recreational activities over the phone with a group of other older adults in the community. SCWW allows participants to socialize and join in on Trivia, Family Feud, Finish the Lyrics, Brain Games and Fitness Classes, all over the phone for free.

- Programs are multi-person phone conversations (or conference calls).
- No special equipment needed – any phone will do!
- Call yourself in to the program, or we can call you – it's your choice!
- Each phone session averages 8-10 people on the call
- You can hear each other, talk to one another, learn, and/or just have fun!

To register:

- Phone: 905-973-0891
- Email: [scww@hamilton.ca](mailto:scww@hamilton.ca)

- More information: <https://www.hamilton.ca/recreation/seniors-centre-without-walls>
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## **Health Care**

### **Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network (HNHB LHIN)**

Provides home and community health care services covered by OHIP, including:

- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Nursing
- Personal care
- Social work
- Information and referrals

You can **self-refer** to the LHIN and will be connected with a **Care Coordinator** who will help determine your needs. Alternatively, your Tenant Support Worker, family doctor, or a family member can refer you to the LHIN.

- To self-refer, contact:
  - Phone: 1-800-810-0000 (open between 8:30 AM-8:30 PM)
  - State that you are self-referring for community services and explain your concerns

### **Health Care Connect**

Free service to connect Ontario residents with a **primary health care provider** (a doctor or nurse practitioner).

To Register:

- By phone: [1-800-445-1822](tel:1-800-445-1822) (9AM-5PM Monday-Friday)
- Online:  
<https://hcc3.hcc.moh.gov.on.ca/HCCWeb/faces/layoutHCCSplash.jsp>