



Welcome  
Office

# Welcome to Well-being

A Journey to your Mental Harmony



This material was created by Welcome Office in cooperation with respected departments and faculties at Palacký University Olomouc: Institute of Social Health, Faculty of Education, Confucius Institute, and The Support Centre for Students with Special Needs.

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# Welcome to Well-being

## A Journey to Your Mental Harmony

Pavel Flekač

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# Introduction

In today's rapidly changing world, taking care of one's mental health and well-being is crucial. "Welcome to Well-being: A Journey to Your Mental Harmony" program offers a unique opportunity aimed at finding balance and harmony in everyday life. This program, implemented by Welcome Office at Palacký University Olomouc, was designed to provide students, staff, and members of the international university community with the tools and support they need to achieve optimal mental health.

Our experts prepared a diverse range of theoretical and practical activities and workshops focused on improving mental well-being, managing stress, and developing positive thinking. The program also included study strategies and support tools to help effectively manage daily academic and work responsibilities. We strived to create a space for self-reflection, relaxation, and personal growth in an environment that fostered openness and mutual respect.

The program was conducted in the summer semester of 2023/2024, during which a total of nine workshops were held, with over 140 students and staff members from the international community participating. This success demonstrates the great interest and need for such initiatives at our university.

We believe that through this preventive pilot program, we have not only discovered ways to strengthen mental resilience and improve the ability to handle daily challenges but also created a platform where mental health care is a priority, and everyone can find their path toward mental harmony and personal development.

Alena Vyskočilová



# Music Relaxation: A Touch of Healing Tones

*Janika Cecílie Bartečka and Pavel Bartečka, workshop instructors, bringing several years of experience in musical relaxation. Having devoted more than half of their lives to cherishing distinguished musical instruments, they have realized the profound impact music has on the body and mind. Through their journey, they established Studium Alfa Návsí, an organization that focuses on musical relaxation techniques and is renowned throughout Czech society for its contributions and positive evaluations. Their expertise and dedication ensure a comprehensive and enriching workshop experience.*

## Annotation

From seemingly cold instruments to an orchestra of sounds and vibrations, the workshop on musical relaxation introduces participants to a new environment where sound soothes the body and calms the mind. Meticulously designed to uncover the transformative power of music as a tool for achieving both mental and physical relaxation, the workshop engages participants in a unique experience that seamlessly blends theoretical insights with interactive exercises. Participants explore the profound impact of music on well-being through guided activities and expert facilitation, discovering how different sounds and rhythms can foster a deep sense of tranquillity and rejuvenation. This workshop not only provides practical relaxation techniques but also enhances participants' understanding of the therapeutic potential of music, offering a comprehensive approach to integrating musical relaxation into daily life.

*"I liked it when I felt the vibration of the instruments on my body." – Workshop Participant*



# Emotions and Mental Health from the Chinese Medicine Perspective

*Natálie Kubičínová is a therapist specializing in Traditional Chinese Medicine, as well as a sinologist with a passion for holistic health. With a focus on helping others rediscover their self-healing potential through body and mind work, she also specializes in Chinese culture and society, particularly the history and modern use of Chinese phytotherapy. Her extensive education and experience, and work with renowned Chinese medicine practitioners, underpin her comprehensive approach to well-being.*

## Annotation

Traditional Chinese medicine, with its rich philosophy and diverse perspectives, offers unique insights into achieving mental harmony through balanced emotions. This workshop provides a comprehensive introduction to Eastern approaches to mental health techniques, focusing on the fundamental theories of Yin Yang and Wuxing (Five Elements Theory), which form the cornerstone of Chinese medical philosophy. Participants delve into Wushen (The Five Spirits) and Qi Qing (The Seven Emotions), exploring their profound impact on the human body and mind.

The workshop emphasizes the importance of balancing physical and mental health, offering practical tips from the fields of acupuncture, Chinese herbology, and Qigong. Participants gain valuable knowledge on how to integrate these ancient practices into their daily lives, promoting overall well-being and emotional stability. This enriching experience broadens participants' understanding of traditional Chinese medicine and equips them with practical tools for achieving mental and physical harmony.

*"I found the lecturer herself astonishing; she was spontaneous, funny, and provided us with interesting metaphors to accompany the techniques." – Workshop Participant*



# Well-being and Self-Care: Fostering a Balanced Life

*Michal Růžička is a renowned researcher who integrates cognitive-behavioural therapy, expressive therapies, and rational-emotive therapy, addressing the full spectrum of an individual's physical, mental, social, and spiritual diversity. Specializing in therapeutic methods in special education, addiction counselling, crisis intervention, and family mediation, he aims to respect each person's uniqueness to help develop their potential. Růžička is also an active member of various academic boards and has co-authored significant publications on drama therapy and addiction treatment.*

## Annotation

Living in a diverse society can be stressful, often causing individuals to lose their motivation to connect and share their unique traditions and experiences. This workshop introduces the core elements of well-being from a societal perspective, offering ice-breaking techniques to facilitate sharing within an internationally diverse community and helping participants overcome cultural fears and stresses.

The workshop includes mindfulness exercises and stress management strategies such as the "well-being passport," which fosters collective values, and the "Five Ways to Well-being," encouraging participants to connect, be active, keep learning, give, and take notice. These activities are complemented by interactive sessions and group discussions, allowing participants to practice these techniques in a supportive environment. By the end, participants are equipped with practical skills to enhance their well-being and build a more inclusive and empathetic community.

*"I appreciated when the lecturer guided us through exercises with music; it helped me relax in a quiet setting." – Workshop Participant*



# Strategies for Effective Learning

*Barbora Kvapilová is a counselling psychologist and mindfulness meditation lecturer. She focuses on various areas, including teaching effective learning strategies through mindfulness and helping individuals enhance concentration, self-awareness, and emotional regulation. With extensive experience in school psychology, she has developed seminars on efficient study techniques using scientific insights about the brain and memory. Her multidisciplinary expertise in psychology and education enriches her holistic approach to promoting mental well-being and effective learning.*

## Annotation

From an early age, learning is an essential activity for human development. Without it, people would not be capable of evolving and succeeding in complex environments. This workshop focuses on utilizing essential learning techniques that are closely linked to personal and academic success, highlighting the potential for students and employees to thrive in any setting.

Drawing from academic and scientific findings on brain function during studying and memorization, the workshop showcases practical methods to overcome procrastination, daydreaming, and other habits that diminish learning effectiveness. Interactive sessions allow participants to practice these techniques and receive personalized feedback, equipping them with the tools to enhance their learning capabilities and achieve their goals with greater efficiency and confidence.

*"Some practical advice about effective learning, which I have already started using in my studies." – Workshop Participant*



# Time Management and Techniques for Successful Planning

*Kateryna Hordiienko is an accomplished psychologist and lecturer with extensive experience in crisis intervention and psychological support for Ukrainian refugees. She is an author of numerous scientific publications and is proficient in cyberpsychology, work psychology, and crisis intervention techniques. Hordiienko is multilingual and has a proven track record in organizing educational events and scientific conferences. Her work is recognized by prestigious awards, and she has significantly contributed to research and practical applications in her field.*

## Annotation

The quality of one's work is determined not only by the moment of fulfilling the task but by managing and structuring its load to ensure successful and qualitative completion. Effective work begins with planning, not just jumping into action. The workshop thoroughly explores this concept and delves into the most effective strategies for achieving goals without burnout and other adverse effects.

It focuses on how to organize and manage one's time, set and achieve goals in a structured manner, and increase productivity in both studies and personal life. It provides practical steps to identify and overcome common "time-wasters" and procrastination using the most effective and up-to-date methods and techniques. By incorporating both classical and digital planning perspectives, the workshop ensures that learners are equipped with a comprehensive toolkit for effective time management. Interactive sessions and real-life examples further enrich the learning experience, making the workshop both engaging and highly beneficial.

*"Make it more often!" – Workshop Participant*



# Nutrition Practices with Traditional Chinese Medicine: Self-Massage Techniques

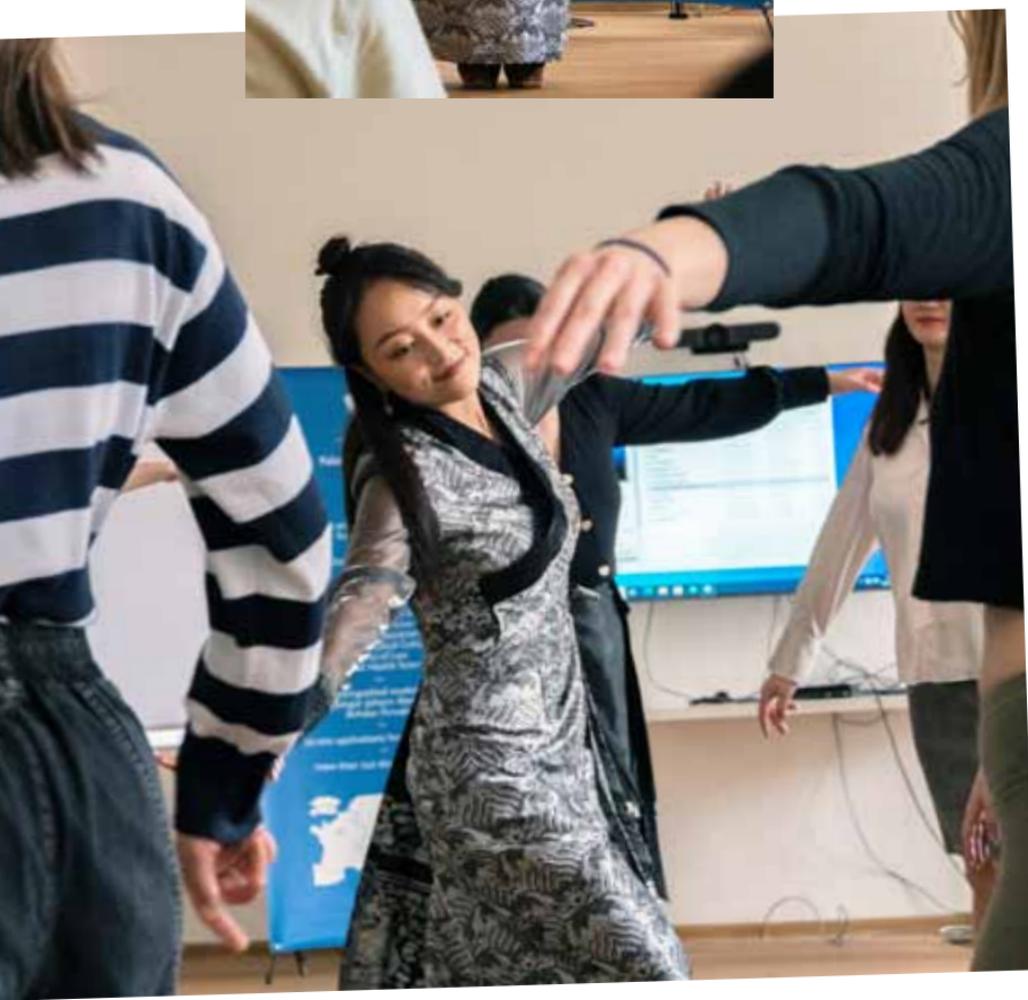
*Zdeněk Chmelka is a sinologist, traveller, and lifelong student of Chinese philosophy, language, and culture. He studied in China and South Korea, achieving fluency in Chinese and conversational proficiency in Korean. Chmelka is a martial arts trainer, interpreter, and translator, and he also delves into traditional Chinese medicine and Qigong. His extensive studies and travels have made him an expert in East Asian cultural and philosophical traditions.*

## Annotation

Traditional Chinese Medicine is increasingly recognized in Western countries as an effective alternative approach to healing both the body and mind. Modern society is beginning to incorporate its positive effects into daily life more frequently. Central to both Eastern and Western health philosophies is the idea that a healthy body results from a healthy diet, and vice versa.

The workshop introduces several key features of Traditional Chinese Medicine, including nutrition, dietetics, and self-massage theory, and provides practical guidance on how to utilize these methods. Additionally, it delves into how to incorporate these principles into daily routines to maintain overall health and happiness. Participants learn to apply these ancient techniques in modern life, promoting balance and well-being. The workshop also covers practical exercises, such as self-massage techniques and dietary recommendations, ensuring participants leave with actionable steps to enhance their health. This enriching experience offers a comprehensive understanding of how Traditional Chinese Medicine can contribute to a healthier and fulfilling life.

*"I found it really interesting, and it inspired me a lot." – Workshop Participant*



# Positive Effects of Tibetan Dance Techniques on Mental Health

*Jia Lin, a lecturer at Sichuan Normal University with 7 years of experience, specializes in Tibetan and ethnic minority dance education. She is dedicated to enhancing spirituality and mental health through dance, offering profound spiritual enjoyment to both participants and observers. Jia's work delves into the rich traditions of Tibetan dance culture, highlighting its unique combination of spirituality and physical movement to improve overall well-being and health.*

## Annotation

One of the key elements that establish harmony between mental well-being and physical health is movement, which releases muscle tension and alleviates stress. The workshop showcases the transformative journey of Tibetan Buddhism and its dance culture by blending spirituality with physical expression. It presents this unique fusion in a practical way, fostering a deeper connection to tradition.

The workshop not only supports overall vitality but also introduces new cultural habits and customs, promoting values of diversity and mutual understanding. Through single and group dance techniques, participants explore their own and collective well-being. It also includes guided exercises, discussions on the cultural significance of Tibetan dance, and interactive sessions where participants can experience the meditative and healing aspects of these movements. This enriching experience offers a comprehensive understanding of how dance and spirituality can enhance both physical health and mental clarity, providing participants with tools to incorporate these practices into their daily lives.

*"I enjoyed taking a break from my studies for a moment. The lecturer was very polite and friendly, making the session delightful and refreshing!" – Workshop Participant*



## Mindfulness: Focusing on the Present Moment

*Marie Buchtová has extensive experience as a social worker in marginalized communities, focusing on education and inclusion. She is skilled in dance movement therapy, art therapy, and mindfulness techniques. She is currently a researcher at the Institute of Social Health. Her research focuses on psychosomatics and human health sensitivity. Buchtová's diverse background and dedication to social health make her an expert at integrating therapeutic practices for holistic well-being.*

### Annotation

In today's society, people often focus on the future, planning what will happen in days, weeks, or even years, rather than living in the present moment. This workshop addresses the importance of being present and helps participants realize what is truly important in their lives. It introduces several techniques to enhance focus on the current state of mind and present activities.

The workshop is structured to help participants better understand and control their emotions, cope with overwhelming situations and respond adequately to emotionally challenging scenarios. Additionally, it provides an environment conducive to mutual communication and the development of critical thinking through activities in pairs or smaller groups. Participants also engage in exercises designed to foster mindfulness and improve emotional resilience. This enriching experience not only promotes personal growth and emotional stability but also encourages collaborative learning and sharing of diverse perspectives.

*"Knowing that someone cares about international students is truly meaningful to me." – Workshop Participant*

# Welcome Office

The Welcome Office (WO) at Palacký University Olomouc (UPOL) is a dedicated support centre providing comprehensive services to the international community.

WO's mission is to assist and support everyone from the international community coming to Czechia. Whether visiting, studying, or working at the university, individuals will feel welcomed and supported throughout their journey. The WO embodies an inclusive and integrative approach, acknowledging and respecting cultural differences while promoting positive values and virtues.

The WO offers a broad range of services that support both personal and academic lives of individuals. Recognizing the cultural differences among societies, the centre aims to accommodate newcomers to Czech society, ensuring they have everything needed to integrate successfully. One of the WO's primary goals is to foster a positive international environment where everyone feels welcomed, respected, and adapted to different customs and cultures.

Personal services provided by the WO include assistance with communication with the Ministry of Interior, mainly regarding visa and residency matters, family reunions, extensions of documents, and more. As a central contact point of the university, the WO also aids with orientation in the city, offering personal assistance with translations, setting up bank accounts, finding medical assistance, providing databases of possible accommodations, and recommending leisure activities for individuals and families.

In close coordination with UPOL, the WO also supports academic orientation. Given the varying academic and curricular systems across different countries, the centre bridges these differences by providing tools and guidelines to help internationals maximize their potential while studying abroad. It connects individuals with the right academics and provides opportunities to participate in university activities.

Though a university department, the WO extends its reach from national to international levels, becoming one of the flagship departments through its communication and cross-curricular activities.

### Contact Information

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## Welcome Office

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## Video Compilation from the Preventive Pilot Program



<https://www.upol.cz/welcome-office/video-gallery/>



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