

“CBD: Creating Balance through De-Stressing”

Workplace Wellness Pilot Program

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IHED 641: Health Promotion Capstone

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The workplace wellness program being designed is for ANTEDOTUM, a startup skin care company based out of Aspen, Colorado. Because ANTEDOTUM is a start-up the company is still in the process of building their infrastructure so there is no workplace wellness program in place. Currently, the only health related benefits for employees are health insurance and paid time off. Karina Perez Marconi, the founder and CEO, is very committed to creating a healthy and happy workplace environment for her new company. Thus, the CEO is the primary champion of this pilot program which is designed to reduce work related stress.

Currently, ANTEDOTUM is in a state of “awareness” in the workplace health readiness continuum outlined by Carl Fertman in his text *Workplace Health Promotion Programs: Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation*. This is the second phase on the continuum. The primary goal of the pilot workplace wellness program is to elevate ANTEDOTUM into its “transition” phase and, ultimately, into a fully “integrated” health promotion strategy (Fertman, 2015).

Proposed Audience.

The target population of the workplace wellness program is the employees of ANTEDOTUM. All ten employees work remotely and are spread out across the US and in Croatia. The complete list with name, title, demographic, and location is as follows:

- 1) Christopher Marconi- Co-Founder/Chairman- male, white, American (CO)
- 2) Karina Marconi- Co-Founder/CEO- female, Hispanic, American (CO)

- 3) Mila Mendez- COO- female, white, Ukrainian (Croatia)
- 4) Chad Stickworth – CFO - male, white, American (NC)
- 5) Hector Sanchez - VP, National Sales - male, Hispanic, American (WV)
- 6) Kim Hellem – Director of Branding – female, white, American (NJ)
- 7) Lynnea Elkind – Member of the Board – female, white, American (FL)
- 8) Ken Elkind – Member of the Board – male, white, American (FL)
- 9) Samantha Silverman – Director of Digital Marketing – female, white, American (NY)
- 10) Sally Starkey - Director of Social Media - female, white, American (IL)

ANTEDOTUM is MBE certified, a credential for a Minority Business Enterprise, given the Puerto-Rican/Cuban heritage of the female co-founder. Diversity is a priority for ANTEDOTUM. Half of its employees are women and four are minorities.

Needs Assessment.

Stress has been identified as the leading health concern for the employees of ANTEDOTUM who all work remotely. While that has its advantages, such as no commuting time, scheduling flexibility, and a relaxed dress code, it also comes with a downside. Research indicates that being “always on” and accessible through technology while working remotely leads to the blurring of work and non-work boundaries (Russell, 2019). It has been determined that the risk factors specific to the work culture of ANTEDOTUM include the lack of definition of their work hours due to the 24/7 blurring of accessibility from working remotely and lack of work-life balance from conflicting demands of work and home (WHO, 2020).

Risk factors for stress.

According to Anderson et al. (2014), a Health Risk Assessment is a commonly used approach in worksite wellness programs. The focus is on health behavior change as opposed to earlier mortality-based approaches. It is commonly understood to be a more “glass half-full” perspective with the emphasis on positive health outcomes instead of illness (Anderson et al., 2014). Based on preliminary conversations with CEO and VP of Sales, I have determined that ANTEDOTUM is at low risk for stress in the categories of communication and subjective factors and medium risk for working conditions. However, their organizational structure puts ANTEDOTUM at high risk for stress.

- **Organizational structure-** (*high risk*) remote nature of ANTEDOTUM work structure currently in place allows for a high degree of autonomy but can impact the work-life balance. Employees can be subject to conflicting demands of work and home and the 24/7 nature of “being on” for other employees who live and work in different time zones.
- **Working conditions-** (*medium risk*) each employee is set up in his/her own home office. They are provided with cell phone, laptop, and internet service. Access to the product through a generous gratis program.
- **Communication-** (*low risk*) directives are clear and concise and expectations, even though they are evolving, are fair and reasonable. Roles are elastic as people wear many hats and can operate to their individual strengths.

- **Subjective factors**- (*low risk*) because the company is still small employees experience a great deal of collaboration and teamwork. Employees feel supported and appreciated and they perceive that they can make an impact.
(Radulovic, 2017)

Methods for assessing their existing knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and needs.

Since ANTEDOTUM currently has a remote workplace structure, all methods for assessing the existing knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and needs will have to be conducted virtually.

- 1) **Survey**- administer a questionnaire to the management and employees of ANTEDOTUM to identify job-related stress triggers. Examples of triggers include work schedules, workload, relationships with coworkers, job conditions, access to electronic devices, and COVID-related concerns (Johns Hopkins, 2015). The surveys to be given will be the “Perceived Stress Scale” and the “Wellness Wheel”.

(See Appendix A: Perceived Stress Scale, Appendix B: Wellness Wheel”

- 2) **Data Collection**- because ANTEDOTUM is still in the start-up stage there is no Human Resources department, information on stress-related problems such as absenteeism, chronic illness, performance issues, and turnover rates would not yet be available. Otherwise, this data would create a baseline for comparison to determine the effectiveness of the stress management program once it has been implemented (Johns Hopkins, 2015).

- 3) **Interviews**- gain access to existing attitudes on stress triggers in the workplace and work-life balance at the top of the company. Interviews will be one-to-one over phone or Zoom with Chief Executive Officer and VP of Sales.

Objectives for the workplace program.

The workplace wellness program will be customized with SMART objectives for stress reduction that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time bound. Both the baseline survey and the exit survey will be designed to answer the objectives put forth. Each of the following objectives are time bound for the duration of the pilot program:

- **Objective 1-** Raise awareness about the need, process, and benefits of implementing a stress reduction plan among the employees of ANTEDOTUM by 90%. This will be measured by comparing employee scores at baseline survey to exit survey.
- **Objective 2-** Increase knowledge of stress triggers by 75% among the employees of ANTEDOTUM. This will be measured by comparing employee scores at baseline survey to exit survey.
- **Objective 3-** Increase the number of employees involved in stress reducing initiatives among the employees of ANTEDOTUM by 50%. This will be measured by comparing employee self-reported activities at baseline survey to exit survey.
- **Objective 4-** Reduce stress related measurements among the employees of ANTEDOTUM by 25%. This will be measured by comparing employee perceived stress at baseline survey to exit survey.

Outcomes for the workplace audience.

The intended outcomes of the stress reduction program for ANTEDOTUM are to have a collective of employees who are aware of work stressors, be able to identify their own job-related triggers, and have acquired new skills to mitigate stress. This will contribute to an overall perception of a less stressful workplace for ANTEDOTUM. Each of the following objectives are time bound for the duration of the pilot program:

- **Outcome 1-** Upon completing “CBD: Creating Balance through De-Stressing” employees of ANTEDOTUM will be aware of work-related stress issues and how this can impact both their health and job productivity.
- **Outcome 2-** Upon completing the “CBD: Creating Balance through De-Stressing” employees of ANTEDOTUM will be able to identify and recognize their individual work-related stress triggers. Examples include feeling obligated to “check in” to work devices on off hours, taking on too many projects, or balancing demands of family while working from a home office.
- **Outcome 3-** Upon completing the “CBD: Creating Balance through De-Stressing” employees of ANTEDOTUM will have learned new stress reduction techniques that they can continue to employ on their own. Although participation in the pilot program is voluntary, the target participation by employees is a minimum of three stress reduction initiatives. These will be defined as turning in a signed Work-Balance Pledge and any two Zen Zoom sessions.
- **Outcome 4-** Upon completing the “CBD: Creating Balance through De-Stressing” employees of ANTEDOTUM will experience a reduction in work-related stress demonstrated by comparing baseline survey to exit survey.

Situation analysis.

To be clear, stress in and of itself is not a disease. However, it can trigger adverse health outcomes. According to Radulovic (2017), “if the body experiences a continuous strain, stress can cause acute and chronic changes which can provoke long-term damage to systems and organs” (Radulovic, 2017, p. 238). Health conditions caused by stress include hypertension, elevated cholesterol, musculoskeletal disorders, diabetes, and inflammatory bowel diseases. The immune system is particularly sensitive to stress which, once compromised, can lead to cancer. Psychologically, stress can impact cognitive outcomes such as memory loss, brain fog, insomnia, anxiety and depression. Studies demonstrate profitability in investing in stress reduction programs for the workplace (Radulovic, 2017). In addition, the strategies to reduce stress in the workplace increase profitability and lead to the perception of the company as an employer of choice.

SWOT analysis.

The purpose of the SWOT exercise is to determine strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for ANTEDOTUM with regard to wellness. This information provides a solid strategy for prioritizing the elements of the stress reduction program and how it will be communicated to the target audience.

In the case of ANTEDOTUM, where all ten employees work remotely, this business model serves as both a strength and a weakness. The strength is that it offers flexibility for the employee. The advantage for ANTEDOTUM is that the company can hire the best person for

each position, regardless of their location. However, the disadvantage (weakness) is that this business model offers little structure and no boundaries.

The following are additional elements to the SWOT analysis:

- **Strengths (*internal*)** - the advantage of being a start-up includes being innovative and adaptive to change. An additional asset enjoyed by ANTEDOTUM is their workforce diversity.
- **Weaknesses (*internal*)** - the main disadvantage of being a start-up is that the company is still in the process of defining itself.
- **Opportunities (*external*)** - opportunities include establishing defined work hours; a clear policy for employee work-life balance; team building and a feeling of connectivity; and enhanced communication.
- **Threats (*external*)** - protect against threats such as stress, burnout, absenteeism, and low productivity.



Outline of proposed program content.

The stress management program will be designed with the current ten top level executives of ANTEDOTUM in mind. Sub-groups are not applicable due to the small company size.

Therefore, “CBD: Creating Balance through De-Stressing” is designed with the assumption that all eight employees will sign a Work-Life Balance pledge which reflects a policy revision for the company and that a quorum will participate in live Zen Zoom sessions.

- 1) Work-Life Balance Pledge** - written pledge will be provided to each employee to sign and will be placed in their human resources file. Research indicates that being

“always on” and accessible through technology while working remotely leads to the blurring of work and non-work boundaries (Russell, 2019).

- a) The Right to Disconnect-** This concept provides each employee with the provision that it is their right to keep “office hours” despite working from a home office and having 24/7 access to electronics. In the document the employee will declare what their regular operating hours will be. An example would be “Monday through Friday, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm”.
- b) The Right to Lunch Hour-** This concept ensures that each employee has the right to enjoy a full one-hour lunch away from work related electronics.
- c) The Right to a Weekend-** This concept respects the time the employee has to enjoy their personal life outside of work understanding that they will be re-energized when they return to work at the beginning of the next week.
- d) The Right to a Vacation-** This concept ensures that the employee uses all allocated vacation days. It will be encouraged by the company to take one whole week at a time for optimum rejuvenation.
- e) The Right to a Wellness Day-** This concept embraces the idea that the employee gets a paid day off for self-care. This can be defined by the employee to include the annual physical, a spa retreat, a day trip, etc.

- 1) **Zen Zoom (The “UN-Zoom”)** - The program will be highlighted by three half-hour Zoom sessions featuring a different topic inspired by a Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) modality. Since all ten current employees of ANTEDOTUM will be invited subgroups are not applicable. Although participation will be considered voluntary,

it will be encouraged by referencing these sessions as a “virtual watercooler”. It is hoped that employees will choose to participate to feel connected to their work community. In addition, the tone of the intervention will be positive and upbeat so it should be a fun activity for those involved.

Each session will feature a different guest host with expertise on a topic targeted to reduce stress. The sessions will be designed to be live and interactive. However, they will be recorded for those who miss the session or wish to review. There will be a total of three sessions conducted through August 2021. The Wellness Manager will host and facilitate the Zen Zoom. The curriculum of each intervention will be designed to stand alone so that participants can opt in or out of any given session without losing a cumulative benefit. Upon the conclusion of each Zen Zoom a brief (five question survey) will be sent via Survey Monkey. This survey can be completed by both those who participated live or via the Zoom recording.

Since it has been determined that workplace wellness begins with a healthy home worksite environment, the pilot program will be launched with **Session 1, “Feng Shui for Home Office”**. An outline of the Zen Zoom sessions is as follows:

- a) **Session 1: “Feng Shui for Home Office” (Modality: Feng Shui)** - Employees will be introduced to the concept of *Qi* (vital life energy) and the auspicious placement and color of furnishings and décor. The goal is to create a harmonious flow in the home office to decrease stress and increase productivity. The participants will have received a wellness box from ANTEDOTUM with a mini book “*Feng Shui: The Art of Living*” (Simmons, 2000) along with a handwritten welcome note from Wellness

Manager and travel sized ANTEDOTUM Vital Face Oil and Firming Serum. The Wellness Manager will host and facilitate the Zen Zoom and provide a brief overview of Feng Shui using a slide show prepared for the Zoom gathering. Considered commonplace in most of Asia, the instruction of Feng Shui will be culturally sensitive to the Western audience that comprises ANTEDOTUM. Facilitator will introduce guest expert, Emilia Lipsman, Interior Designer and Feng Shui Consultant, who will provide more in-depth knowledge of the practice and provide tips for strategic placement of furnishings and other objects. Before and after photos of a real-life home office will be provided along with employee submissions of their personal workspaces. The interactive portion of the intervention will have participants engage in peer group recommendations for home office enhancements of the submissions based on what they just learned.

b) **Session 2: “Acupressure for Relaxation” (Modality: Acupressure/Traditional Chinese Medicine [TCM])** - Acupressure, a form of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), releases tension, stimulates *Qi*, and enhances well-being. This Zen Zoom will demonstrate how a *gua sha* stone can be used to massage along the TCM meridians to relieve stress. The goal is to provide employees with a relaxation technique fun and easy to use. The participants will have received a wellness box from ANTEDOTUM with a *gua sha* jade stone along with a lab sample of ANTEDOTUM’s summer launch Relief Body Balm. The Wellness Manager will host and facilitate the Zen Zoom. It will begin with a brief overview of Acupressure using a slide show prepared for the Zoom gathering. Considered commonplace in most of Asia, the instruction of

Acupressure will be culturally sensitive to the Western audience that comprises ANTEDOTUM. The Wellness Manager will introduce the guest expert, Lula Madrigal, Acupuncturist and TCM Practitioner, who will provide more in-depth knowledge of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and provide tips for getting most acupressure benefit from the *gua sha* stone. The interactive portion of the intervention will have participants use their own *gua sha* stone on areas of their body which hold the most tension. Special emphasis will be placed on the neck, shoulders and feet to tie in to ANTEDOTUM's new body product.

c) **Session 5: “Boardroom Yoga” (Modality: Yoga Therapy)** - The benefits of yoga are widely recognized. Employees may be surprised by how effective seated (chair) yoga can be for stress reduction. The goal is to learn enough poses that the employee can do it at his/her desk during the workday to reduce stress. The participants will have received a wellness box from ANTEDOTUM with an ANTEDOTUM t-shirt (made of hemp) along with a lab sample of ANTEDOTUM's fall launch Essential Daily Sunscreen SPF 30. The Wellness Manager will host and facilitate the Zen Zoom. It will begin with a brief overview of seated yoga using a slide show prepared for the Zoom gathering. Although trendy in the US, the instruction of yoga, which is rooted in the traditional spiritual practice of India, will be culturally sensitive to the Western audience that comprises ANTEDOTUM. The Wellness Manager will introduce the guest expert, Beth Cosi, Yoga Instructor, who will provide more in-depth knowledge of the practice and provide tips for getting most anti-stress benefit from seated yoga.

The interactive portion of the intervention will have participants follow Beth's guided instructions for best chair yoga positions.

Health Behavior Model

This wellness program will be designed according to the construct of the Transtheoretical Model (TTM) of behavior change. According to Prochaska & Prochaska in *Health Promotion in the Workplace* (O'Donnell, 2014), the TTM categorizes the target population based upon where they fall on the sliding scale of change. The five stages of change are recognized as precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action and maintenance. ANTEDOTUM, vis-à-vis Karina Perez Marconi, is at the preparation stage. There have been preliminary discussions and the company will move forward with action within the next month.

In alignment with TTM, a dynamic theory of change, the "Stress Reduction Pilot Program" is designed to be interactive and relevant to a diverse demographic. Plus, there will be incentives for participating which will motivate program engagement. (O'Donnell, 2014). This will be explored in the section on adherence.

Communication/internal marketing plan.

The objective of the communication campaign is to inform the employees of ANTEDOTUM of health risks associated with stress. The approach of the wellness program of ANTEDOTUM will utilize a two-pronged strategy: individual and organizational.

- 1) **Individual-** encourage individual employee behavioral changes
- 2) **Organizational-** influence policy direction of company (CDC, 2017)

The communication channels to be used include the following:

- 1) **Text**- once a week each employee will get a “Wellness Wednesday” text from Wellness Program Manager with a tip for reducing work related stress.
(See Appendix C: Wellness Wednesday Text Content)
- 2) **Email**- invitations to each Zen Zoom session will be sent one week prior to each event and other updates as needed.
- 3) **Care Package**- monthly wellness box shipped to each employee with a gift from ANTEDOTUM. The gift will tie in to the topic of the monthly Zen Zoom session. The box will also include an ANTEDOTUM product and marketing materials. The premier box will include a handwritten note from the Wellness Program Manager.

Program Preparation.

1) Action Plan.

The tactical plan for the execution of “CBD: Creating Balance for De-Stressing” for ANTEDOTUM includes communication channels and vehicles, a timeline, budget considerations, research methods, and evaluation components.

2) Timeline.

The structure of the timeline will follow a GANTT format. This is a type of bar chart that presents a visual project schedule. The visual presentation will make it easy for the team to see where projects stand. Access will be granted to the CEO and VP of Sales. It will be placed on an ANTEDOTUM shared drive for all to access and updated by the Wellness

Program Manager as tasks get completed. This is a living document so dates can be adjusted and tasks may be added as necessary. (*See Appendix D: GANTT Timeline*)

3) **Selling the Program.**

- **Zoom Meeting** – Meeting was conducted on March 22, 2021 with ANTEDOTUM Founder/CEO Karina Perez Marconi and Hector Sanchez, VP of Sales. Although the CEO will be the primary decision maker along the various stages of implementation, the VP is a key figure since he brought the Wellness Manager into the company fold. The Wellness Manager will created an agenda for the first formal program meeting.
- **Presentation** - PowerPoint presentation on the “CBD: Creating Balance through De-Stressing” was presented at the Zoom meeting on June 9, 2021. A video version will be sent to the employees of ANTEDOTUM by Karina Perez Marconi.
- **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** - CEO signed a copy of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on May 11, 2021. This document formalized the relationship between the Wellness Program Manager, who is designing and implementing the pilot, and the CEO who will roll it out to her company. Although not a legally binding contract, the document is helpful in delineating the roles of all involved in the initiative. Further clarification was provided at a Zoom Meeting on May 24, 2021, with Karina Perez Marconi and Katherine Smith, MUIH Professor supervising academic portion of the Practicum.

(See Appendix D: Memorandum of Understanding)

4) Budget considerations.

Once it was decided to move forward with the “CBD: Creating Balance through De-Stressing” the funding was determined. The budget for the pilot program was proposed by the Wellness Program Manager. It was submitted to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and VP of Sales. Final approval will come from Karina Perez Marconi, the CEO.

(See Appendix F: Budget)

Evaluation Framework.

The evaluation plan for the “CBD: Creating Balance through De-Stressing” will use the summative approach. Wholey et al. (2010) explain that this approach can be used to measure outcomes after completion (Wholey et al., 2010). This works for my program which has a fixed time frame. The evaluation components are as follows:

- **Comparative data-** the evaluation will be centered on a set of outcomes from the pilot program and will come at the conclusion of program. It will use comparative data from before and after surveys. *(See Appendix G: Work-Balance Pledge)*
- **Logic model-** the logic model allows the evaluation to focus on the important elements of the program and to identify what questions should be asked and what performance measures to utilize. The following is a logic model which highlights cause and effect that summarizes key elements of the “CBD: Creating Balance through De-Stressing”. The elements of the logic model includes the resources, activities, inputs, outputs, and outcomes (Wholey, 2010). *(See Appendix G: Logic Model)*

- **Credible evidence-** evidence will be gathered for the evaluation using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Qualitative data collections will consist of a survey both before and after the pilot program, structured interviews with Karina Perez Marconi (CEO) and Hector Sanchez (VP of Sales). Quantitative data collection will be in the form of two surveys: Stress Perception Survey and the Wellness Wheel (Wholey et al., 2010). The measures will be reliable as the questions in the exit survey will mirror those from the initial survey. This will allow them to be comparable and ensure the reliability of the measurements even as the evaluation plan evolves.
- **Justify conclusions-** according to WHO, stress can damage an employee's health and the work performance (WHO, 2020). It is hoped that comparisons between baseline and exit surveys will demonstrate that work-life balance has increased within the time frame of the pilot program. Therefore, it can be argued that workplace stress has been reduced, and that the program works. If "CBD: Creating Balance through De-Stressing" meets the goals stated in the objectives portion of this framework, then it is considered a success.
- **Ensure use of evaluation findings-** the findings of the evaluation will be shared via email with Karina Perez Marconi, CEO and Hector Sanchez, VP of Sales and discussed in a Zoom meeting. This feedback will be shared with all the stakeholders in the form of a PowerPoint presentation. In addition, it will be used in the creation of the next generation of ANTEDOTUM's workplace wellness program. It is hoped that ANTEDOTUM will adopt a long-term wellness program. The goal will be to create a culture of health at the company with a long lasting and holistic impact on the employees.

Overview of policy change.

Policy influence will happen only after there is top level buy-in. Thus, I will provide an overview for top executives of ANTEDOTUM identifying and reducing job-related stress (Johns Hopkins, 2015). A Zoom meeting with these decision makers is key to getting the stress reduction program to work. This meeting would serve as their introduction to workplace wellness and would demonstrate how a robust program will benefit them not only as individuals but also the company as a whole. An emphasis will be placed on the return on their investment.

(See Appendix G: Work-Balance Pledge)

Adherence.

The main challenge in the planning of the workplace wellness program is ensuring employee participation once the program is launched. Therefore, the stress reduction program will be an incentive attached to participating in the Zoom sessions (NIOSH, 2008). Attendance for each session will earn the employee one hour of paid time off (PTO). If an employee attends all six Zoom session (s)he will earn an enhanced total of 8.0 hours, the equivalent of a full day off. This offers employees a high impact health promotion program.

Furthermore, since ANTEDOTUM is a new company and building their infrastructure, the pilot program should propel the organization from the “awareness” stage to the “transition” stage in the workplace health readiness continuum. As ANTEDOTUM grows and incorporates a full-fledged workplace wellness program into its infrastructure, it is anticipated that it will flourish into having a fully “integrated” health promotion. It is worth noting that the mantra of Karina Perez Marconi, mentioned in her bio on the website, is “happiness through healing”.

Thus, the goal of the “CBD: Creating Balance through De-Stressing” to incorporate this concept into the workplace culture of ANTEDOTUM.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Perceived Stress Scale

(separate PDF)

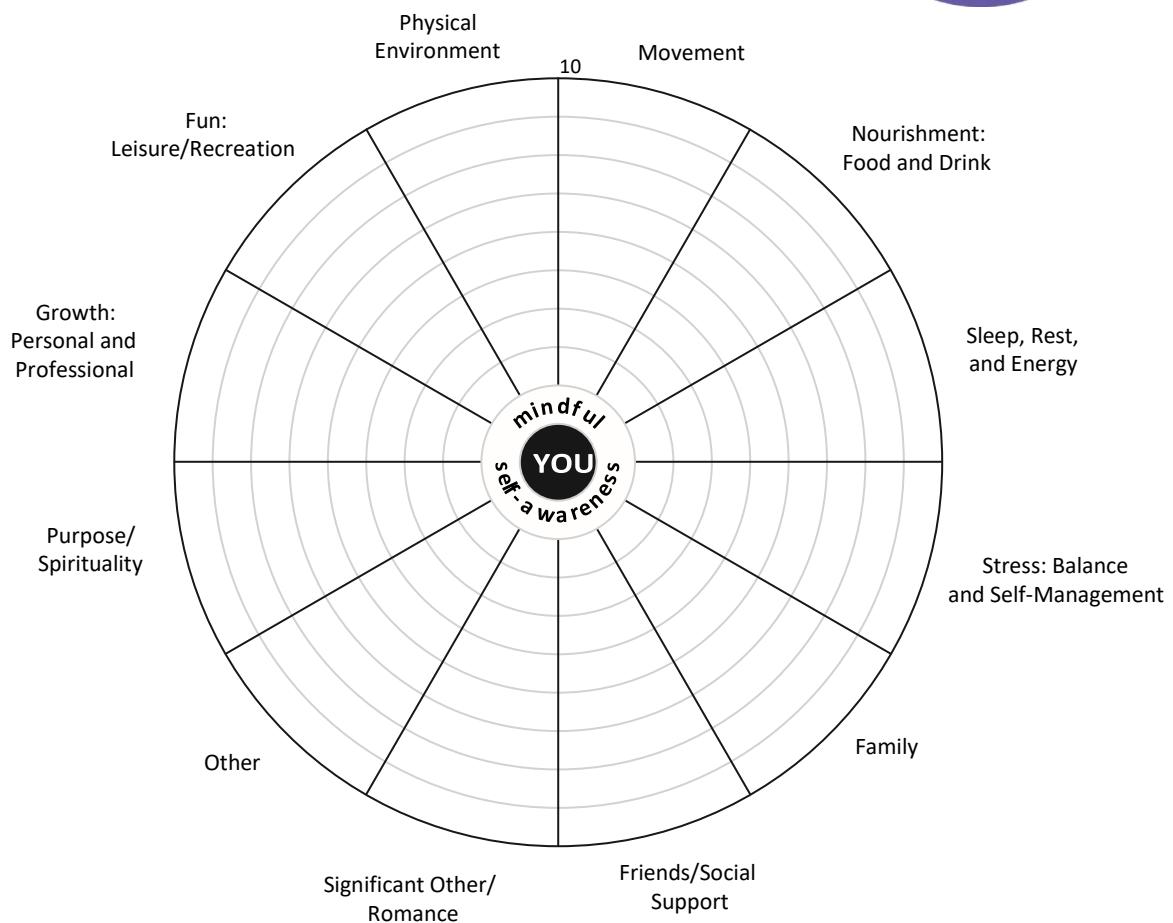
Appendix B

Wellness Wheel

The Wellness Wheel

Name: _____

Date: _____



Wellness Wheel Instructions: The 12 sections of the Wheel represent life balance. Please look over each category. Feel free to add anything that is important to you in the "other" category. Also you may rename any category so that it is meaningful to you and the wheel overall represents your balanced life.

Next, taking the center of the wheel as 0 and the outer edge as 10, draw a line at your level of satisfaction in each area, at this time in your life. Looking at the wheel overall, you may get a sense of how balanced your life feels to you now.

Appendix C

Wellness Wednesday Text Content

- 6/2 TIP #1: SMILE

😊 SMILE!! Smiles are powerful. Smiling more often reduces stress improves your overall health. Share your smiles and spread the positivity!

- 6/9 TIP #2: BREATHE

❑ BREATHE:: Did you know taking deep breaths reduce stress and releases negative energy?
► Next time you feel anxious take a deep inhale, hold, and exhale slowly. AHH...

- 6/16 TIP #3: MOVE

❑ MOVE!! When you are feeling overwhelmed, movement can shift your nervous system, calm your emotions, and relax your body. ❑ Take a walk, stretch, and move your body!

- 6/23 TIP #4: HYDRATE

❑ HYDRATE!! Did you know that stress can cause dehydration? Don't wait until you are thirsty to drink water. ❑ Stay hydrated throughout the day with regular intake of water, juices, and tea. ❑ Enjoy a snack of watermelon!

- 6/30 TIP #5: UNPLUG

UNPLUG!! Did you know that using electronic devices at night can interfere with both the quantity and quality of sleep? Tonight, try turning off all electronics before you go to sleep. Yes, even your cell phone!

- 7/7 TIP #6: NO

NO!! Sometimes saying NO is actually a YES to your own self-care. Setting healthy boundaries can greatly reduce stress.

- 7/14 TIP #7: LAUGH

LAUGH!!! Did you know that laughing increases endorphins and reduces stress? Take a break from work and have a good laugh.

- 7/21 TIP #8: THANK YOU

THANK YOU!! Saying thank you is the simplest and yet most powerful means of expressing gratitude. The Thanker increases his sense of wellbeing while Thankee feels valued. Surprise someone today with a “thank you”.

- 7/28 TIP #9: 2 MINUTES

2 MINUTES!! Follow the two-minute rule. If there is something on your work to-do list that you can complete in less than two minutes, do it immediately. This can help reduce stress from your work life.

- 8/4 TIP #10: DANCE

DANCE!! Did you know dancing reduces cortisol and increases endorphins? Take a moment to put on your favorite song and dance around the house. Dance like no one’s watching!

Appendix D

GANTT Timeline

(separate Excel spreadsheet)

Appendix E

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Memorandum of Understanding

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This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) clarifies the role and responsibilities between **Elizabeth A. Wade (Liza)** and **Karina Perez Marconi** to conduct a pilot test of a health promotion program with 10 participants who are employees of ANTEDOTUM.

This MOU also clarifies the nature of the proposed health promotion program, “Stress Reduction Program”, that will be tested in the practicum within the Capstone course (IHED 641). Based on the results of the pilot test, a revised MOU will be created to clarify roles and responsibilities and outline the program that will be implemented beyond that point.

This MOU is in effect from March 22, 2021 (date of first contact) until August 10, 2021 (last day of the semester).

Background

Stress has been identified as the leading health concern for the employees of ANTEDOTUM. Risk factors stem from the remote business structure. They include lack of definition to work hours and conflicting demands from work and home.

Research indicates that being “always on” and accessible through technology while working remotely leads to the blurring of work and non-work boundaries (Russell, 2019). It has been determined that the risk factors specific to the work culture of ANTEDOTUM include the lack of definition of their work hours due to the 24/7 blurring of accessibility from working remotely and lack of work-life balance from conflicting demands of work and home (WHO, 2020).

Purpose

The purpose of the pilot test is to determine if the proposed program is a good fit for ANTEDOTUM. The goal is to decrease the stress levels of the employees through increasing the awareness of stressors and providing sample solutions to mitigate them.

Target Population: The target population of the pilot program is the employees of ANTEDOTUM. For the purposes of this MOU employees are defined as those persons on direct payroll not to include part-time or contact workers.

Methods of Assessment: The methods of assessment will be conducted virtually. This will include: 1) a baseline survey to assess existing knowledge, behaviors, and needs; 2) data collection for absenteeism and turnover rates; 3) interviews with CEO & VP for further assessment; and 4) measurement stress levels and work-life balance at baseline and at the conclusion of the program.

Objectives: The objectives for the stress reduction program will be customized with SMART objectives for stress reduction that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time bound.

- **Objective 1-** Raise awareness about the need, process, and benefits of implementing a stress reduction plan among the employees of by 90%. This will be measured by comparing the employee scores at baseline survey to exit survey.
- **Objective 2-** Increase knowledge of stress triggers by 75% among the employees of ANTEDOTUM. This will be measured by comparing employee scores at baseline survey to exit survey.
- **Objective 3-** Increase amount of involvement in stress reducing initiatives among the employees of by 50%. This will be measured by comparing employee self-reported activities at baseline to exit survey.
- **Objective 4-** Reduce stress related measurements among the employees of ANTEDOTUM by 25% after six months of program implementation. This will be measured by comparing perceived stress at baseline survey to exit survey.

Evaluation Plan: The evaluation will use the summative approach. This approach can be used to measure outcomes after completion. The evaluation components are as follows:

- **Comparative Data-** the evaluation will be centered on a set of outcomes from the pilot and will come at the end of the pilot program. It will use comparative data from assessments at baseline and at the conclusion of the program and from human resources statistics measurements.
- **Logic Model-** a logic model will be used which highlights cause and effect by creating a flowchart that summarizes key elements of the “Stress Reduction Pilot Program”. The elements of the logic model will communicate the resources, activities, outputs, and outcomes.
- **Credible Evidence-** evidence will be gathered for the evaluation using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Qualitative data collections will consist of a survey both before and after the pilot program and structured interviews with

Karina Perez Marconi. Quantitative data collection will company records of employee sick days.

- **Justify Conclusions**- according to WHO, stress can damage an employee's health and the work performance. If the outcomes of the evaluation can prove that stress has been reduced and work-life balance increased within the time frame of the pilot program then it can be argued that the program works.
- **Ensure use of evaluation findings**- the findings of the evaluation will be shared with Karina Perez Marconi. The findings will be sent via email as a report and discussed in a Zoom meeting.

Outline of proposed program content:

The stress management program will be designed with the current ten top level executives of ANTEDOTUM in mind.

- **Work-Life Balance Pledge**- written pledge will be provided to each employee to sign and will be placed in their human resources file. Research indicates that being “always on” and accessible through technology while working remotely leads to the blurring of work and non-work boundaries (Russell, 2019).
- 1) **The Right to Disconnect**- This concept provides each employee with the provision that it is their right to keep “office hours” despite working from a home office and having 24/7 access to electronics. In the document the employee will declare what their regular operating hours will be. An example would be “Monday through Friday, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm”.
- 2) **The Right to Lunch Hour**- This concept ensures that each employee has the right to enjoy a full one-hour lunch away from work related electronics.
- 3) **The Right to a Weekend**- This concept respects the time the employee has to enjoy their personal life outside of work understanding that they will be re-energized when they return to work at the beginning of the next week.
- 4) **The Right to a Vacation**- This concept ensures that the employee uses all allocated vacation days. It will be encouraged by the company to take one whole week at a time for optimum rejuvenation.
- 5) **The Right to a Wellness Day**- This concept embraces the idea that the employee gets a paid day off for self-care. This can be defined by the employee to include the annual physical, a spa retreat, a day trip, etc.

➤ **Zen Zone on Zoom-**

The stress reduction program will be highlighted by monthly half-hour Zoom sessions. Each session will feature a different guest host with expertise on a topic targeted to reduce stress. The sessions will be designed to be live and interactive. However, they will be recorded for those who miss the session or wish to review. The pilot program will be launched with Session 1, *Feng Shui for Home Office*. The next two sessions will be selected from 2-6 as follows:

- 1) **Session 1- *Feng Shui for Home Office***: Employees will be introduced to the concept of “Qi” and the auspicious placement and color of furnishings and décor. The goal is to create a harmonious flow in the home office to decrease stress and increase productivity.

- 2) **Session 2- Boss the Clock:** Employees will learn to recognize what habits they have that cause distractions and log how much time is “wasted” by them. Facilitator will recommend tips to overcome common distraction from working at home. The goal is to reduce the stress of distractions and increase productivity.
- 3) **Session 3- Setting Boundaries:** Employees will learn how to visualize the boundaries of the virtual workplace. The goal is to “unblur” the distinction between work and home and embrace the right to disconnect.
- 4) **Session 4- Laughing Lab:** Studies show that laughing increases endorphins and reduces stress. Employees will be encouraged to laugh. The goal is to reduce stress and promote a sense of well-being.
- 5) **Session 5- Chair Yoga:** The benefits of yoga are widely recognized. Employees may be surprised by how effective chair yoga can be for stress reduction. The goal is to learn enough poses that the employee can use them while working in his/her home office.
- 6) **Session 6- Vision Board for Stress Reduction:** Building upon the concept of visualization, vision boards are widely accepted to offer benefits of visual self-talk. Since a vision board should focus on how a person wants to feel, the employee will learn to create a board to help them feel more stress free.

- **Marketing and Communication**
 - **Email-** A daily quote on wellness to keep positive reinforcement top of mind.
 - **Text-** Once a week each employee will get a “Wellness Wednesday” text from Wellness Program Manager with a tip for reducing work related stress.
 - **Slack.com-** Monthly posts on the ANTEDOTUM team platform with information about benefits of reducing stress from Wellness Program Manager.
 - **Care Package-** A monthly wellness box will be shipped to each employee with a gift from ANTEDOTUM. The gift will tie-in to the topic of the monthly Zen Zone on Zoom session.
- **Timeline.** The structure of the timeline will follow a GANTT format. The visual presentation will make it easy for the team to see where projects stand. Access will be granted to the CEO and VP of Sales. It will be placed on an ANTEDOTUM OneDrive and updated by the Wellness Program Manager as tasks get completed.

Roles and Responsibility

Karina Perez Marconi agrees to do the following activities:

- 1) Host Zoom meetings on a weekly basis with Liza Wade and any additional parties she deems beneficial to the wellness dialog;
- 2) Provide feedback to Liza Wade on program submissions via email and/or on Zoom;
- 3) Promote wellness program to the ANTEDOTUM team by participating in the initiatives;
- 4) Select the topics for the two sessions to follow Session 1 from the list provided; and
- 5) Supply materials for the execution of the wellness initiatives.

Liza Wade agrees to do the following activities:

Attend Zoom meetings on a weekly basis hosted by Karina Perez Marconi;
Conduct two surveys: a preliminary survey before the pilot program is initiated and a second survey once three Zoom sessions take place;
Interview Karina Perez Marconi and other top-level executives as needed;
Create a Work-Life Balance pledge and brochure for ANTEDOTUM;
Conduct a minimum of three Zoom sessions with a stress reduction topic;
Ask participants for feedback on materials and content, including care package and marketing materials, after each Zoom session is conducted;
Provide Karina Perez Marconi with items to review before each Zoom session. These items may include items for the care package, marketing materials, and relevant questions; and
Present the results of pilot program via email as a report and discuss in final Zoom meeting of MOU period.

Katherine Smith, MUIH Capstone Instructor, agrees to do the following activities:

Meet with Karina Perez Marconi for an initial introduction to the practicum by telephone or web conference.
Be available for additional communication as needed with Karina Perez Marconi;
Review materials developed by Liza Wade to ensure principles of health promotion planning and adult learning principles are followed in the design of the pilot session;
Review of the final report summarizing the pilot experience.

This agreement may be amended at any time with the mutual consent of the parties.

Contact Information

Katherine Smith, MPH
Maryland University of Integrative Health
7750 Montpelier Rd, Laurel, MD 20723

Appendix F

Budget

BUDGET

	1 Unit	8 Units
Gift #1	\$15.00	\$120.00
Shipping	\$15.00	\$120.00
Gift #2	\$15.00	\$120.00
Shipping	\$15.00	\$120.00
Gift #3	\$15.00	\$120.00
Shipping	\$15.00	\$120.00
TOTAL	\$90.00	\$720.00

Appendix G

Logic Model

(see attached PDF)

Appendix H

Brochure: Work-Life Balance Pledge

This is a trifold brochure which will be presented to all employees of ANTEDOTUM. The pledge is intended to set the tone for the positive and holistic workplace culture of health and wellness.

[Outside]



The image shows the front cover of a brochure for Antedotum. The left side of the cover features a photograph of a snowy mountain slope with a ski lift. The right side is divided into two sections: a yellow section containing the company name and contact information, and a dark blue section containing a compass icon, the slogan, and a tagline.

ANTEDOTUM

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www.antedotum.com

**WORK-
LIFE
BALANCE
PLEDGE**

Happiness through
healing

**Inspired by
ANTEDOTUM values
for our most
valuable asset...YOU**

[Inside]



ANTEDOTUM RESPECTS

Your Right to Disconnect

Your Right to a Lunch Hour

Your Right to a Weekend

Your Right to a Vacation

Your Right to a Wellness Day

Your Right to Disconnect

Set your office hours and stick to them. Create "Operating Hours" in your email signature line for all to see.



Your Right to a Lunch Hour

Take your full hour, enjoy a healthy meal, and do not answer work calls.

Your Right to a Weekend

Your weekend starts when you log off on Friday. Enjoy your time with friends and family. We want you to be rejuvenated when you log back on to work Monday morning.



YOUR RIGHT TO A VACATION

Use all your vacation days! It is highly recommended to take one whole week at a time. We want you to have the opportunity to relax and come back to work refreshed.

YOUR RIGHT TO A WELLNESS DAY

We want you to dedicate a day off for self-care. This can be used for your annual physical, a spa retreat, or a day trip...whatever restores your body and soul.

