Mitä kuuluu?
Well-being approaches at the University of Helsinki and what we can learn from each other.

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Mitä kuuluu?
(How are you doing?)
In Kumpula we can manage… or can we?

Faculty of Science: 5 departments + 1 institute
= 6 workplace wellbeing groups

1. Institute for Atmospheric and Earth System Research (INAR)
2. Chemistry
3. Computer Sciences
4. Mathematics and Statistics
5. Physics
6. Geoscience and Geography
GEO wellbeing group: Why, who, what?

Why do we exist?

• responsible for sharing information and good practices
• promote the sense of community and work-wellbeing on campus
• provide low-threshold support (It does not need to be a crisis; we are here to help in any situation!)
• promote “breaking the silence”: lowering the threshold for reporting harassment and other physical & mental wellbeing concerns
Why did I join?

Reduce stigmatisms around mental illnesses/
health issues

lazy
not trustworthy
rude
manipulative
attention seeking
unstable
irresponsible
pretending/ faking
unable to take criticism
incapable
not good enough
weak
unreliable
irresponsible
not trustworthy
rude
manipulative
attention seeking
unstable
GEO wellbeing group: Why, who, what?

Who are we?

We are not trained psychologists.
GEO wellbeing group: Why, who, what?

Who are we?

4x Professors/University lecturer (2 female, 1 non-Finnish)
2x PhD researcher (2 female, 1 non-Finnish)
2x general department representatives: i.e., research coordination, human resources (2 female)
(2x Bachelor and Master student representatives)
GEO wellbeing group: Why, who, what?
What do/can we do?
GEO wellbeing group: Why, who, what? What do/can we do?

University and scientific community scope:
- Publishers/ Journals
- Funding
- Hierarchies
GEO wellbeing group: Why, who, what?  
What do/can we do?

Group/ department level scope:
- Communication  
  (frequency, visibility, channels, tone)  
- Expectations/ Responsibilities  
  (supervisor-supervisee agreements)  
- Training (supervision, mental health, ....)  
- Work environment
GEO wellbeing group: Why, who, what?
What do/can we do?

Personal scope:
- know your responsibilities
- say “no”
- E-mail management
- Time management (Work-life balance)
- reach out (colleagues, friends, doctors)
- celebrate your own success
GEO wellbeing group: Why, who, what?
What do/can we do?

Our scope where change is possible
Recreational and team-building activities

Annual department BBQ

Communal XXXL Christmas Card 2023
“holiday wishes and seeing the good in us”

Group discussions:
Well-being surveys
What can we do for YOU?

Recreational and team-building activities
“baby steps have an impact on the big picture”
- Hanna Vehkamäki, vice-dean and head of the INAR wellbeing group

Life can be overwhelming
Be considerate. Choose your communication channels carefully.

It’s okay to leave work at work
And for others to do the same.

Community matters
Conflict resolution begins with genuine encounters

GEO communication
”House rules” (2023)
Remember...

...to focus on what you can influence

...“how are you doing?” and “how can I help” are a great first steps

...everyone needs a hand sometimes
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Let’s have a chat later 😊
In Kumpula we can manage... or can we?

Average share of female employees

University-wide: ~53%, Faculty of Science: ~29%, Geoscience and Geography: ~40%

More numbers  https://www.helsinki.fi/en/faculty-science/faculty/faculty-numbers

Career levels:
1 = doctoral researchers
2 = postdoctoral researcher
3 = assistant and associate professors, university lecturers, senior university lecturers, university researchers, senior researchers
4 = professors, research director

Average share of female employees

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