

YOUR LIFE *well lived*

SEPTEMBER 2019

WELLBEING RESOURCES FOR HARVARD FACULTY AND STAFF

CULTIVATING COMPASSIONATE COMMUNITIES

When it comes to wellbeing, it pays to be kind. Sometimes described as the state of “suffering together,” compassion is the motivation to help when faced with another’s pain. But how can we practice compassion without becoming overwhelmed or burned out by the needs of others?

One potential solution is practicing “compassion meditation,” which prepares the heart and intellect to navigate the demands of compassion within the context of work and personal relationships. By learning to cultivate the compassionate parts of yourself, you can better support others and even enhance your own wellbeing. Emerging research from Harvard and [other institutions](#) suggests that this practice can significantly reduce depression, anxiety, self-criticism, and shame—and also may offer health-related benefits, such as reduced immune and behavioral responses to psychosocial stress. Compassion can even help you [avoid burnout](#) at work.

To learn and practice compassion meditation at Harvard, you can:



- Register for the upcoming [Mindfulness and Compassion session](#) (HarvardKey required), September 24, sponsored by Harvard’s Mindfulness @ Work. The session focuses on observing internal and external experience with a heightened sense of clarity—an essential element for effectively navigating the demands of compassion.
- Attend our [Monthly Mindfulness and Compassion Lecture Series](#), sponsored by the Institute for Meditation and Psychotherapy, [Center for Mindfulness and Compassion](#) of Cambridge Health Alliance, and [David S. Rosenthal Center for Wellness and Health Promotion](#), Harvard University Health Services.

SAVE SMART WITH HARVARD’S TAX DEFERRED ANNUITY

Are you making the most of one of your most valuable benefits? The Harvard Tax Deferred Annuity (TDA) offers a convenient and simple way to save for your financial future.

Getting started is easy! Here’s how it works:

- You can contribute in [two ways](#):
 1. **Traditional:** Contributions are made pre-tax, and you pay taxes when the funds are withdrawn.
 2. **Roth:** Contributions are taken after taxes. Withdrawals in retirement are tax free and can be left tax free to heirs.
- In 2019, you can contribute up to \$19,000, or \$25,000 if you are age 50 or older.
- If you do not [make an investment choice](#), your contributions will automatically be invested in a Vanguard target-date fund that most closely matches the year you turn 65.
- If you’re a faculty or administrative/professional staff member, you’ll be [automatically enrolled](#) after 60 days of employment if you don’t make an active election.



- You may enroll, change, or stop your TDA contributions at any time through the [HURC website](#) (HarvardKey required) or by calling 800-527-1398.
 - You can consolidate accounts by rolling over contributions from an IRA and other qualified retirement plans.
 - You may withdraw some of your savings once you reach age 59½ and take a loan or withdrawal if you experience a qualifying hardship. See the [Retirement Program SPD](#) for details.
- Questions?** Visit the [HURC website](#) (HarvardKey required) or call 800-527-1398.

TEST YOUR TDA KNOWLEDGE

True or False?

1. I can enroll in Harvard's TDA plan only during benefits Open Enrollment.
FALSE — You can enroll in a TDA or change your contributions at any time.
2. My beneficiary designation for the Harvard-Funded Retirement Plan also applies to the Harvard TDA account.
FALSE — You need to provide a separate beneficiary for each account.

MIND AND BODY

Enrich your mind and strengthen your body with these free Harvard resources.

- Visit the Museum of Fine Arts for free with your current valid HUID. Want to bring a guest? Half-priced tickets are available from [O&I](#) (HarvardKey required).
- Did you know oral health can significantly impact your overall health? Learn more at a [Brownbag Lunch & Learn](#) hosted by Harvard Benefits, with presentations by the Harvard Dental School, on September 19.
- Join alumni, faculty, trainees, students, and staff for a day of reflection celebrating 50 years of diversity and inclusion at Harvard Medical School and Harvard School of Dental Medicine. Register [here](#).

LIVING AND WORKING

Prepare for every stage of life with these Office of Work/Life resources.

- Caring for an aging adult can be challenging. Access professional advice and vetted services through the [Senior Care Planning program](#).
- Get strategies for keeping your teen safe by [registering](#) for the online group chat Talking to Your Teens About Alcohol and Drug Misuse, September 24 at 1 p.m.
- The new Office of Work/Life Program Calendar is [here](#)! This fall, register for classes that promote your wellbeing.

LEARNING AND GROWTH

Start the new school year off right by investing in your professional development.

- Explore a variety of topics, from public policy to bioethics, through HarvardX's free [online learning](#) activities, which empower faculty teaching, enhance student learning, and support research.
- Master the elements of effective, meaningful, verbal communication in the popular Center for Workplace Development (CWD) course [Communicating at Work](#) (HarvardKey required), September 25 and December 12.
- Don't miss out! Sign up for the CWD [mailing list](#) to learn more about upcoming career and professional development opportunities.

FINANCES AND SECURITY

Whether you're planning your commute or your retirement, these resources can help you stay on track.

- Check out [HARVie Classifieds'](#) new commuter-related listings—including rideshare information and tips (HarvardKey required).
- Are you saving enough? Which investments are right for you? Find out by attending one of our September or October financial workshops, found on the [Financial Education Calendar](#).
- Retiring soon? If you or your spouse will be 65 or older, remember to allow 2.5 to 3 months to apply for Medicare B. Learn more [here](#).

For more about Harvard employee events, view the [full calendar](#) on HARVie.