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Discovery Vitality launches Vitality mental wellbeing module and rewards; partners with Miss South Africa on awareness campaign

JOHANNESBURG, 29 March 2021 | [Discovery Vitality is excited to announce the introduction of the mental wellbeing module to Vitality.](#) Members can now track their mindful minutes and sleep goals on partner apps, including Headspace, Calm, The Mindfulness App and buddhify, in the Vitality Active Rewards platform. Members will be rewarded with Discovery Miles for taking proactive steps towards their mental health and wellbeing.

An innovative digital intervention to address a global challenge

Mental health concerns are a prevalent part of everyday life, affecting our thoughts and emotions as well as our health behaviours.

- Worldwide, [more than one billion people](#) are affected by mental or addictive disorders – around 16% of the world’s population
- According to the [South African Stress and Health \(SASH\) study](#), the lifetime prevalence for any mental disorder among South Africans was found to be 30%

Improving mental wellbeing and resilience is integral to overall health. “We know that mental and physical health are [connected](#). While living with a chronic condition increases the risk for developing poor mental health, the opposite is also true – poor mental health increases the risk for developing chronic conditions,” explains Dr Mosima Mabunda, Vitality’s Head of Wellness. “For example, depression is associated with an [18% higher risk of type 2 diabetes](#). This may be because people with a mental health condition find it more difficult to manage their physical health.”

Vitality data supports the impact of healthy lifestyle behaviours on mental wellbeing:

- Physical inactivity is associated with 4 times more reported psychological distress.
- Unhealthy food purchases are associated with 1.7 times more reported psychological distress.

“This highlights the importance of preventative behaviours for both mental and physical health,” says Dr Mabunda. “These include mindfulness-based meditation – which has been [shown](#) to be useful in improving mental wellbeing – and adequate sleep. Physical activity and good nutrition have a well-established positive impact on our health,” she notes. “This is what drove us to more purposefully and formally integrate mental wellbeing into the Vitality programme.”

Not getting enough sleep negatively affects our physical and mental health

[One in three adults](#) suffers from poor sleep. While an occasional sleepless

night won't harm your health, studies show that not getting enough sleep on a regular basis has been linked to [increased mortality and several health conditions](#), including diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases and obesity. It may also lead to long-term mood disorders, like depression and anxiety.

“We have applied our understanding of behavioural science to nudge our members to adopt healthy sleeping habits,” says Dr Mabunda. “While many factors can affect our sleep, tracking the amount of sleep we get is a good start. So is developing habits that improve sleep, like keeping regular sleeping hours or incorporating relaxation techniques such as [mindfulness meditation](#).”

How the programme works

Vitality members earn 500 points for completing mental wellbeing [assessment](#) online. These are based on key areas that influence our overall state of mental wellbeing, including sleep, resilience, depression and anxiety. [After completing the assessments, members activate the mental wellbeing module in the Vitality Active Rewards programme.](#) They can download a mindfulness app of their choice (Calm, Headspace, buddhify or The Mindfulness App) to track their mindful minutes and link their Garmin and Apple devices to track their sleep.

In addition, the [Vitality Mental-Wellbeing channel](#) shares free tools, available to anyone, to improve mental wellbeing. These include videos, podcasts and tips from experts.

Partnering with Miss South Africa to raise awareness

As part of this mental wellbeing drive, Vitality is also delighted to announce a new campaign, with Miss South Africa, to raise awareness of the importance of mental wellbeing. The flagship initiative of the collaboration will be a series of topical discussions on the Miss South Africa #MindfulMonday digital broadcasts. The #MindfulMonday initiative was launched in February and has featured a multitude of mental health experts covering a variety of important issues including depression, anxiety, trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Miss South Africa 2020, Shudufhadzo Musida, and Vitality Clinical Wellness Specialist and mental health expert, Dr Seranne Motilal, will be live on #MindfulMonday on 29 March 2021, on [Facebook Live](#) and [Instagram Live](#), discussing the role of sleep, mindfulness, exercise and nutrition on mental wellbeing.

“We have always been driven to educate and empower our members to prioritise mental wellbeing in managing overall health,” says Dr Motilal. She adds, “The partnership with Miss South Africa, an increasingly powerful voice in this space, is opportune and meaningful at a time when so many South Africans are taking mental and emotional strain.”

Dr Motilal concludes: “Mental wellness must be a priority for all South Africans. So, in addition to these exciting new initiatives for our Vitality members, we have a number of resources available to all South Africans on the [Vitality at Home](#) site. These include mental wellbeing articles, podcasts and breathwork videos as well as home-workout videos and nutritious recipes.”

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Discovery information

About Discovery

Discovery Limited is a South African-founded financial services organisation that operates in the healthcare, life assurance, short-term insurance, savings and investment and wellness markets. Since its inception in 1992, Discovery has been guided by a clear core purpose – to make people healthier and to enhance and protect their lives. This has manifested in its globally recognised Vitality Shared-value Insurance model, active in 24 markets with over 20 million members. The model is exported and scaled through the Global Vitality Network, an alliance of some of the largest insurers in key markets, including AIA (Asia), Ping An (China), Generali (Europe), Sumitomo (Japan), John Hancock (US), Manulife (Canada) and Vitality Life & Health (UK, wholly owned). Discovery trades on the Johannesburg Securities Exchange as DSY. Follow us on Twitter [@Discovery_SA](#)

About Vitality

Vitality is the largest platform for behaviour change globally, underpinning the insurance products of 14 leading global insurers, with more than 20 million members in 24 countries. It is a leading behaviour-change programme that underpins insurance and financial services, creating shared value by combining behavioural economics and clinical science to encourage and reward members for exercising more, eating healthier, managing stress, and looking after and improving their health. For more information, please visit the [Vitality Website](#) or email media_relations_team@discovery.co.za.

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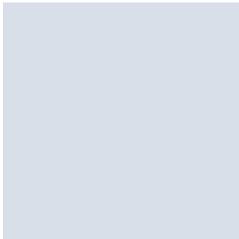
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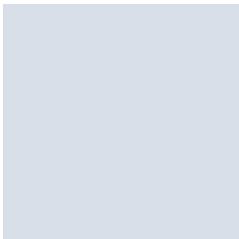
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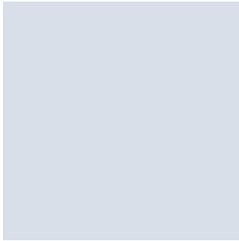
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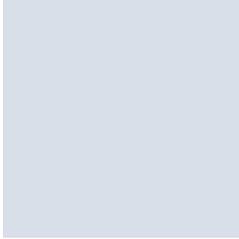
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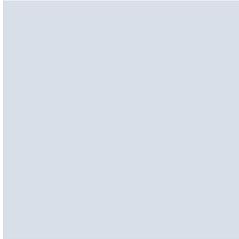
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