

Blue Cross® VIRTUAL WELL-BEING

Hygge

Almost every year, one of the Nordic countries — Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Iceland — makes it to the top of the World Happiness Report produced by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network. What makes people in these countries so happy? It may have to do with hygge.

Hygge is a concept originated in the Danish culture that focuses on living with a sense of comfort, coziness and peace. It has been described as “creating a warm atmosphere and enjoying the good things in life with good people.”

There are a number of benefits to practicing hygge, including:

Emotional benefits: Hygge promotes a sense of emotional well-being, comfort and safety from creating a cozy living space. These feelings can result in increased feelings of self-worth, lowered stress, a greater sense of mindfulness, and less depression and anxiety.



Physical benefits: When we feel safe and calm, our bodies respond accordingly. A hygge-style environment allows minds and bodies to feel more relaxed. This can result in improved sleep, weight regulation, fewer stress hormone spikes, improved self-care and a reduced need for unhealthy coping behaviors such as alcohol or drugs.

Social benefits: When we feel comfortable and emotionally safe, we’re more likely to build and nurture connections with others. In a hygge-focused lifestyle, there’s an emphasis on connecting with family and friends. Social benefits of hygge include increased trust and intimacy, new social connections, improved relationships and less reliance on social media.

How can you incorporate hygge into your everyday life? Here are a few ways:

- Get together with friends and family
- Enjoy good food and drink
- Disconnect from devices and savor the moment
- Turn the lights down
- Dress comfortably
- Make your home a hygge hot spot
- Get out in nature
- Play games and get creative
- Celebrate the seasons

Sources: [howstuffworks.com](https://www.howstuffworks.com)*, [everywellmind.com](https://www.everywellmind.com)*, [medium.com](https://www.medium.com)*

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