

## MPI Michigan Blog – January 2021

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Welcome to 2021, MPI Michigan – WE MADE IT! Though the pandemic is far from over, there's light at the end of the tunnel. To start of the year right, we wanted to give you some health and wellness tips to incorporate into your virtual events (and your life) from our friends at Prevue Meetings and MeetingPlay.

**Lead by Example:** If you include health and wellness into a program, make sure it feels authentic and not forced. If you, the planner, place value on health and wellness activities, your attendees are more likely to have fun and the activities will feel less like a chore. On your agenda, make sure you highlight the activities with a brief description. This will let participants know ahead of time that the virtual event will accommodate breaks, physical and mental exercise, connectivity and more.

**Give Us a Break:** We already know attention spans are short and you're more likely to lose someone in a virtual meeting than face-to-face. Build in short, 15-minute breaks for attendees to get up, stretch, grab a drink and then be re-engaged when they get back. You can play slideshows, videos or music – something that is appealing, but doesn't require the attendee's full attention.

**Move Your Body:** For more structure, try a short fitness break to get your attendees' blood (and ideas) pumping. Activities like stretching, dancing, or walking can invigorate your attendees, improve their cognitive performance, and boost mood. Or if you don't have time to incorporate long-form wellness breaks into your event, try providing links to classes on a "wellness hub." This encourages your attendees to move on their own time.

**Clear the Mind:** Don't forget about your attendees' mental health – it's just as important as their physical health. Find ways to incorporate activities that stimulate and calm the mind. Guided meditations, novice yoga sessions are a good way to decrease stress and fortify the immune system. Regardless of the industry your attendees are in, mental health issues are on the rise. If you can provide a little break during the day, your attendees will thank you.

**Create Deep Connections:** One thing everyone is missing during this time is personal connection, so try to create those connections during your event. You could try doing one-on-one appointments, do a live Q&A session with a presenter or even end on a happy hour to get them engaged and talk amongst the group.

Whatever you choose, make sure to take time for yourself too.