



HOLIDAY SEASON AND WINTER BREAK STRESS KIT

For some students, long breaks or the holiday season can come with challenges and dilemmas. Many of the stressors encountered over long breaks and during the holiday time can be quite hazardous. We've designed and compiled the information in this stress kit to support you in whatever situation you might navigate over your time off.



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STRESS KIT

Hello!

While many folks think of winter break or the holidays as being relaxing and joyous, they can be quite stressful for some. This stress kit was designed to help you generate ways to cope with the various stressors that can occur with holidays and/or a long break.

There will be situations you are in that might feel like an eternity. Remember, every stressful situation will stop. Every hard conversation will be over soon. Every bizarre gathering will end at some point. Use the resources in this tool kit to help you before, during, and after any stressor(s).

There are several topics covered in this kit include Setting Boundaries, Handling Difficult People, Continuing Connections, Creating Safe Spaces, Maintaining Routine, Engaging in Self-Care, and Mindfulness.

We also recognize that some of the concepts discussed in this tool kit will look different for different individuals. So many of these concepts are dependent on context and culture. This kit is not an exhaustive list of all skills and methods that you can use. We hope that this helps jump start your mind to think about ways you can care for yourself and support your well-being around the holiday season and during winter break.

If you find a tip or two to share with others, feel free to pass along the info!

There are additional resources at the very end of this kit if you need further assistance.

Take care,



**SETTING
BOUNDARIES**

**HANDLING DIFFICULT
PEOPLE**

**CONTINUING
CONNECTIONS**

**CREATING SAFE
SPACES**

**MAINTAINING
ROUTINE**

SELF-CARE

MINDFULNESS

CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

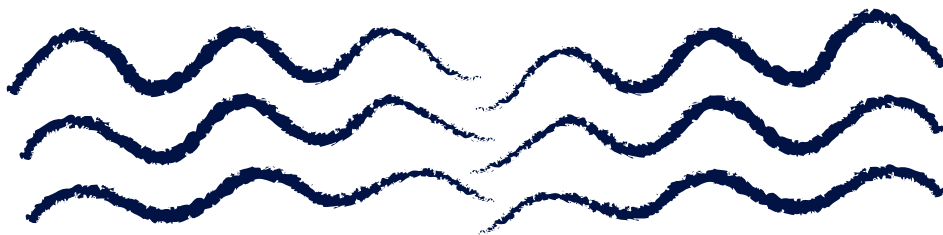
Before we talk about anything in-depth in this tool kit, we need to zoom out and take a look at the big picture. There are a variety of topics and concepts discussed here. Some might work really well for you, some might not. You might have already tried some, while others could be brand new ideas. Some might work really well in specific situation, while some might have zero impact.

Culture is an umbrella term that describes behaviors, norms, beliefs, customs and habits of a group of people. Some cultures across an entire continent might share a norm, while another norm could be confined to a culture of a much smaller group of people. The culture of a person's family might have zero overlap with the culture of campus, while the culture of a group of friends might be extremely similar in one location compared to another.

Whatever the situation, know that life, people, circumstances, and cultures are complex. You might be at dinner and not want to talk about career plans or your ideas for life after graduation. However, that might be a really important topic for a parent to ask you about. When spending time with family, setting boundaries and advocating for yourself might cause more drama than going with the flow of the situation.

The information in this tool kit is not designed to serve as the line of best fit for all people everywhere. There might be some aspects that work, there might be some that you read and know they will be a disaster. None of these suggestions are absolutes.

In every situation, evaluate what you need. Take time to evaluate the dynamics, patterns, and rules of the people you are with in the variety of situations you will encounter. If there is a conflict between your needs and the needs of others, ask yourself "how can I take care of myself while still respecting others?" That does not mean you need to sacrifice your self for others. However, in some situations we might feel limited in our power to influence events. Ultimately, you know your situation best. You are the expert on your circumstances. Use the information in this tool kit how you see fit!



SETTING BOUNDARIES

What are *boundaries*?

Boundaries are personal limits and guidelines that you create for yourself in relation to another individual. Think of a boundary like a state line; we know exactly where one state ends and the other clearly begins. As your own boundaries can be based on a variety of elements such as own principles and beliefs, your relationship with the other individual, and cultural values. Boundaries can include what you will and will not participate in, what you consider acceptable behavior, and how you will respond when the limits and guidelines are violated or damaged.

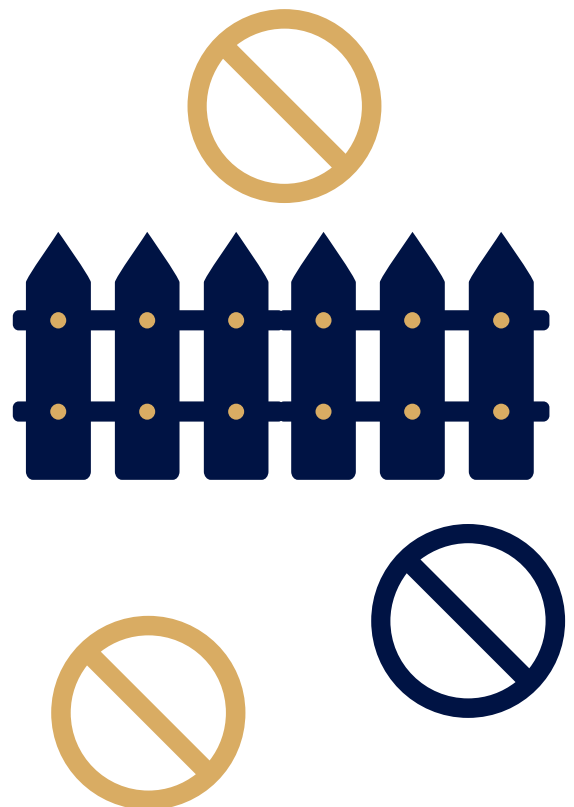
The function of a boundary is to protect you and your own sense of self. Boundaries can look different for each relationship you have in life. This includes romantic, familial, workplace and interpersonal boundaries. We can also set boundaries for our personal space, our items and possessions, and time and energy.

We recognize that boundary setting might be easier said than done. Some cultural considerations and some situations do not always allow for the exact boundaries that we want or need. Always think as creatively as possible to help care for your well-being.

Physical Boundaries:

Sometimes we need to create a physical boundary. Much like a band-aid over a cut, we sometimes need a layer of space with another individual. This can include increasing physical space between yourself and someone else. If someone is talking loudly to you, the first reaction is to take a step back. Setting physical boundaries can involve leaving a room if you are uncomfortable or not allowing others too close into your own personal space.

Non-verbal behaviors such as taking a step back or standing behind an object like a chair can sometimes alert another individual to our need for space. Other times, we have to verbally notify someone that they are too close, that we need more space, that we feel crowded, or that we do not like what they are doing. If you feel unsupported with certain individuals, you might try to spend limited or no time with them. If that is not possible, identify roles where you can get space such as being an errand runner or volunteer to help with gardening or the lawn.

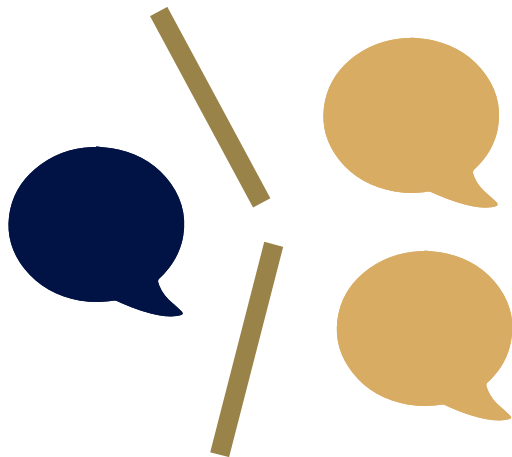


SETTING BOUNDARIES

Emotional Boundaries:

Sometimes we need to establish interpersonal boundaries with another person. Like melted ice cubs in a glass of water, we can lose ourselves with other people and not notice where we begin and someone else ends. Another individual's words and choices can greatly impact our own sense of self, our emotions, and our self-esteem. There are times when other people might make us feel responsible for something we did not do.

If asked a question, there are times when we verbally need to state to someone else that we do not feel comfortable sharing certain pieces of information right now. Other times, we need to ask for a chance to think and reflect on a discussion or piece of new information before responding. We also have the right to say NO to other people and others have the right to say NO to us. It is always okay to prioritize ourselves. If you are not in a space where you can safely assert yourself, how can you find ways to engage with others without sacrificing your own emotional security?



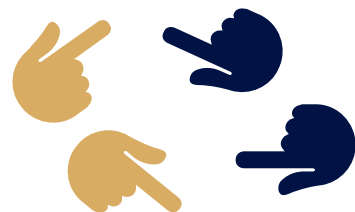
Social Media Boundaries:

Sometimes we need to establish social boundaries with another person. Maybe someone is posting social media content that is distressing to you; it is okay to sign out of social media, unfollow individuals, or take breaks. In order to take care of ourselves, we might need to monitor our intake and consumption of what other individuals are saying and doing in the online realms.



Social Boundaries:

Setting boundaries can also involve spending time with other groups of friends or acquaintances. You always have the right to be treated with respect and dignity. If this is not occurring in some settings, you are allowed to leave early or not go at all. Taking care of yourself should be a priority and taking care of others should not be a laborious process that depletes you.



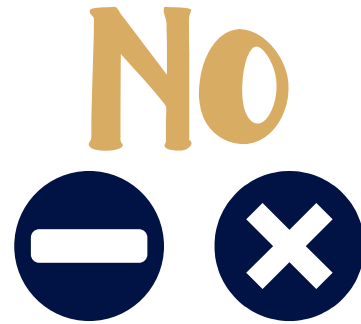
SETTING BOUNDARIES

No is a two-letter word. Sometimes it can be the hardest word to say! "No." is actually a complete sentence! It might be short but it is incredibly powerful. **There is zero explanation required.** While "no" is sufficient as a response, some individuals might want an explanation, might need more elaboration, or might not accept it. It is entirely up to you if you have the energy and time to provide a response.



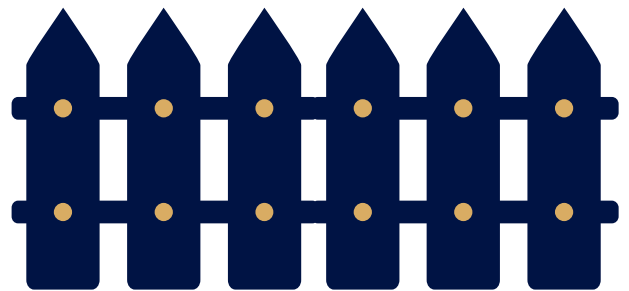
Need to maintain personal boundaries?

- 1) Set specific times for personal time.
- 2) Assert your needs by saying "these are on my to-do list today" or "these are the things I need to accomplish today."
- 3) Communicate with individuals or family what break will look like.
- 4) Negotiate and discuss updated house rules about college students as adults.
- 5) Communicate with individuals when you need space to adjust to a situation.
- 3) Stuck in a one-sided conversation? Let them know that you will need their opinion on a story or event that you will share next.
- 4) Let someone know you are not comfortable sharing that piece of information, or that you are not in the appropriate mental space to share right now.



Need to maintain digital boundaries?

- 1) Put passcodes on devices.
- 2) Use the "do not disturb" feature on a device, turn off notifications, or turn it to silent.
- 3) Limit newsfeed checks or temporarily delete apps that cause distress or drama.
- 4) Tell individuals you will be out of contact for a day or week.
- 5) Reply to a text or email with "Hey, I saw this but can't respond right now. Will send a longer reply later."
- 6) Change your voicemail greeting to let individuals know you might not be available.



HANDLING DIFFICULT PEOPLE

How do you handle difficult people?

Break might be a time where you get to see friends, spend time with people you enjoy being around, and catching up with peers. Break is also several weeks which can be long time. This sometimes means we might have to spend time with difficult individuals or people that we struggle to be around. How do we handle being around difficult people? How do we spend time with individuals who might be harsh, critical, or unkind? How do we exist in the same spaces as someone who is not as affirming as we want and need them to be?

1) Always be calm. (Probably one of the hardest steps!) When you are calm, you can be more in control of your own thoughts, feelings, and reactions.



2) Try to understand their perspective and intention. This does not mean you have to agree with them, but it can help you better understand their motivations so you can plan your strategic response.

3) Ask others for support. If you aren't sure how to respond, ask someone else you trust for some insight, perspective, or guidance. Find someone who maybe has experience with the difficult individual.



4) Focus on what can actually be done. We most likely cannot resolve the situation with a snap of our fingers. But what can be done right now? What can actually change in the moment? Focus on what can be done here and now to help bring some resolution.

5) Avoid arguing. There is usually no need to argue as it is unlikely to convince them and nothing might change because of it. Some people just want to argue to be able to make their point or hear their own voice.



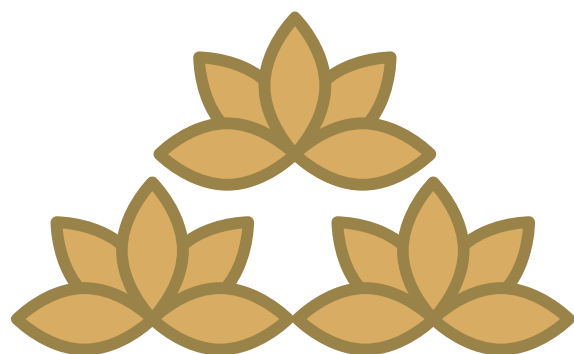
HANDLING DIFFICULT PEOPLE

6) Have conversational back-up. Know you are going to be around someone who is difficult? Have other topics ready and prepared that you can quickly divert and easily to if needed.



7) Come prepared. Have anecdotes and stories prepared ahead of time that you do feel comfortable sharing. However simple it might be, have the details stored in your brain so that you can share it. Others will see you are still participating in conversations, but you are actively sharing only what you want.

8) Have realistic expectations ahead of time. Sometimes we hope that this is the year where everything goes smoothly. Sometimes we hope that the upcoming event is going to be free of drama. We might become disappointed when these don't happen. Set realistic expectations ahead of time so you are mentally and emotionally prepared for what might come. Sometimes we need to recognize the people in our life who they are and that we unfortunately cannot change them.



9) Give yourself permission to let things go. This does not mean you need to forget the experiences you've had. This does not mean it gives free rein for someone to hurt you and they can get away with it. Giving yourself permission to let things go is allowing yourself to no longer be controlled by the events of the past. Let go of the events you cannot change so you can focus on your own future.

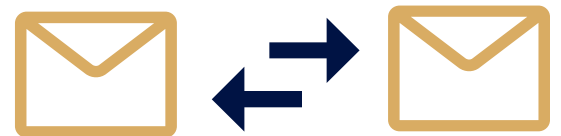
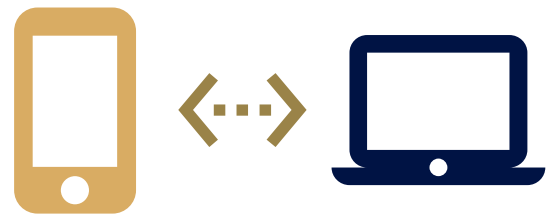
CONTINUING CONNECTIONS

What does it mean to continue connections?

Thankfully in this day and age, our social network can involve individuals who are not in physical proximity. Sometimes there are situations where home life, family situations, and/or winter break logistics make us feel isolated and alone. How can we keep connections going with individuals, friends, and peers who can provide support? Here are some ideas for you to maintain connections over winter break with supportive individuals so that you do not feel isolated or alone.

Ideas for continuing connections

- 1) Start an intentional text thread with individuals and peers that you can use to communicate with throughout break about experiences, hardships, or trouble.
- 2) Start a text thread with people from your dorm floor, roommates, organization, etc. to get updates on what individuals are doing.
- 3) Schedule intentional check-in times via phone, Zoom, Skype, etc.
- 4) Send email updates with reflections from the day or week.
- 5) Sync your Netflix viewing to watch a movie or show at the same time and text your reactions and thoughts as you are watching.
- 6) Share funny Facebook posts, Tweets, and Instagram posts with each other.
- 7) Create a Spotify playlist for someone.
- 8) Play the game "Twenty Questions" with someone over text.



CONTINUING CONNECTIONS

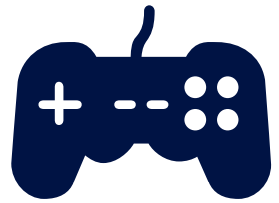
9) Make a list of all of the events and experiences that happen over break as a reminder to talk about them next time you see someone or are talking with someone.



10) Write an actual, physical letter that you can mail to a friend. The art of the hand-written note or letter has gone out of practice but not out of style. (Make sure you seal the envelope with tape instead of licking it! #COVID-19)



11) Create a challenge or game for winter break where friends and peers need to tally or keep track of occurrences. This can be tracking who sees the highest number of tacky winter sweaters or how many times you hear a particular word.



12) Revive old school apps and digital games such as Words with Friends that can involve other individuals.



13) Have similar literary tastes? Sync up your reading queue and read the same book at the same time. Discuss reactions to events and characters.



14) Get everyone to take a BuzzFeed quiz and then discuss your results with each other.

15) Play games on Sporcle.com and compare scores and results.



15) When in doubt, share enjoyable memes with people who have the same style of humor as you.

MAINTAINING ROUTINE

What is a routine?

Routines are the tasks and habits that individuals complete and participate in regularly or almost every day. For some folks, it can involve habits like having coffee with breakfast or taking a shower every morning. For others, it can involve completing tasks, responsibilities and assignments in the morning and afternoon, then relaxing and engaging in leisure activities in the evening. For some, it could be intentionally completing activities like exercising.

There are broad similarities in routines for everyone, but they can also vary depending on lifestyle and/or personal preference. Some routines are imposed upon us because of external constraints such as jobs and schools. Other routines exist naturally such as the biological disposition to be active during the day and to sleep during the nighttime. For some, winter break can result in a lot more free time without the constraints of school while others might find winter break has more constraints because of a change in work schedule.

Routines can be important because they might anchor our day or give us a sense of stability during periods of uncertainty or stress. Whatever the situation, having some easy routines during break can help you feel a little more grounded and give you a bit more sense of control.

Some of the smallest habits might provide you with structure during winter break and in turn, support positive mental health and can improve organization and focus.



MAINTAINING ROUTINE

Thinking back over the past couple months...

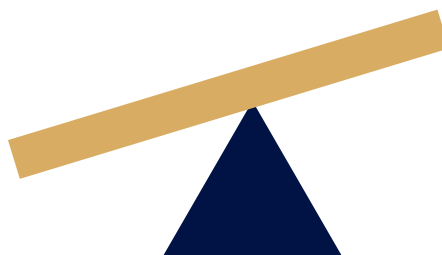
What morning routines did you find helpful in planning and starting your day?

What routines helped you make sense and meaning out of the day?

If you have time during break, what routine(s) or habit(s) would you like to develop?

Routines can seem solely related to work or productivity, and thus make us feel restricted, bored, or that we are always needing to complete something. Routines are not necessarily a bad thing.

In order to relax, we all need days that feel a little unstructured or are unburdened. Sometimes having the routine of self-care or taking an easier day is equally important in the schedule. It is important to find the right balance for yourself.



Thinking back over the past couple months...

What were some habits, routines, or frequent situations that you find enjoyable?

Were there any that provided you some joy or excitement each day?

If you have time during break, what routine(s) or habit(s) would you like to develop?

Come up with an action plan for what you need to do to add routine to your break.



FINDING SAFE SPACES

What is a safe space?

The term safe space refers an environment or location where you feel affirmed, welcomed, and free to be you. There are times when the term gets thrown around in a negative use, but it represents a space or location where you feel comfortable, secure, and free from harm.

While the term is generally used by members of the LGBTQ+ community, anyone individual with a marginalized identity might need to access a safe space. Sometimes an individual is specifically around invalidating individuals or negative influences and needs to find respite. Whatever the situation, it is absolutely okay to find and/or create a haven where you are able to feel comfortable and secure.

A safe space can be an actual location such as a bedroom or a particular residence. Sometimes there are safe spaces in various cities or towns such as our favorite stores, coffee shops, and parks. Other times it is a religious or spiritual location. A safe space could also be created by an individual person wherever they are; this could be in the form of going for a run and listening to music, going for a drive and talking to a friend, or taking a walk and getting fresh air, or volunteering to be the family errand runner.

Overall, we might need havens where we can let our guard down and not feel defensive. If we spend too much time being hyperalert or feeling insecure, it can begin to impact our mental health.

Safe spaces are intentional.
Safe spaces provide a higher level of freedom.
Safe spaces should have unconditional acceptance.



FINDING SAFE SPACES



Ways to create safe spaces

1) A safe space is going to look different for every single individual. Think about the answers to the following questions:

Where are the locations or spaces where I feel most like myself?

Where are the places where I can be free to be me?

Where can I let my guard down and not be in a state of constant vigilance?

Reflect on what specifically about those locations is helpful and useful. Sometimes it is that spaces are quiet and free from distraction. Sometimes it is that a location allows you to be alone. Some spaces don't have harmful messages or intolerant influences.

2) Think about the logistics of setting up a safe space or getting access to one:

How can you modify a situation to incorporate these elements?

How can you find locations that meet these criteria?

What do you need to feel safe and how can you get it into a particular environment?

Who are individuals you can trust to help create affirming or secure places?

3) Come up with an action plan for what to do when you need an affirming environment.

Think about your methods and strategies for accessing it so you can be ready.

PRACTICING SELF-CARE

What is self-care?

Self-care is about how you take care of yourself when you feel stressed. Stress is the non-specific response of the body to any demand. While that sounds incredibly vague, stress cannot always be measured or quantified. Reactions to stress might be different for every single person depending on the situation. There are positive types of stress, but we generally do not need to cope with those. The negative types of stress are often unpleasant, can make us feel anxious, impact us in a variety of capacities, and can have long-term implications.

Overall, we should focus on two aspects of self-care: what we do before the stress and what we do after the stress. Here are some basic tips for what you can do before stressors occur so that you aim for your peak performance.

SLEEP: Sleep gives our brain and body time to regenerate. Are you getting enough sleep? And are you getting enough quality sleep? Try to aim for 7 – 8 hours of sleep per night with a relatively consistent bedtime. It can be beneficial to cut out screens (smart phones, laptops, TVs, etc.) an hour before sleep to help your brain begin to wind down.

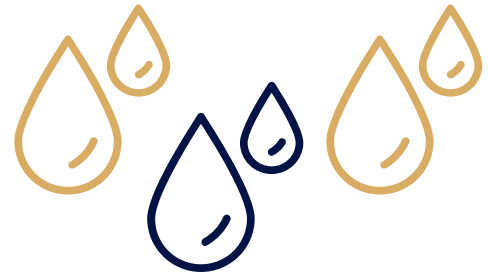


FOOD: A balanced diet can assist with providing the energy and resources to do what we need and want to do. Sometimes we really want tasty snacks over something like a boring vegetable. Sometimes cooking meals or being intentional about food can be a struggle, but positive attempts to push yourself to round out your diet can assist in getting you the fuel you need to feel good.

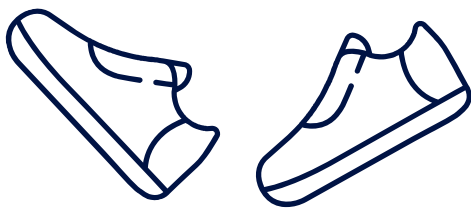


PRACTICING SELF-CARE

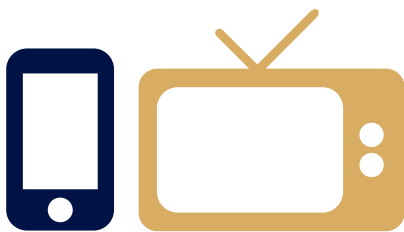
WATER: Water helps transport nutrients in our body and also flushes out toxins. Yes, it is annoying to drink a lot of water and have to pee all the time. However, even mild dehydration can begin to impact our mood and energy levels. There are varying reports on how much water you need, but several glasses a day will be very useful to you!



MONITORING SUBSTANCES: Alcohol, tobacco, and caffeine can all impact our functioning. While it might be fun to share a beverage with some friends or to enjoy a cup of coffee, are we monitoring the amount of substances we put into our bodies? Try to limit the use of substances as these can throw our bodies out of balance.



EXERCISE: You don't need to go to the gym to exercise! Walking counts as exercise. We need about 150 minutes of moderate activity per week or 75 minutes of vigorous activity per week. If we are not active enough, it might impact our metabolism which could prevent us from getting the fuel our brain and body needs to function.



SCREEN TIME: Screen time includes any activity looking at a digital screen including playing video games, looking at a computer, watching TV, and ironically yes, reading this document. Too much screen time can impact your sleep, increase irritability, and create changes in your ability to pay attention.

PRACTICING SELF-CARE

Developing Coping Strategies

We've talked about doing some preventative tasks like getting enough sleep and drinking water. However, these don't always work as a way to cope with stressors. Remember, everyone copes with stressors in different ways. Sometimes what worked for a situation might not work when a similar situation arises again. It is important to think about how we can cope with difficult situations, adversity, and challenges.

Make sure you know what can be in your own personal resource toolkit so you don't scramble to find something after the fact or are frustrated that you're not sure what to do. What activities, tasks, exercises, or efforts do you deliberately engage in when you are feeling stressed? What do you do to help yourself feel better?

There are four domains to focus on depending on your need and the challenge. We need to make sure we achieve success in all four areas so that we can find balance and adequately cope with stressors.

Mental Self-Care: What does your brain need in order feel better?

Let's focus on tasks that address cognitions. These can include reading a good book, learning a skill, reflecting on experiences, increasing our awareness, getting organized, working on a jigsaw puzzle, finding outlets for creativity, crossword puzzles, Sudoku, and organizing or developing plans.



PRACTICING SELF-CARE

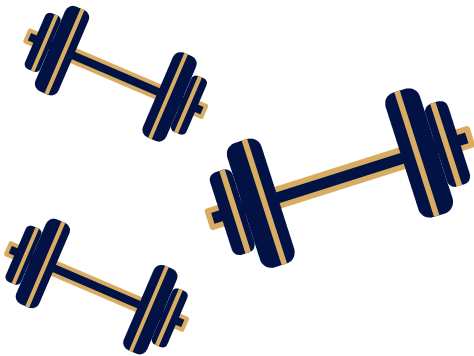
Emotional Self-Care: What does your heart need in order to feel better?

Let's focus on tasks that address emotions. These can include having good conversations, journaling, reflecting on positive aspects of an experience, going to counseling or therapy, crying, laughing, spending time in conversation with people you trust, setting boundaries, and giving permission to let things go.



Physical Self-Care: What does your body need in order to feel better?

Let's focus on tasks that address physical well-being. These can include wearing comfy clothing, getting enough sunshine, going for walks, giving and getting hugs, doing yoga, practice breathing exercises, and stretching.



"Big Picture" Self-Care: What does your soul need in order to feel better?

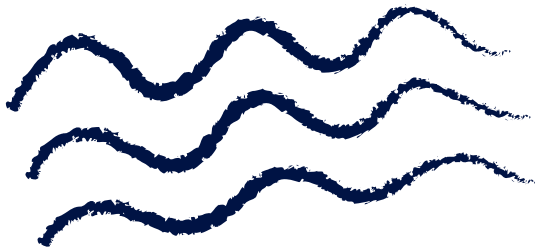
Let's focus on tasks that address how we connect to the world around us. This can include spiritual and religious needs, community building, spending time in nature, volunteering for issues you care about, cultivating meaning about experiences, and start planning for Spring 2021.



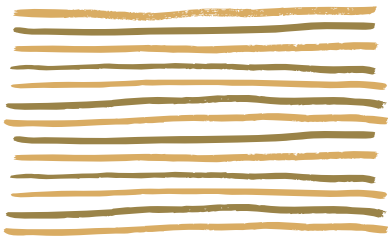
PRACTICING SELF-CARE

Need Ideas for Coping Strategies?

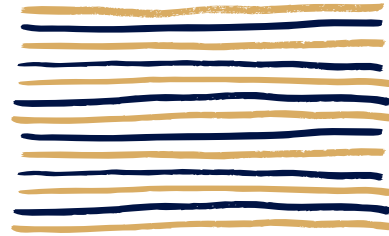
- 1) Learn a new dance
- 2) Memorize new jokes
- 3) Read a new book
- 4) Sit in the sunshine
- 5) Walk to a new place



- 11) Cook a brand new meal
- 12) Watch a documentary
- 13) Take a different route
- 14) Draw a picture
- 15) Get a coloring book



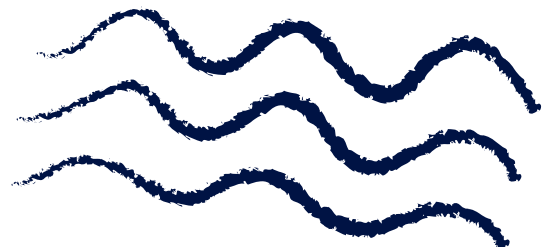
- 21) Learn a new language
- 22) Watch your favorite movie
- 23) Watch a really bad movie
- 24) Re-watch favorite childhood shows
- 25) Listen to a YouTube meditation



- 6) Wear your favorite clothes
- 7) Toss out old stuff
- 8) Stand up and stretch
- 9) Make a paper airplane
- 10) Learn how to garden



- 16) Get a stress ball
- 17) Enjoy a new musical artist
- 18) Write a to-do list
- 19) Read strange Wikipedia articles
- 20) Learn a new card game



MINDFULNESS¹

When we feel distressed, anxious, worried or concerned about something, it can be incredibly natural to spend a lot of time thinking about the situation or issue in our brain. Sometimes we spend a lot of time thinking about the past, what happened, and what we could have done. Sometimes we spend a lot of time thinking about the future, what is looming on the horizon, and all the things we need to get done.

Mindfulness is a practice to bring yourself into the present by consciously focusing the mind without judgement or attachment. While we already live and exist in the present, our minds often times are reflecting on the past or worrying about the future.

Have you ever driven somewhere and wondered how you got there? Do you ever do a simple task like locking your door and then 5 minutes later wonder if you locked the door? Our habitual and automatic thinking habits might keep us from being in the present.



Our goal is to shift from "doing" mode to "being" mode. We might constantly feel the need to achieve, accomplish, and complete. What would it like to simply just "be" in the present without the greater pressures pushing and pushing us?

Here are some strategies to assist you with mindfulness.

1) **OBSERVE** what events, actions, emotions, and thoughts are happening. We do not need to end them or make them come to a conclusion or even decide what to do with them. Take time to notice what is happening within you and around you.

Recognize and pay attention to what is going on inside of your body. What are your thoughts saying? What are your feelings doing? What bodily sensations do you notice?

Focus on what is going on outside your body. What do you see all around you? What do you hear in your current space? What do you feel on your body?

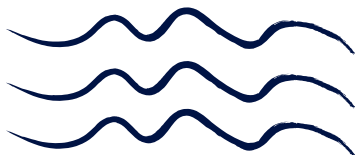


¹ Adapted from Linehan, M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Manual (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.

MINDFULNESS¹

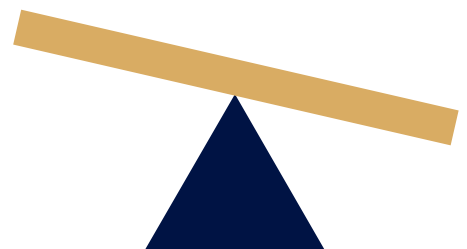
2) **DESCRIBE** what events, actions, emotions, and thoughts are happening. How can we take the information we now have and turn it into words? Let's make sure we are not doing it with judgement. For example, "I'm hearing good noises" or "I'm hearing bad noises" assigns labels to what you are hearing. Take a step back to label just what it is such as "I'm hearing the fan" or "I hear a bird chirping."

When describing your thoughts and feelings, we want to label them as they are and not what it could mean. Recognize that a thought is just a thought and that a feeling is just a feeling. We aren't determining if one or the other is true, we are simply acknowledging that we experience them. You might be feeling anxious, but that does not necessarily mean you are in danger. You might be feeling lonely, but that does not necessarily mean you are isolated.



3) **PARTICIPATE** in the moment. Bring yourself to the here and the now. We cannot change the past and we cannot control the future. How can we be spontaneous? How can we let the moment guide us? How can we respond flexibly? How can we be alert and aware without being on the defense? We don't need to be right or wrong, we are doing the best we can in the current environment around us.

4) **BALANCE** your thoughts and feelings. Sometimes our thoughts tell us one thing while our feelings express another. We don't need to pit them against each other. Take a step back and recognize that a thought is just a thought, and a feeling is just a feeling. What is it like to merge the two? What is it like to pull data from both? What is it like to listen to both? Accept what you are thinking. Accept what you are feeling. You are in the driver's seat of your life, not your thoughts or feelings.



¹ Adapted from Linehan, M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Manual (2nd ed.). Guildford Press.

MINDFULNESS

**The situation you are in might feel like an eternity.
However, every stressful situation will stop.
Every hard conversation will be over soon.
Every bizarre gathering will end at some point.**

Here are two practices that you can utilize to help you feel grounded in the moment of stressful events to help get you to the other side.



Deep Breathing

Try to get as comfortable as possible. Breathe in through your nose. Let your stomach fill with as much air as possible. Hold it and count to 3. Breathe out through your nose. Repeat as many times as needed.



5, 4, 3, 2, 1

Look around. Try to focus on 5 things that you can see that you didn't notice before. *I see a scratch on the wall, I see the pattern of a picture, etc.*

Pay attention to your body. Think about and recognize 4 things you can feel. *I can feel my feet in my shoes, I can feel my glasses on my nose, etc.*

Try to take in all the sounds around you. Listen for 3 things you can currently hear, no matter how soft it is. *I can hear the air coming through the vent, I can hear the clock ticking, etc.*


Take in a deep breath of air. What can you smell? Identify 2 things you can smell. If you cannot smell anything at the moment, try to recall your 2 favorite smells. *I can smell the rain, and my favorite smell is freshly cut grass.*


Focus on your mouth. What is 1 thing you can taste now or recently tasted? If you cannot taste anything, think of your favorite taste. *I can taste the flavor of popcorn.*




Need more or prefer guided meditations? Check out apps like the Insight Timer or Calm. You can also search YouTube for guided exercises. Check out our website at students.georgiasouthern.edu/counseling/mental-health-apps-disclaimer/ for a list of more apps and digital resources.


AVAILABLE RESOURCES

 Remember that if at any point you are experiencing a mental health emergency or you feel like you are not able to keep yourself safe, **please call 911.**

 The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline offers free and confidential support for individuals in distress as well as provides crisis resources. Please call **1-800-273-8255**. They are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can also access their online chat feature at their website www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

 If you or someone you know has experienced a sexual assault, please contact the free and confidential National Sexual Assault Hotline at **1-800-656-4673** to be connected with resources and referral information. You can also access their free and confidential web chat at www.rainn.org

 The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administrations offers a free treatment referral and information service for individuals and families facing mental health and/or substance use concerns. Please call **1-800-662-4357**.

 There are a variety of mental health apps available through the iTunes and Android store. For more information on mental health apps, visit <https://students.georgiasouthern.edu/counseling/mental-health-apps-disclaimer/>