

# SELF-CARE AND RESILIENCY TIPS FOR THE INCOMING COLLEGE STUDENT



Self-care refers to the activities and routines practiced to benefit your psychological, physical, and spiritual well-being. Self-care activities should be practiced on a regular basis to promote mental well-being. Self-care activities help reduce stress, increase productivity, improve health, help achieve work-life balance and prevent burnout.

Resiliency is the ability to adjust to circumstances and keep going in the face of adversity, whether it's a minor hassle or a major life event. Resilience also helps you take on challenges, form stronger relationships and embrace new experiences. A lack of resilience can lead to anxiety, poor self-care, depression and risky behaviors, such as substance abuse. We can't always control events, but we can control our responses.

## SELF-CARE

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### PHYSICAL

- Surround yourself with nature. Walk to class, spend time outdoors between classes.
- Develop a regular sleep schedule. Limit electronic use an hour before bed. Your body needs around 6-8 hours of sleep. Notice how you feel on different amounts of sleep.
- Eat nutritious foods such as fruits, vegetables and lean meats. Limit refined carbohydrates and added sugar, as well as fried foods, alcohol and caffeine. Take vitamins. Bring snacks with you to class to stay energized and engaged.
- Drink water! The current Institute of Medicine recommendation is 13 cups for men and 9 cups for women per day (NASEM 2015). Dehydration is one of the major causes of headaches.
- Exercise or dance to get out extra energy and relax. This helps to release endorphins (chemical in your brain) that makes a person feel good. Many campus gyms are free for students, and nearby gyms or studios will offer student discounts. Check out Groupon!
- Spend time with quality friends and family and share how your days are going. Don't be afraid to seek support from others, and to ask for help.

### PSYCHOLOGICAL

- See a therapist or participate in support groups during times of high stress. Use the student mental health center or community resources.
- Keep a journal to clarify thoughts. Evidence shows that writing about stressful events helps come to terms with them, reducing the impact they have on your life (Psych Central, 2016).
- Take a break from television, social media, and the internet to avoid exposure to negative information.
- Be an active member of the community by joining an organization or helping with community service at the local foodbanks, recreation centers, schools, etc.
- Express emotional healing practices of crying, laughing or story-telling.
- Read books or listen to podcasts.
- Participate in activities that make you happy, feel good and are empowering.
- Take breaks from studying. Do not try to cram a 15-page paper into one night.
- Plan ahead and stay organized with class times, time for homework, time for student activities and time to relax. Set realistic goals for yourself for each semester.

## **SPIRITUAL**

Spiritual self-care involves caring for your soul. Spiritual wellness involves seeking a purpose and meaning in our life. Practicing spiritual self-care can help you find peace between your inner feelings and emotions and the stressors of your life.

- Practice meditation or yoga.
- Pray or attend a church service.
- Express gratitude. Think of 3 things you are grateful for every day.

## **RESILIENCY**

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### **MANAGE STRESS**

Identify your sources of stress and how they affect you. Once you understand how your behavior changes in response to stress (e.g., your health suffers, you isolate yourself from others), you can modify unhealthy or unproductive reactions and develop coping strategies for your vulnerable areas.

### **EXAMINE YOUR THOUGHTS**

Negative or inaccurate thoughts about ourselves, others, or the future can produce unhelpful emotions and behaviors. Increase your awareness of how you interpret events, so you can challenge and alter counterproductive thoughts and develop a more adaptive thinking style.

### **BUILD A SUPPORT NETWORK**

Positive social connections provide assistance, guidance, and comfort during difficult times. Strengthen your relationships with family, friends and trusted others to form a support network. The quality of these relationships is more important than the quantity.

Resource: <https://www.scoreforcollege.org/resilience101>

**TAKE CARE OF  
YOURSELF, AND  
PERUSE YOUR  
GOALS!**

