

Stress Management Kit

Are you feeling overwhelmed, stressed, or struggling to find a routine this semester? Let's take a quick inventory of your **personal stress management "toolbox."** After reviewing the list of stress management skills below, you may consider personalizing and adding a few of these skills to your own toolbox.

Tools for Personal Wellness

- **Get Active** by getting 150 minutes of moderate exercise (walking, riding a bike on level ground) or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise (running, swimming, riding a bike on hills) a week.
- **Sleep** at least 7 hours nightly and maintain a regular sleep schedule.
- **Eat a Balanced Diet**--healthy mix of proteins, carbohydrates, and fats (fruits, vegetables, grains, proteins, and dairy or dairy substitutes).
- **Limit Caffeine and Alcohol Use** to no more than 400 mg of caffeine (or preferably less!) a day and no more than 2 drinks for men or 1 drink for women.
- **Practice Mindfulness** (Use all of your senses in all of your surroundings) by taking time to savor your lunch, take a few deep breaths before getting out of your car, or taking time to notice your feelings without judgement.
- **Practice Gratitude** by finding one thing you are grateful for, one thing you learned, one thing you accomplished, and one thing that delighted you today.
- **Stay Connected** to social support by talking to family, friends, peers, and joining activities on or off campus.
- **Do Positive Activities**--hike, surf, swim, paint, draw, play a sport, join a club/organization, whatever it is that brings you joy!
- **Know your Limits** and identify what self-care looks like to you.
- **Find a Routine** by setting a regular time to sleep, eat, exercise, and do homework (but don't forget to leave a little room for spontaneity).
- **Be Flexible.** Things do not always go according to plan.
- **Express Yourself.** Recognize your triggers, use positive self-talk, be a good listener, label what you are feeling.

Tools for Managing Academic Stress

- **Avoid Procrastination** by identifying the hardest task and the easiest task you have and start with the one that will give you the most motivation to keep going.
- **Set Short-Term & Long-Term Goals** that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound.
- **Prioritize.** You cannot do everything. What is the most important task that you need to get done?
- **Use a Planner.** Buy an inexpensive paper planner or use a free app on your phone.
- **Ask for Help.** Don't assume your professors know that you are struggling. Connect with your classmates/peers.
- **Utilize Your Resources on Campus.** Find a motivating environment to work in, use tutoring services, or join a study group.

- **Take Breaks** often. Sometimes we need a break before we can get focused.

Tools for Managing Social and Relationship Stress

- **Set Boundaries** by remembering you don't have to say yes to everything.
- **Take a Breather** by asking the person you are in conflict with for time to reset, instead of saying something you regret
- **Use Assertive Communication** by clearly stating your opinions and feelings without blaming, name-calling, yelling or swearing.
- **Remember That You Only Have Control Over Yourself.** You are not responsible for how other people feel or respond.
- **Seek Out Different Groups of Friends.** We all have different circles we hang out with at different times.