

Resources for Emotional Success

- **The Science of Stress (Meditation & Mindfulness)**
- **When and Where to Seek Help (Facts About Mental Health)**

STRESS

Definition of Stress – *a negative response to environmental stimuli, external stimuli or any life event and/or perception of the mind that results in either a physiological response, mental distress or both.* A stressor is an entity or thing that causes stress. It can be environmental, physical, psychological or a combination.

Stressors

- **Psychological:** Albrecht's Four Types of Stress:
 1. Time Stress: deadlines
 2. Anticipatory stress: e.g. first day of school, meeting new people, planning for an oral presentation
 3. Situational stress: e.g. your backpack is stolen with all your notes, text book and wallet
 4. Encounter Stress: this type of stress revolves around people, e.g. meeting up with a study group, being around an angry or violent person or group of people
- **Environmental:** e.g. noise, too much stimuli e.g. living in a city; pollution, extreme temperatures
- **Physical:** e.g. lack of sleep, poor diet, too little exercise, or even too much exercise

Body Responses to Stress: Fight or Flight - an evolutionary adaptation to danger that protected us from predators and other aggressors

The release of cortisol (stress hormone) results in an increase in heart rate and blood pressure, stimulates the release of glucose (for energy) and narrows the focus of the brain. *“Long-term activation of the stress response system - and the subsequent overexposure to cortisol and other stress hormones can disrupt almost all your body's processes.”* Mayo Clinic

Chronic stress can therefore result in: anxiety, depression, upset stomachs, headaches, difficulty sleeping, irritability, restlessness, memory and concentration problems, weight gain and heart disease.

Perceptions of Stress - latest research

Studies have shown that adults who have higher levels of perceived stress have earlier deaths (heart attacks & strokes) compared to those who don't. Stress is a serious risk factor for poor mental and physical health and causes premature aging on a cellular level, and memory problems. A really unhealthy lifestyle, or chronic stress can increase the expression of genes that can lead to mental health problems. Promising new research has to do with the benefits of changing our thoughts and perceptions of stress. Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcGyVTAoXEU>

STUDENT RESPONSES TO STRESSORS IN THEIR LIVES:

1. Smart phones
2. Social media – everyone else’s life looks perfect (creating false personas)
3. News and information 24/7
4. Family: responsibilities/expectations/mixed messages/demands
5. Lack of support from parents – sometimes parents haven’t been to college, and therefore they don’t understand the demands of college
6. College applications/scholarship forms & applications/FAFSA
7. Negative Self-Beliefs
8. Money
9. Finding a group in college with similar interests, backgrounds, values
10. Not being able to maintain the same grades in college
11. New environment of college
12. Romance
13. Friendships: maintaining old ones, creating new ones
14. Exams
15. School Projects
16. Competing demands e.g. need to attend class and study for an exam scheduled later in the day
17. Social life – rejecting others by refusing to attend a party.
18. Fear of sexual assault or bodily harm
19. Physical Illness or mental health problem
20. Knowing what I want to be
21. Knowing what I want to study
22. Finishing college in 4 years
23. Peer pressure

ASK & REFLECT:

Which stressors are in your control? Which stressors are perceived? In other words, are stressors real or are they real because we believe them to be real?

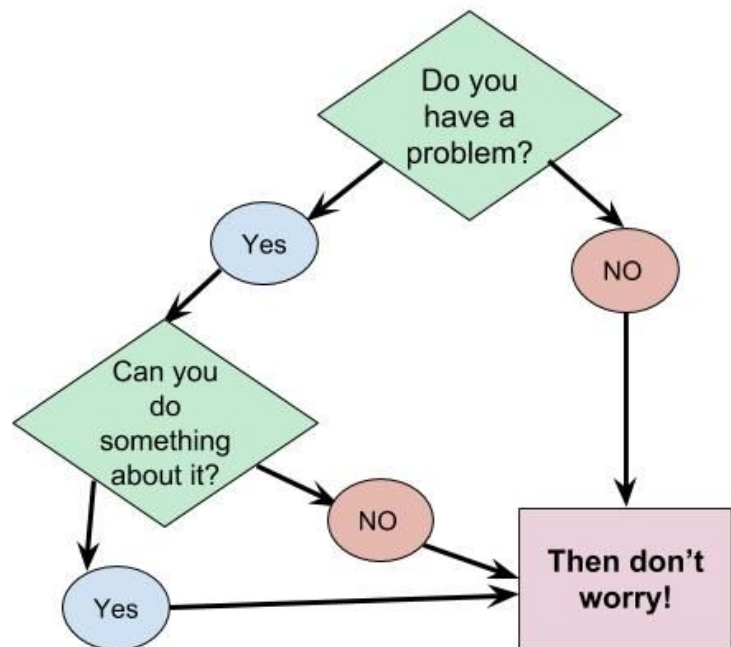
CASE STUDY

Tomas, a sophomore student, learns that his cousin has passed away. Upon hearing the news and hearing his mother cry, he feels devastated for himself and the whole family. At first, it doesn't seem real, so he goes to class as usual and "pretends" nothing has happened. However, Tomas soon learns that he is having difficulty concentrating in class. He is constantly thinking about the last time he saw his cousin, what he is going to say to the family and how difficult it's going to be to return home for the memorial service and face all his relatives. He worries about all the calls that have to be made to give support and condolences to family members.

1. First, he decides to notify his professors of what has happened and that he will attend class, but may not be as engaged or focused.
2. Second, he decides to take one day off for self-care, reflection, and getting things done that he is obligated to do under the circumstances. (Again, he notifies his professors why he will be absent.)
3. Third, he finds a good friend or empathic person to talk to.
4. Fourth, Tomas maintains those activities that bring him relief from stress and he decides to attend his intramural soccer game. He got a really good workout, and a break from thinking about the family tragedy.
5. Lastly, he made an appointment with the school psychologist, for a few weeks in the future, in case he still feels the need to talk to a professional about his feelings.

Discussion:

Tomas couldn't change what happened, and to some extent the feelings or emotions that erupted from the loss. However, he acknowledged his feelings and allowed himself the space to talk about them with friends and family. He also gave himself some time to clear his mind by playing soccer. He took control and realized that he needed to reach out for support. Tomas communicated with his professors and he made a plan to get extra support from a professional on campus. Once again he acknowledged his feelings of being distracted and unable to concentrate in class and notified his professors.



What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is a simple concept: it brings us home to the present moment. Mindfulness is an acceptance of thoughts, and or emotions as we experience them in the present. Whenever we acknowledge a negative emotion we can focus on our breath, the sights or sounds around us, and bring our mind to the present moment.

Meditation

Our mind is always running to the future, experiencing fear, and anxiety, or it is caught in a prison of past experiences, especially traumatic ones. When we are thinking about the past or future, our minds experience a variety of emotions: fear, anger, rejection, regret, pain, happiness, gratitude, hopefulness or joy. Whether those emotions are negative or positive we are missing what's happening in the "NOW". For meditation advise for beginners go to:

<https://www.mindfueldaily.com/livewell/meditation-advice-for-beginners-in-10-basic-steps/?rq=meditation>

There are lots of free apps too. **HEADSPACE** app offers free guided or unguided meditation at various levels, and for different situations, e.g. sleep, relaxation, and during exercise. You can even choose the length of guided meditation; 10-15-20 minutes. If you're having trouble regulating emotions, such as losing your temper, being frustrated a lot, feeling overwhelmed; with a subscription to **HEADSPACE** you get more access and meditations to help deal with these emotions.

Review & Summary:

Suffering is unavoidable and we have to live or co-exist with stress. Challenges that energize us and motivate us are probably good, even if it causes some stress. Healthy activities such as working out, meditation, mindfulness, journaling, practicing daily gratitude, doing activities you enjoy; like listening to music, playing an instrument, or other creative endeavors can bring more joy, balance and even equanimity in your life. Equanimity means mental calmness, a sense of peace or cool headedness, especially in times of stress.





YOGA

RISE, YOGA FOR YOUTH

Calming Breathing Techniques

Belly Breathing

Belly breathing calms the mind and body, engages the relaxation response, and helps cure insomnia.

Instructions: Place both hands on your belly and feel it expand as you inhale and release towards the spine as you exhale. Try to make your exhalation longer than your inhalation, letting go of any tension in your body as you exhale.

Variations: If you find it difficult to draw the belly in on the exhalation, you can gently press your belly in with your hand on the exhalation. Placing the hands or a block on the belly while doing this exercise is helpful to feel the movement of the abdomen with the breath. This breath may be practiced seated, standing, or lying down.

Alternate Nostril Breathing

This technique calms the body, focuses the mind, and balances the left and right hemispheres of the brain. It is also a good preparation for meditation.

Instructions: Sit comfortably and close your right nostril with your right thumb. Inhale fully through your left nostril and then close your left nostril with your right ring finger. Hold. When ready, release your right thumb and slowly exhale through your right nostril. Inhale through your right nostril and then close your right nostril with your right thumb. Hold. When ready, release your right ring finger and slowly exhale through the left nostril. Continue in this pattern for several breaths. When you're ready, release your fingers from your nose and take a few deep breaths.

Variations: Repeating a mantra during alternate nostril breathing, or counting the breath. Gradually work towards lengthening the exhalation to twice the length of the inhalation. (for example, 2:4, 3:6, or 4:8 ratio of inhalation to exhalation)

“The best decision I made was reaching out to other individuals going through the same issues to see how they overcame them! Problems are always at ease once you build a foundation with other individuals who’re in the same shoes. You need people in your life in order to come out as a stronger individual to the real world.”

P.U. College Freshman and Bella Scholar

What can be done about stress?

Self Care: Regular sleep habits, and healthy eating is important for proper physical and emotional health, especially brain health. Stay away from high fat, high sugar foods. Turning to drugs, food or alcohol provides only very brief relief from stress and usually leads right back to MORE STRESS! Some studies have shown that Vitamin C, Omega 3s fatty acid, meditation & mindfulness all improve brain function. Exercise, walking, jogging, or yoga produces endorphins, the feel-good brain chemical. Regular exercise improves sleep, reduces anxiety, and in many studies, exercise is as effective as medicine in treating depression.

Mindfulness/Meditation Practices

The practice of mindfulness increases awareness of what you are feeling at any given moment. We can live with stress if we are aware of it and learn techniques of resilience. Regular practice of mindfulness and/or meditation results in less ruminating with our thoughts (neuroticism), less worrying about the past or future, and decreases emotional negativity. Over time the practice creates inner peace and a sense of well-being even through adversity or stressful events.

Meditation Is Not: A Religion, A Dogma, Or A Belief System.



The Practice is the Teacher.

The practice brings clarity of mind. Just as a snow globe is opaque when it is shaken, but clears as the snow settles; the mind if given the chance to settle during meditation results in more clarity.

Cooling Breath

This breath cools the body and calms the mind. It is great to practice on hot summer days or if the room is stuffy.

Instructions: If you can, roll your tongue, curling the outsides toward the center, making a tube-like shape. Breathe in through it as if your tongue were a straw. If you cannot roll your tongue, place the tip of your tongue on the roof of your mouth for the same effect. Exhale through your nose with the mouth closed. Repeat for several breaths.

Take 5

This technique helps improve concentration and relaxes the body.

Instructions: Inhale slowly to the count of five, and then exhale slowly to five.

Balancing Breaths

Three-Part Breath (Deergha Swaasam)

Benefits: Utilizes full capacity of the lungs, calms and energizes the body, and focuses the mind.

Instructions: Students will be breathing slowly and deeply in three parts. Begin by exhaling fully through the nose. To inhale, first let the belly expand, then allow the lungs to expand, and finally the upper chest rises. As you exhale, first release the upper chest, then the rib cage releases inward, and then the draw the belly. Continue breathing this way for 1-3 minutes.

Variations: Students may practice this breath seated, standing, lying down, or in various yoga poses. One hand may be placed on the belly and the other hand placed on the abdomen to feel the movement of the breath in different parts of the torso.

Breath of Joy

This technique releases tension in the body and calms the mind.

Instructions: This technique is done standing. Inhale as you lift the arms overhead. Sigh loudly as you exhale, coming into a forward bend and letting the arms dangle. Hold the breath as you come up to stand. Repeat 5-8 times.

*** If you feel dizzy or light-headed during any of the breathing practices, please stop and let your breath come back to normal or rest in child's pose.**

BOOKS/RESOURCES FOR TEENS:

Add more ~ing To Your Life by Gabrielle Bernste

Breathe: Yoga for Teens by Mary Kay Chriyssicas

Just Say Om! A Teenager's Guide –Your Life Journey by Soren Gordhamer

The Seven Steps for Highly Effective Teens, by Steven Covey, Jr.

Um, Like...OM: A Girl Goddess's Guide to Yoga by Evan Cooper

You're Accepted, by Katie Malachuk

Indigo Teen Dreams: Guided Relaxation Techniques Designed to Decrease Stress, Anger, and Anxiety, while Increasing Self Esteem and Self Awareness, by Lori Lite

Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul, by Jack Canfield

The 54321 Game

This quick and easy game is a sensory awareness exercise. It works like this:



5 Name **5** things you can **SEE** right now ("A spot on the wall" or "The clouds outside.")



4 Name **4** things you can **FEEL** ("My feet in my socks" or "The breeze on my face.")



3 Name **3** things you can **HEAR** ("Traffic outside" or "The coffee maker.")



2 Name **2** things you can **SMELL** ("My lotion" or "The flowers on the table." If you aren't in a stimulating environment, feel free to move to where you can smell something or simply think of 2 smells you enjoy)

1 Name **1** good thing about **YOURSELF**

As you concentrate and try to find answers for each of the prompts, you'll be distracted from distressing feelings and be drawn into the here and now.

Anita's Video Recommendations:

- **The New Science of Stress:** How you think about stress matters. TED Talk by Kelly McGonigal
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcGyVTAoXEU>
- **UCSF's Osher Center for Integrative Medicine and The New Science of Stress and Stress Resilience:** Elissa Epel, Ph.D. Stress Soup www.integralhealthresources.com
- **Understanding Procrastination** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=arj7oStGLkU>



doctor.zg



Types of Headaches

MIGRAINE



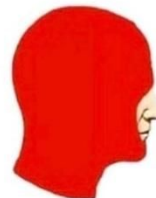
HYPERTENSION



STRESS



THINKING ABOUT HOW
TO SAVE THE SEMESTER



*“Nurture your mind with great thoughts,
For you will never go any higher than you think.”*

Benjamin Disraeli



RISE YOGA FOR YOUTH Recommendations:

- Traditional Sun Salutation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=73sjOu0g58M>
- Free Live Nidra (guided deep relaxation) Recordings: <https://flyingvenus.com/free-live-yoga-recordings>
- MC Yogi "Be the Change" music video Themes: ahimsa, self empowerment https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n_gQxVMod0

Meditation Resources & Articles:

- For meditation/mindfulness practice ideas, daily quotes, thoughts, wisdom & inspiration: www.mindfueldaily.com

Apps



<https://www.headspace.com/headspace-meditation-app>



Websites and National Organizations:

- Protect Your Brain From Stress:

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/protect-your-brain-from-stress>

- 7 Ways Meditation Can Actually Change The Brain

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/alicegwalton/2015/02/09/7-ways-meditation-can-actually-change-the-brain/amp/>



- ***JUST FOR FUN by James Clear*** [*Read this on JamesClear.com*](#)
The following list was compiled by James Clear, filled with insights and wisdom about life.

- Jeff Bezos, "[What Matters More Than Your Talents](#)"
- John Cleese, "[Creativity in Management](#)"
- William Deresiewicz, "[Solitude and Leadership](#)"
- Richard Feynman, "[Seeking New Laws](#)"
- Neil Gaiman, "[Make Good Art](#)"
- Atul Gawande, "[Curiosity and What Equality Really Means](#)"
- Richard Hamming, "[You and Your Research](#)"
- Steve Jobs, "[2005 Stanford Commencement Address](#)"
- Admiral William H. McRaven, "[Make Your Bed](#)"
- Arno Rafael Minkinen, "[Finding Your Own Vision](#)"
- Charlie Munger, "[A Lesson on Elementary, Worldly Wisdom](#)"
- Charlie Munger, "[The Psychology of Human Misjudgment](#)"
- Nathan Myhrvold, "[Roadkill on the Information Highway](#)"
- Jawaharlal Nehru, "[At the Stroke of the MidnightHour](#)"
- Randy Pausch, "[Achieving Your Childhood Dreams](#)"
- Sir Ken Robinson, "[Do Schools Kill Creativity?](#)"
- J.K. Rowling, "[The Fringe Benefits of Failure](#)"
- Claude Shannon, "[Creative Thinking](#)"
- Bret Victor, "[Inventing on Principle](#)"
- David Foster Wallace, "[This is Water](#)" Art Williams, "[Just Do It](#)"

When to Seek Help

The purpose of this handout is to help identify the signs and symptoms of common mental health issues in students. Left untreated, these issues can become debilitating and even life-threatening. If you feel that you may be experiencing these issues or find yourself concerned for a friend or peer, it is important to take action now.

For some, experiencing these symptoms or feelings can be scary and confusing. Discussing what you are going through with others is an important first step to getting help. Speaking up and asking for help is a sign of strength. For more information on How and When to Disclose to Others:

<https://www.nami.org/Find-Support/Living-with-a-Mental-Health-Condition/Disclosing-to-Others>

You're not alone if you're experiencing these feelings. Mental distress or illness is very common among students today. According to mental health research conducted by the National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI):

- One in four students have a diagnosable illness
- 40% do not seek help
- 80% feel overwhelmed by their responsibilities
- 50% are so anxious that they struggle in school
- The most common issues are depression, anxiety, suicide, eating disorders, and addiction (drug and/or alcohol abuse)

Feelings:

- Enduring sadness, despondency
- Sulking, irritability
- Rapidly changing moods, from euphoria to agitation
- Impatience
- Anger
- Hopelessness
- Fear
- Loss of interest in people or activities that used to be positive/pleasurable

Thoughts:

- Trouble concentrating, remembering or making decisions
- Racing thoughts or difficulty focusing
- Excessive worrying
- Thoughts of suicide*

Seek Help -When & Where

Physical Symptoms:

- Tiredness or lack of energy
- Unexplained aches and pains
- Changes in appetite / weight loss or gain
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Rapid heartbeat, sweating, lightheadedness, dizziness, shaking or hyperventilation

Behaviors (especially if this is a change in behavior):

- Seeming quiet or withdrawn, attempting to isolate, sitting in the back of the room
- Speaking more, or more rapidly
- Missing or arriving late to class
- Inability or unwillingness to start or finish assignments or meet commitments (sports, music, clubs, etc.)
- Falling grades
- Restlessness, fidgeting or hyperactivity
- Self harm, such as cutting
- Disrupting class or acting out
- Crying over seemingly minor things
- Changes in physical appearance, grooming or hygiene
- A negative outlook; verbalizing negative thoughts
- Engaging in impulsive, reckless or destructive behaviors (including [self-harm](#))
- Engaging in repetitive or compulsive behaviors (hand washing, counting, checking, etc.) in an attempt to control anxious feelings
- Expressing indifference or futility (“Who cares?”) when confronted with concerns
- Expressing disturbing thoughts and feelings through artwork -- some people express themselves through art -- including both visual arts like drawing and painting, and other art forms like music and poetry. A student whose artwork begins to center around dark themes like violence or death may be struggling with difficult or painful feelings.

It may be difficult for you to approach a friend or parent regarding these feelings, thoughts, or physical symptoms, but it’s important to talk to someone until you can see a counselor or professional. If a friend approaches you and is open about suicidal thoughts or depression, seek help immediately from a counselor, teacher or other adult you trust. <http://ok2talk.org/>

Seek Help -When & Where

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

We can all help prevent suicide. The Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals.

 1-800-273-8255

+1 800 273 8255

<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

- More information about mental illness at the National Institute of Mental Health website; <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/index.shtml>
- Information for teens and their parents can be found at the following website; <https://medlineplus.gov/teenmentalhealth.html>
- Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance: https://secure2.convio.net/dabsa/site/SPageServer/?jsessionid=00000000.app268b?NONCE_TO_KEN=87E911CF6CFA6A4A1D9BF961A22870A8&pagename=home

Drugs and Alcohol

Sometimes people use drugs or alcohol to try and feel better or numb the pain they are experiencing. Any of the following behaviors can signal an alcohol or other substance use problem:

- Using drugs or drinking frequently to the point of intoxication, impaired function or blackouts
- Engaging in binge drinking, which for average adults is defined as consuming five+ drinks (for men) or four+ drinks (for women) in a short period of time
- Using drugs or alcohol to the point of interference with functioning at home or school
- Using drugs or alcohol despite dangerous or lasting consequences (such as driving while intoxicated or arrest)
- Preoccupation with obtaining or using alcohol or drugs
- Giving up other activities because they might interfere with the ability to drink or use drugs
- Experiencing a sense of shame or guilt, or a feeling of being flawed or damaged
- Ignoring longtime friends to hang out with a different crowd

College Student's Guide to Avoiding Drug and Alcohol Abuse, Addiction, Recovery and Navigating Substance Use Culture on Campus

<https://www.accreditedschoolsonline.org/resources/avoiding-substance-abuse/>

This page lists a number of [federal](#), [non-federal](#) and [law enforcement](#) resources connected with college students and substance abuse.

<https://www.campusdrugprevention.gov/resources>

Where to Seek Help

There is no one right person to seek help with at first. The most important thing is to start a dialogue with a trusted friend, a family member, a school counselor, dorm adviser, college adviser, your medical doctor or campus medical provider. The descriptions below give brief descriptions of various professionals. Larger schools may offer 24-hour support and walk-in services, or online screening for common mental health concerns.

The following website offers a student tool kit supporting student mental & physical health developed at the University of Michigan. This website was developed by experts at the University of Michigan Depression Center to help college students address mental health issues and improve their emotional wellness on campus and at home.

<http://www.campusmindworks.org/downloads/>

What Can I Expect from a Counselor?

Counseling services are provided to assist students in areas of personal growth and adjustment to life stressors. Counseling typically explores such issues as well-being, relationship, social and sexual struggles, self-esteem enhancement, academic difficulties, eating disorders, major life decisions, grief, depression and anxiety. Students seeking counseling explore their ability to cope with life effectively by establishing a trusting and confidential relationship with a counselor.

The Difference Between Counseling and Psychotherapy

Although the terms counseling and therapy are often used interchangeably, there is a difference between psychotherapy and psychological counseling. Counseling focuses on specific issues and is designed to help a person address a particular problem, such as [addiction](#) or [stress management](#). The focus may be on problem solving or on learning specific techniques for coping with or avoiding problem areas. Counseling is also usually more short-term than therapy. (Excerpt from Web MD)

<https://www.webmd.com/mental-health/guide-to-psychiatry-and-counseling#3>

Psychology vs. Psychiatry Treatment

Because psychiatrists are trained medical doctors, they can prescribe medications, and they spend much of their time with patients on medication management as a course of treatment.

Seek Help -When & Where



Psychologists focus extensively on psychotherapy and treating emotional and mental suffering in patients with behavioral intervention. Psychologists are also qualified to conduct psychological testing, which is critical in assessing a person’s mental state and determining the most effective course of treatment. (Excerpt from All Psychology Schools)

- Preventing Suicide Among College Students - SAVE A LIFE – maybe a friend’s
<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/02/well/preventing-suicide-among-college-students.html>

HAVE THESE NUMBERS & EMAILS HANDY!

Campus Counseling & Psychological Services

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Campus Security: _____

Wellness Center Phone: _____

College Counselor or Adviser

Phone: _____

Email: _____