

CREATING HEALTHY ACADEMIC HABITS

WEBINAR 3 – IMPLEMENTING SELF-CARE

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HABITS THAT WE'LL COVER IN THIS WEBINAR SERIES:

- Time Management
- Goal Setting
- Self Care (This week!)
- Mindfulness
- Stress Reduction
- Combating Perfectionism
- Building Positive Self Talk

WHAT IS SELF-CARE?

- Self-care is typically viewed as a simple break from the every day; a moment where a person can focus on something they enjoy. However, it is actually a bit more involved.
- A better way to view self-care would be as a continuous process. It is a set of activities that maintain physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Typically, self-care needs to be ongoing to be effective.
- When viewed holistically, self-care includes all of the tasks associated with health and well-being. On the simplest end, this could consist of nutrition, basic personal hygiene, exercise, and getting enough sleep.
- However, it should also include activities that reduce stress, regardless of whether those activities fall in any of these categories.

BARRIERS TO SELF-CARE

- Lack of time
- Feeling guilty and selfish
- Not understanding how to practice self care
- Wanting to be perfect
- Believing self care is expensive
- Not setting boundaries
- Placing the needs of others before your own
- Believing that you don't need or deserve it
- Mental health conditions

MYTHS ABOUT SELF-CARE

- ~~Self-care is selfish.~~ **By taking care of yourself first, it will allow you to be more present for others.**
- ~~Self-care is a luxury.~~ **You do not need to spend any money to engage in self-care.**
- ~~Self-care is earned.~~ **You are inherently deserving of self-care.**
- ~~Self-care is optional.~~ **Self-care is essential to physical and emotional health.**
- ~~Self-care is time-consuming.~~ **You only need to spend a few minutes.**
- ~~Self-care is just anything that feels good.~~ **Some pleasurable activities can be damaging, especially in excess or over time.**
- ~~Self-care is always exciting.~~ **Self care takes discipline and consistency and is not always exciting.**

BENEFITS OF SELF-CARE (ESPECIALLY DURING GRAD SCHOOL!)

- Self-care can provide a wide range of benefits. By managing your well-being and overall health, you can better manage stress and the host of obligations you have to juggle.
- As stress diminishes, you may notice you're more productive and have an easier time concentrating. Your self-esteem may improve, resulting in more outward confidence. Essentially, self-care allows you to be at your best, maximize your potential, increase your ability to deal with stressors, and improve the overall quality of your life.

HABIT 1: PHYSICAL SELF-CARE (EXAMPLES)

- Get 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night
- Wake up and go to bed at the same time every day
- Exercise for 20 to 30 minutes at least three to five days a week
- Focus on proper nutrition and limit sugar and caffeine intake
- Drink enough water
- Engage in relaxing activities, like taking a walk, meditating, gentle stretching, and deep breathing exercises
- Take a nap
- Walk or bike to class instead of driving or taking the bus
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator
- Practice good hygiene

HABIT 2: PROFESSIONAL SELF-CARE (EXAMPLES)

- Set boundaries with colleagues and supervisors
- Utilize lunch and break times
- Get support with challenging tasks
- Use sick time as needed and vacation time routinely
- If working from home, try to create a work station where your work is separate from you personal activities
- Remember that self care is an ethical responsibility to most professions

HABIT 3: SOCIAL SELF-CARE (EXAMPLES)

- Call or visit a family member or friend
- Join fun student organizations to make friends
- Sign up for a study group to make learning social
- Grab a meal with a fellow student
- Catch up with your roommates
- Make shopping a group activity

HABIT 4: MENTAL & EMOTIONAL SELF-CARE (EXAMPLES)

- Make time for activities that engage you in a fun way (puzzles, reading, art, etc.)
- Reflect on past achievements or successes (journal this out!)
- Take breaks when studying
- Study slowly over a period of time instead of cramming
- Clean up your room (clutter can increase feelings of anxiety or be distracting when you need to focus)
- Say “no” if committing to a request is genuinely too taxing or your calendar is full
- Smile (this can help boost positive feelings)
- Keep a journal so you have a place to be honest about your feelings
- Counter negative thoughts with optimistic ones (view a challenge as an opportunity for growth)
- Help someone (being helpful can be gratifying)
- Watch funny movies, television shows, or video clips for a quick laugh
- Ask for help if you need it

SELF-CARE & MENTAL HEALTH

- It is important to note that self-care is designed to help with well-being. However, even if it can typically make a difference, it isn't a solution in all cases. At times, getting help from a medical professional is a necessity. Self-care should not be viewed as a substitute for formal mental health care. Instead, it may be better classified as supplemental to a treatment plan in those scenarios.
- *If you have a mental health concern, seek support from a professional such as SPH Counseling & Wellness Services or an outside provider. A professional can help you determine the potential cause of your concerns/stressors and create a suitable treatment plan based on your unique needs.*

REMINDER TO: UTILIZE CUNY SPH COUNSELING & WELLNESS SERVICES OR MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES IN YOUR COMMUNITY

SPH Counseling & Wellness:

- Free counseling support for students living in NY state. We can offer referrals for students out of state.

<https://sph.cuny.edu/students/student-services/student-wellness/counseling-and-wellness-services/>

Mental Health Resources:

- For free 24/7 support or referrals there is CUNY Crisis, NYC WELL or the national 988 mental health hotline (info below)
 - **Crisis Text Line:** Text **CUNY** to 741741 for crisis counseling
 - NYC WELL: Text WELL to 65173; Chat: <https://nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/>; Call 1-888-NYC-WELL (1-888-692-9355)
 - 988: Text to 988; Chat: <https://988lifeline.org/chat/>; Call 988
- For outside providers:
 - Search providers through your health insurance website
 - Psychology Today: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/>
 - Open Path Collective: <https://openpathcollective.org/>
 - Telehealth clinics: Mindful Care <https://www.mindful.care> and Lifestance Health <https://lifestance.com/>

SELF-CARE PLAN



REMINDER TO: PRACTICE POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS 😊

- *“Today I will share my positive attitude”*
- *“I trust myself”*
- *“I listen to advice from others”*
- *“I am capable of success”*
- *“My hard work will lead me to my goals”*
- *“I am stronger than any challenge I face”*
- *“I spread positivity and kindness”*