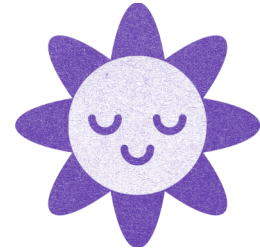


# Wellness: Managing your stress/anxiety

*Experiencing anxiety or stress in your day to day? Use this toolkit to receive guidance on how to manage those negative feelings. Keep in mind, if your anxiety is creating large barriers in your daily life, you may want to consider meeting with a professional counselor.*

**Stress and anxiety** are common concerns among college students. Feelings of being unprepared or inadequate can also contribute to these negative feelings. Recognizing and knowing how to control your stress and anxiety can help improve your wellbeing.



## Recommendations to manage your stress and anxiety:

- **Be prepared:** Preparing ahead of time can help you avoid unnecessary anxiety. For example, you will feel anxious about a test if you are not fully prepared. Ways to prepare academically include: attending all your classes and supplemental support classes, tracking your courses with a planner or calendar, and setting realistic time frames for you to complete your assignments and prepare for exams.
- **Manage your expectations:** When trying to lower your anxiety and stress, consider the expectations you are setting for yourself. Make sure the expectations you set are realistic.
  - ★ *Are these expectations achievable? Do they align with your goals?*
- **Recognize your limits:** Consider what is in and out of your control. For what is in your control, take steps to address how you can change. For what is out of your control, find peace in knowing that you have already done what is necessary to help your situation.
- **Find an outlet:** A helpful way to manage stress and anxiety is finding other things to focus on. For example, finding a hobby, running, or spending time with friends can help alleviate feelings of stress and anxiety.
  - ★ *What helps you relax when you're feeling anxious? Is this something you can engage in during moments of stress?*
- **Find a support system:** Sometimes talking about how you are feeling to someone can help. Having a listening ear can ground you and give you a new perspective. This person may be a trusted friend, family member, or therapist.



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- **Take care of your body:** Eating well, exercising, getting a good night's sleep, and getting enough sunlight can have an impact on your mood. Make sure you are caring for your physical body if you want to see improvements in your wellbeing.
- **Control your breathing:** When trying to relax, practice purposeful breathing. When people are anxious, they normally hold their breath; so, take deep meaningful breaths.

★ Consider using the following breathing techniques:

## **Diaphragmatic breathing:**

- Relax, place one hand on chest, the other on your belly, and practice breathing in and out. If it is difficult to breathe, lean forward.
- Choose a focal point (sound or sensation) and focus in it as you breathe.
- Inhale forcefully, listening to the sound of your breath entering your body.

## **Hand on heart:**

- Place your own hand on your heart.
- Breathe deeply. As you are breathing, breathe in a sense of peace, ease, or goodness into your heart center.
- Remember an instance of when you have felt safe, loved, and cherished by someone.

- **Utilize your resources:** Should you feel that you are experiencing high levels of stress and/or anxiety, consider meeting with a professional counselor. You can receive access to a free counselor through the Student Health and Counseling Center.



**My commitment is...**