

Stress Management and Self-Care

True self-care is not salt baths and chocolate cake, it is making the choice to build a life you don't need to regularly escape from.

Eat Well

A healthy and balanced diet helps you fight stress. For example, eating complex carbohydrates (whole grain, fruits, and vegetables) increases serotonin production and helps your body stabilize blood pressure.



Exercise

Movement produces endorphins, which act as natural painkillers and improve your quality of sleep. It also reduces your body's stress hormones, such as adrenaline and cortisol.

Have an Outlet

Hobbies can help minimize the impacts of stress by providing a sense of fun and freedom. Things like sports, music, art, gardening, reading, and more can provide an outlet for stress and something to look forward to.



Build a Support System

Surround yourself with people who lift you up, encourage you, and listen without judgement. There are many ways to connect with people on campus: try joining a club/organization, starting a study group, or attending residence hall events.

Practice Mindfulness

Mindfulness is the practice of focusing one's awareness on the present moment. Regularly practicing mindfulness can improve brain functioning and lead to less intense stress responses. Ways you can practice mindfulness include meditation, deep breathing, yoga, journaling, and gratitude.



Have a Plan

Time management is a key skill in reducing stress. Prioritize your obligations, and schedule time for friends and yourself. Remember: you must take care of yourself first before you can take care of anything else.

If Stress Gets Too High:

- Make an appointment at the NDSU Counseling Center: (701) 231-7671 or complete their free, anonymous Stress and Depression Assessment here: https://www.ndsu.edu/counseling/stress_and_depression_assessment/
- If you live in the Residence Halls, reach out to your Resident Assistant
- Contact your doctor or Student Health Services: (701) 231-7331
- FirstLink (local 24-hour helpline): (701) 235-7335 or 211

The top three mental health concerns for college students are stress, anxiety, and depression.

Nearly 45% of college students feel "more than average stress," and another 13% feel "tremendous stress."

Developing stress-management and self-care skills are necessary and important for success in college.