

# SELF-CARE WHEN WE ARE IN A HARD PLACE

Here are some things you can do to try to alleviate some of the distress you may currently be experiencing. This list is for informational purposes only and is not intended to diagnose or treat any conditions - it **cannot** substitute for a consultation with a medical or mental health professional.

## Stick to a routine

Get dressed, go to class, keep to the structure you normally have during your day.

## Eat regularly

Skipping meals robs you of the energy you need to cope.

## Talk to supportive friends or family members

Isolating yourself can make things worse.

## Keep a journal of your thoughts and feelings

Note any patterns or questions you'd like to discuss in counseling.

## Get some sleep

Most people need from 7 to 9 hours of sleep every night.

Try to go to bed and get up at the same time every day.

## Do some kind of movement that you enjoy

This can be walks around the campus, playing sports, working out. Movement can help reduce stress and will produce endorphins.

## Avoid using alcohol or drugs as a way to "self-medicate"

This includes consuming too much caffeine.

## Find activities that are relaxing or soothing to you

Listen to your favorite music, take hot baths, meditate, paint a picture.

## Care for yourself spiritually

Go to church, attend chapel, or just enjoy nature. Pray, read uplifting books, speak to a trusted pastor or spiritual mentor.

## Find humor in life

Spend time with those who make you laugh. Watch a comedy or read a funny book.

## Distract yourself temporarily from your difficulties

Watch TV, play a game, go window shopping.

## Recall what has helped you before in similar situations

Make a list of these things and try to do them.



### **STEP 1: Know when to get help**

What are warning signs that you are starting to struggle with your problem?

These can be thoughts, feelings, behaviors.



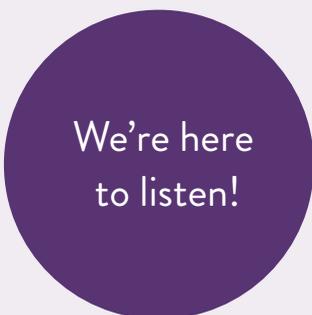
### **STEP 2: Coping Skills**

What can you do, by yourself, to take your mind off of these problems? What could be some of the obstacles to taking care of yourself? Brainstorm possible ways around these obstacles.



### **STEP 3: Social Supports**

If you are unable to deal with these problems on your own, who are trusted friends and/or family you can contact? List several in case the first is unavailable. What can you say to them that lets them know you need support?



### **STEP 4: Professional Resources**

Below is a brief list of off-campus resources where you can obtain support, guidance, and assistance:

National Crisis Text line  
741-741

National Suicide Prevention Hotline  
1-800-273-TALK (8255)