

TEACHER WELLNESS



Whether we're planning and teaching virtually or managing projects, working from home for extended lengths of time can be challenging as work time blends into personal time. It's too easy to slip into being on call 24/7 as we tackle emerging challenges and requests from learners anywhere and at any time.

Setting boundaries that separate work time from personal time is only a first step. To help and support others, we must become avid caretakers of ourselves.

Tending to our personal health seems important but also really difficult in situations like the current pandemic, when our time feels consumed with urgent work issues. We may feel that if we don't get a task done, our students will suffer or programs will fail. However, if we become mentally exhausted, overtired, or drained of energy, we risk a complete shutdown mentally or physically—and at that point, no tasks will get done.

Fortunately, there are many ways that we can take care of ourselves so that we can meet the needs of others from home. ***Taking care of yourself is the best gift you can give your students.*** The following are my suggestions for personal care and sharing with others.





- Make a list of the things you like to do that feed your heart, your body, your mind, and your soul.



- Get out your calendar and make time for yourself EVERY day.

- Give up all guilt about taking time for yourself, or for taking time to be with people who boost your energy and your joy.



- Keep a gratitude journal.



- Ask for help when you need it. After all, you aren't asking for anything you would not be happy to give. Allow others the blessing of giving to you.



- Laugh and learn from your mistakes— another great gift to yourself and others.
- Maintain a routine that includes a consistent bedtime. Plan to get the rest you need so that each day you can better address your students' needs.



It can be helpful to get other teachers involved in your plan for self-care. Try the suggested activity below

In a faculty meeting or with a group of teachers, take time to set personal goals and encourage each other. For this activity, get into small groups of two or three.

1. First, spend a few minutes on your own identifying three to five personal goals for self-care. Write each down. This can serve as a guide for your self-care plan moving forward.
2. Share your individual self-care goals within your small group. When sharing, be as specific as possible. Think about ways you can track your progress. For example: if you plan to walk three times a week, mark the days in your calendar and then check off each time you walk, to track your success.





3. Brainstorm ways to help keep self-care a priority. Are there specific things you could do to encourage yourself and each other?
4. Make an agreement in your small group to check in regularly regarding one another's progress and provide encouragement and support for the group members to follow through.



Introspect on your thoughts and behaviour, watch yourself and question

Do you yell more in class and give out more punishments when you are tired, or do you get annoyed easily when students ask a question more than once. then this is when you need more self -care.

As a teacher, it is difficult, because you always think about your students first. You always think about your class and how you can do better activities; organize things that are both educational and fun for the kids. Preparing is important; however, if you are tired, get off track no matter how much preparation you have done.

It's time to know that you have to go to bed early, that you have to take a tea break, relax after a day of teaching, see friends quite often even if it means virtually, and try to do sports three times a week. Doing that influences your way of teaching, and ***you will become more of the teacher YOU want to be.***

The way you act with your students depends on how you take care of yourself. It is an obligation as a teacher to take care of yourself.

We are role models for our students and our children, and we can set an example and practice what we teach about lifelong learning—which is now more important than ever. Managing our physical, mental, and social well-being can give us the energy to be present to those we are responsible for and set an example for them of how to cope with our tough current situation.

TAKE CARE



OF YOURSELF