

Self-Care and Coping

Developing self-care and healthy coping practices allows you to better avoid burnout and behaviors that create long-term stress. Taking care of yourself is not overindulgent; it means that you are deciding to invest in your own sustainability and long-term success.

Tips for self-care and coping:

- **Set boundaries.** Have you volunteered too much of your time? Are you supporting friends or family when you need time to yourself? Setting realistic boundaries for yourself and sticking to them helps everyone. When you advocate for your own health and well-being, you become a stronger and more reliable support to yourself *and* others who need you.
- **Stay in your body.** Breathing exercises, meditation, yoga, physical activity, and stretching help ground yourself and confront any anxieties you may be experiencing. At first, it can feel so uncomfortable and unusual to pay attention to anxiety. With practice, it gets easier. It's okay to be anxious.
- **Be with friends.** If you want company but don't have the energy for the usual ways you socialize with friends, ask them for what you need. Sitting in silence together doing homework? Playing a video game? Lying on the floor listening to music? Your friends want to support you; for that to happen, you have to tell them what helpful support looks like to you.
- **Take time for yourself.** It's okay to spend time alone. Sometimes that's exactly what you need to recharge. If that means missing social events, that's okay. Try revisiting an old hobby or picking up a new one, writing letters to people you care about, making yourself a perfect cup of tea, or redecorating and organizing your room.
- **Get enough sleep.** Often when we're burned out and about to lose, a good sleep will do wonders. If you're struggling to sleep, try herbal supplements like essential oils or melatonin to help get the sleep your body needs. Instead of watching TV or scrolling on your phone before bed, try reading a book, drawing, or journaling to avoid the energizing effect of screen lights.
- **Find help.** There are people on your campus whose job is to help students succeed. They are there to help and they want to help—go to them! You do not need to be in a crisis to ask for help. Asking for help early helps avoid crises altogether.

Helplines | In an emergency, call 911 for immediate help.

Iowa Victim Service Call Center (24hrs)
800-770-1650 or text 'IOWAHELP' to 20121

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (24hrs)
800-273-8255 or online chat available
800-799-4889 for deaf and low-hearing



Questions about this resource?
Email campus@iowsafeschools.org

