

# DAM Good Self-Care\* Packet

Thanks for picking up a **DAM Good Self Care\*** packet! Academic Success is holistic, and taking care of yourself by managing your stress and scheduling your time is an important aspect of your time here at OSU.

The following exercises, strategies, and tools are here for you to evaluate your current self-care strategies, offer options for reframing the way you think about and approach periods of stress (and we know that school, and everything that you're involved in, and *life*, can be stressful!), and provide you with a place to plan ahead for those stressful periods, so that when you're in the thick of it, you have something to turn to for support, ways to navigate, and paths forward.

We're so excited you're here, and we can't wait to work with you. Visit our Waldo 125 space with any academic questions you have, for help locating resources, or to make an academic coaching appointment. Onwards!

## SELF-ASSESSMENT

**WHEN YOU FEEL STRESSED, DO YOU:**

**YES      NO**

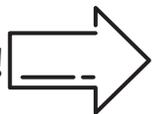
	YES	NO
Engage in physical activity	A	B
Drink more caffeine than usual	B	A
Get less than 6- 8 hours of sleep	B	A
Make time to relax	A	B
Connect with family or friends	A	B
Overeat or under eat	B	A
Get organized, make a list	A	B
Maintain healthy routines and hygiene habits	A	B
Spend too much money (more than you plan to)	B	A
Find you get upset, frustrated or angry easily	B	A
Note your accomplishments and reward yourself	A	B
Watch a lot of shows, movies, TV, Netflix (more than 3 hours a day)	B	A
Ignore or deny stress symptoms	B	A
Engage in positive thinking, humor, optimism or gratitude	A	B
Avoid what needs to get done and the sources of stress	B	A
Create a plan to manage or reduce stress	A	B
Lose yourself in internet browsing for long periods of time	B	A

Adapted from: <https://socialwork.buffalo.edu/content/dam/socialwork/home/self-care-kit/lifestyle-behaviors.pdf>

**TALLY:** \_\_\_\_\_ A responses \_\_\_\_\_ B responses

\***DAM Good Self-Care** is a program coordinated by OSU's Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS). For more self-care activities, please visit <http://counseling.oregonstate.edu/main/dam-good-self-care>.

**RESULTS!**



# SELF-ASSESSMENT RESULTS!

**MOSTLY As** – Good for you! You are already using some self-care strategies in your regular routine and you are avoiding many of the common behaviors that amplify stress levels. Your next level of self-care will be fine-tuning this work and ensuring consistency!

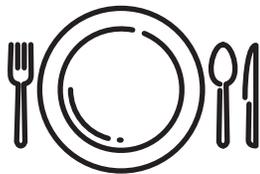
**SOME As, SOME Bs** – You’ve got a good start to self-care, and luckily there is always room to improve. In the pages to follow you’ll have a chance to think about not just the strategies and behaviors you want to start doing, but maybe those you want to stop doing as well!

**MOSTLY BS** – It’s time to get started on some self-care practices! Your results demonstrate that you often engage in behaviors that amplify stress and may not be taking advantage of some strategies to reduce stress. We think you’ll be delighted by what you can accomplish with a little reflection and planning.

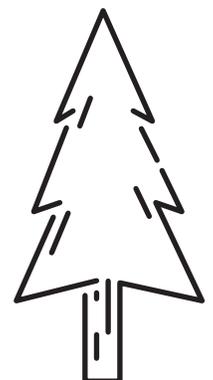
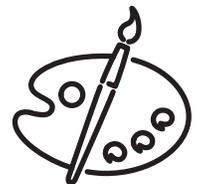


## EXAMPLE SELF-CARE STRATEGIES

Go to sleep and wake up at the same time  
 Eat well and regularly  
 Participate in physical activity (*check out Dixon Rec Center*)  
 Take care of your personal needs (hygiene, laundry, etc.)  
 Take care of yourself when sick  
 Take naps when you’re tired  
 Know what you’re feeling and what you need  
 Find ways to laugh during the day  
 Have people you can talk to  
 Write in a journal  
 Experience positive emotions  
 Feel a sense of accomplishment  
 Feel centered/grounded  
 Make time for yourself  
 Limit your time on social media  
 Get together regularly with friends  
 Find time to do hobbies  
 Talk with family or supportive people  
 Feel connected to a community  
 Find ways to meet new people  
 Volunteer  
 Have a relaxing evening/morning routine  
 Take breaks and have something to look forward to later  
 Read for pleasure  
 Be creative (color, draw, music, etc.)  
 Feel like your life is organized  
 Make time for spirituality (in any form) or mindfulness  
 Meditate (*visit CAPS Mindspa*)  
 Find time to be outside or in nature  
 Practice gratitude  
 Engage in small acts of kindness



Focus on your breathing  
 Write down what you value  
 Take a bath or shower  
 Tidy your space  
 Listen to music  
 Phone a friend or family member  
 Stretch  
 Take a walk  
 Listen to a guided relaxation  
 Do a wall squat or pushups  
 Sit outside (*find a favorite campus spot*)  
 Look at art (*check out Fairbanks gallery*)  
 Thank someone  
 Paint or draw  
 Read poetry  
 Color (*try the Craft Center’s Mandala Mondays or Watercolor Wednesdays*)  
 Exercise or work out  
 Get a snack  
 Drink something refreshing  
 Take three DEEP breaths  
 Look off into the distance  
 Watch the clouds or sky  
 Get away from electronics  
 Pet an animal  
 Go to a park  
 Make a list  
 Create a plan  
 Recognize negative self-talk  
 Break things into small tasks  
 Track accomplishments



Sourced from *50 ways to take a break*: <http://www.fullcupthirstyspirit.com/posters.php>

# ON-GOING & PROACTIVE SELF-CARE OR “MAINTENANCE” SELF-CARE

*Self-care activities that are part of your regular routine can help keep your stress levels in check and create a pro-active approach to managing stress levels. Maintenance self-care refers to activities that you commit to on a regular basis as a means of taking care of yourself (Butler, L.D, University of Buffalo SSW). Engaging in ongoing self-care may help you avoid high levels of stress during peak times of the term. Continually working on self-care means you’ll get to know yourself better and improve over time.*

**DEVELOP HABITS AND ROUTINES FOR HEALTHY LIVING.** Regular sleep, good nutrition, limiting caffeine, sugar, alcohol. (Cuseo, Fecas & Thompson)

**RELY ON AN ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEM.** Having a system to stay organized can help relieve the tension of needing to keep all of your deadlines and to-do items in your head. Whether it’s electronic or a paper planner, create a system you can trust. Use it to know what your key priorities and areas of focus are so that you know what you can say ‘no’ to. Avoid being stretched too thin or falling behind.

**BUILD TIME INTO YOUR SCHEDULE FOR SELF-CARE.** If you’ve already got a method for scheduling your time or a planner that tells you when your commitments are, build in time for self-care activities. Scheduling that time will make them feel more like another commitment and less like something you can opt out of if you start feeling busy. Block time in your calendar for the activities that help you relax, improve your mood, or provide support and encouragement. Little breaks throughout the day or a weekend away.

**CONTROL YOUR ENVIRONMENT.** There’s no perfect environment for everyone. Know yourself and know what works for you. Limit distractions – create a space for working or relaxing that allows you to concentrate and focus. When possible, avoid places, people, discussions/websites that cause unwanted anxiety.

**IDENTIFY YOUR STRESS RELIEVING ACTIVITIES.** Take note of the type of activities that help you relax and recharge (see list on page 2). Activities that produce deep breathing, muscle relaxation, and laughter will help increase relaxation and reduce tension (Cuseo, Fecas, & Thompson)

**MONITOR OVERWHELM.** You know yourself best. What does stress look like for you? How do you know when you’re stressed. If the day-to-day habits you’ve created for yourself aren’t helping, know your next steps!



Referenced: <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/stress-management.htm>

# SITUATIONAL & REACTIVE OR “EMERGENCY” SELF-CARE

*Even with the best planning and self-care habits, there are still instances when stress and overwhelm build up. When stress levels are high or you feel overwhelmed or burned out, it can help to have already thought through some sure-fire ways to take care of yourself in the moment. Thinking ahead about what works for you will make it easier to enact this plan in the moment.*

**IDENTIFY YOUR SUPPORT NETWORK.** Take some time to identify who you can contact in different scenarios.

- Who listens well?
- Who encourage me?
- Who can remind me of my self-care plan?
- Who will encourage me to do something fun?

**KNOW WHAT TO AVOID.** Certain people, environments, and activities can have a negative impact if you’re already having a hard time. (Examples: that dramatic person in your house, that super-sad play list, staying in bed all day, etc.)

- Who should I avoid if I’m really stressed out?
- What environments escalate stress rather than relieve it?
- What types of activities should I avoid if I’m trying to lower my stress?
- What habits do I get into that I should be aware of if I’m stressed?

**REFRAME HOW YOU TALK TO YOURSELF.** While we cannot always control the situation, sometimes we can try to view stressful situations from a different perspective .If you find yourself upset, frustrated, or angry, try converting that thought into something more positive. Annoyed by a long line? It’s a chance to listen to a podcast. “I can’t get everything done” becomes “I just need a plan to help me get organized.”

- What does negative self-talk sound like for you? When you’re stressed, what do you say to yourself?
- What can you say to yourself that’s positive instead? How can you reword that talk to be more positive?

Adapted from Rinfrette, PhD, LCSW-R, accessed on <https://socialwork.buffalo.edu/resources/self-care-starter-kit/developing-your-self-care-plan.html>

# PLAN FOR SELF-CARE!

Now that you've engaged in a self-assessment of your current approach to self-care, and have explored some possible strategies for both routine and emergency self-care, take some times to develop your own plans. Making plans helps you to establish and/or maintain routine habits, and provides you with valuable tools when you experience periods of high-stress. Having activities and strategies at the ready can be extremely valuable, and can help you to navigate more smoothly through those high stress times.



## ROUTINE HABITS

<b>Self-care activities that I can do regularly &amp; frequently (see list on page 2):</b>	<b>Strategy for planning and scheduling:</b>
<b>Perceived obstacles to my self-care habits:</b>	<b>Strategies for overcoming obstacles:</b>

## EMERGENCY SELF-CARE!



<b>Activities for relaxation:</b>	<b>Activities that put me in a good mood:</b>
<b>People I can contact for support or distraction:</b>	<b>Reminders for myself when I get stressed:</b>