

# HEALTHY HABITS TO HELP MENTAL HEALTH

It's easy to feel overwhelmed in college, but there are some practices you can start implementing to manage all the stress that comes along with being a college student. By applying some of these practices daily, you can learn to tackle these challenges in a healthy way and take care of yourself.

## Managing Time and Assignments

It can be difficult to adjust to the workload in college. You have to learn what works best for you in terms of time management habits. Here are some solutions that may be helpful in handling completing assignments on time and creating a good study schedule:

- Using apps, such as the notes app, to keep track of all of your assignments, quizzes, etc. in order to complete them in a timely manner.
- Setting reminders for yourself, whether that is using your phone or using sticky notes, so that you are reminded of the work that you need to complete.
- Doing homework/assignments at the beginning of the day so that your nighttime schedule is clear for recreational activities and sleep.
- Setting realistic goals and rewarding yourself when you complete them.
- Taking study breaks.

## Feeling Stressed and Anxious

Feeling stressed and anxious in college is super normal. You are confronted with many academic and personal responsibilities and it is a period of adjustment as you become more independent. Some ways to manage these feelings of stress and anxiety include:

- Exercising
- Meditating
- Journaling - this will help you get your thoughts out instead of keeping things bottled up.
- Talking a walk
- Coloring



# Lack of Motivation and Concentration

With tons of assignments piling up and little time for personal tasks, it is hard to stay motivated to study and complete your work. Here are some ways to be encouraged, concentrated, and have fun while doing schoolwork:

- Establishing study groups - see if your classes offer organized study groups or create your own! Not only will this help you socialize in an academic setting but it will help you fully grasp the information that you are learning.
- Putting your phone in your backpack or a separate room so that you can fully focus without distractions.
- 45 minutes on 15 minutes off - doing work for 45 minutes and then taking a 15-minute break to make studying more manageable.
- Getting a student tutor from Rutgers.



# Feeling Burnt Out

With all the assignments, homework, and exams in college, it is easy to lose time for personal tasks. This can lead to feeling burnt out. To help with this, practice self-care such as:

- Taking a bath
- Taking a walk
- Taking a nap
- Reading a book
- Journaling/affirmations

## Not Getting Enough Sleep

Between going to class, completing assignments, studying, and hanging out with friends, it can be hard to find time to get optimal sleep as a college student. However, sleep is very important to feel reenergized and helps with concentration and memory. If you aren't getting enough sleep, try:

- Having a consistent sleep schedule - going to bed and waking up at the same time every day.
- Creating a comfortable sleep environment.
- Avoiding electronics before bed.
- Only spending time in your bed if you are sleeping.



## Feeling Depressed and Lonely

A lot of time in college is spent by yourself. On top of being away from your family and hometown friends, it also gets hard to make time to see your friends at college. If you start feeling down about being lonely try:

- Setting up regular FaceTime and Zoom calls with family and friends.
- Planning a certain day of the week dedicated to doing something fun with friends.
- Seeking professional mental health guidance through Rutgers or another personal therapist.



# Too Much Social Media Use

These days social media has infiltrated our daily lives. Although social media use can be positive, such as allowing us to communicate with family and friends, it can also be very harmful. It can make you feel left out, increase the pressure of wanting to succeed, decrease your ability to concentrate, impact your sleep schedule, and affect well being. It is important to limit the time you spend on social media, here are some ways to do so:

- Setting screen time limits for each social media app.
- Not using social media before bed.
- Avoiding screens when spending time with family and friends.
- Taking breaks from screens.



## Helpful Links:

- [Daily workout classes at Rutgers](#)
- [Tutors/study groups at Rutgers](#)
- [Counseling services at Rutgers](#)

## FOOTNOTE

Developed by Kennedy Peck, Wellness Self Care Lab, Center of Alcohol Studies and Substance Use Studies <https://alcoholstudies.rutgers.edu/research/wellness-self-care-lab/>.

## Related References

“Social Media Effect on College Students - Continuum Outpatient.” Continuum Outpatient Center, 21 Mar. 2024, [continuumoutpatient.com/effect-of-social-media-on-college-students/#:~:text=Impact%20on%20Academic%20Performance,lower%20rates%20and%20economic%20performance](https://continuumoutpatient.com/effect-of-social-media-on-college-students/#:~:text=Impact%20on%20Academic%20Performance,lower%20rates%20and%20economic%20performance)

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