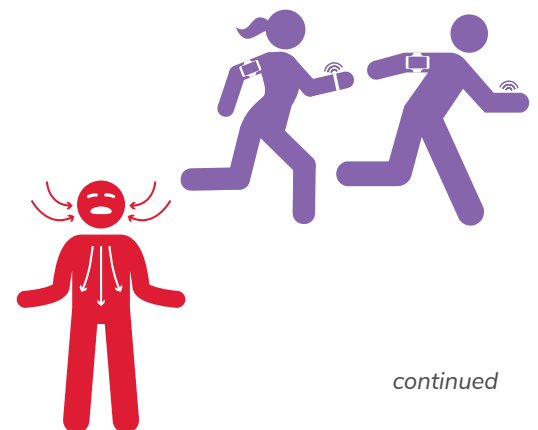
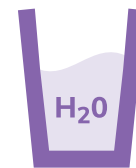


Wellness Tips

In our fast-paced world, taking care of yourself is more important than ever for teachers, parents, students and the entire school community. Schools have a culture of competitive performance. Increasing workloads and higher values are often placed on new systems and student testing rather than people and human experience. Teachers report that their workload feels overwhelming and that they carry challenges home from their workday.¹ Many parents struggle to balance work and family life.² Students feel more overwhelmed than past generations with increased testing, extracurricular activities and a constant barrage of influences from social media. Here are some wellness tips that might help with today's struggles:

- 1. Hydrate:** Are you drinking enough water? It sounds very basic, but not getting enough water can cause headaches and lead to fatigue.
- 2. Eat well:** We need food to fuel energy. Although it is tempting to eat muffins and doughnuts, we know that food with more protein and less sugar can help us to feel better longer and decrease the mental “funk” and impatience that slows us down. Often, parents and teachers are so busy it is hard to find the time to eat healthy. However, planning ahead and bringing fruit or a thermos of thick soup can make a huge difference.
- 3. Exercise:** Exercising three times a week for at least 30 minutes is recommended for optimal physical and mental performance. Often, it is tough to fit this into the schedule, but remember that the results will outweigh the inconvenience.
- 4. Relax:** Remember to breathe deeply, fill your belly first and then your chest—slowly release and repeat again. Take five minutes a few times each day to practice breathing. This helps the body to reset and unwind.



continued

¹ Taylor, H. (n.d.). Why Self-Care Strategies for Teachers Are So Important. Retrieved from <https://welldoing.org/article/why-self-care-strategies-for-teachers-are-so-important>

² Wang, W., & Wang, W. (2014, April 10). Parents' Time with Kids More Rewarding Than Paid Work - and More Exhausting. Retrieved from <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2013/10/08/parents-time-with-kids-more-rewarding-than-paid-work-and-more-exhausting/>

5. **Have fun:** Get out of your regular routine and do something you love. Think of fun things that you haven't done in a while. Make a list of five activities. Pick one, and make plans to do it during the week. ³



6. **Create a journal:** Set a time each day to write or draw and put your thoughts or feelings into a journal.



7. **Listen to uplifting music:** Music is a powerful way to nourish ourselves and help us feel less stressed.



8. **Connect with a close friend:** Take time to connect or reconnect for one uninterrupted hour with a close friend. This helps build our social support and can help us feel better. ⁴



9. **Sleep:** Having a consistent sleep pattern helps regulate emotions and can keep us happy and healthy.



10. **Limit social media:** The overuse of social media can lead to negative mental health effects. It is important for both adults and children to take breaks from social media. Apps such as Screentime can help keep track of how much time is being spent online.



11. **Reach out for support:** Sometimes our anxiety, depression or overwhelmed feelings are too much to deal with alone. It is OK to ask for additional help. If it is tough to maintain balance, connecting with a counselor, close friend, mental health professional, someone at church or a doctor can help us feel better. ⁵



Today we face more and more pressure from friends, family, emails, news sources, social media and daily responsibilities. For many, the increased pressure can lead to behavioral issues. By managing emotions and implementing wellness tips, one can begin to experience more relaxation, calmness and positive attitudes throughout their day.

³ Melinda. (2018, October 02). Teacher Self Care: What Will You Do For You Today? Retrieved from <https://topnotchteaching.com/reflective-teaching/teacher-self-care/>

⁴ 25 Simple Self-Care Tools for Parents. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/joyful-parenting/201708/25-simple-self-care-tools-parents>

⁵ Lane, P., & Lane, P. L. (2017, December 21). Self-Care Tips for Students. Retrieved from <https://iachievelearning.com/2017/12/self-care-tips-for-students/>