Balance, balance, balance. There is a great deal of stress right now. An election cycle and COVID followed by the end of the semester stress. It is more important than ever that you work toward finding balance in your life. Checking with yourself to make sure that you are tending to the 7 areas of wellness will help you do just that!

**STRESS KIT**

for managing November

Elements of **Wellness**

- Environmental
- Intellectual
- Physical
- Emotional
- Occupational
- Social
- Spiritual
Stay informed about what is going on but know your limits! Monitor how you are feeling after you watch or read the news. Feeling preoccupied or upset by the news may be a signal to cut back on your news intake and social media consumption. Consider scheduling a short block of time in the morning and one in the evening to catch up on the news.

Make sure you do take ‘digital breaks’ and use that time to do something enjoyable that does not involve any screen time.

Finally, incorporate self-soothing practices into your daily routine. This can help you to reduce the intensity of negative emotions by engaging all of your senses in intentional, calming ways. 

Try the following:

SIGHT:
- Low light, soothing colors, sleeping masks, coloring books

SOUND:
- Calming noises, nature sounds, guided meditations, binaural beats

TOUCH:
- Soft things, massage, hot/cold shower, heated/weighted blanket

SMELL:
- Aromatherapy, fresh air, comforting smells

TASTE:
- Strong flavors, warm drinks, nostalgic flavors
Utilize the practices that are consistent with your spirituality. These practices can provide calmness while also emphasizing the connection you have with something bigger than yourself.

Prayer, meditation, and being in nature are some of the ways that students have practiced spirituality.

IF YOU WISH TO EXPLORE MORE ABOUT MEDITATION, THESE ARE THE TOP APPS AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD:

- CALM
- HEADSPACE
- INSIGHT TIMER
- AURA
- SIMPLE HABIT
- BREATHE
- 10% HAPPIER
- BETTERME
- PACIFICA
- ABIDE

Check out CAPS’ video on mindfulness:
[Link](http://wcu.edu/experience/health-and-wellness/caps/self-help.aspx)
EXERCISE.
Campus Recreation and Wellness (wcu.edu/experience/campus-recreation/index.aspx) offers multiple opportunities for students to tend to their physical wellbeing.

SLEEP.
We can’t overemphasize the importance of sleep for your overall health. If you are having difficulty with your sleep, check out CAPS’ sleep hygiene video: wcu.edu/experience/health-and-wellness/caps/self-help.aspx for some tips.

HEALTH.
In addition to COVID, flu season is here. Remember to get your flu shot and be a flu fighter:

ARE YOU A WCU FLU FIGHTER?
LEAD BY EXAMPLE.
This is an important time to remain **CONNECTED**.

**CONNECTION ALLOWS YOU:**
- **TO DECREASE LONELINESS, STRESS, DEPRESSION, AND ANXIETY**
- **TO EXPERIENCE SOLIDARITY**
- **TO EXPERIENCE LOVE AND BELONGING**
- **TO RECEIVE AND GIVE CARE AND COMPASSION.**

Connecting in the middle of a pandemic is hard! Here are some great ways to build stronger connections during the pandemic... or really, at any time:

- **WRITE A LETTER**
- **CALL (DON'T TEXT!) SOMEONE**
- **ASK MEANING QUESTIONS**
- **ANSWER QUESTIONS HONESTLY. IF YOU AREN'T DOING WELL, SAY THAT!**

We have heard of very creative ways to connect virtually. Zoom dance parties, the House Party app 🤘, virtual group workouts, CAPS drop in groups: [wcu.edu/experience/health-and-wellness/caps/index.aspx](http://wcu.edu/experience/health-and-wellness/caps/index.aspx)

Try these out!
Zoom fatigue is real. And it is a reality that we have to use it right now.

How do you manage using Zoom without creating MORE stress?

**TRY THESE TIPS:**

- Establish ‘no screen’ blocks of time in your day. Of course, choose these times when you don’t have to be in class or at a meeting.

- You may want to turn off your camera during class as a way to manage your zoom fatigue, but don’t do it all the time. Remember, leaving your camera on, even if you can only see your professor, can help you feel connected and more focused on content.

- Do not try to do multiple things while on Zoom. It is tempting to use multiple devices at one time to check emails or respond to texts while also zooming, just focusing on one thing—your class—will give your brain a break.
Identifying what is important to us can be one way to foster motivation and connection. Try a values card sort (think2perform.com/our-approach/values/new) and then consider how you can express your values on a daily basis.

Another important way to address problems is to lean on your strengths. These are important characteristics to help you be successful after your time at WCU. Try taking the VIA Character Strengths Survey to identify your strongest traits: viacharacter.org/
It can be challenging to stay motivated right now. But doing something – some action, no matter how small – can lessen some of the uncertainty.

Activism, service and generosity can help you feel more connected to your environment. What you do doesn’t have to be political, but finding a sense of empowerment and contribution can help you to overcome a sense of helplessness. **Want a voice in politics? Then vote!**

You can also find a cause you believe in by joining a club or organization at engage.wcu.edu.