

Stressors Program Directors Face Abroad

- Co-Curricular duties
- Logistical and organizational duties
- “On call” 24 hours a day
- Group and interpersonal dynamics
- Student conduct issues
- Health and safety concerns
- Intercultural dynamics

An Overview of Self-Care Strategies

- Physical:
 - Eat well
 - Exercise
 - Sleep
- Emotional:
 - Mindfulness and meditation
 - Writing and reflection
 - Practicing self-compassion
- Social/Relational:
 - Set reasonable boundaries
 - Carve our personal time
 - Nurture supportive personal relationships

Matrix for Self-Care as Education Abroad Program Directors

GROUNDWORK

Know Yourself: Do I understand my own privilege/bias? Do I know how I might react during moments of difficulty or uncertainty (i.e., what is my typical stress response)? What are my typical health and wellness strategies and routines? Will I be able to continue these while abroad? If not, what can I do to stay healthy?

Find Community: Who is in my community of support? What communities of support do I rely on in a time of crisis? How can I tap into these communities of support while abroad?

COURAGEOUS MOMENTS

Be Yourself: Am I present? Have I demonstrated compassion with myself and others? Am I taking care of myself? Have I eaten, slept, exercised, drank water? Have I used my standard strategies for managing and diffusing stress?

Engage Community: Have I reached out to my communities of support for input and/or assistance? Why or why not?

REFLECTION & PROCESSING

Respect Yourself: Have I carved out time/space for reflection and recovery? Have I been able to (re)establish my typical health, wellness, and stress management strategies? Was I able to let go of things that I cannot control?

Connect with Community: How am I including my communities of support in this time of reflection and recovery?

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YOUR PERSONAL SELF-CARE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

1. Determine what you know about the **circumstances of your education abroad program**: Location? Weather? Schedule? Safety issues? Living arrangements? Available resources?
2. Identify **what self-care needs are most important to you**; prioritize the must-haves versus the negotiables.
3. Keeping your program circumstances in mind, brainstorm **modes of flexible integration of self-care practices** that can help you meet, *at a minimum*, those prioritized needs on a regular basis during the program. How could you make time for these practices daily or weekly?
4. Identify **one new self-care practice** discussed here that you would like to try, and determine a way you could work it into your schedule.

*Adapted from Boye, A., and Smith, A. (2018). Re-Prioritizing our Well-Being: Evidence-Based Self-Care for Faculty. Lilly Conference on Evidence-Based Teaching and Learning. Austin, TX. January 2018.

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MEDITATION APPS

- **Headspace:** Some free features, great guided meditations.
- **Insight Timer:** Timer tracks progress over time, allows you to share your progress with others in the program.

FREE SCREEN FILTER APP

- **f.Lux:** Available for Mac and PC (though not available as a mobile app), this app follows natural light cycles (or custom settings) to filter out blue light.

FREE TIME MANAGEMENT APPS

- **To Doist:** create to-do lists and manage tasks.
- **Evernote:** helps you stay organized across multiple platforms; jot notes, save and annotate clips from the web, etc.
- **30/30:** create a running list and assign time to tasks.
- **Focus Booster:** helps you track your time and productivity, and avoid distractions using the Pomodoro technique.
- **1-3-5:** prioritize your to-do list.

ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES and ACTIVITIES

- **Self-Compassion Guided Meditations and Exercises, by Dr. Kristin Neff:** <http://self-compassion.org/category/exercises/>
- **9 Self-Compassion Exercises and Worksheets:** <https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/self-compassion-exercises-worksheets/>
- **How to Meditate for Beginners:** <https://theconsciouslife.com/how-to-meditate-a-guide-for-beginners.htm>
- **11 Journaling Prompts for Stress Relief:** <http://aimhappy.com/journaling-prompts-stress-relief/>