



SHIELD FOR SUCCESS

Monthly tips for success and promotion of overall well-being brought to you by **Valparaiso University's Counseling Services**

International Stress Awareness Week

Welcome to the November issue of the Shield for Success! This monthly newsletter is divided into two parts. The first section will give information and resources on a topic relevant to the current month. The second section will offer helpful tips and exercises tailored to each month's topic. November is often a month where we're starting to look forward to the holidays and getting to take much-needed breaks, however this is also a month where we'll be feeling a lot of academic stress with finals on the horizon and end-of-semester papers and projects to work on. Stress can affect us in a variety of ways, and it doesn't always appear the same with every person. This month we're recognizing International Stress Awareness week which occurs from November 1st to the 5th and would like to share some useful information with you to help you identify what stress can look like as well as how you can learn healthy coping strategies to reduce some of the stress in your lives.

In this issue:

- Stress Awareness
- Links on Identifying and Managing Stress
- Time Management Workshops in November
- Instructions
- Tips for Managing Stress
- Mental Health Pain Scale

Links on Identifying and Managing Stress

- [Stress: An Epidemic Among College Students](#)
- [Balancing Stress](#)
- [Top Stress Relievers for Students](#)
- [What's Worrying College Students?](#)
- [Handling Stress in College](#)



Virtual Time Management Workshops Presented by Counseling Services:

- Monday 11/1/21 @ 4:30pm-5:45pm
- Tuesday 11/2/21 @ 7:00pm-8:15pm
- Friday 11/5/21 @ 1:00pm-2:15pm

To sign up, please complete [this form](#).

Instructions

Step 1: If you choose to participate, first rate your mood on a 1-10 scale, you can use the Mental Health Pain scale provided.

Step 2: Each day you will have the opportunity to complete a different exercise. On weekdays, Monday through Friday, pick one exercise from the list provided for you below. On weekends, Saturday & Sunday, choose one exercise that you felt improved your mood the most, these exercises do not have to be from the exercises provided.

Step 3: After implementing the exercise, rate your mood using the same scale as Step 1.

Tips for Managing Stress

- 1) Find a stress outlet: exercise, comfort food, spend time with friends, etc.
- 2) Listen to a guided meditation.
- 3) Find or create your own playlist of relaxing music to achieve a state of calmness.
- 4) View modules on TAOConnect related to stress, burnout, and breathing.
- 5) Use a schedule or planner to better organize and prioritize your studies.
- 6) Use positive affirmations and thoughts to help reframe negative thinking.

A Simple Mental Health Pain Scale

thegracefulpatient.wordpress.com

MILD

- 1** Everything is a-okay! There is absolutely nothing wrong. You're probably cuddling a fluffy kitten right now. Enjoy!
- 2** You're a bit frustrated or disappointed, but you're easily distracted and cheered up with little effort.
- 3** Things are bothering you, but you're coping. You might be overtired or hungry. The emotional equivalent of a headache.

MODERATE

- 4** Today is a bad day (or a few bad days). You still have the skills to get through it, but be gentle with yourself. Use self-care strategies.
- 5** Your mental health is starting to impact on your everyday life. Easy things are becoming difficult. You should talk to your doctor.
- 6** You can't do things the way you usually do them due to your mental health. Impulsive and compulsive thoughts may be hard to cope with.

SEVERE

- 7** You're avoiding things that make you more distressed, but that will make it worse. You should definitely seek help. This is serious.
- 8** You can't hide your struggles anymore. You may have issues sleeping, eating, having fun, socialising, and work/study. Your mental health is affecting almost all parts of your life.
- 9** You're at a critical point. You aren't functioning anymore. You need urgent help. You may be a risk to yourself or others if left untreated.
- 10** The worst mental and emotional distress possible. You can no longer care for yourself. You can't imagine things getting any worse. Contact a crisis line immediately.

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