

Self-Care for Caregivers & Teachers in Stressful Times

Your stress and your mental health matter! Stressful experiences that are ongoing can lead to exhaustion, irritability, difficulty dealing with everyday events, and signs of anxiety or depression.

We cannot take care of others unless we first take care of ourselves. Sometimes we don't realize how stressed we are. When we're caught up in intense events and taking care of other people, it's easy to forget that our health matters. You cannot eliminate stress from your life, but you can take care of yourself so that stress does not overwhelm you.

Take stock of yourself: we see the effects of stress in our bodies, in our personal lives, and in our ability to parent or teach. **Reach out to people in your support system** so others can help decrease your stress.

Self-care does not have to take a lot of time, and most of us do not have the time or resources to take care of ourselves by taking a vacation.

If you have...

2minutes

- Breathe - Close your eyes and focus on breath in and breath out
- Stretch
- Make a list of 3 things you are thankful for
- Send an email or text to someone important to you, letting them know you're thinking of them
- Let someone know that you need some time to talk with them later in the day, set up a time to talk
- Take time to say good morning/good night/goodbye

5minutes

- Listen to music
- Talk with a co-worker or friend
- Reach out through email or a phone call to give someone in your life a quick update on how you're doing
- Step outside for fresh air
- Have a snack or a cup of coffee
- Look at pictures of friends or family members
- Make a plan to get together with a friend or family member in the near future

10minutes

- Write in a journal
- Call a friend
- Write down or tell someone one thing that went well today
- Have a cleansing cry
- Meditate or pray
- Go for a brief walk
- Get coffee/breakfast/lunch with family or friends
- Reach out and let someone know if there's a way they can help you

30minutes

- Play a game with your child
- Read to your child, or read a book you enjoy
- Go for a walk, exercise
- Take a bath or shower
- Cook or bake a favorite food
- Sit down to a meal with family or friends
- Watch a TV show with someone you like to spend time with
- Read a website or magazine that is not related to the news

If you have immediate needs related to the recent events in Baltimore: **The Disaster Distress Helpline 1-800-985-5990** provides immediate crisis counseling to people affected by the community unrest stemming from the events in Baltimore.