

# Why Your Mental Health Matters

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Let's be real: post-secondary life can be a lot. Between classes, assignments, work, and everything else life throws at you, it's easy to forget that your mental health is just as important as your GPA. But here's the thing: when you take care of your mind, everything else gets a little easier: focus, motivation, relationships, and even sleep.

When stress or anxiety builds up, it can sneak into your day in quiet ways. Maybe your concentration slips during lectures, or your motivation to finish that project disappears. Taking care of your mental health early on can protect your focus, energy, and confidence throughout the semester.

Your mental health also shapes how you connect, learn, and grow. When you're managing stress and resting well, you can collaborate better, communicate openly, and make space for the people who matter. Taking small steps to care for your well-being now can make a big difference later. You will prevent burnout, helping you stay motivated all the way to graduation.

## Two Quick Tools You Can Try Today

### The 5-Minute Mindful Journal

1. Find a quiet space and set a timer for 5 minutes.
2. Choose one prompt:
  - "What's in my control this hour?"
  - "What's the actual worry vs. the story I'm telling myself?"
  - "What's one small next step I can take?"
3. Write freely. You don't need to edit or overthink.
4. Reframe one thought with a calmer, more realistic one.
5. Do one small action (send that email, take a short walk, make a to-do list).

Use this when you feel stuck, overwhelmed, or caught in a late-night spiral. You'll likely notice your thoughts feel a little clearer and the pressure eases.

## **Box Breathing (4-4-4-4)**

1. Breathe in through your nose for 4 seconds.
2. Hold for 4.
3. Exhale through your mouth for 4.
4. Hold again for 4.

Repeat 4–6 cycles.

Perfect for calming nerves before a presentation, test, or bedtime.

## **Where to Get Help**

If you're not sure where to start, you don't have to figure it out alone. There are many supports in place on campus that are free, confidential and available to all students.

**Counselling Services** is a great place to get support that fits your journey.

A great way to connect with peers is to join the Peer-to-Peer lounges. These drop-ins are a great way for you to connect with peers and build community. **Check out when they are hosting their next drop-in.**

## **Remember...**

You're not alone in this journey; support is always within reach. Taking care of your mental health isn't a weakness; it's a strength that helps you show up as your best self in school and beyond.

*Written By: Rosa Faraj Mohammadi, Student Services Ambassador*

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