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**MINDFULNESS & SELF-CARE**

As a school nurse there are endless needs competing for your attention. You become so consumed with taking care of the health of others, your own health and well-being gets placed on the backburner. Maintaining your health and well-being is directly related to your mental health, and your ability to serve others!

**FIVE WAYS TO REDUCE STRESS\***

1. Take a deep breath. While inhaling, think “inhaling, one.” While you exhale, think, “exhaling, one.” Continue to inhale and exhale until you reach 10, and then return to one. Practice this exercise while seated and breathe from your stomach.
2. Laugh with your students and co-workers. Find ways to lighten your mood and the mood of your office/surrounding. For example, have a joke of the day, sing silly songs, have a laughing contest, and celebrate birthdays with your students/co-workers.
3. Make a list of your accomplishments both as an individual and a nurse. If you are having a bad day, read your list and reflect on the positive things you have done.
4. Engage your senses. Put something beautiful in your office that you can look at whenever you feel stressed. Consider adding your favorite picture on your desk, a plant that you can watch grow, or a piece of art. Drink some peppermint tea. Herbal scents can help lift your mood.
5. Remember why you became a school nurse. Sometimes it is easy to feel frustrated by everyday hassles, or to feel overwhelmed with your job. Whenever these feelings come on, take a moment to remember why you chose nursing in the first place and write down those reasons.

**THREE KEY MINDFULNESS SKILLS**

**Awareness – Instead of always multi-tasking, try to focus on one thing at a time. Tap into what’s going on around you and the thoughts and feelings inside of you.**

**Objective Observation – Practice remaining objective, try to refrain from labeling things as “good” or “bad.”**

**Live in the Moment – Do not allow yourself to be bogged down by past ruminations or future worries. Embrace the current moment, do not let time pass you by instead be present here and now.**

***For more mindfulness resources such as meditation apps, audiobooks, and programs, check out this resource:*** [*www.mindful.org/audio-resources-for-mindfulness-meditation/*](http://www.mindful.org/audio-resources-for-mindfulness-meditation/)