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Nine Ways to Help Diffuse Student Stress

St. Norbert College

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Nine Ways to Help Defuse Student Stress

It’s no secret that many of today’s college students suffer from **stress, anxiety and depression**. A persistent pandemic and looming finals don’t help. But parents can be key in helping students cope if they’re struggling. One of the best approaches is simply to talk with your student about mental health concerns. Let them know that if they experience any struggles, they’re not alone.

Keep communication lines open with regular check-ins, and not just by text or email. Phone conversations are important because it’s easier to detect potential problems from your student’s voice rather than their written words. Key in on their daily habits, too. Do they mention eating healthy meals, getting plenty of sleep, exercising and hanging out with friends?

Should your student express a need for help, have them contact **Counseling & Psychological Services**, where they’ll have access to counseling, wellness information, self-help resources and more. If their stress and anxiety is on the moderate side, here are nine suggestions you could offer to help them destress.

Talk a walk outside

Numerous studies show both exercise and nature are very effective in combating stress, anxiety and depression. Our students like to stroll along the Fox River, walk the **college labyrinth** or simply walk around the beautiful SNC campus, something Breeana Zubrod ’24 does to relax. If the weather’s bad, suggest a workout at the Mulva fitness facility.

Meditate

Experts at the Mayo Clinic say meditation is an easy, quick way to destress. Students can meditate at the peaceful **Grotto of Our Lady**, in the **Shakespeare Garden**, in the comfy third-floor Campus Center lounge with its stunning views of the river, or any place they personally find soothing.

Try yoga

Like meditation, yoga can reduce stress because it encourages mental and physical relaxation. SNC offers **group yoga** at the Contemplation Space in Pennings Activity Center.

Get a massage

Students asked for **massage therapy** services on campus, and now they’re available on the third Thursday of every month.

Snuggle with a dog

Pets have repeatedly proven to be great at calming nerves in humans. Encourage your student to seek out George, pet to the President Brian Bruess ’90 family and a frequent campus visitor. On May 10, the college will once again be hosting **Canines, Caffeine, and Career & Professional Development**, a 90-minute de-stressing event to prepare for finals week. The event features coffee, cookies and plenty of huggable dogs, courtesy of the Packerland Kennel Club.

Tap into religion or spirituality

In trying times, a religious or spiritual practice can help with stress management. The college offers many opportunities for both. Admission counselor Cabrini Jablon ’97 likes to light a candle at Old St. Joe’s when



Listen to This

Neuroscientists at the U.K.-based **Mindlab International** determined the song “**Weightless**” by **Marconi Union** was the top song in the world for destressing, and more effective than a massage, drinking tea or walking. The group created the song in collaboration with sound therapists.

Also in This Issue

This article first appeared in the March 2022 issue of Parents of St. Norbert College. Other features in this edition included:

- How to Wind Down the School Year**
- Nine Ways to Help Defuse Student Stress**
- Behind the Scenes with Marc von der Ruhr (Economics)**
- This New Grad Is Off to a Great Start**
- Top Tips for Managing College Costs**
- It’s Quiz Time!**

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things get trying. The **Emmaus Center** offers spiritual programing and resources, as well as this **list of sacred spaces on campus**.

Call a friend

Sometimes all you need to calm down is to talk to a trusted friend. If your student has a cherished friend living elsewhere, suggest they have coffee or dinner together over Zoom.

March 8, 2022

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