



SELF-CARE FOR TEACHERS

HOW TO FILL YOUR OWN CUP

With so much to do (students to teach, parents to inform, standards to meet) making time to look after yourself is often the first to go. But taking care of yourself is critical to being able to address the needs of others: students, parents and colleagues alike. As the saying goes, you can't pour from an empty cup!

At Stop, Breathe & Think, we are committed to finding seamless and accessible ways to help teachers find rest, regenerate and strengthen resilience. We've compiled a list of our favorite self-care practices below. Each self-care practice can be found as a guided activity in the Stop, Breathe & Think app. Give them a try, and let us know what you think. Here's to filling your cup so that it becomes positively overflowing!



CHECK IN

While students often bring their own baggage into the classroom, teachers can too. Taking a moment to check in with how you are feeling and then setting a positive aspiration for the next period is a grounding mindfulness practice and a wonderful way to reset.

BREATHE

Never underestimate the positive, physiological effects of breathing. This simple act can help create a little space when you need it, especially in the middle of whatever is stirring up your stress. Breathing can help you to energize, be present and centered, and find calm in the middle of a storm.

Mindful Breathing: Observe your thoughts, feelings and physical sensations with openness and curiosity.

2:4 Breathing: Breathe in a little and out a lot by extending the length of your exhale.

Deep Breathing: Breathe deeply into your belly.

Energizing Breath: Energize yourself when you feel fatigued or sleepy.

PRACTICE MINDFULNESS

Refresh your mind, relax your body and shift your perspective.

Relax Ground & Clear: Press the restart button by visualizing everything around you as peaceful calmness.

Progressive Relaxation: Release tension in the body by squeezing your muscles and letting go.

Self-Compassion: Find ease and relief in the ups and downs of your day by giving yourself a little compassion and understanding.

STOP, BREATHE & THINK

Build resilience with kindness and understanding.

Stop

Just pause for a moment—stop what you are doing, or just pause for a moment in your mind.

Breathe

Take a few deep breaths, paying attention to your breath as it goes in and out.

Think

- As you continue to breathe deeply, call to mind a student or person (or group of people) you are about to interact with.
- As you imagine them, think to yourself, "Just like me, they want to be happy and have a positive experience." "They are a human being with feelings just like me." "Just like me, they want to feel understood and respected."
- Now with a few breaths, send some kind wishes. Make the wish for your own happiness. Something like, "May I be strong and healthy, and may I have positive experiences and happiness." Or you can use your own words. Make the wish for the happiness of the other person or people. Something like "May they be peaceful, safe and content, and may they have positive experiences and happiness"
- And finally, smile.