

UCSF Benioff Children's Hospitals

UCSF Medical Center

Mission Bay: 443-LISTEN (5786)

Parnassus: 443-CARE (2273)

Anytime 24/7

For help, call Spiritual Care Services

Seven Steps to Self-Care

Tips for a healthier you at work and in life



SEVEN STEPS TO SELF-CARE

- 1. Stay nourished and hydrated.** If you are feeling irritated or exhausted, part of the reason might be because your body needs fuel. Make sure you're drinking water regularly and eating healthy snacks whenever you can.
- 2. Take five slow, deep breaths, inhaling through your nose and exhaling through your mouth.** Try to inflate your lower lungs as you breathe. When we are under stress, we tend to take shallow breaths. Slow deep breathing will help lower your stress and enhance your mood and concentration. As you breathe, you can meditate, pray, or simply enjoy a quiet mental space.
- 3. Reach out to others and feel free to ask for help when you need it.** You don't have to apologize. Remember that other people do care. Alternatively, you can contact friends who could use a call and ask them how they are doing. Sometimes supporting someone else is a good way to improve your own attitude.
- 4. If you're worried, bring yourself back to the present. When we feel anxious, we're preoccupied with the future.** A good way to release anxiety is to stand still, move your fingers and toes, and pay attention to those sensations. While you do this action, it can help to think about someone you care about or who cares for you.
- 5. Lighten up. Let your sense of humor travel with you.** Laughing increases blood flow and relaxes blood vessels. It reduces levels of cortisol, the stress hormone that increases our belly fat and makes our kidneys retain salt and water, boosting our blood pressure.
- 6. Write down something that inspires you, that moves you, or that you're grateful for.** People who exercise their gratitude have greater peace of mind, happiness, physical health, and more satisfying personal relationships.
- 7. Talk with a chaplain – we're always available!**
You can reach us anytime 24/7; our contact information is on the reverse.