

The Importance of Self Care

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Why is self-care important? **It helps prevent burnout.** In a culture where go-getters, hustling, and excessive levels of dedication are rewarded, the idea of resting, doing (what may be perceived as) nothing worthwhile, and “chilling” sounds shameful. However, going, going, going like an Energizer bunny leads to burnout because your internal battery can only last for so long before it needs to be recharged by something other than school responsibilities.

It helps enhance your motivation. Stepping away from your duties and responsibilities gives you a chance to breathe and regain a sense of yourself. When a task or thought has you wound into a ball of stress, step away, this allows the source of stress to erase from your mind. Returning to it later often comes with a renewed energy to complete the task or think through a thought.



All of us are at Mercer because we want to enter the health care field, a field that at its core aims to positively impact lives. It's easy to focus on preparing for our classes and exams since studying is what we came here to do. However, we won't be able to care for those future patients if we are burnt out and unmotivated individuals by the time we get to that point. If we treat *ourselves* with the kindness, gentleness, and respect that we will one day show to our patients, we become better physicians for THEM.

When we try to care for ourselves feelings of guilt may crop up.

Becoming more efficient with our time helps stave off feelings of guilt.

Bake in a free period each day or plan a few days ahead of time to socialize so you can prepare for time away from the books. Bumping up study time in anticipation of scheduled breaks will help you fit that social time in with less guilt.

Before we came to Mercer, we were individuals who had lives that involved passions, interests, and non-school related goals. Just because we have chosen a career path that requires a high level of focus and dedication does not mean our personal lives fall to the wayside.

In all, self-care is just as important to our success as is studying and doing well in our classes. I believe that the key to happiness and fulfillment is an awareness of how much rest, relaxation, and personal enjoyment is interconnected with success and achievement. I wish every reader success in their personal and professional lives and leave you with the reminder to take good care of yourselves.

