

TEACHING TIP OF THE MONTH

Theme: Renew and Recover

Tip 1: Take an Actual Break

For many faculty, the end of the semester means time to focus their energies away from classroom instruction to other jobs, personal business ventures, research, or taking courses. While these are all wonderful and worthy ways to spend newly available time, make sure that some of it is used to take an actual break. This doesn't necessarily mean traveling or structured vacations; a break is just time and permission to truly enjoy activities outside of work. Whether it's getting through some of that "for fun" reading list, spending time on a home project, finally going out for a meal with friends and family in a restaurant, or catching up on the latest "must watch" show on Netflix, do something that YOU want to do, and do it just because you CAN. Often people feel the need to be busy all the time and account for all their hours as being productive, but a break for self-care will help boost mood, improve relationships, and help the brain be more effective when tuning back into those other life and work tasks.

Tip 2: Take Care of Your Body

We often talk about 'mental' versus 'physical' health, but what happens within our bodies can significantly impact our mental health and vice versa. Taking care of our bodies can help our brain perform better and can help reduce stress. This means getting a good night's sleep- not just hours, but our bodies being able to cycle through all the phases of sleep. It also means moving our bodies- going to the gym or an exercise class is great, but so is taking a leisurely walk around the block. It doesn't matter what kind of movement, just move! Ensuring we're eating nutritious foods is important; it doesn't mean we should be cutting out sugars, fats, or any other foods we enjoy but making sure we're adding in fruits, veggies, and protein to help our bodies and brain get all the nutrients it needs. Finally, we need to make sure we're talking to our doctors. It's important to get annual check-ups, take prescribed medications, and have an ongoing conversation with our physician about what we need to do to help our body stay as healthy as possible!

For questions about these tips, contact Stephanie Will, Mental Health Services Program Manager, stephanie.will@montgomerycollege.edu

More Info on Teaching Tips

"Teaching Tips of the Month" began as a project of Program for Active Learning in STEM (PALS) and Teaching to Increase Diversity and Equity in STEM (TIDES) grants. Many thanks to Ray Gonzales and Alla Webb, who served as Principal Investigators of the TIDES grants. You can view archived Teaching Tips of the Month on [The Hub](#). We welcome feedback and invite you to submit ideas for this publication to Angela Lanier, angela.lanier@montgomerycollege.edu

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