Option 1: Self-Care for Educators

You cannot teach what you do not know, you cannot give what you do not have...

Consider the following questions for reflection:

1. What do you need in order to operate at your highest-functioning self?
   a. What do you do (or wish you did) for self-care?
   b. Consider this list of some self-care essentials below and self-evaluate on a scale from 1-10 how you are engaging with each factor (with 1 indicating low/unhealthy engagement and 10 indicating high/healthy engagement). For those that rank low, make a plan that includes accountability or help.

   Self-Care Essentials:
   • Sleep
   • Exercise or active movement
   • Healthful eating habits (including regular meals)
   • Healthy boundaries (including reasonable work hours and the ability to “clock out”)
   • Taking breaks (even when you don’t feel you have the need or time for them)
   • Leaning into support systems (family, friends, colleagues who provide encouragement and promote positive/healthy life-choices)
   • Mental health maintenance strategies (this will look different for different individuals but could include meditation, breathing techniques, engaging with spiritual/religious practices, etc.)

2. What are your coping strategies?
   a. Identify one positive coping strategy. How can you set up your environment to more easily engage in this coping strategy?
   b. Identify one negative coping strategy. How can you set up your environment to more easily make a more productive decision for coping?

3. Create a plan. Share your plan with at least one individual who will keep you accountable.

Resources:

Self-Care for Educators:


University at Buffalo Self-Care Starter Kit:

http://socialwork.buffalo.edu/resources/self-care-starter-kit.html