

**Counseling Services
Winthrop University**

Guidelines for Self-Care

1. **Permit and accept what you are feeling:** There is no right or wrong way to feel. Everyone has his or her own reactions. Just notice what you feel without judgment.
2. **Preserve your usual routines:** Finding ways to be consistent in your regular routines including self-care practices (such as eating regularly and getting enough rest), and attending to your usual responsibilities can help engage you and reestablish a sense of normalcy and regularity.
3. **Engage in pleasurable and meaningful activities:** prioritize doing things you typically enjoy including taking a walk outside, eating a favorite meal, watching a movie, or spending time with friends. These activities can enhance your sense of well-being and elevate your optimism.
4. **Make healthy choices:** Using substances or other self-injurious behaviors to dull your feelings ultimately leaves you feeling more depleted. Take note of your particular stress-reactions (such as tight muscles, irritability, etc.) and practice healthy stress reduction. For example, take a mindful walk, meditate, and listen to soothing music, journal, or exercise.
5. **Limit media consumption:** Constantly connecting with social media and news outlets can be overwhelming, and interferes with sleep and other important activities. If you need help controlling your connectivity, consider temporary use of blocking apps and websites
6. **Limit political debate and argument:** It is important to stay engaged and informed in the political process and the news – but keep it in balance. If it is stressing you out, then let some time pass or take a break.
7. **Spend time with supportive friends and family:** Being with people who care about you can help you feel safe and protected. Seek counseling if you need professional support.
8. **Practice awareness of self and stress:** Explore your reactions and work toward understanding the personal impact of what has happened given your own life narrative, identities, concerns for loved ones, or other experiences. Practice self-soothing.
9. **Practice gratitude and hopefulness:** Reminding yourself of the people and things that you are grateful for in your life, and the things that you are working toward, can help you maintain your balance.
10. **Practice empathy and kindness:** Strive to understand the experience of others. Even if you disagree with their opinion, do so in a respectful manner. Doing something kind for others makes you feel good too.
11. **Find community:** Reach out to others who may be having similar experiences and consider sharing so that you provide mutual support and understanding.
12. **Focus on your goals:** Remember what you are working for and make choices to uphold those goals. Find your voice and make sound decisions to empower yourself to take positive action based on your goals.
13. **Be mindful of your perspective:** Negative thoughts produce negative emotions. Look at how your thinking is affecting your feelings and behaviors. How can you shift your perspective to feel more calm and encouraged? Are there other ways to interpret the situation?
14. **Seek help:** If you continue to struggle despite attending to self-care and utilizing your support system, contact Counseling Services. Same-day intakes and crisis appointments are available Monday through Friday. Log in to the Health and Counseling Services [Medicat Patient Portal](#) to schedule an intake or call (803) 323-2206 if experiencing an acute crisis.
The Winthrop College of Education Counseling and Development Program operates the Community Counseling Clinic, a Master's training facility, which provides free counseling to the community. The CCC is located at 146-A Withers building, (803) 323-4783.