Faculty Matter Tip #10: This one is for you - the importance of self-care

Our lives - as well as those of our students - are complex, and the final weeks of the semester always seem to bring a large number (and great variety) of unexpected and challenging complications and disruptions. It can be very difficult to keep our many spinning plates “strategically counterpoised”, a phrase I borrow from our colleague Cindy Baer, Assistant Professor of English and Comparative Literature. As research on stress and coping suggests, it is much easier to marshal the energy and patience and compassion to arrive at good solutions when we don’t already feel exhausted and tapped out.

The gist of this week’s tip is fairly simple. Most of us are familiar with the instructions on the laminated card found in airplane seat-back pockets: Put your own oxygen mask on first, and then help others around you with theirs. As we approach the Thanksgiving Break and then the final push of the semester, we encourage you to tend to your own needs - for sleep, for exercise, for nutritious food, for calm, for uplifting and affirming human contact, for spiritual renewal, for opportunities to connect with what matters most to you, for time to catch your breath.

SJSU has an institutional membership to the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity. This entitles all faculty to free access to a number of resources focused on self care and work-life balance. Our own Center for Faculty Development also offers sessions on these and related topics. Coming up later this month: Self-care and time-management strategies for the end of the semester and beyond, Monday 11/28 from 12-1 and Tuesday 11/29 from 3-4, both in IRC 210.

Note: Below, please find pasted a section of an earlier Faculty Matter post, to remind you of the many resources our students can draw upon as they gear up for the next few weeks:

Peer Connections provides one on one appointments for peer mentoring and tutoring. They also offer several workshops a month on academic success skills. The Writing Center offers one on one tutoring for writing, online resources, and workshops. The Communications Center has drop in and one on one appointments for oral and written communication. There are also numerous tutoring centers in the departments and colleges listed on the Tutoring Hub.

Educational Counseling provides one on one appointments, workshops, and online resources for academic success. The library has technology workshops. In addition, the library offers resources to support students in research, including details online to help the student define the type of resources and help they need and how to connect with a librarian. The library also has laptop and I-pad rentals, meeting rooms that can reserved for teamwork or collaboration, and online resources on referencing and literature reviews and tutorials on plagiarism. The Spartan Success Portal has a range of online, academic success modules.