

Five Steps to Rejuvenate Now

1 Acknowledge Your Emotions

Recognizing and identifying how you feel allows you to decide what you want to do with your emotions. The simple act of acknowledging what you're feeling can enable you to move on. For example, saying "I am frustrated by technology!" can open the door to a weekend digital detox. Find the physical or mental space to serve as a container for whatever you are feeling in the moment—a walk or vigorous run, writing in your journal, a visit to a park where you can sit quietly and reflect. If you're someone who processes verbally, find a trusted friend and ask them to simply listen without judgment. In short, whatever you're feeling, let yourself feel it.

2 Self-Assess and Reflect

Use the skills you have to assess your students for your own self-assessment. Make a T-chart listing what energizes you and what drains you. Over the first week, focus on adding more items in the energizing column while looking at the list of draining items to determine if any of these can be delegated or dismissed, or are completed and can be checked off your list. At the end of the week, reflect on how things went. For each week that follows, consider different combinations of items.

3 Make Sure You Are Attending to Your Basic Needs

Juggling a professional and personal life and optimizing how we meet our basic needs can be a challenge, but by taking small steps you can ensure these needs are met. Set aside time to sleep a little longer. Give yourself 10 to 20 minutes of quiet time each afternoon. Read a book or magazine, recline in the shade, or take a nap. A daily rest period helps reduce anxiety and stress and promotes immune health. It can also increase creativity and problem-solving.

4 Put Self-Care Practices in Play Now So They Become Habits

Return to the self-assessments and then leverage those strengths and items that bring energy into daily and weekly habits. Make time for building habits that serve your well-being. Ask yourself questions such as what type of movement feels good, what calms your mind, and what spiritual practices help you stay grounded. Some new habits to consider for a daily dose of rejuvenation include personal quiet time, a relaxing bedtime routine, setting boundaries on digital connections, or a date night by yourself or with someone you care about.

5 Keep a Growth Mindset

Self-care is not a one-and-done task. It evolves over time and requires personal reflection to determine what's working, what's not, and what you need in order to feel energized, satisfied, and rejuvenated. Continue practices and habits you start but remain compassionate with yourself, especially as circumstances change. Build on what works and continue to reflect on what you need to manage your stress as well as the secondary stress that educators often absorb.