Welcome Lions! We, at the Counseling Center, are very excited to have this campus full again! As this can be a time of mixed emotions, we want to remind you of the importance of self-care. It can be easy to become overwhelmed in college. You have expectations, classes, goals, deadlines, meetings, assignments, readings, etc. Additionally, some students also work, have families, and many struggle with finances. There is legitimately a lot that can occupy and dominate our precious time-if we allow it. Learning to prioritize is certainly helpful but what happens when everything seems to be a priority?

This is where self-care comes in. Self-care is about making YOU and your mental, emotional, and physical health a daily priority. It’s about making your calm roar. It’s what helps stop you from pushing yourself so much you hit burnout. Finding inner peace can be done but only if you make it happen. More specifically self-care is about living a balanced life where you intentionally take time out for yourself to do something loving, compassionate, and kind for YOU.

It may seem counterintuitive to stop and take breaks to tenderly tend to your needs when you have a page full of tasks to do. But as life often cleverly teaches us, it’s little things that make big differences. So let this be your first lesson of the semester: your physical health is not more important than your mental health. Your to-do list won’t get done as efficiently or fantastically if you don’t take care of your emotional health. Please review the following list of self-care tips and don’t forget to visit us at “Make Your Calm Roar” to participate in some hands-on learning:

1. **Spoil Yourself**: Make the time to treat yourself in little ways. This can be enjoying your favorite cup of coffee in a quiet space, going for a run, chatting with a good friend, giving yourself a 30 minute nap, or petting the miniature horses at “Make Your Calm Roar”.
2. **Sleep is Gold**: In fact it’s more valuable. Research repeatedly shows that gifting your body with enough sleep improves many aspects of your daily functioning from weight management to staying focused and productive.
3. **Enjoy the Outdoors**: Connecting with nature, even in the smallest ways, reminds one that you are part of a much bigger universe. Even stepping outside for 5 minutes to enjoy the sun can be rejuvenating. An upcoming way to give this is a try is to explore the campus by participating in the Counseling Center’s “Make Your Calm Roar” scavenger hunt.
4. **Practice Mindfulness**: Being aware of the present moment in a non-judgmental way keeps you grounded and in the moment. This can be particularly helpful to combat anxiety and depression.
5. **DISCONNECT**: Once upon a time there was no technology. Being social in a face-to-face way or learning to be alone with yourself are some of the most valuable experiences of human existence. Don’t deprive yourself of these gifts. One great way to unplug is to stop by the Counseling Center and enjoy our relaxation room-no electronic devices allowed in there.

*As a last offering I highly encourage you to watch a TED talk on Emotional Hygiene by Guy Walsh, PhD entitled, ”Why we all need to Practice Emotional First Aid”. Simply Google: TED Talk Guy Walsh.*

Take a stance and make your emotional well-being a priority! Participate in our scavenger hunt, learn essential stress management tools, pet adorable miniature horses, and collect a Counseling Center signature T-shirt! To participate simply stop by one of our 4 stations set up around campus on 8 September from 11AM-3PM.