



LFS
COLORADO SPIRIT
Wellness Program
Of Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains

Self Care For Educators

It's time to take care of yourself.

Educators, you have done an amazing job during the pandemic! We thank you for your ongoing dedication, innovation, and support for your students and community during these challenging times. Throughout the pandemic, you have taken on additional roles, learned new skills, and deftly navigated quickly evolving environments.

This balancing act can be stressful and, at times, feel overwhelming. It is easy to focus on the needs of others and forget to take care of yourself so we want to make it a little easier to prioritize YOU! The LFS Colorado Spirit Wellness Program has designed this self-care packet just for you.

We have included a variety of tools to help you build a sustainable approach to wellness, including tips for daily self-care, exercises exploring control and setting boundaries, techniques for quick stress reduction, and much more. We hope these tools will help you develop a sustainable, daily wellness plan that reduces stress and amplifies your joy for the amazing, self-less work you do for our students and community.

If you find yourself in need of someone to go through any activities or prompts with, don't hesitate to give us a call. Our team is here if you need a confidential wellness buddy or just a listening ear!

How are you feeling today?

Checking in with ourselves helps us take a moment to pause and identify feelings we are experiencing. We can check in our feelings throughout the day or week to see what we need to get us to a space where we are feeling good.

Draw/Create your own visual to reflect your feelings using the prompts below!

Excited and ready to take on more!

Feeling good and getting what I need

I look fine on the outside, but I have no idea how I'm doing.

I could use some extra support.

I'm struggling with lots of problems and feeling overwhelmed.

I'm burnt out!

5 Daily Self Care Tips for Educators

**Prioritize and use self-care routines throughout
your day.**

Set and maintain boundaries.

Reflect on your feelings and needs.

Recognize what is and isn't in your control.

Acknowledge moments of gratitude or joy.

Source: <https://www.understood.org>

Purpose and Meaning

Activity

Think of a time someone shared a positive impact you made on them. It could be from a performance review or even a kind word shared passing each other in the hallway. Something that makes you smile.

Write it down:

Keep it nearby to remind yourself of the impact you have on your team, the people you serve or support, your colleagues, and your community. Let it be a reminder of what inspired you to join this position, this field, this team, or support this community.

When you find yourself questioning your efficacy or feeling detached from your purpose or community, repeat this praise as an affirmation to bring you back to your purpose and hope.

Don't forget to share a kind word with someone else, too. You could be providing them a future affirmation!

Focus On What You Can Control

Think of an ongoing unresolved situation in your life. Write a brief outline of the facts and why it feels unresolved for you.

What can you control in this situation?
Make a list.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

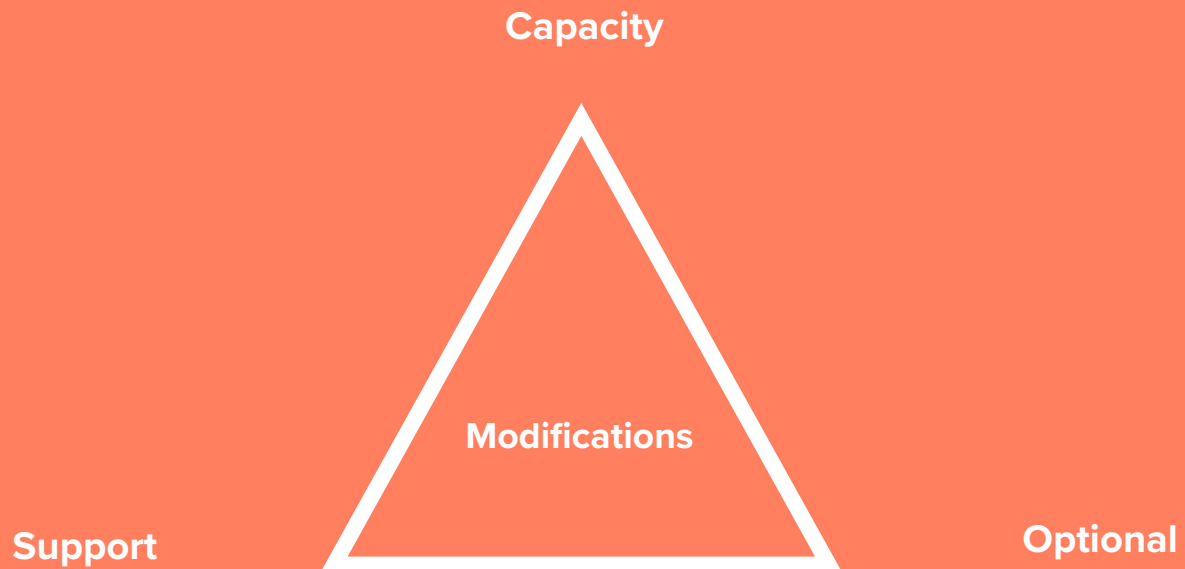
What can't you control in this situation?
Make a list.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Being honest with yourself, on which of the above things are you spending most of your energy and attention right now?

How can you focus more on the things you can control? What would that look like?

Triangle Framework for Reframing Control



Amidst uncertainties, we can regain control by making modifications to reframe the situation. This framework can help determine how to either **modify our response to something outside of our control** or **modify our actions to make it more within our control**. When faced with a challenge outside of your control, ask the following questions to determine if there is an opportunity to regain some control over it:

What is **Optional**? – Can anything be removed from your to-do list or calendar to free up more time to address the challenge? Is there anything that can be delayed or has a longer time frame? Is there anything that is optional or that you can participate in a different or diminished capacity?

What is in your **Capacity**? – Given your time constraints, energy level and sense of comfort, what is realistic for you to complete or engage in? Can you modify the time of day or location to make it more within your capacity?

Is there someone who can offer **Support**? – Who can you ask for help to manage your load – colleagues, friends, supervisors, family, roommates, counselor? Can they accompany you to provide support? Can they be available to process your response to a situation? Can they support you by taking something else off your plate?

REFRAMING CONTROL

A guide to explore ways you can modify stressors to gain more control over them.

1. Consider the things in your life that impact you, worry you, take up a lot of your mental energy and then list under them **CHALLENGE/STRESSOR**
2. Consider an aspect of these challenges that is outside of your control. Using the Triangle Framework, assess any possible ways you can modify your reaction to the situation. List them under **ACTION TO MODIFY**
3. Consider an aspect of these challenges that is within your control. Using the Triangle Framework, assess any possible ways you can directly take action to adapt it to be less stressful and more within your current capacity. List them under **ACTION TO CONTROL**



CHALLENGE/STRESSOR

ACTION TO MODIFY

ACTION TO CONTROL

Setting Boundaries

The awareness to know what is comfortable for you and the confidence to respectfully set your boundaries is a useful skill to help ease the transition to more in-person activities and settings. You can use this fill-in-the-blank formula to help express your boundaries to people in your life. Add your own value, need and action to complete a script that you can use to share your boundaries.

EXAMPLE

VALUE

I really value parent involvement and participation.

NEED

I need to have uninterrupted time in my schedule for down time and planning.

ACTION

Therefore, I would like to meet with parents during specific office hours designated for parent meetings.

I really **(value)** _____

I **(need)** _____

In order to make that happen, I would like to **(action)**

Thanks for hearing me out.

Honoring Our Grief & Building Resilience

The past year has challenged us with many losses – both loss of life and loss of daily routines, holiday traditions and in-person connections. As we begin to see the light at the end of the tunnel, it is important to take time to feel, process, grieve and honor our individual and collective losses.

A time capsule is a container filled with items that you can bury in the ground for future generations to get a snapshot of life at a particular time. Pick 3 items that you would put in your time capsule to represent your experience during the pandemic. They could be photos, objects you cherish, items of necessity, activities etc. These items can represent experiences that gave you strength, caused you pain or bring up a complexity of emotions. Add a brief explanation of why each of these items encapsulate your pandemic experience.



Item 1:

Item 2:

Item 3:

Practice Playfulness

Complete any of the following prompts at your own pace.

Choose your own playful adventure!

Be playful with someone in your support system.

Doodle without looking at paper.

Find a new trail to explore.

Find a shape in a cloud/mountain or rock.

Send a funny video, photo, or joke to someone.

Imitate a bird/animal that you hear.

Practice Self Compassion

Complete any of the following prompts at your own pace. Self compassion helps us care for ourselves when we're facing difficult situations and circumstances.

Enjoy quiet, still moments with yourself.

Avoid stretching yourself thin by saying no.

Learn to appreciate compliments.

Let go of mistakes and try again.

Enjoy doing nothing.

Reach out for help when you need it.

Grounding Exercise

Find a spot to sit or stand still, take a breath, and use the following prompts to observe your surroundings and ground yourself.



5 Things You Can See



4 Things You Can Feel



3 Things You Can Hear



2 Things You Can Smell



1 Thing You Can Taste

Grounding Exercise

If you feel anxious when you are out and about, or need to refresh yourself during the work day, breath work is a great way to add some relaxation to your day.

4-7-8 Breathing



Breathe in for **4** seconds



Hold Breath for **7** seconds



Breathe out for **8** seconds



Optional: Repeat 3x or 5x for deeper relaxation!



We're Here For You!

The LFS Colorado Spirit Wellness Program is here to:

Listen to you and help you process the emotions you are feeling.

Support your wellbeing by sharing coping skills and techniques.

Connect you to the right resources based on your needs.

These services are FREE, anonymous, confidential and there is no criteria requirements. We're here to support and explore what you need.

Anyone can access our free, anonymous services.

Including, individual, couples, families, children, teens, and adults. Resources are also available to community organizations and professionals.



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www.lfswellness.org
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Ways We Can Support:

Skills to manage & reduce stress

Connection to critical resources

Helpful ways to deal with anxiety, depression, and uncertainty

Create a plan to address your unique needs

Coping with grief and loss related to COVID-19

Scan For Free MyStrength APP



Call Us At:

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