



REFRESH FROM STRESS

DAY 1: CREATE YOUR SELF-CARE PLEDGE

Take 10-minutes to reflect on what self-care means to you. Consider the reasons why you are participating in *Refresh from Stress*.

Are you hoping for increased self-awareness,

confidence or calmness? More energy, motivation, resilience or gratitude? Improved work performance? Healthier personal or professional relationships? Enhanced emotional or physical health? Better coping skills?

Write your thoughts in a journal or other place using this template if desired to develop your “Self-care Pledge.” Here’s one way to get started: “I choose to ‘Refresh’ and take care of me because...”

SELF-CARE PLEDGE

I choose to Refresh and take care of me *because* _____
_____. I commit to invest in
my health and well-being *by focusing on* _____
_____.

I pledge to practice healthy habits throughout the month of
November and beyond.

Signed: _____



REFRESH FROM STRESS



DAY 2: SLEEP AT LEAST 7 HOURS

Practice healthy sleeping habits:

- Plan your eating with sleep in mind. Avoid heavy meals and food that causes heartburn 4 hours before bed, and limit alcohol or caffeine 6 hours beforehand.
- Limit exposure to lights from TV, laptop or phone screens before bed, and use the night mode/light dimmer on electronic devices
- Avoid daytime napping for more than 30 minutes
- Establish a regular bedtime routine, such as going to bed at 10pm and waking up at 6am each day
- Practice a wind down period for relaxation and pre-bedtime rituals
- Keep bedroom at a cool and comfortable temperature.



Learn about the benefits of good sleep hygiene: [9 Reasons to Sleep More](#)



REFRESH FROM STRESS



DAY 3: INCREASE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Participate in at least 10 more minutes of physical activity today than originally planned. Some suggestions:

- Use stairs instead of an elevator
- Park your car further away to increase steps
- Participate in an [Active Works](#) activity
- Ride a bike or take a yoga class
- Turn up the music and dance!



REFRESH FROM STRESS



DAY 4: STRESS-LESS SATURDAY

Take the day to do one of your favorite things to refresh and unwind from the week

- [Break out](#) the arts and crafts and color, draw or paint
- Try [gentle yoga](#) or another low intensity exercise
- Cuddle with your kids (or your pet!)
- Watch your favorite movie or go see a new one
- Read an article or book
- Volunteer or donate clothes
- Belt out your favorite song
- Go to your favorite restaurant



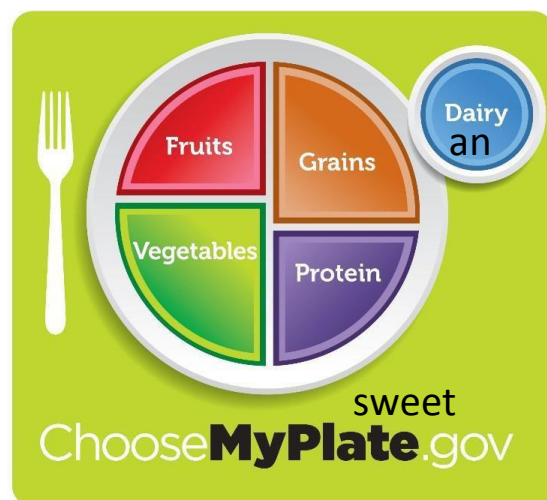


REFRESH FROM STRESS

DAY 5: EAT A HEALTHY MEAL

Good nutrition is a recipe for lower stress and a healthy mood. Here are 10 tips from [ChooseMyPlate](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov) to build a healthy meal:

1. Make half of your plate fruit and veggies
2. Include whole grains (100% whole grain bread, oats, brown rice, etc.)
3. Don't forget the dairy; or try soymilk or low-fat yogurt
4. Add lean protein (skinless chicken or turkey, fish, tofu, nuts, beans or 90% or higher beef)
5. Avoid extra fat, such as heavy gravy/sauces
6. Get creative - use less meat and cheese and try more veggies when cooking
7. Take control of your food - eat at home more often so you know what you're eating
8. Try new foods, such as kale or chickpeas
9. Satisfy your sweet tooth with a naturally sweetened fruit, such as mango
10. Everything you eat matters - choose healthy snacks and drink more water!



REFRESH FROM STRESS



DAY 6: JOIN THE MINDFULNESS MOVEMENT

Choose Your Pleasure:

- Read the article—[Nine Essential Qualities of Mindfulness](#)
- Download the free [Headspace](#) app to learn and practice mindfulness
- Need some guidance on mindful meditation? Check out Jimmy Fallon and Andy Puddicombe's: [2-minute meditation](#)
- Already know the basics, but having trouble practicing regularly? Make mindfulness a habit:
 - Set a goal of 5-10 minutes of mindfulness daily for 30 days
 - Try to practice same time daily, schedule a reminder and use a timer
 - Add mini-mindfulness moments, such as mindful breathing when you log on to your computer or when you are in between activities
 - Use cues such as a stone or bracelet to remind you. Move the stone or bracelet from one side or wrist to the other every time you complete a mini-mindfulness moment throughout the day.



REFRESH FROM STRESS



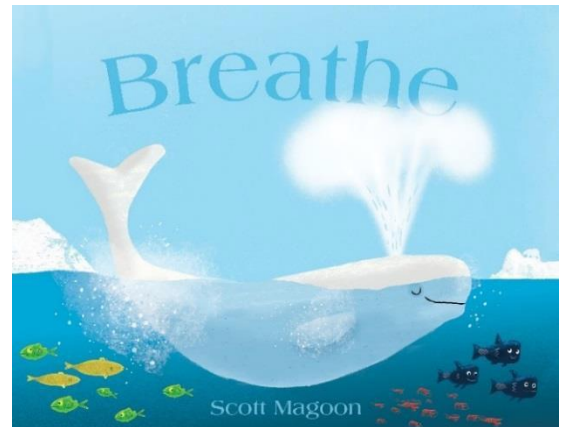
DAY 7: BREATH MINDFULLY

View & Participate in Guided
Exercise: [Take 5 for Wellness:
Mindful Breathing Video](#)

OR

Follow these Steps to Participate:

1. Find a relaxed, comfortable position in a chair, on the floor or a cushion.
2. Relax your body and notice any areas of tightness or tension. Relax more.
3. Feel and listen to your breath. Breathe in slowly through your nose and exhale through your mouth.
4. Continue for 5 minutes - slow breaths in, hold a few seconds and exhale.
5. If you notice your mind wandering, that's okay – just redirect your attention back to your breathing.
6. Finally, return to normal breathing and let yourself relax even more. Offer yourself some appreciation for breathing mindfully!



REFRESH FROM STRESS



DAY 8 – TAKE A RELEASE WALK

It's all about meditation in motion. Release tension and stress with a light walk. A "Release Walk" will relax you, lower your stress level and give you an endorphin boost to carry you through the day.

What is mindful walking? Mindful walking focuses on the sensations of walking. Notice, without judging, your surroundings, smells and sounds. Feel the air on your skin and the ground on your feet. The speed of the walk doesn't matter as much as focusing on the sensations.

Join a Release Walk:

- **Location:** Release Walk groups will meet at a [designated location and time](#) and be led by a walk leader. Schedule will be updated by Nov. 6.
- **Date:** Wednesday, November 8, 2017
- **Duration:** 15 minutes (please arrive 5 minutes early if possible)
- **Activity:** Mindful walking and light stretching
- **Directions:** Walk for 10 minutes (5 minutes each way), taking time to breathe, relax and notice your surroundings. After completing the 10 minute walk, the walk leader will guide participants in light stretching. *If you cannot join a group, [try a self-guided walk and stretching.](#)*





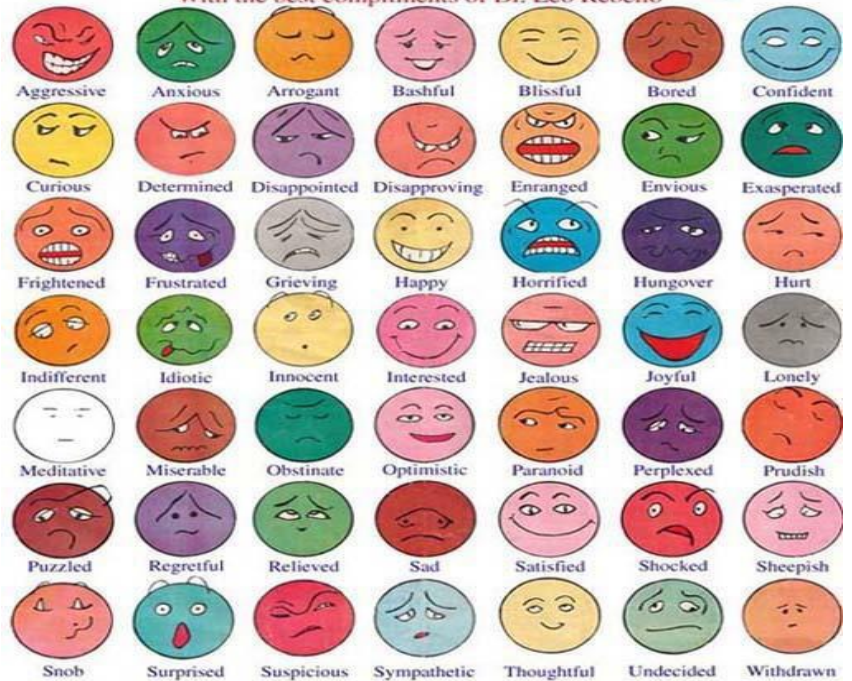
REFRESH FROM STRESS

DAY 9: NOTICE HOW YOUR SURROUNDINGS AFFECT YOUR MOOD

Mood is an overall feeling and attitude that can vary from hour to hour, day to day and week to week. Moods are rarely a complete mystery or out of our control. Therefore, a first step you can take is to find a word or words that capture your overall feeling and attitude. Then notice how what's around you is impacting your mood.

How do you Feel Today?

With the best Compliments of Dr. Leo Rebello



(Continued next page)





REFRESH FROM STRESS

Exercise – Ask yourself the following questions to monitor your mood (write in journal if preferred):

1. Using the Emoji symbols (facial expressions) on previous page, determine “How do I you feel today?”
2. What physical factors around you may be affecting your mood today? Are there ways to attend to these physical factors to improve your inner feelings and mood?
3. What situational factors may be affecting your current mood? Is there an aspect of your current situation that you can change or ask someone else to adjust in order to reduce stress and/or improve your mood?
4. Do you have repetitive thoughts that seem to surround you and impact your current mood? If your overall mood is positive, what thoughts help you keep life in perspective and remain hopeful? If your overall mood is negative, are there pessimistic, gloomy thoughts that can be changed to help improve mood and reduce stress?



REFRESH FROM STRESS



DAY 10: PRACTICE MINDFUL SELF-TALK

Our minds naturally create streams of ideas, feelings, and sensations. While we don't always notice, these streams produce "self-talk," which consists of thoughts, reactions and beliefs. We may not say these out loud, yet they often drive how we feel or act. Examples range from "This dessert is delicious!" to "I wish my kids would hurry up," to "I'm the unluckiest person." If you get to know your "self-talk," you'll be more aware of your mind's flow and where it takes you. Plus, you can create a helpful flow of thoughts with patience and practice. Try this:

Set aside 15 minutes of uninterrupted time in a place where you can focus on yourself.

- For the first 5 minutes, sit quietly and without judging or editing yourself, jot down thoughts that come to mind. Notice urges to push away or hold onto thoughts, while still allowing them. Pay attention to any sense of relief that comes while writing.
- For the next 5 minutes, be curious and write your observations about your list. Is your mind busy with planning, worrying, enjoying, criticizing, blaming, etc.?
- For the final 5 minutes, imagine words that can help you create an encouraging flow of self-talk. Start a list of things to "say" to yourself throughout the rest of the day, such as "I'll take one moment at a time." Add to your list over time. Visit <https://www.mindful.org/feeling-self-critical-try-mindfulness/> to learn more.



REFRESH FROM STRESS



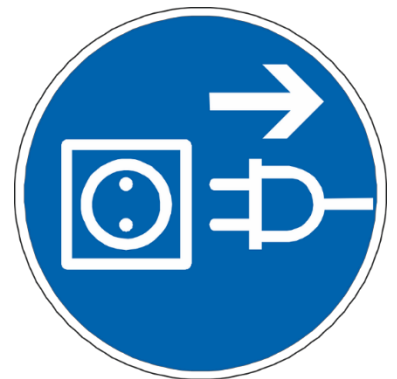
DAY 11: UNPLUG FROM TECHNOLOGY

Disconnect from all electronic devices today. If you are typically connected to social media, email, television, phone, radio, gaming devices, etc.:

- ...all day - Try at least 1 hour
- ...most of the day – Try 2 to 5 hours
- ...part of the day – Try 6 to 8 hours
- ...only an hour or less a day – Try 24 hours

During your down time try one of the following:

- Try a new recipe or read a short book
- Hand write a letter or catch up on chores
- Try a new walking trail; go hiking or biking
- Spend more time communicating with family/friends
- Take in the arts (attend a music event or museum)
- Get some much needed sleep or rest!



REFRESH FROM STRESS



DAY 12: PRACTICE MINDFUL EATING

Eat one meal or snack today in a slow and mindful way so that you truly enjoy and appreciate each bite, while noticing the texture, taste and smell of your food. For a snack, try this:

1. Find a comfortable seated position. Take a few deep breaths, noticing how you feel physically.
2. Place a snack, such as raisins or nuts, in your hand. Notice the impulse you might have to eat it right away.
3. Take a minute and look at your snack, examining it with curiosity as if you've never seen it before. Notice how it feels in your hand – texture, shape and weight.
4. Put a small bite (one raisin or nut) in your mouth and swirl it around your tongue to fully take in the texture and flavor.
5. Slowly chew and think about the “farm to table” efforts it took for you to be able to enjoy. Swallow with appreciation!



REFRESH FROM STRESS



DAY 13: SHARE YOUR SMILE

Smiles are contagious. They are also healthy for you! Read the article in the link below and share your smile with others throughout an entire day.



[Karen Kleiman, LCSW - Try Some Smile Therapy.](#)



REFRESH FROM STRESS



DAY 14: ENJOY BREAK TIME WITH A COWORKER/TEAM

Invite a co-worker, team or a colleague from another department to talk a stroll or sit down together and have a 5 or 10-minute, non-work-related chat. Ask a question about something you don't know about them. Share a laugh or two!



Learn more about communication here: [Help Guide - Effective Communication](#).



REFRESH FROM STRESS



DAY 15: TAKE A LAUGHTER BREAK

Creating opportunities for laughter can be an easy and useful strategy for managing stress. Practiced over time, humor and laughter can enhance emotional resilience and overall well-being.

Share a funny memory or story with someone or watch a humorous video so that both of you can laugh.

To view an interesting example of combining laughter with other stress management strategies, see this video about laughter yoga: [Dr. Madan Kataria - Laughter Yoga](#)

You can schedule a Laughter Yoga break for your team and have some fun!



REFRESH FROM STRESS



DAY 16: SUPPORT OTHERS

Supporting others brings mutual benefits because we usually feel good after we have helped someone. Choose one or more of these kind gestures:

- On your commute to and from work, allow another driver to merge or turn in front of you
- Help start the day off by brewing a fresh pot of coffee in the office
- Hold the door open for a person coming in behind you
- Make a specific offer to assist a co-worker who is juggling many tasks and would appreciate the help
- While shopping or running errands, invite someone to stand ahead of you in line
- Stand in solidarity with others attempting to make meaningful change by taking the “Great American Smokeout” (GASO) Pledge.

Learn more about [The Benefits of Giving](#)



REFRESH FROM STRESS



DAY 17: EMBRACE CULTURAL CUISINE & CONVERSATION

Learning about or trying a new dish can expand your knowledge, appreciation and appetite for cuisines of various cultures. Sharing with others is even better! Here are some suggestions:

- Share a recipe or story that reflects one's culture
- Try a cuisine you are unfamiliar with and tell someone else about it
- Invite a co-worker, team, friends or family members to enjoy a meal or snack together in which one or all bring a favorite dish or snack associated with their culture
- Go together to a restaurant for a cuisine at least one person has not tried, and share stories about cultural traditions.





REFRESH FROM STRESS

DAY 18: ENGAGE IN A FUN ACTIVITY WITH FAMILY/PET/FRIEND

Enjoy a fun activity with a family member, friend, or pet. Plan an activity that is realistic for the time you have available. If you wish, write or verbally share how the experience impacted your level of stress.



Play is a fundamental and healthy part of life. Whether a child, teen or adult, it has enormous value. By its nature, play involves being in the moment, spontaneity and suspending worry about ordinary or extraordinary stress. Learn about the [Benefits of Play for Adults.](#)





REFRESH FROM STRESS

DAY 19: RECONNECT WITH AN OLD FRIEND



Reconnect by calling, emailing, writing or visiting a friend or family member you haven't talked to in a while.

Meaningful social connection is a basic emotional need that can be overlooked in the busyness of work and family obligations. Maintaining healthy connections in which there is shared history and reciprocal support is important for a sense of stability and for minimizing experiences of loneliness.

If you wish, write about your experience of reconnecting in your Refresh journal.





REFRESH FROM STRESS

DAY 20: RECOGNIZE BENEFITS OF GRATITUDE

To understand the great and scientifically proven benefits of giving gratitude, check out:

[Psychology Today - Benefits of Gratitude.](#)



REFRESH FROM STRESS



DAY 21: SHARE TEAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Write down at least two work team accomplishments that occurred during the last month or two. What contributed to the team's success? Share your observations with your team members as a way to express gratitude. Make time for this important activity during a staff meeting, huddle or one to one, and remember, it's okay to complete the activity on any day of the month!



REFRESH FROM STRESS



DAY 22: COMPLIMENT SOMEONE ELSE & YOURSELF

Exercise 1

Take time to express your gratitude for others in your life. This could be a friend, loved one, and/or coworker who helped or supported you or others. Take today to say “thank you!” and challenge yourself to try these 3 ways for expressing gratitude:

1. **Words of Recognition:** Thank you for your help today.
2. **What you Appreciate:** I appreciate you taking the time to clarify the priorities and next steps for our project.
3. **Why it’s Important:** Thanks for listening to me today because now I feel more supported during this stressful time.

Exercise 2

Write down 3 traits or strengths about yourself that you appreciate. Reflect on these strengths as a way to express gratitude to yourself throughout the day. If interested, learn about your strengths here:

[VIA Classification of Character Strengths](#)



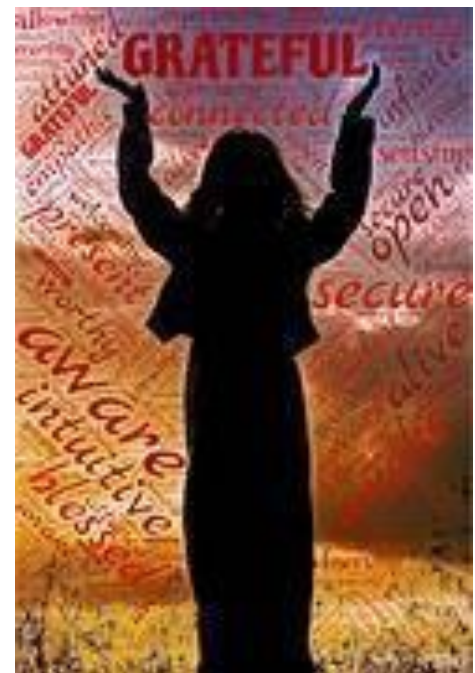
REFRESH FROM STRESS



DAY 23: WRITE DOWN 3 THINGS YOU ARE GRATEFUL FOR TODAY

Areas of gratitude may relate to nature, your health, relationships, basic needs, technology, work, talents/skills, etc., to name a few.

Write 3 things you are grateful for today. To receive some inspiration, watch this 5 minute video on gratitude:



<http://gratefulness.org/resource/a-good-day>



REFRESH FROM STRESS



DAY 24: FIND POSITIVE OUTCOME FROM A MISTAKE OR REGRET

Are you still “kicking” yourself because of a mistake or a lingering regret?

Research shows that there is often value in regret, primarily because of its “motivating corrective action.” In one study,* positive outcomes of regret included: (1) making sense of the world, (2) avoiding future negative behaviors, (3) gaining insight, (4) achieving social harmony, and (5) improving ability to approach desired opportunities. In addition, we often don’t realize a “silver-lining” until well after our decisions or actions.



Think of a mistake or regret you are still struggling with and ask yourself, “What is one positive outcome that resulted from that mistake/regret?” Use this experience to re-shape your perception and outlook. If you are not able to identify a positive outcome, focus on forgiving yourself, which is, in itself a good thing.

*Source: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-mindful-self-express/201206/the-neuroscience-regret>



REFRESH FROM STRESS



DAY 25: WRITE A “THANK YOU” NOTE

Write or type a thank you note to someone you’ve wanted to thank for something, but haven't yet. Take time to mail, email or hand-deliver the note. If you need some ideas about what to include in your note, visit: [Thank You Card Messages](#).





REFRESH FROM STRESS

PAY IT FORWARD

DAY 26: PAY IT FORWARD (SHARE AN ACTIVITY FROM THIS WEEK)

Capture your favorite activity from this week of gratitude practices. Pay it forward by sharing the activity with a friend, family member or co-worker. Discuss with them what you learned about the benefits of giving or receiving gratitude.



REFRESH FROM STRESS



DAY 27: WATCH A 3-MIN TED TALK: *How to Make Stress Your Friend*

[Watch TED Talk: How to Make Stress Your Friend \(3-minute version\)](#)

Now that you have viewed the TED Talk, identify a strategy for how you can better embrace stress. If you'd like to learn more, see [full version](#) of video.



REFRESH FROM STRESS



DAY 28: CHOOSE & PRACTICE RESILIENCE

Select a strategy from this list of ways to build resilience (developed by the American Psychological Association), and **practice today**:

- **Make connections.** Good relationships with close family members, friends or others are important. Accepting or giving help/support strengthens resilience, and social support can build hope.
- **Accept that change is a part of living.** Accepting circumstances that cannot be changed can help you focus on circumstances that you do have influence over.
- **Move toward your goals.** Develop realistic goals and take small steps. Instead of focusing on tasks that seem unachievable, ask "What's one thing I know I can accomplish today that helps me move in the direction I want to go?"
- **Look for opportunities for self-discovery.** People often learn something about themselves and grow as a result of their struggle with loss. Many report better relationships, greater sense of strength and self-worth, a more developed spirituality and an increased appreciation for life.

(Continued below)



REFRESH FROM STRESS



- **Nurture a positive view of yourself.** Developing confidence in your ability to solve problems and trust your instincts helps build resilience.
- **Maintain a hopeful outlook.** An optimistic outlook enables you to expect that good things will happen in your life. Try visualizing what you want, rather than worrying about what you fear.
- **Take care of yourself.** Pay attention to your own needs and feelings. Engage in activities that you enjoy and find relaxing. Exercise, meditation, spiritual practices, rest and play help keep your mind and body primed to deal with situations that require resilience.

Source: <http://www.apa.org/print-this.aspx>

Learn more about resilience:

- [Characteristics of Resilience](#)
- [How to Improve Your Resilience](#)
- [Quiz: How Resilient Are You?](#)



REFRESH FROM STRESS



DAY 29: REFRAME: OBSTACLE TO OPPORTUNITY

Another way to practice resilience is to keep things in perspective. When facing a challenging situation, try to view it in a broader context and avoid blowing it out of proportion.

The next time you have a setback and are feeling stuck, create an opportunity to practice reframing. For example, if you are feeling overwhelmed by your heavy workload, be proactive and ask yourself questions such as:

1. Are my feelings making a challenging situation more intense? If so, pause and take a breath. Allow yourself to be open to new perspectives.
2. What tasks can I delegate?
3. What boundaries can I set in order to limit interruptions?
4. What conversations do I need to have with my supervisor to clarify priorities and request permission to delegate?
5. What will I take ownership of for my role in getting behind or over-reacting to work or personal stress?
6. What “Embrace” mantra can I say moving forward? Examples: “I have the power to influence change.” “It’s okay to ask for help.” “I’ve got this.” “It is what it is.” “This too shall pass.”

Write about your obstacle and how you will reframe it as an opportunity!





REFRESH FROM STRESS

DAY 30: ENGAGE IN STAYING REFRESHED

Congratulations on completing **“Refresh from Stress: 30-Day Inspiration!”** Now it’s time to create a plan to continue prioritizing and practicing stress management strategies to promote emotional well-being.



Complete the “Staying Refreshed from Stress” plan on the next page, print/copy and post your action plan to keep “refreshing” yourself.

Commit to use the skills, activities, and support you found most helpful over the last month. And don’t forget to check off completed activities in your online calendar. The Faculty Staff Assistance Program (FSAP) will follow up with all participants within the next month to share a few more Refresh tips and resources.

On behalf of the FSAP Team and Healthy Emory, thank you for participating in ***Refresh from Stress: 30 Day Inspiration!***



“Staying Refreshed From Stress” Inspiration Plan

**Starting on (date) _____, I (name) _____
commit to the following plan to keep “Refreshing from Stress.”**

I will remind myself of benefits I experience when I “Refresh from Stress”:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

I will be aware of signs of stress when I need to “Refresh from Stress”:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

I will practice the following helpful “Refreshers” (include specifics: when, how, reminder plan, etc.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

**I will share my plan with _____ (support person).
I will invite him/her to check-in with me on my progress every/on
_____ (e.g., last Fri each month).**

**If I need additional assistance with managing stress, I will contact Emory’s
Faculty Staff Assistance Program (information below) and/or reach out to
_____ for help.**



Faculty Staff
Assistance Program
EMORY

www.fsap.emory.edu
404-727-WELL (9355)