

## **TAKING STEPS TOWARD SAFETY**

The following list offers a variety of ideas of things to consider when you are feeling overwhelmed or you're not sure what to do next.

- **Take a Shower:** The warmth of the water and relaxation of the shower experience can be a solid choice to break a cycle of worry, frustration, or anger.
- **Read/listen to a Favorite Book or Podcast:** The escape of reading can often take us out of a stressful situation and transport us to another world for a time. Another option is listening to a book on Audible or a book summary on an app such as Headway. Podcasts are another great way to help feel connected to a larger community without the anxiety or worry that may occur when meeting new people.
- **See a Movie:** Consider seeing a new movie in the theater or watching a favorite movie at home. Many libraries offer audiobooks and movies as part of their service to the community.
- **Go for a Walk:** Sometimes, a change of scenery and some fresh air can shift you out of negative thoughts. Even a short walk is good exercise and releases endorphins that can change your mood.
- **Exercise/Workout/Sports:** A more targeted approach to that endorphin release involves going through some cardio and muscle building. From swimming to weightlifting, working out can help shift you out of a difficult mood. There may be clubs and intramural sports on campus that can be a way to exercise and spend time with people.
- **Play a Video Game:** If you have a video game system, this can be a useful way to escape to an alternative world for a bit.
- **Have an Emergency Number/Online Support:** Research and have an emergency number (such as 988) available prior to needing it. The same goes for online support and texting to a professional group or organization.
- **Text/Call a Friend:** Have a list of friends that you can reach out to when you aren't feeling your best. Have a few options in case your first choice of a support person can't respond.
- **Meditation Class/App:** Consider joining a movement/meditation class such as Tai Chi or look for some online apps in the meditation space that can help reduce your stress when your mind gets racing. Some examples are Headspace, Calm, Breathe, Buddify, and Meditation Moments.
- **Have a Healthy Snack:** Try having a snack if you are feeling overwhelmed, irritable, or sad. Like with exercise, eating something nutritious can change your mood, balance your blood sugar, and maybe help to shift your perspective.
- **Listen to Music:** Music can have a powerful impact on our mood. A favorite song or playlist can lift you out of a stuck place.
- **Use a Distraction Toy:** These little handy devices can help manage anxiety and help us think about something else for a time.
- **Make a Favorite Meal:** Think about your favorite meal or comfort food. Consider a trip to the grocery store and put together a meal for yourself or with some friends.
- **Find a Furry Friend:** The act of petting and spending time with a dog, cat, or other pet may be just the thing to help shift your mood.