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The Importance of Prioritizing Mental and Emotional Well-Being Among College Students

- 25% of Gen Zers say they don't do enough to manage their stress ([APA](#))
- 73% of Gen Zers indicate they could have benefited from more emotional support in the last 12 months ([APA](#))
- 91% of college students recently reported moderate to high stress levels ([NYT article](#))
- 39% of college students reported moderate to severe anxiety ([NYT article](#))
- 53% of college students percent reported moderate to severe depression ([NYT article](#))
- 50% of people develop a mental health disorder at some point in their lives and 75% of these disorders develop by the age of 24 ([NAMI](#))
- 80% of college students reported that COVID-19 has negatively impacted their mental health ([Active Minds](#))

Benefits of Positive Psychology, Mindfulness, and Self-Compassion Training for College Students

Positive Psychology

- Studies show that college students who report higher levels of optimism ([Carver et al., 2009](#)) and emotional well-being ([Diener, 2000](#)) enjoy college more and report higher levels of satisfaction with their college experience ([Schreiner et al., 2009b](#)).

Mindfulness

- College students with higher levels of mindfulness experience lower levels of anxiety in response to academic stressors and use less defensive, more effective coping strategies ([Weinstein et al., 2009](#)).
- College students who have experienced Mindfulness Training report that it “helps them ‘get more out of’ their academic work because they learn how to ‘bring the mind back’ when a professor is lecturing or other students are talking” ([Grace, 2011, p. 241](#)).
- Research on first-year college students indicates that mindfulness practice facilitates their adjustment to college ([Ramler et al., 2016](#)).



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Self-Compassion

- Self-compassion training has been found to reduce chronic academic stress among college students ([Zhang et al., 2016](#)).
- Undergraduate students with higher levels of self-compassion are:
 1. less likely to report feelings of homesickness during their first term in college ([Terry et al., 2012](#))
 2. experience fewer social adjustment issues throughout their time in college ([Kyeong, 2013](#))
 3. exhibit lower levels of procrastination ([Sirois, 2014](#))
 4. demonstrate higher levels of resilience—namely, they are more likely to respond constructively to academic and personal setbacks ([Neely et al., 2009](#)), maintain self-motivation and sense of competency, and perceive mistakes as learning opportunities ([Neff et al., 2005](#)).
- Even brief self-compassion interventions have been helpful in reducing college students' feelings of depression and increasing their feelings of optimism, happiness, and self-efficacy ([Smeets & Neff, 2013](#)).