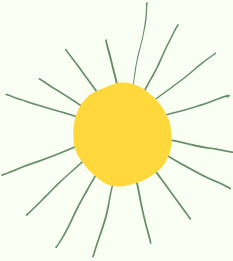


# FINDING BALANCE DURING BREAKS

TIPS AND RESOURCES FROM THE APP STATE COUNSELING CENTER  
[COUNSELING.APPSTATE.EDU](http://COUNSELING.APPSTATE.EDU) (828) 262-3180



## BREAKS CAN BE GOOD FOR US

Many college students eagerly anticipate breaks from school as times to rest, relax, and spend time with family and friends. There is even research showing that there are lots of potential physical and mental health benefits to taking time off:

- Improved work-life balance
- Improved mood and reduced stress
- Improved productivity
- Decreased risk of health issues such as heart disease
- Bonus long-term benefits: reflecting on past experiences in a positive light can affect your current state of happiness!

[American Psychological Association Division 28 Newsletter: "Four Reasons to Take a Vacation"](#)



## BREAKS CAN ALSO BE TOUGH



While time away from school can be restorative for many, breaks can also present their own set of challenges for college students. Some common break-related concerns that students might experience include:

- Feeling pressure to see everyone or get everything done in a limited amount of time
- Changes in relationships (due to breakups, loss of loved ones, or changing values)
- Feeling like a "new person under old rules" (less independence or privacy at home)
- Multiple responsibilities to manage (employment, family responsibilities)
- Changes in schedule and lack of structure
- Lack of safety and stability
- Anxiety about returning to school at the end of break

## HERE ARE SOME TIPS FOR BALANCING IT ALL AND MAKING THE BEST OF TIME AWAY FROM SCHOOL:

### ROUTINES

Day-to-day patterns like sleeping, eating, hygiene, and exercise may all look a little different while away from school. Make a plan for how to keep healthy routines intact while also having realistic expectations for yourself. Big changes in these patterns can be a good indicator that it's time to tend to your mental health or seek support from others.

### EMOTIONS

Be intentional about making space for your emotions. Think ahead about what situations might be difficult, how you might cope, and who could offer support. Consider making yourself a coping skills tool box or writing out your self-care plan before leaving for a break. Make sure to include fun things to look forward to!

### FINANCES

Create a budget for yourself and stick to it. Research free or inexpensive activities in your area that you can enjoy with others or alone. Consider finding temporary employment over breaks.

MORE TIPS AND RESOURCES ON THE NEXT PAGE!

## RELATIONSHIPS

Recognize that you and others in your life may have changed some since you were last together, and consider talking ahead of time about how to navigate these changes. It's okay to set boundaries, to spend some time alone, and to say no when you need to. If conflict occurs, get clear with yourself on how you think and feel about the situation, make an effort to understand others' perspectives, and take the time to respond in a way that is most consistent with your values.

## SAFETY

If you are ever in a situation that makes you feel endangered or is inconsistent with your important values, it is okay to trust yourself, be assertive, and stick with what's important to you. If you need to, make an exit plan that includes people you trust, safe places to go, and emergency resources.

## APP STATE COUNSELING CENTER RESOURCES

**Self-Help Materials:** Lists of resources for many different topics including anxiety, depression, grief, trauma, sleep, eating concerns and body image, gender and sexual identity exploration, coping with COVID, and more!

**Referral Coordination:** Connect with a member of our staff who can help you consider therapist options in the Boone community or at home. Get support navigating considerations like who is a good fit, who takes your insurance, etc. (**PsychologyToday.com** is another good resource for finding a therapist.)

**Emergency Resources:** Reach our on-call counselor at **(828) 262-3180**. For students outside the Boone area, consider one of the National Resources below or visit **crisissolutionsnc.org** for resources in your NC county.

**Stay connected with us:**

- **Instagram:** [@appstatecounselingcenter](https://www.instagram.com/appstatecounselingcenter)
- **Facebook:** [Appalachian State University Counseling and Psychological Services Center](https://www.facebook.com/AppalachianStateUniversityCounselingandPsychologicalServicesCenter)
- **YouTube:** [youtube.com/user/TheASUCPSCTube](https://www.youtube.com/user/TheASUCPSCTube)

## NATIONAL RESOURCES

**American Psychological Association's Holiday Stress Resource Center**

**National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)**  
<https://www.thehotline.org/>

**National Eating Disorder Association Helpline: 1-800-931-2237**  
[www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/help-support/contact-helpline](http://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/help-support/contact-helpline)

**National Hunger Hotline: 1-866-3-HUNGRY**  
[www.fns.usda.gov/partnerships/national-hunger-clearinghouse](http://www.fns.usda.gov/partnerships/national-hunger-clearinghouse)

**National Sexual Assault Hotline: 800 656 HOPE (4673) hotline.rainn.org/online**

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255**  
<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

**SAMHSA's Substance Use Helpline: 1-800-662-HELP (4357)**  
[www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline](http://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline)

**Trans Lifeline: (877) 565-8860 www.translifeline.org**

**Trevor Project: 1-866-488-7386 www.thetrevorproject.org**

**Veterans Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1 www.veteranscrisisline.net**