



As we approach the end of the school year, it is not uncommon for teachers to experience both mental and physical fatigue, especially when we factor in the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. You have gone from trying to keep children safe in the classroom to then having to pivot to online learning and now teaching in-person. It is no wonder why many teachers are exhausted!

How you manage this fatigue is important. Whether you are feeling physically tired, mentally tired or both, there are steps you can take to re-energize and improve your overall wellness. One of the best ways to start to feel better is to reflect on where you are in your life both mentally and physically. Think about any concerns you have or behaviors you want to address to combat the fatigue you are experiencing.

Some ways to re-energize yourself mentally could include:

- Focus on the present and practice relaxation and stress reduction through mindfulness and meditation.
- Maintain relationships with friends and family by exploring new ways to connect and come together while apart. You could participate in, or host, watch parties to view different television programs or movies, or attend virtual events such as paint nights or cooking classes. It is important to revive the social aspects of your life even if you are struggling by talking and listening to the people closest to you. Remember to reach out to people who you have not heard from in a while as they may be facing similar challenges of their own.
- Explore services and supports offered through the NSTU Group Insurance Program such as the Manulife Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) or Your Wellness Partner offered through CAREpath. Information and how to access both programs can be found by visiting the NSTU Group Insurance Trust website at <https://nstuinsurance.ca/>.

In an effort to re-energize physically, you could consider the following:

- Keep up with simple exercise such as walking and housework, or explore online classes, like yoga, that are low-impact and do not require equipment.
- Maintain good sleep hygiene and sleep routines. Plan on getting eight hours on a regular sleep schedule, and where possible, plan for naps.

- Ensure that your nutrition is optimized to provide the nourishment, vitamins and minerals that your body needs. Stick to a well-balanced diet, heavy in fruits, veggies and lean proteins. Steer clear of caffeine, sugar, and processed foods. These tips will help you achieve both physical and mental wellness by giving you the energy to do more of the things you want to do.

As teachers, your NSTU Group Insurance Trustees understand that mental and physical fatigue is a real issue, especially given how difficult the last year has been. They want to thank you for your continued hard work and dedication.

The information provided here can help when you are feeling mentally and/or physically exhausted as well as arm you to become more resilient as we continue to navigate our “new normal”. We are in this together. Take care and stay safe!