

# WELLNESS CONNECTION

*for Faculty*



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## LETTER TO THE READER

Dear Reader,

With the semester coming to a close, we want to say thank you for your readership and dedication to supporting your own and our campus community's health and wellness this semester. We hope you have enjoyed the content so far, but please reach out with any suggestions or concerns using the contact information on the last page.

We have focused this issue on ways you can make the most out of your time off- ways to prepare for next semester, ways to have fun over break through reading and baking, and resources to use to focus on your well-being.

We hope you have a happy and warm winter break, and have time to relax before next semester. We look forward to sending you our next issue in the spring!

With warm regards,  
The Health and Well-Being Committee and Student Well-Being

# WELLNESS IN THE CLASSROOM

## Meeting Students Where They Are

*From Student Well-Being Staff and BetterLesson; featuring an interview with Dr. F. Scott Miller, Teaching Professor and Associate Chair for Academic Affairs*

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a heightened focus on student engagement and retention. How do we keep students engaged and interested while there is a multitude of social, environmental, health, and well-being concerns that fight for their, and our, attention?

A way to combat this competition for energy and attention is to meet students where they are—academically, emotionally, and physically. While faculty and staff may not have the time, bandwidth, or ability in giving every student highly personalized attention and care, we *can* witness and identify common student concerns and trends and adapt for the overall group.

### **Meeting Students Where They Are Academically:**

Since returning from the pandemic, many students may be feeling behind or are and having a hard time catching up. Professors can combat this by focusing more time on reviewing material and checking on how students are feeling over certain subjects. If there isn't time in class, maybe designate one of your office hours each week just for review of previous materials.

After working from their computers at home and being rather isolated, many students may be having trouble concentrating in class and on homework with all the additional distractions that come with in-person learning. A way to combat this is to break lessons into 10-15 minute bursts, especially with new material. Then give time for students to ask questions, catch up on notes, or review the material with their peers. This can also provide time for students who process and learn information more slowly to catch up.



### **Meeting Students Where They Are Emotionally:**

As courses get more difficult and demanding and our extracurriculars get back into full swing, we may all be feeling burnt out, have low energy, or having a hard time getting motivated. A great way to deal with this is encourage students to come to you when they are struggling or provide plenty of resources for when they need help with their mental health. Many students thrive on positive feedback, so making sure to point out when a student is doing well or improving is vital.

Another way to promote emotional wellness in the classroom is to take a small amount of time each class for wellness or mindfulness, such as group stretching, a breathing exercise, or simply "temperature checking" the class on how they're feeling and what kind of support they need. Allowing students time in class to practice emotional wellness and build resilience can make them a better student overall, minimizing the need to focus on it as much in the future.

## WELLNESS IN THE CLASSROOM (CONTINUED)

### **Meeting Students Where They Are Physically:**

Meeting students in more "neutral" or "student focused" spaces is a great way to meet students where they are physically.

One example of this could be hosting office hours in a campus location other than your office. To share more about this, we interviewed Dr. F. Scott Miller on his experience hosting office hours each week in the Student Success Center (SSC).

### **What courses do you teach?**

Currently, I teach:

Freshmen Engineering

1100 – Study and Careers in Engineering

Met Eng 2110 – Metallurgy for Engineers

Mech Eng 2653 - Manufacturing Processes

Cer Eng 3410 - Characterization of Inorganic Solids.

### **How often do you host office hours in the SSC?**

Two hours per week, one hour each on Wed. and Thurs.

### **Do you host office hours in other places?**

Yes, I host walk-in advising hours in my faculty office (224 McNutt) during business hours.

### **How do students like this location? Is it well utilized?**

I think the SSC provides a great place to meet on "neutral ground" for students. I wish it was utilized more.

### **Do you think other faculty should host office hours in the SSC/other campus locations? Why?**

Yes, I think the SSC location offers two main benefits:

1. It allows students visiting the SSC to have a conversation with a faculty member about any topic they wish to discuss.
2. It shows students in my classes who might not be familiar with the SSC that it is a valuable resource in many ways to help them succeed.

### **What are the benefits and downsides of hosting office hours in the SSC?**

Upside: more traffic, I am out of my office, so no phone calls, emails, drop-ins to interrupt.

Downside: the SSC can get noisy and distracting at times, and is not conducive to conversations that need to be kept private.

### **Any advice for faculty on meeting students "where they're at", or meeting student needs?**

Make yourself accessible.

Student interactions (one on one or in small groups) is one of the most valuable tasks that we can undertake as faculty. Students value the interactions, and the more we make them feel comfortable, the more they will feel confident in having those interactions.

### **Anything else you want to add?**

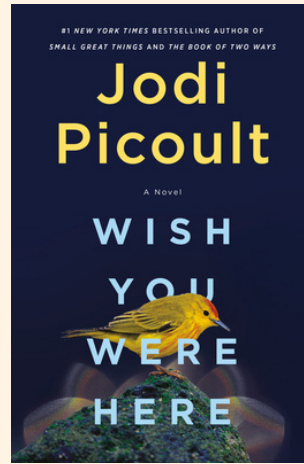
I think S&T needs to emphasize these academic support activities, like the SSC, to interested high school students and counselors, they are one of the aspects that should make S&T the destination of choice for many students interested in a college-level STEM education.



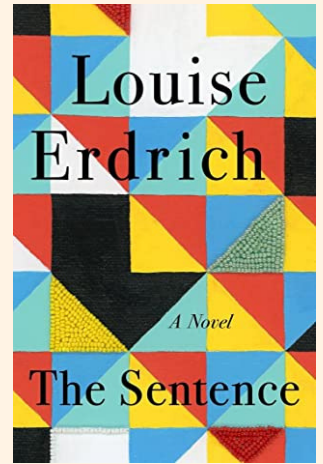
# WELLNESS OUT OF THE CLASSROOM

## New Book Releases To Read This Winter Break

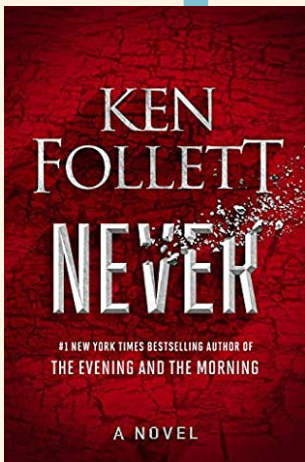
From Student Well-Being Staff and GoodReads



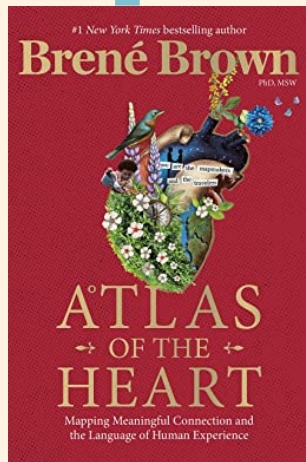
*Wish You Were Here*, Jodi Picoult  
(Fiction)



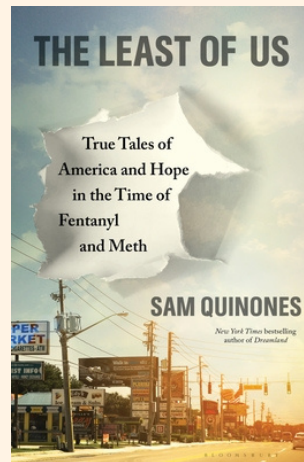
*The Sentence*, Louise Erdrich  
(Fiction)



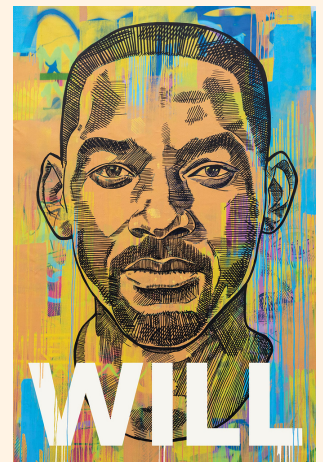
*Never*, Ken Follett  
(Mystery/Thriller)



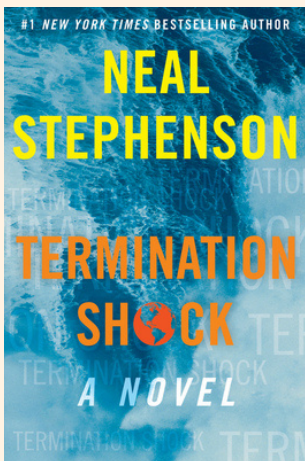
*Atlas of the Heart*, Brené Brown  
(Nonfiction)



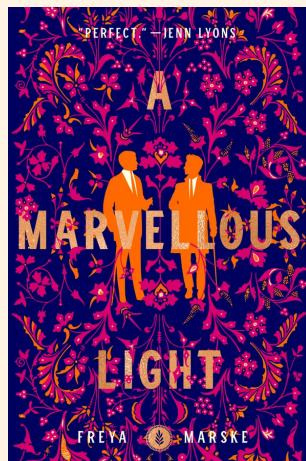
*The Least of Us*, Sam Quinones  
(Nonfiction)



*Will*, Will Smith & Mark Manson  
(Memoir/Autobiography)



*Termination Shock*, Neal Stephenson  
(Science Fiction)



*A Marvellous Light*, Freya Marske  
(Historical Fiction)



*The Fastest Way to Fall*, Denise Williams  
(Romance)



*You've Reached Sam*, Dustin Thao  
(Young Adult)

# WELLNESS OUT OF THE CLASSROOM

## Holiday Treats

*From Dr. Michelle Schwartz, EdD, Assistant Teaching Professor*

Our five senses can be used to pull up memories we have stored in our brains. During the holiday season, one of the smells that brings up happy memories for me is the smell of cookies baking. I have continued the tradition of holiday baking with my own children, and every year in December we bake sugar cookies. My kids love decorating them and, although they may not look perfect, they always get eaten!

I will share with you my favorite sugar cookie recipe. I have tried a lot of different recipes, but this one never fails. It's from Betty Crocker's New Cookbook (1996, p.127)\*\*.



### ***Betty Crocker Sugar Cookie Recipe***

***Makes about 5 dozen cookies***

#### Ingredients:

- 1 ½ cups powdered sugar
- 1 cup margarine or butter, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ teaspoon almond extract
- 1 large egg
- 2 ½ cups all-purpose flour (if you use self-rising flour you would omit baking soda and cream of tartar)
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon cream of tartar
- Granulated sugar

**(Continued on next page)**

# WELLNESS OUT OF THE CLASSROOM (CONTINUED)

## Directions:

- Mix powdered sugar, margarine, vanilla, almond extract, and egg in a large bowl. Stir in remaining ingredients except granulated sugar. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours.
- Heat oven to 375°. Grease cookie sheet lightly with shortening.
- Divide dough in half. Roll each half ¼ inch thick on lightly floured surface. Cut into desired shapes with 2- to 2 ½ inch cookie cutters. Sprinkle with granulated sugar. Place on cookie sheet.
- Bake 7 to 8 minutes or until edges are light brown. Remove from cookie sheet. Cool on wire rack.

## Modifications:

As I make these every year, I have gradually made some of my own substitutions. Here are some things I have modified throughout the years with this recipe.

- Instead of margarine or butter I use Imperial 53% vegetable oil spread. I like the taste of this better than the real butter, but you can use what you are most familiar with.
- I have found that the longer the dough sits in the refrigerator the easier it is to knead, so I usually leave it overnight.
- I do not sprinkle the cookies with granulated sugar because I am a fan of icing and after they cool we always decorate with icing. I have tried making my own icing in the past, but I find that store bought icing works just as well!
- You will need to have LOTS of flour on hand when rolling out the dough. Don't be afraid to put a lot of flour on the surface you are using to roll out the dough as well as on the dough itself when you knead it. If you don't use the flour it will be too sticky and make a bigger mess.

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The most important thing about holiday baking is that you have fun doing it! Put some fun tunes on the radio, bring along the people that make you happy and just enjoy it. Sneaking in a few bites of cookie dough along the way also helps, I have found! I hope you enjoy this recipe as much as I do.

## **\*\*Citation:**

Betty Crocker's New Cookbook: Everything You Need to Know to Cook. (1996). Macmillan: New York, NY, p. 127.



## Well-Being Coaching from ComPsych

Available as a fully integrated add-on to current EAP programs, ComPsych® offers coaching services to address mental health and well-being through one holistic solution.

Work one-on-one with certified coaches and master's-level clinicians to reduce personal roadblocks and specific risks that may be hindering your ability to reach personal goals and milestones. The goal of the coaching is to address mental health and well-being issues before they evolve into long-term, more costly challenges.

Some concerns that can be addressed are burnout, dealing with competing needs, developing self-compassion, grief and bereavement, developing resiliency, time management, coping with stress and anxiety, quitting smoking, healthy weight management, motivation, sleep, exercise and more.

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For more information, contact the ComPsych Employee Assistance Program:

Website  
833.515.0754

## FEATURED RESOURCES

### Guided Relaxation from ComPsych

Spend 12 minutes with Eric Antens, licensed counselor and trainer through ComPsych, S&T's Employee Assistance Program, as he guides you through a few relaxation techniques that can help you relax in the moment and learn to relax on your own in the future.

Don't worry, you aren't asked to lie on the floor, light a candle, or even take your shoes off. Simply get comfortable wherever you are, press play, and listen, to learn to relax.

[Click here](#) to view and listen!

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For more guided trainings and information regarding mindfulness and wellness, [click here](#).

Learn more about ComPsych Employee Assistance Program:

Website  
833.515.0754



## FEATURED RESOURCES (CONTINUED)

### Nicotine Cessation in the New Year

January and the new year often bring new years resolutions, during this time we often set goals related to our health. People who use nicotine products like cigarettes, vapes, or dip may choose this time to reduce or quit their use of nicotine.

Taking the steps to reduce or quit your nicotine use can have positive effects on your overall health. Within the first few days of not using, your body begins to recover as carbon monoxide levels in the body reduce and circulation and respiration functions begin to improve.

Quitting use of nicotine products can be hard and having support throughout your quit or reduction efforts can be beneficial. Nicotine Cessation coaching has evidence that it helps to support successful quit attempts.

Student Well-Being offers a one-on-one nicotine-cessation program for students, faculty, and staff who are thinking about or are ready to quit. These sessions may include:

- Free nicotine replacement therapy (patches, gum, or lozenges)
- One-on-one coaching and goal assessment
- A participant workbook
- A personalized quit plan
- Peer support

During the initial 60 minute consultation, will review your current use, any quit attempts in the past, and what will work best for you as you work towards quitting nicotine use.

To meet with a quit coach, email us at [wellbeing@mst.edu](mailto:wellbeing@mst.edu) or call 573.341.4211.



In addition to the S&T resources to quit nicotine products there are other virtual and national resources:

#### ***American Lung Association Lung Helpline***

The Lung Helpline is staffed by nurses and respiratory therapists who help people with information and questions about the lungs, lung disease and lung health, as well as helping people quit tobacco. Services are free, and you can call by phone at 1-800-LUNGUSA (1-800-586-4872)

#### ***American Cancer Society (Quit for Life)***

866-QUIT-4-LIFE (866-784-8454); 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (except Thanksgiving, Christmas, and July 4)

#### ***National Cancer Institute (Smokefree.gov)***

NCI's telephone quitline: 877-44U-QUIT (877-448-7848); TTY 800-332-8615; 8 AM to 8 PM ET, Monday through Friday (English and Spanish)  
LiveHelp, live online chat assistance, is available 8 AM to 11 PM ET, Monday through Friday (English only).

#### ***Apps to Help Quit:***

- NCI QuitPal by the National Cancer Institute
- MyQuit Coach by LiveStrong
- QuitSTART by the CDC



## CAFE TIP OF THE MONTH

### End of Semester Wrap Up

*From CAFE, Center for Advancing Faculty Excellence*

The Center for Advancing Faculty Excellence staff would like to wish everyone a happy and safe holiday break. At CAFE, we know everyone is drained from the semester, projects to grade, papers to review and proposals to write. During this winter break, while you are sipping hot cider or coco, or your favorite drink, think about what 2022 will bring to your career. How can you step up your game in the classroom, doing research or providing a service to the community? What things would you like to accomplish in the new year? We challenge you to become a better teacher than you are right now. [Here is a link](#) to an essay by Joe Hoyle, "Choose the Award You Want to Win" to help you on that journey.

Spring classes will be here before we realize. [Here is a checklist](#) to make sure you have your classes ready for the spring. As always, please reach out to [CAFE](#) for your course design assistance or on our website ([cafe.mst.edu](http://cafe.mst.edu)). We are here to help you become a better teacher.

Happy Holidays and see you in the new year!!



## GET IN TOUCH



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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**December 17th:** Fall semester closes

**December 21st:** Final grade entry closes to instructors

**January 3rd:** Registration begins for Summer 2022

**January 18th:** Beginning of Spring 2022 semester