

WELLNESS CONNECTION

Your health, your well-being, our priority!



TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM MAK

BOOST YOUR WELL-BEING: DEALING WITH FAMILY CONFLICT AND STRESS

BOOST YOUR WELL-BEING: NEW BOOKS TO READ THIS WINTER BREAK

FEATURED RESOURCES: CURTIS LAWS WILSON LIBRARY, STUDENT RECREATION CENTER

DATA BRIEF: OFF-CAMPUS SUPPORT FOR PERSONAL CONCERNS

MINDFUL MOMENT: GROUNDING TECHNIQUES TO QUIET DISTRESSING THOUGHTS

THIS MONTH'S EVENTS

LETTER FROM MAK

Dear Reader,

We can't believe it's already the end of the semester! We hope studying for finals is going well and your semester is wrapping up how you want it to.

With winter break right around the corner, we have focused this issue on ways you can make the most out of your time off- ways to deal with family conflict and stress, some campus resources available over break, connecting to off-campus support systems, grounding techniques to quiet those stressful thoughts, and new books to read in your free time.

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 January!

With warm regards,
Mak the Mole (and *The Student Well-Being Office*)

BOOST YOUR WELL-BEING



Dealing with Family Conflict and Stress

From *Family Aware* & Student Well-Being

The holiday season is often filled with fun and family, but it can also be stressful. Family dynamics play a major factor in how much you and your loved ones enjoy the holidays, so here are a few ways you can manage family-related stress.

Talk in advance to set expectations around gift-giving.

When spending on holiday gifts, it's possible that unevenly priced or different quantities of gifts can lead to awkward moments. Have a brief conversation prior to gift purchasing to set the ground rules and agree on a spending range.

Be selective with activities and protect your time to do what matters most to you.

There are so many activities and events this time of year - to keep from running yourself ragged going from commitment to commitment, be selective when deciding what to attend. It's important to create dedicated break times. Are you attending out of obligation or genuine excitement?

Create a game plan for how you will respond to stressful conversations.

As this probably isn't your first family gathering, you should be able to predict some of the stressful conversations you may have. These could include questions about relationships, school, or work. Having a plan in place for what you'll say in these situations can go a long way in reducing stress.

Be aware of the tendency to revert to old patterns of behavior.

When families congregate again, it's possible to fall into old habits. Perhaps your older siblings will tease you relentlessly or certain family members will drink excessively. Being mindful of these possibilities can help you stay calmer and work towards either diffusing the situation or removing yourself from it before it begins.

Set and enforce boundaries with family members who display toxic behaviors.

When family members display toxic behaviors (e.g. verbal abuse, emotional manipulation, narcissism), it can ruin your holiday experience and affect your mental health. Set boundaries where you can and limit the time you spend with them to shorter, more manageable doses.

Give yourself time to remember and grieve departed loved ones.

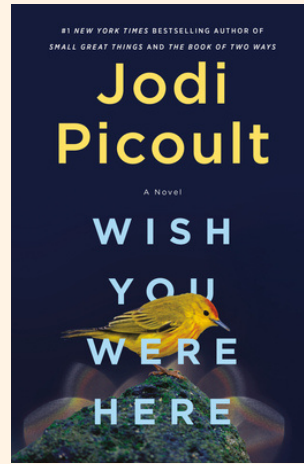
The holidays can bring up memories and emotions about the loved ones we've lost. Recognize when those feelings come up and give yourself the space to feel them. Consider sharing stories and happy memories of your loved ones.

Identify a "lifeline" to call or talk with when you start to feel stressed.

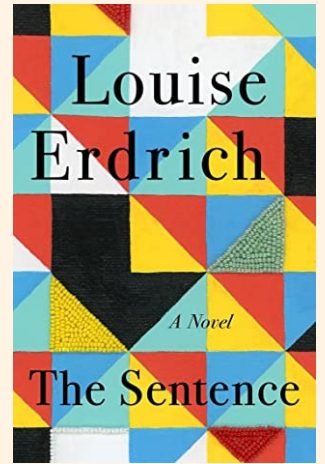
Having a trusted friend available to let you release the pressure before it builds up can be very helpful. Student Well-Being will also be available during most of winter break, Monday - Friday, 8am - 5pm.

BOOST YOUR WELL-BEING New Book Releases To Read This Winter Break

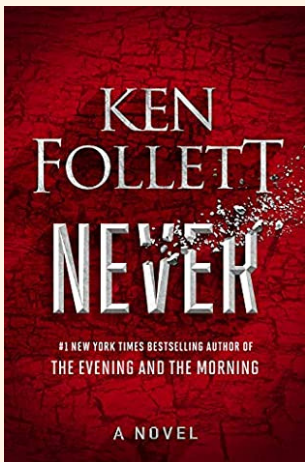
From Student Well-Being Staff and GoodReads



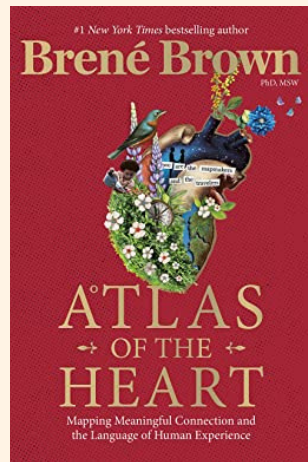
Wish You Were Here, Jodi Picoult
(Fiction)



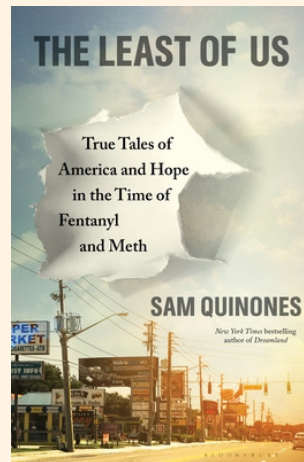
The Sentence, Louise Erdrich
(Fiction)



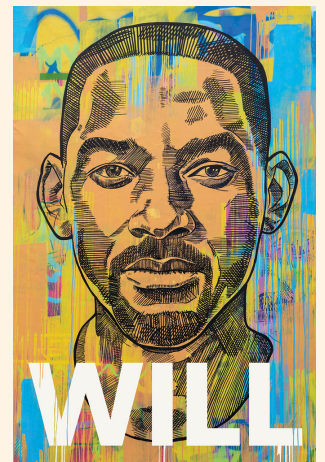
Never, Ken Follett
(Mystery/Thriller)



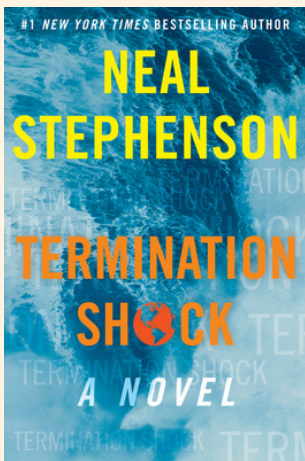
Atlas of the Heart, Brené Brown
(Nonfiction)



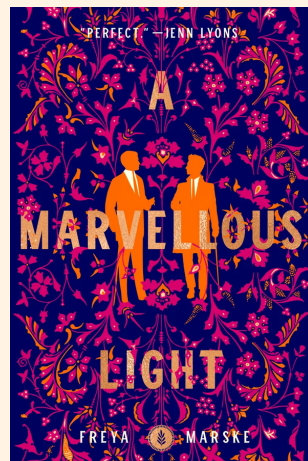
The Least of Us, Sam Quinones
(Nonfiction)



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)

FEATURED RESOURCES



Curtis Laws Wilson Library

The campus library is an essential resource to all campus and community members! All Missouri S&T students, faculty, and staff can check out materials and laptops, access electronic resources, and use the computers on the ground floor and the second floor CLC. Additionally, all of the databases, ebooks, and electronic journals available through the library can be accessed off-campus by logging in with your university credentials, unless noted otherwise. There are also study and meeting rooms available to reserve on a first come, first serve basis.

Additionally, reference librarians are available to help you develop your research skills and effectively use library resources. You can meet with them at the resource desk or schedule an in-depth meeting for yourself or a group.

The library is open Monday - Friday, 8am - 5pm during most of winter break. For a more detailed schedule, view on [their website](#).

Recreation Center

The Student Recreation Center houses three basketball/volleyball/badminton courts, four racquetball courts, a squash court, an aerobics room, a pool, and a three lane track, all indoors. Student groups (of at least 2) can reserve different rooms or courts on campus for one hour per week. Campus members are also allowed to use the intramural turf field, while the building is open. View live room usage stats [here](#).

Sports equipment (for use in the building and on the field) can be checked out with your university ID. Items available include raquetball, wallyball, volleyball, squash, basketball, badminton, table tennis, darts, washers, futsal, football, Kan Jam, soccer, and ultimate frisbee equipment.

Various sports events take place at the recreation center, and tickets to these events are free to all S&T students.

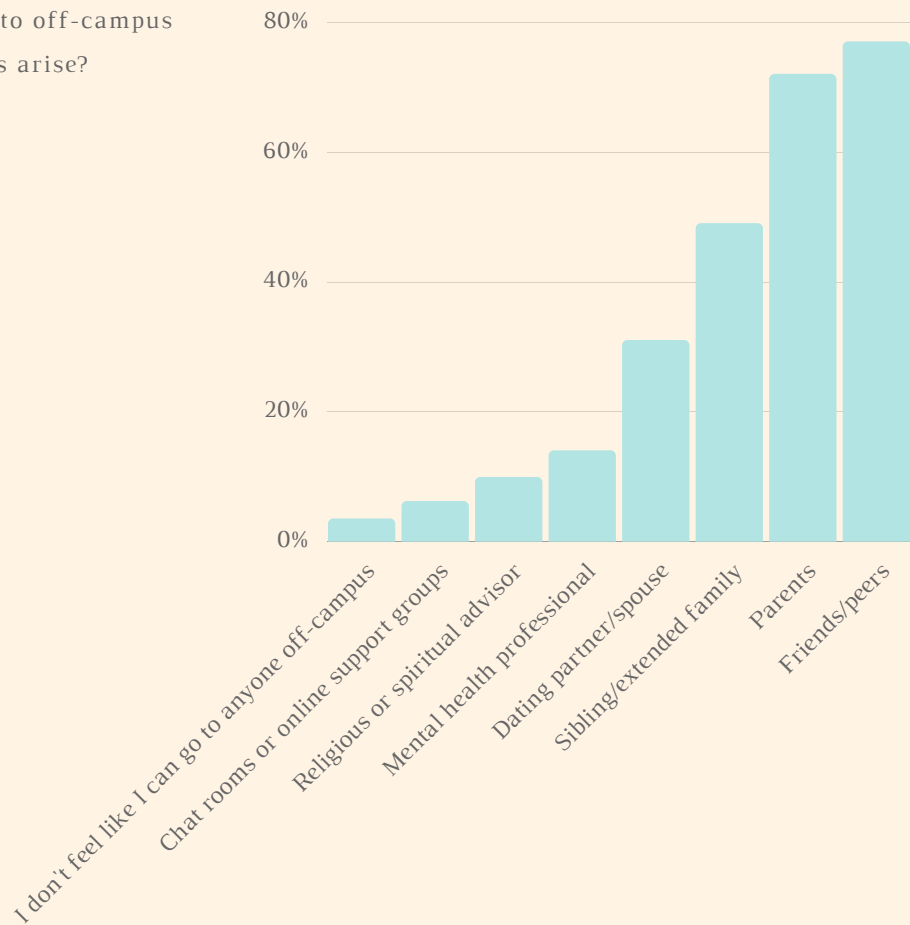
The Student Recreation Center will be open most of winter break, with varying hours every day. Check [their website](#) for an day-to-day schedule.



DATA BRIEF

Off-Campus Support for Personal Concerns

Whom do you feel you can go to off-campus when personal concerns arise?



Having a support system established and available when you are experiencing overwhelming emotions or have other personal concerns is important for your overall mental well-being. Take time this holiday break to check in with your support system(s) off campus. Keeping them in touch with how you've been doing over the past semester will allow that support system to grow even stronger and make it easier to check in when you need it.

While you're in person with your support systems for a short while, consider establishing new ways to keep in touch while you're back on campus, such as video chatting or checking in more frequently.

*From 2021 Missouri Assessment of College Health Behaviors; n=415

MINDFUL MOMENT



Grounding Techniques to Quiet Distressing Thoughts

From [heathline](#) & Student Well-Being

Grounding is a practice that can help you pull away from flashbacks, unwanted memories, and negative or challenging emotions. These techniques may help distract you from what you're experiencing and refocus on what's happening in the present moment.

You can use grounding techniques to help create space from distressing feelings in nearly any situation, but they're especially helpful if you're dealing with:

- anxiety
- post-traumatic stress disorder
- dissociation
- self-harm urges
- traumatic memories
- substance use disorder

Physical techniques

These techniques use your five senses or tangible objects - things you can touch - to help you move through distress.

- Put your hands in water
- Pick up or touch items near you
- Breathe deeply
- Savor a food or drink
- Take a short walk
- Hold a piece of ice
- Savor a scent

- Move your body
- Listen to your surroundings
- Feel your body

Mental techniques

These grounding exercises use mental distractions to help redirect your thoughts away from distressing feelings and back to the present.

- Play a memory game
- Think in categories
- Use math and numbers
- Recite something
- Make yourself laugh
- Use an anchoring phrase
- Visualize a daily task you enjoy or don't mind doing
- Describe a common task
- Imagine yourself leaving the painful feelings behind
- Describe what's around you

Soothing techniques

You can use these techniques to comfort yourself in times of emotional distress. These exercises can help promote good feelings that may help the negative feelings fade or seem less overwhelming.

- Picture the voice or face of someone you love
- Practice self-kindness
- Sit with your pet
- List favorites
- Visualize your favorite place
- Plan an activity
- Touch something comforting
- List positive things
- Listen to music

MINDFUL MOMENT

Grounding Techniques to Quiet Distressing Thoughts (continued)



From [heathline](#) & Student Well-Being


Grounding yourself isn't always easy. It may take some time before the techniques work well for you, but don't give up on them.


Here are some additional tips to help you get the most out of these techniques:


- **Practice.** It can help to practice grounding even when you aren't dissociating or experiencing distress. If you get used to an exercise before you need to use it, it may take less effort when you want to use it to cope in the moment.
- **Start early.** Try doing a grounding exercise when you first start to feel bad. Don't wait for distress to reach a level that's harder to handle. If the technique doesn't work at first, try to stick with it for a bit before moving on to another.


If you're interested in discussing with someone about your thoughts and feelings, contact Student Well-Being to set up a consultation.

GET IN TOUCH

 wellbeing@mst.edu

 [\(573\).341.4211](tel:(573).341.4211)

 [@sandtwellbeing](https://www.instagram.com/sandtwellbeing)

 [@sandtwellbeing](https://www.facebook.com/sandtwellbeing)

 [@sandtwellbeing](https://twitter.com/sandtwellbeing)

THIS MONTH'S EVENTS

Have an event you want featured? Submit to wellbeing@mst.edu

December 6th 12-1pm: [Drop-in Stress Management Session](#)

December 8th 12-1pm: [Drop-in Stress Management Session](#)

December 9th 6-7pm: [Drop-in Stress Management Session](#)

December 18th: [Winter Break Begins](#)

Student Well-Being would like to take the time to recognize four students for their efforts supporting COVID-19 vaccination and awareness through the Fall 2021 ACHA CoVAC Initiative Grant awarded to Missouri S&T. Abby Sybert, for efforts managing social media and content creation; Simran Bhatia, Vivian Kate Barnes, and Femi Alademehim, for translation support to assist with the multi-lingual accessibility of this project. Without the efforts of these students this project would not have been possible!

Many of the efforts by the Student Well-Being department would not be possible without the peer education facilitated by our Peer Wellness Educators (PWEs). This semester we have four students graduating- Adam Rice, Hannah Cooper, Vivian Kate Barnes, and Femi Alademehim. Congrats to these students and we wish them the best in their future endeavors.