What can you do to nurture your students’ mental health?

This list of action items can help you build an inclusive environment where students feel comfortable talking about mental health—and reaching out for help when they need it.

1. **Bring in relatable guest speakers**
   - Provide opportunities for students to connect with the speaker’s own mental health struggles.
   - Help students recognize that they are not alone on campus.

2. **Talk about your own experiences**
   - Relate with students over your own experiences as a student or how you navigate mental wellness.
   - Mention your own wellness routines throughout the course and apply it to the material.

3. **Normalize and destigmatize conversations**
   - Make it as comfortable and commonplace as possible to talk about mental wellness.
   - A few examples include the following:
     - Build an assignment around students becoming more aware of the way they talk to themselves, and the things that bring them joy, as well as stress.
     - Teach your students a simple meditation task, so they learn how to give themselves a mental break and focus solely on sensation and perception.

4. **Promote on- and off-campus resources**
   - Facilitate student searches for local non-profits.
   - Raise awareness of resources available at your school, such as:
     - Counseling and testing support
     - Dean of Students
     - Student support groups
     - Student organizations
   - Use your Learning Management System (LMS) to build a mental wellness module dedicated to resources like support groups.

5. **Incorporate mental wellness into assignments**
   - If you are not the best resource to assist them, have a list of resources ready.
   - Reach out to your school’s student support programs on their behalf.
   - Participate in suicide prevention training.
     - Suicide Prevention Resource Center: [https://www.sprc.org/training](https://www.sprc.org/training)
     - QPR training (Question, Persuade, and Refer)

6. **Be someone your students can talk to**
   - Provide opportunities for students to connect with the speaker’s own mental health struggles.
   - Help students recognize that they are not alone on campus.

Sources:
- Kristal D. Clayton
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  - Co-Author of: *Essentials of Psychology*
- Dawn M. McBride
  - Professor of Psychology, Illinois State University
  - Co-Author of: *Psychology, Seventh Edition*