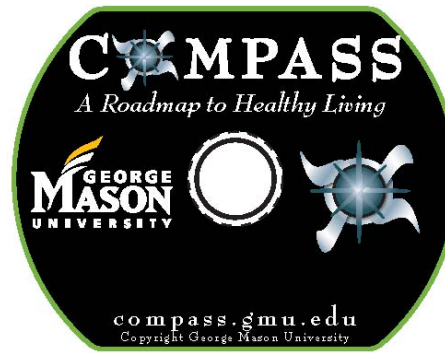


Spring Break is Almost Here!

You're almost there!!! It's just a few days away: the long-awaited Spring Break! We hope you have some good plans for yourself, as you deserve some reward at this half-way point of the semester. But before you get there – it's the week of many stressors. Professors like to give mid-terms and assignments right before the break, so that you can really have a break! Last week, we highlighted some tips for studying and writing. This week, our focus is on stress management. The article in the **COMPASS: A Roadmap to Healthy Living** resource has some helpful guidance. This points you to a deeper understanding about what may be causing your stress, and what you can do about it. As the author states, stress management has three major components: assessment, perception and behavior. While each of us typically looks at the behavior (what can we do to manage the stress), it's often helpful to look at some of the causes, and how we interpret it. Check out the TIPS box in this e-newsletter, as well as the full article online [here]. You might also check out the two worksheets on stress with the **COMPASS** resource.



COMING SOON! The brand new and improved COMPASS CD-ROM!

TIPS FOR MANAGING STRESS

- 1.) Assess your current stressors and stress levels
 - What are your daily stressors?
 - Do you need to decrease your stress level?
- 2.) Evaluate and explore options for your perceptions
 - Can you change how you think about your stressors? Can you reframe the stressors into challenges?
 - Can you avoid some of these – not place yourself into these situations?
 - Are there some stressors that result in irrational beliefs?
 - Could some of your “should” and “musts” be reduced?
- 3.) Make changes in your behavior
 - How can you get greater control for yourself? Can you be more assertive with your own needs?
 - Create clearer boundaries for yourself.

Now for Spring Break. This is a great time of the year, and one that rewards you for your good work so far this year. It's a great break from classes, from campus responsibilities, and perhaps from other responsibilities. You may be heading away to the beach, you may be participating in an Alternative Spring Break with some service activities, or you may be working longer hours to gain a few extra dollars. Whatever you are doing, you have some extra time for yourself to catch up, get some rest, spend extra time with friends and family, or just be alone.

As you head into Spring Break, we offer several suggestions. First, we hope that your Spring Break is as much of a “break” for you as possible. Time away from our normal routine is vitally important for each of us – it helps us with our mental health and our physical health, and it helps us keep our perspective about a whole range of things. Second, we hope that your Spring Break is a healthy and safe one. If you're driving long distances, stay refreshed and take frequent rest and stretching breaks; share the driving, and stay alert. If you're heading to a location where partying is a central part, it's important that you make your own healthy, safe, and legal decisions. Peer pressure, the allure of a good time, and lots of ‘promises’ will be tempting; again, it's

UPCOMING EVENTS: HEALTH EXPO

- **Wednesday, March 26 – noon to 6 p.m. – Dewberry Hall, Fairfax Campus**
- **Thursday, March 27 - 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. – Dewberry Hall, Fairfax Campus**
- **Thursday, April 4 - 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. - Bull Run Hall, Prince William Campus**

important that your decisions are your own, and are ones that you are confident you will be proud of in the days, weeks and months to come. Third, if you're traveling or hanging out with friends (old or new), we encourage you to take some responsibility for them. You might need to suggest that someone else drive (if you're on a long drive, or if they are just too tired to drive), that they need to get out of the sun, or other parts of healthy living that they may not have thought of or may not be able to see.

Finally, we hope that you come back to campus all refreshed and rejuvenated. Spring Break is a reward, and we hope that yours is a healthy, safe and enjoyable one. Just as when you came back from Winter Break for the Spring Semester, you thought about some “New Year's Resolutions”; Spring Break can give you some good perspectives for some new resolutions for yourself for the remainder of the year. Enjoy!!!!