



January 12, 2018

Dear Students,

Are you concerned about a friend or about yourself? Having a lot of stress lately? Struggling with the school/life balance? Please fill out a CARE referral: www.rochester.edu/care

In this email I've attached a flowchart of how we handle these CARE referrals. I want you to know more about this process so you can feel more comfortable utilizing this service.

But in addition, consider the following *before* you submit a referral:

Our team of administrators take CARE referrals seriously. Please let us know if you have a legitimate concern. I urge you to submit a CARE referral that includes your identity and when possible inform the person that you are submitting a CARE referral because you're concerned about them. I've noticed that some students are sending CARE referrals that aren't serious (ex. telling us that someone has an eating disorder when they don't, telling us that someone has a drinking problem when they don't, and telling us that you're concerned about someone without any context).

Rationale: The CARE system works best when we are transparent about our concerns and genuine in intention. CARE reporting isn't a system for abuse and/or retaliation.

There's no question that today's Eastman students are busy. That leaves limited time to spend thinking about self-care. I encourage you to explore your options: exercising, setting a boundary for practicing, and making time for support. It's easy to look at a paper cut and think, "I need a Band-Aid." We often prioritize body over the mind. Make time for your own wellness. Here are a few tips that may help you out:

Automate: Bring out your weekly schedule, write down every class you take, prioritize time for meals and rest (write them in), then structure practice/study time around these. Leave room for mental breaks like seeing friends, attending a club function, or seeing a friend's performance (you should be able to squeeze in a 4-hour chunk of time over the weekend).

Communicate: Let's face facts – some of your instructors need to be told when they're pushing you too hard or that they need to allow you to be an adult. Likewise, education isn't always easy and if an instructor is telling you that there are consequences for missing a lesson, then you may need to hear that. Set appropriate boundaries and mutually agreed upon expectations. We live in an age of high expectations, immediate replies, and in some cases, unreasonable requests. Do you expect your instructor to reply within 24-hours? Should they expect the same of you? If you exchange text messages, then are you allowed to read something and not reply? Are they? These are hypothetical, but relevant.

Gain Control: If you are depressed, lonely, or otherwise upset – please realize that it's still possible to change your potential. A single failure or disconnect often convinces us that change is impossible. This is just not true. Recognize that these feelings distort us – they make us feel that others care less than they do – they keep us from reaching out. Fight this feeling by reconnecting, asking for help, and seeing a therapist if these feelings persist.



Practice Resilience: Break any cycles that are upsetting. Remind yourself that struggling is a natural occurrence that thousands of students have experienced before you. Connect to those who appreciate you and love you. Remind yourself of your achievements, think about changes you can make to assist your success, and keep trying. Concentrate on solution-based ways to improve your condition. While it is important to get your feelings communicated, it is equally important to focus on action. If your language is negative, then consider changing your perspective.

The welfare and success of our students – both undergraduate and graduate – is our priority. Making students aware of resources and discouraging students from engaging in behavior that negatively impacts their progress in this shared community is part of what we do. Some students may not want our support and we accept that there are some cases when they have the right to refuse. Likewise, some students may need to recognize that their actions impact others and our interventions and communication come from a place of helping students develop.

If you have any questions about the CARE Network, talk to your RA, stop by the Office of Student Affairs, or contact me directly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Bones', followed by a long horizontal line.

Robert E. Bones, Ed. D.
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Eastman School of Music
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