

## ► Take Some Time for Yourself

Congratulations! You've almost made it to the holiday break! For new teachers, that's quite an accomplishment. Take comfort in knowing that things will start to get even better after the holiday break since you're beginning to feel more comfortable with your students and your teaching.

Use the holiday break as a time for rejuvenation. Try these tips to help you survive and thrive.

- Put problems behind you. Use the new year as a fresh start if need be. Focus on the future and what you want for yourself and your students.
- Continue to have high expectations but also face up to reality. Pace yourself and leave room for mistakes. Be clear about your goals and what you want for your students and for yourself.
- Concentrate on polishing your teaching techniques. Work on improving weak areas. Ask for help from your mentor, your colleagues and the association.
- Write in a time on your calendar for regular exercise. It's a great stress reliever.
- If you can, leave your teaching at school. If you have to lug schoolwork home, get it done early in the evening.
- Get plenty of sleep. Leave your classroom issues back in the classroom. Don't lie awake worrying about how you should have handled Johnny or Susie in class. Tomorrow is a new day.
- Observe good eating habits, don't skip meals.
- Don't feel you have to do everything. Get over it! You can't do it all and you won't. Set and recognize reasonable goals for yourself and your students.
- Keep a "to do" list. Review it daily and try doing at least one or two things you can check off. It will bring a real sense of accomplishment.
- Find a friend who can be a trusted listener. Your mentor and association rep can fill this role. Don't vent in public; find a private place for your conversations.
- Don't procrastinate about things you have to do. Get those papers graded rather than let them hang over you. Just think, if we spent as much time doing the job as we do avoiding it, we could have more time for ourselves.
- Learn to tolerate and forgive. Walk a mile in someone else's shoes to try to understand why he/she might behave in a particular way.
- Learn to plan ahead. Develop a personal style for getting things done. Organization keeps stress to a minimum.
- Learn to have fun and laugh at yourself. Smile often - hopefully, you've done this before December!
- When you're facing a stressful situation, ask yourself, "What's the worst thing than can happen as a result of this?" Anything less than the worst happening will be a pleasant surprise.
- Reward yourself for your professional achievement. Celebrate your accomplishments.