

48 TIPS

TO ADDRESS, TACKLE, TAKE ON,
DEAL WITH, TALK THROUGH, HELP
YOURSELF, NUTURE OTHERS, AND
REALLY MANAGE THE VERY WEIRD
TIME THAT IS

BACK TO SCHOOL



2021

THE
YELLOW TULIP
PROJECT

FEELING WEIRD ABOUT SCHOOL AFTER THE PANDEMIC? US TOO.

Going back to school has always been weird. After a summer spent doing your own thing, getting back into the routine of classes and schedules can definitely be a challenge.

What makes this year different? We are the first generation in recent history experiencing back to school anxiety compounded with the woes of COVID-19.

After more than a year of online or hybrid school, you're 100% not alone if you're experiencing any anxious, depressive or lonely thoughts - and that's exactly why we want to share our self-care tips with you! Take it from us because we know first-hand.

- YTP Youth Leadership Team

Julia



Hi everyone!! My name is Julia and I am YTP's co-Founder! I am a passionate plant enthusiast, nature lover, mental health activist and musician. I believe deeply that no matter how hard and painful times will be, hope and beauty can be found. I see such strength and resilience in everyone I meet and find such joy and meaning in The Yellow Tulip Project's community. Everyone's life matters and it is crucial people understand that it is okay to not be okay, taking a step back and time for yourself is a sign of strength not of weakness. This fall I am returning to Occidental College in LA where I will be a senior. I am nervous and excited but through these wavering emotions, I will carve out dedicated time to hold myself, slow down, take deep breaths, go for runs, get into the ocean and woods and find time to laugh/cry/sing/dance!

ADVICE:

Spend more time with your emotions and or external activities and less time in others' minds and their perspectives of you. You will never understand what is going through people's minds, so try to spend less time caring about everyone else's perceived opinions of you and more time on your own self care.



1

Go on a new music hunt!! Find some new fresh beats to kick off the year. This is a new, fresh time in our lives and we deserve some new and exciting music to kick off the year. Listening to old music might drag us down so some fresh music can be uplifting and create space for new memories to bloom.

2

Write daily affirmations that help uplift yourself. You don't have to necessarily believe them, just get them down onto paper once a day and breathe them into existence eg. I am standing strong in my power, I am powerful, loved and whole..etc

3

Get yourself a plant. Indoor plants rely on us to continue on and having something sweet and living to take care of can give us immense purpose as we bustle through our extra-curricular activities and homework assignments. As we tend to our plants we can take a step back and ponder what we need to take care of ourselves.

4

Give yourself time to not be okay. Crawling into bed and not leaving is okay. Even as life continues to move fast, that does not mean you have to move fast. It's okay to get onto your own time frame of self care as you listen to your body and it's needs. It won't always be like this. I promise. Just let the sadness flow in and know it will flow out again to create room for the light.



Hattie



Hello Hello!! I'm the co-director of community outreach and someone who loves to be outdoors and feel supported by those around me. These are the two things that bring me the most hope and resilience in all that I do and when I realize this hope, it allows me to best move productively and comfortably through the world. I will be a second-semester sophomore (funky I know) this coming fall at Bowdoin College. Though I am excited to return to campus, I took the past semester off from school and so I know that this will bring various academic and social complexities back into my life that I have not had to cope with for over a year and a half.

ADVICE:

Apologize less, demand more. When back at school there is no reason to be anyone but your whole self and there is no reason to apologize for how you learn, who you are, or what you need. Instead, demand what you need to succeed as YOU. When you can be unapologetically yourself, the best people and experiences will surround you.



1 Listen to yourself– your mind, your body, your soul– for food, fatigue, exercise, social meter, feelings, burnout, and more. Listen to music– I like different kinds of music for different moods and feelings. I actually find that “sad music” especially Phoebe Bridgers, instead of making me sad necessarily and simply cry (though some days it does) helps me to process and think through things.



2 Stay active. For me, this means going for a walk or run when I feel stuck or in a rut. I like to couple this with some fresh air as well to tap into that healing and freeing power of nature.

3 Journal. I enjoy journaling and find myself in the best headspace when I can process my thoughts this way. Sometimes my journaling is photographic, sometimes written– perhaps in the notes app, or my journal, or on a random piece of paper. Sometimes it's a drawing or doodle. Whichever form it takes, it heals.



4 Reach out. Lean on networks of support whether they be family, friends, teachers, coaches, professors, or librarians for anything from help with writer's block or research paper to informal check-ins over lunch or a walk. You are not alone, and others want to help you and see you at your very best.

Conrad



Hey hey wonderful peeps! I'm the co-director of the Public Relations team here at YTP. A firm optimist in believing in the best, an adventurer by day and a netflix enthusiast by night; the gist is finding the best and beauty in everything large and miniscule—a lifestyle that feels just right when you can smash the stigma, especially with ytp ;)! I'm a sophomore in the deep south at Tulane University in New Orleans and I am more than thrilled about the endless adventures that I will embark on.

ADVICE:

Do you. Be you. Do bold strokes. Be brave. What others think of you will never go away, but the people won't always stay. Live a life where you don't regret being who you are, find the happiness in your own peace, find the joy in blocking out what people think. We're all human, and at the end of the day, it's you and your adventures, so own your experiences.



1

Mindset: I cannot stress this enough, nothing will change if you don't change your perception.

2

Thrilling: Act upon any chance of happiness. Don't be deterred by the what-ifs and instead focus on the potential great outcome. Taking risks leads to growth

3

Imbalance: Take some rest days, procrastinate a little, work on the project that you love! At the end of the day, you don't need to balance all aspects of your life to be happy, focus on the parts that bring you infinite joy.

4

Growth: You must let yourself get lost to find yourself. Only you can embark on the journey of self discovery. Be inspired to do new things and grow from your failures. We can't grow if we can't learn.



THE
YELLOW TULIP
PROJECT

Hey Changemakers! I'm the Director of Outreach, a passionate speaker, and a believer in the power of music, specifically its ability to heal the soul. I know healing isn't a linear process, so I'm more than grateful for organizations like the Yellow Tulip Project that work tirelessly to make sure no one feels alone in their journey. This fall, I'll be a freshman at George Washington University in D.C, and I certainly feel like I'll be stepping into the unknown. But, as the old saying goes, I'm ready to "trust the process".

Danielle



ADVICE:

The way you speak to yourself has the power to alter not only your self-perception, but also how others perceive you. So, each day, make sure you give one positive affirmation to yourself. It's as simple as saying: "I love how my skin looks today!", or "I'm proud of the decisions I made today".



1

Savor: Have you ever had a meal that was so good that you had to let each bite sit in your mouth for an extra moment? That's savoring. Savor the good things in each day, even if just for a minute.



2

Breathe: When you begin to feel that you're living life in the fast lane, slow down, and breathe. Ground yourself in each moment, don't let life make you feel like you're a high functioning sleepwalker. In through the nose and out through the mouth.

3

Move It, Move It: As a student, we sit

4

Trust: As I said in my introduction, sometimes in life all you can do is "trust the process", and trust yourself. Some days will be great, others won't, and that's alright. Life isn't about preventing all the rainy days, it's about learning to open your umbrella.



Heyyy! I'm Emma and I'm the Co-Director of Events here at YTP. I am obsessed with going to the beach, drinking iced coffee, anything activism related, going on random night drives, exploring, plant shopping, watching sunsets, TACOS, and my puppy:)

Emma



This fall, I will be a first-year at Northeastern University and I am, for sure, feeling the pressure of the unknown creep up on me, but I refuse to become overwhelmed by those thoughts and instead am attempting to embrace what I do not yet know or can control.

ADVICE:

Stay in your power, in your bliss, in your pleasure, in your purpose, and live awake.



1

Treat yo self - sleep in a little, take an extra 5 mins to drink your coffee, buy yourself that cute dress, honor and respect your boundaries, eat some yummy food, watch a beautiful sunset. Do whatever you need to do to feel like the superstar you are.



2

Nature, nature, nature - go outside, breathe in the fresh air, feel the sun on your skin, take in the beauty of our earth. stay grounded and aligned with yourself and your needs.

3

SMILE - just smile:) go do whatever makes you laugh because when you are smiling, your brain releases tiny molecules called neuropeptides that fight off stress and literally make you happier.



4

Organization - Try using a calendar app, notes app, planner, journal, or even sticky notes to keep your thoughts and schedule organized. I find that when I write my tasks and responsibilities down that my mind feels WAYY less cluttered.

Jaden



Hey all! My name is Jaden and I am the Co-Director of Public Relations here at the Yellow Tulip Project. I am a lover of food (especially sushi and boba), music, and all sorts of adventure. I am heading into my senior year at Liberty High School in Lake St. Louis, MO and honestly am a little anxious about it. Although I have been going to this school for three years and am pretty comfortable there, the pressure of planning for my future with college applications, scholarships, etc. has been starting to stress me out, even before school has begun. I just keep reminding myself to keep hope and have trust in myself that everything will turn out okay :)

ADVICE:

Take life step by step. Whether we are starting something new, or returning to something that we have done before, it is natural to feel overwhelmed occasionally. This happens to me a lot, especially during the school year. Whenever I become aware that I am stressing out, I focus on one thing that I can control until I once again feel comfortable with the situation. Make sure to give yourself that time to regain composure and feel confident about what lies ahead, because you got this!



- 1** Music: There is a song for every emotion, whether you just finished a 10 hour shift and need to scream or simply had a bad day and need to let the emotions out. I use music in my daily life to supplement my mood.
- 2** Walks: I discovered how calming and peaceful walking can be during quarantine last year. I began taking daily walks for about 20 minutes each day to make sure that I have some time to relax.
- 3** Prioritize your health: Set a day aside each week or time aside each day to relax and take care of yourself, both mentally and physically. Whether this time consists of taking a bath, cleaning your room, working on personal projects, etc., make sure to set boundaries with school, extracurriculars, and work to have this time for yourself
- 4** Positivity: It is vital to have a positive mindset in regards to life as well as yourself. Embrace who you are and love yourself for it, as there is no one else like you! I know this is easier said than done, but with some practice, a positive mindset will go a long way.

Hi everyone! My name is Shelby and I am the Co-director of Education for YTP. I love the action-based model of YTP and am inspired everyday by the energy of our youth ambassadors and passionate educators! I recently graduated from Bates College with my BA in psychology and am currently applying to medical school. In the recent months, I have honed in on several self-care practices that worked wonders for me!

shelby



ADVICE:

Make yourself and your mental health a priority. It will pay off in the long run!



1

Get enough sleep: Sleep is vital for both mental and physical health. Studies show that adequate sleep boosts your immune system, improves mood and your ability to concentrate, increases productivity and memory, and lowers your risk of heart disease!

2

Try square breathing: Square breathing is a deep breathing technique used to distract your mind and calm your nervous system. The best part is, you can practice square breathing anywhere, without anyone knowing that you're doing it!

Here's how it works:

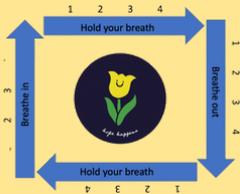
- Breathe in for four seconds, hold for four seconds, breathe out for four seconds, hold for four seconds, and repeat.
- While you're breathing, follow the pattern of a square in your mind.

3

Progressive muscle relaxation: This is another one of my favorite relaxation techniques that you can do anywhere. Start by tensing all of the muscles in your body. Then, starting at your feet, slowly relax your muscles- moving from your toes, into your feet, up through the legs, to the abdomen, through your chest and extending down into your arms into your scalp and face.

4

Remember there is help out there: If you start to feel overwhelmed or overly anxious about starting the new school year remember that there are trained professionals out there to help you navigate your world!



Idey



Hello!! I am a co-director of the diversity and equity team at ytp. I live in Lewiston, Maine. I am passionate about the environment, mental health and activism. I am an ailurophile and enjoy spending time with my family and friends. I also love going on walks even if it's just to the park. I just graduated high school and will be a freshman at Cornell University this fall.

ADVICE:

Don't overthink, you've got this! Everyone is nervous and is feeling many different emotions. Step out of your comfort zone and try new things, make new friends, and explore! But surround yourself with people who make you happy and don't forget to be true to yourself.



1 Rest: Make sure you get a good night's sleep, so that you are energized for the new day.

2 Go outside: We use technology everyday for school, work, and life. Phones are distracting and many of the things we see online can easily ruin our mood. Take time to go outside once or twice a week to enjoy the beautiful nature and time away from your phone. Breathe in the air and feel the warmth of the sunshine on your face.

3 Take time to relax: School can get overwhelming so take a break and to do something that makes you happy. I like watching anime and spending time with my friends. Other examples are going for a walk, reading a book, taking a nap, journaling and there's many more. Find something you enjoy and when you get overwhelmed or just need a break, do it.

4 Celebrate the little things: Make sure to celebrate even the small things, sometimes we can be hard on ourselves and don't pay attention to even the small accomplishments we've made. Celebrate the little things like going to bed early or cleaning your messy room. This can ultimately motivate you to set bigger goals and get out of your comfort zone.



Jenna



Hello, friends! My name is Jenna and I am the Co-Director of Outreach for YTP as well as a sister, aunt, active community member, hiker, artist, and more. I discovered YTP my freshman year and I am so thankful not only for the opportunity to improve my leadership skills but also the incredible support system that comes alongside this beautiful organization. I am currently a rising senior at Rutland High School in Rutland, Vermont looking forward to my 13th first day of school! From my last 12, however, I think I have garnered enough evidence to give y'all some tips and tricks.

ADVICE:

Every new experience comes with a disorienting "first day". Everyone will be faced with loads of opportunities and therefore, my advice is to explore! If a club or sport interests you, give it a shot! Throughout high school, I have joined a grand total of 15 clubs and, throughout my time, have honed in on the few that truly interest me. Exploring all of my interests has allowed me to center my passions and become the president of three clubs, all of which I originally joined on a whim.

1 Fuel Your Body- When school gets back in full swing, I often find myself saying I'm "too busy" to cook nutritious meals for myself. If you're in a similar situation and find yourself running low on time, consider meal prepping or planning out your meals so that you can eat foods that your body thanks you for.

2 Move it for Mental Health!- Whether or not you play a sport (I personally love field hockey), make sure you're moving your body! Consider joining a sports team, going on a short walk with your dog, or walking to school in the morning!

3 Keep a Planner- Suddenly thrusting yourself into several activities can be stressful and overwhelming. Try writing down all of your meeting times-- it reduces stress so that you won't worry about missing anything.

4 Be Kind to Yourself- You will be getting a brand new schedule of classes full of possibly challenging material. Give yourself time to adjust. If you don't score well on the first weekly test? That's ok, there will be 35 more!



Madeleine



Hello! My name is Madeleine and I am the Co-Director of Outreach at YTP. I am a creative spirit, lover of nature, and a firm believer that compassion is the key to hope and happiness, not only for others, but for yourself! I am from Massachusetts and am a rising senior at Fontbonne Academy. It feels like just yesterday I was a freshman, discovering YTP for the first time, and it's crazy to think this is my last year in high school!

ADVICE:

Go into each experience with an open mind! I tend to create so much worry when I try something new, but always end up realizing that there is nothing to worry about!

Although it isn't easy to tune out this doubtful voice, I have found that positive affirmations and helpful coping skills are essential. Affirmations help me to be in a positive headspace and have a more optimistic approach to every experience.

1 Release your energy: Have you ever felt a build up of energy after a really nerve-wracking or super exciting event? I know I have. In order to release this energy, I love to do meditation and yoga. Both have allowed me space to just breathe and let go.

2 Music: Music has so much power to set the tone of your day. I have created a daily music playlist, where I choose one song that encapsulates my day and add it to a playlist.

3 Art journaling: I love to create in whatever way possible, especially in my journal! My journal has allowed me to escape the pressure and explore my creative freedom. I write down my feelings, doodle, splat paint on the pages, and include mementos

4 It's ok to be alone: Being alone is both hard and scary but has allowed me to tune in with my emotions, decompress and not worry about those around me. I recommend going to a spot in nature, reading or taking yourself on a date to your favorite coffee shop.



Rithvika



Hi guys! My name is Rithvika and I'm the Co-Director of Diversity and Equity at YTP and a rising senior in high school. No words can describe how discombobulated this year has been (well I guess the word discombobulated does). But, with online school and social distancing, I came to adapt and apply certain techniques that I have found to be helpful.

ADVICE:

We may not have metaphysical powers to foresee what will be or reverse time, but we all do encompass the power to shift our perception. The reality of life is that there are going to be hurdles, it is our choice whether we will embrace hardships to grow or remain stagnant. How you view events will truly allow you to see your inherent and never ending potential.

1 Pause- take a breath. Things will get overwhelming. I find that word vomiting over a piece of paper about all the stress I'm feeling gets my thoughts out. This can help see what the real issue is as well as coming up with a game plan.

2 Acknowledge your growth and hard work. Living in a world where everything revolves around what we produce can be difficult. If you ever feel that you are not doing enough, step back and realize all of the impacts you made as a student, friend, and beautiful soul.

3 Embrace your passions. Directing your energy towards activities you love can really help process your experiences.

4 Accept all the twists, turns, and unknowns of life! We will not always be in control and that is completely ok. Take it one day at a time and enjoy the journey; you deserve all the happiness in the world :)



Andrea



Hello everyone! I am the Co-President of Enrichment, a passionate musician and artist, and a learner of life. As of now I live in a small town in Maine, but this fall I will be experiencing new beginnings while attending Emmanuel College in Boston. I am equally terrified as I am excited for this big change, but change is all part of the human experience!

ADVICE:

For those who may be anxious about returning back to school, try to keep a positive mindset. The days left in your school career are the stepping stones to what lies ahead in life. How exciting is that? Let this time be filled with no regrets and maintenance of authenticity to your truest self.

1 Talk about it. It is easy to feel alone. Writing has been the easiest way for me to talk about what I am going through, and I can always go back to my writing to reflect on it. Whether it be to emails to my sister, songs I write, art projects, journaling-it has been an outlet for me to express.

2 Listen. There will be days where you feel like you have to lay in bed and rest, while others you feel like you have a thousand things you want to do. Your body will tell you what it needs. While interacting with others, listen to understand, not respond.

3 Bask. There is only so much time in a day, and it goes by so quickly, so let yourself enjoy it. Spend your time doing things you love and genuinely enjoy.

4 Growth. Nothing happens overnight. Healing is not linear. Don't let your off-days set you back. There are more days ahead that can be filled with growth, love, and healing. Keep a mindset that focuses on your growth to come rather than the past. The first step towards moving on from the past is recognizing that the past is over.



BACKPOCKET QUOTES

For those moments when
you need a little extra hope.



"Remember: It's OK to ask for help. It's OK to start again, It's OK to say no. It's OK to rest. It's OK to leg go. It's OK not to be OK." - @StacieSwift

"Be truthful, gentle, and fearless."
- Gandhi

"When you ask for help, you're not being weak or incapable. You're being human."
- @thehappynewspaper

"Believe you can and you're halfway there."
- Theodore Roosevelt

"By being yourself, you put something wonderful in the world that was not there before."
- Edwin Elliot

"Live in the sunshine, swim in the sea, drink the wild air."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

"He said, 'There are only two days in the year that nothing can be done. One is called yesterday and the other is called tomorrow, so today is the right day to love, believe, do and mostly live.'"

- Dalai Lama

THERE IS ALWAYS HELP AND HOPE OUT THERE.

You are not alone.

Need Someone To Talk To?

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

A confidential suicide or crisis
helpline. Available 24/7. ■ 1-800-273-
8255

Or text ANSWER to 839863

Crisis Text Line

Text HOME to 741741

The Trevor Project (LGBTQ)

A confidential helpline for LGBTQ
teens.

Available 24/7. Call 1-866-488-7386.



**Our deepest gratitude
to our sponsor**



**Thank you for
believing in the need
for this project and for
helping young people
everywhere as they
transition back to
campus.**

**Thank you for reading! Remember that while
things might be bumpy at times, we're all in
this together. Wishing you a slightly easier
return to campus.**

- YTP Youth Leadership Team

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