



# The NOODLE

Open up and say AHHHH!!!



Volume 16, Issue 12

May, 2024

**W**elcome to the May 2024 edition of *The Noodle*, written and published by members of The Florida Youth Council! For this special issue of *The Noodle*, members of the FYC wrote about what they do to help them help them de-stress. May is Mental Health Awareness Month and many individuals struggle with their mental health. We hope that you enjoy learning ways we use to keep our minds in a positive place. Maybe you can think of your own!

### Current Members:

*Aviva Banks*

*Jakel Baker*

*John Howard Baldino*

*Shevie Barnes*

*Derek Carraway*

*Sky Tristian Elliot*

*Alexander Gonzalez*

*Leah Gorman*

*Morgan Griffin*

*JJ Humphrey*

*Tamara Koren*

*James Kuhlman*

*Vanessa Muniz-Pellicer*

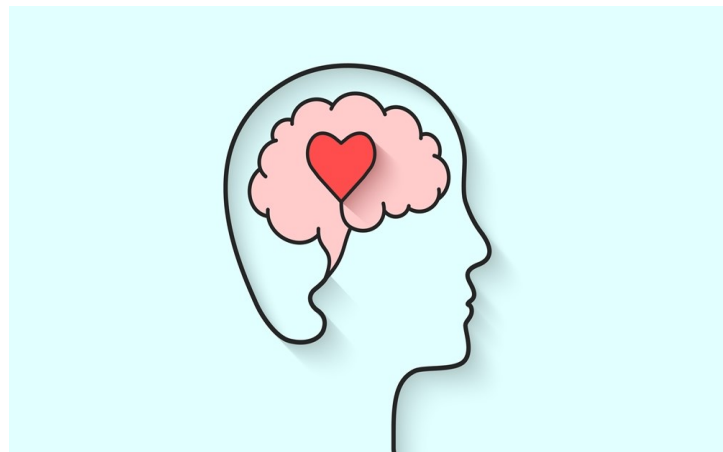
*Michelle Sandiford*

*Josue Tapia*

*Lilibeth Vega*

*Christina Waldron*

*Serena Wetmore*



### From the Advisors' Desk

Mental Health is something that we all have to remember matters. As the Council members have shared their ways to de-Stress, it's important for me to share how I de-stress! Laughter, which I can feel from many things, writing, singing, dancing, video: games it all works in a keep me smiling!

## *Wii Games to Help De-stress*

*by Aviva Banks*

Figuring out ways to de-stress is an important factor in someone's life. De-stressing, also known as doing something you love, can help to prevent burnout and improve wellbeing. For myself, I have many games that I like to play on my Wii. For this *Noodle*, I will be talking about my top two Wii games that bring me the most enjoyment.

1). *Mario Sports Mix*: Mario Sports Mix is a multiplayer sports game. Developed in collaboration with Square Enix, Mario Sports Mix gives a new challenge for its players. The title features four different sports: dodgeball, basketball, hockey, and volleyball. However, the game's story mode takes place in each sport's tournament. Therefore, players are required to collect a colored crystal from every sport. Once a player completes the story mode, the results are rewarding. Think of the reaction of a diehard sports fan when they see their team score a winning touchdown. As a result, the fan jumps out of their seat and reacts hysterically. This will be you when you complete the game.

2). *Tetris Party Deluxe*: Tetris Party Deluxe is simply...well, Tetris. Except this game does a great job of attracting Tetris for younger audiences. *Tetris Party Deluxe* is the 2nd adaptation from the WiiWare Tetris Party. Out of curiosity, I tried to play *Tetris Party* for myself, and it's like a beta version of *Tetris Party Deluxe*. The menu for *Tetris Party* consists of blocky and solid shapes. While the menu of *Tetris Party Deluxe* consists of highlighted and multicolored shapes. In gameplay, *Tetris Party Deluxe* has much smoother animation when someone clears a row of blocks. The difference is extremely obvious between the two games.



In the end, de-stressing can look different for everyone. Moreover, it is important to have a method of destressing that works for every individual.



## *My De-stressful Life*

*by Alexander Gonzalez*

"Life Sucks, We Know!" Fortunately, though, we make life easier for ourselves. Since May is Mental Health Awareness Month, it is essential to prioritize our health, especially for most of us who attend school or go to work. Stress brings a plethora of risk factors that affect your well-being, such as psychological and behavioral. Based on a recent study from MentalHealth.org, 51% of adults who felt stressed reported feeling depressed. 37% of adults reported feeling lonely as a result of stress. How do I cope with stress, you may ask? 1). Playing video games. 2). Meditating. 3). Listening to music. 4). Watching movies. 5). Sleeping.

This list has no particular order; it is what helps me in my situation. Since I was three years old, video games (no pun intended) have been a factor in my childhood that I will always cherish. Gaming helped me escape from real-world problems I was facing. When I was in grade school, I tried to discuss my interests with my classmates, but it is safe to say they weren't enthusiastic. Which eventually made me feel ostracized by my peers. One thing to know about me is I'm a film nerd. I have loved movies since going into the theater for the first time and watching *Toy Story 2*. Watching movies is the same as playing video games; it helps me escape reality.

Mediation helps me reflect and think. I was sitting in my room or outside on the ground where I didn't need to talk to anyone. Sometimes, sitting in a quiet place where you don't need to be bothered is good. When I listen to music, I always listen to my favorite soundtracks or playlists on Spotify. Depending on my mood, my song choices vary. If I'm working out, it's hip-hop; if I'm playing video games, it's punk rock; or if I'm cleaning, it's reggaeton.

Of course, sleep is crucial for everyone. I always try to get a good night's sleep. I mean, who doesn't? I have to ensure my body is fully ready for work every day. Acquiring enough sleep gives health benefits in the long term. According to [newsinhealth.gov](http://newsinhealth.gov), "Not getting enough sleep regularly raises the risk of many diseases and disorders. These range from heart disease and stroke to obesity and dementia."



All in all, I do this to help cope with stress. Everyone's situation is different, but we all battle stress no matter who we are. How we deal with it plays a factor in our lives. Just remember always to take things day by day and worry about the little things. There is a quote from Thich Nhat Hanh: "Keeping your body healthy is an expression of gratitude to the whole cosmos- the trees, the clouds, everything."

### *Music for the Soul: De-stress with the Tunes*

*by John Howard Baldino*

Ross Lynch, the musician who formed the pop rock band R5, said, "When I am feeling stressed out or overwhelmed . . . I will either listen to music or play music."

I feel the same way. Music is the best medicine to relax body and mind, unwind, decompress, or chill. I love listening to music because when I have a lot on my mind, I sometimes get stressed out, and I must take a break from what I am doing



and transition into something new. Transition means change. I get tired of doing the same thing over and over again. Music is a way for me to transition and destress. Music is soothing and relaxing, and it resets my mind. I play music on my piano and on my keyboard. Whether it is classical, jazz, or pop, I love it. I also listen to music on my cell-phone through my headphones and through my Bose speaker. The Van Morrison, Beatles, and

Bruce Springsteen tunes put me to sleep, and I enjoy listening to them. I love music, whether I am listening to it or playing it. It is essential to de-stress. As Ross Lynch said another time, "Take time to do the things you enjoy and make you happy – self-care is important for your overall well-being." Let's listen to Ross and take time to think of yourself when you feel stressed.



## *De-stress with Florida Youth Council*

*by Jakel Baker*

Hello Everyone, I'm Jakel Baker from the Florida Youth Council (FYC). As someone who experiences stress daily due to disabilities, I understand how important it is to find good ways to de-stress. Everyone needs to de-stress especially those with disabilities its important for me to speak on ways I de-stress to help others like me.

- 1). Immersive Escape
- 2). Engaging Distraction
- 3). Social Connection

When it comes to Immersive Escape, video games provide a virtual escape from reality, which allows me to immerse myself in different worlds and narratives.



Whether it's exploring vast landscapes or embarking on epic quests, gaming offers a temporary break from life's challenges and allows me to do things I just couldn't in real life.

**Engaging Distraction:** When I play video games, my focus shifts entirely to the game I'm playing. This distraction helps me temporarily set aside worries, allowing me to recover mentally.

**Social Connection:** Gaming is a big form of social connection, whether through online multiplayer games or

gaming communities. Interacting with other gamers provides a sense of support, allowing me to have fun with others.

In conclusion, video games have become a valuable destressing tool for me and many others in the FYC. Video games offer an immersive escape allowing for social connection digitally, making it a fun habit and hobbies.



## *De-Stress How?*

*by Josue Tapia*

This world I live in can be so unforgiving at times. From the loud sounds to the strange scents. From the sour taste of a Lemonhead to the sweetness of cotton candy. I may even add, from the adored by some texture of rice to hated and misunderstood grains of quinoa. I share that this world is unforgiving. And I share it this way to say that all our senses get pushed to the max every day.

Taste, touch, sight, smell and sounds beat our senses clean everyday and some of us are better than others at handling these situations. I myself am visually impaired and have sensory issues that affect my sense of smell and how I react to my area if triggered. For example, being visually impaired and having the gift of a strong nose allows me to smell the perfume or cologne of someone way before they're close enough where someone with a regular sense of smell can. It allows me to individualize them in my head and thought process and also I can give them a compliment. BUT . . . in turn there are those bad versions. Just like I can smell the good, I also smell the bad. We are all married here I shouldn't have to elaborate on what happens when a super nose meets his match? WE ARE ADVOCATES STOP IT :).

Anyways, in those situations I've learned to understand that I'm not the only one reacting in this moment. My de-stress technique is to just put myself in their shoes. What are the odds that they even know? What if it's something to do with their disability? Who am I to judge?

I de-stress almost every interaction with my fellow disabled community almost all the same. I approach with an open mind of understanding and patience. And with the added benefit of having The Family Café and Florida Youth Council pointing me always in the right direction.

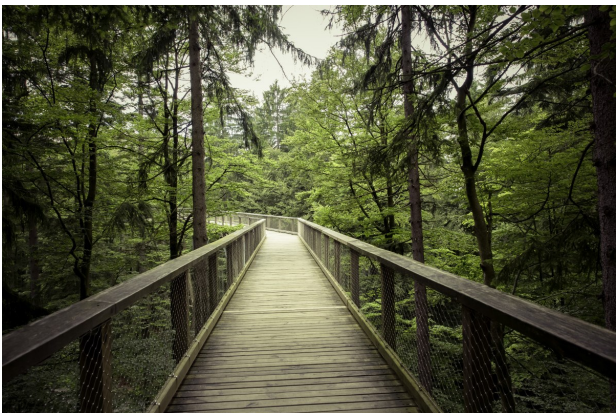




## *The Gift of Nature: Finding Peace*

*by Vanessa Muniz Pellicer*

When you have ADHD and Autism you tend to have a lot of raging thoughts vying for attention inside your brain and it can be overwhelming and extremely stressful. This would lead to a complete system shutdown if I didn't learn that sometimes you need to take time to de-stress before moving on to something new. I use the usual go-to's to de-stress: watching TV, listening to music, eating junk food, hanging out with friends or family, but when I am at a DEFCON 1 level stress state I go and do one sure-fire thing: go out for a walk outside. I tend to believe that the greatest gift ever given to humans is the earth itself, the planet we are home to, the land we walk on, and the air we breathe. Have you ever just gone to a park, stood in the middle of a field, closed your eyes, and just breathed in?



Well, I have, it's great, and I highly recommend it! What I have realized is that nature is peaceful and unencumbered, unlike humans. We tend to worry about the next step, while nature just is; it's in a constant state of present-ness, not something focusing on a future that hasn't happened yet. So when I feel the weight of the day or I worry about the future yet to arrive I take a second to go outside and walk, I walk and realize the air is refreshing,

I walk and feel the sun on my skin, I walk and look up at the clear sky, I walk and remember that no matter what I'm still here in this world and I can continue to the next day with a new perspective and that makes me feel less stressed and more peaceful.



# How Do I Become Part of The Florida Youth Council?

The Florida Youth Council is a group of youth (between the ages of 15 and 17) and emerging leaders (between the ages of 18 and 30) with disabilities or special health care needs that live in Florida.

The Florida Youth Council is all about getting youth and emerging leaders involved in self-advocacy, peer mentoring and other activities that will improve the quality of life for youth and emerging leaders with disabilities in Florida. The program empowers youth and emerging leaders to decide what issues are important to their generation, to discuss those issues in their state and local communities, and to develop strategies to address them.

We are seeking a group of enthusiastic, motivated youth and emerging leaders to participate. If you would like to take a leadership role in advocating for youth and emerging leaders in Florida, please visit The Florida Youth Council website at [www.floridayouthcouncil.com](http://www.floridayouthcouncil.com). The program is open to application year round.

We hope to hear from you soon!



713 East Park Avenue  
Tallahassee, FL 32301  
[FamilyCafe.net](http://FamilyCafe.net)

