

“I’m Not A Therapist:” Mental Health Promotion for College Educators  
Leslie Bernsten, Ph.D.  
[leslie-bern.com/contact](http://leslie-bern.com/contact) | @leslie\_bern on Twitter  
2023 Winter Teaching and Learning Conference | La Salle University

–

## **SOME NON-EXHAUSTIVE “LIFE HAPPENS” COURSE DESIGN STRATEGIES**

- Automatic (e.g., 24-hour) blanket extension added to all course due dates
- Emergency button(s) for students to use for late assignments
- Free drops for quizzes, exams, lab/discussion days
- “Choose your own adventure” course organization
- Scaffolding for major assignments
- Explicitly checking in with students who have missed (early) major deadlines

## **SOME MYTHS WE CAN BUST THROUGH OUR PEDAGOGY**

- That our students’ worth is defined by their grades
- That good grades require them to hustle/grind at the expense of their own well-being
  - See [here](#) for some incredible “study smarter, not harder” infographics from The Learning Scientists
- That failure is catastrophic
- That we, their teachers, don’t care about their well-being

## **LINKED RESOURCES**

[1 in 5 college students so stressed they consider suicide](#) (CBS News)  
[Graduate School Can Have Terrible Effects on People's Mental Health](#) (The Atlantic)

[How Not to Handle Student Failure](#) (The Chronicle of Higher Education)  
[How Teens Benefit From Reading About the Struggles of Scientists](#) (KQED)  
[Hearing That Things Can Change Helps Teens Dodge Depression](#) (NPR)

[A promising new clue to prevent teen suicide: empower adults who care](#) (Vox)

BONUS: [The Best Way To Save People From Suicide](#) (The Huffington Post)

[17 Steps For Recognizing and Responding To Warning Signs Of Suicide](#) (BuzzFeed)

[9 risk factors for suicide and 1 important question you can ask to hopefully know for sure](#)  
(Upworthy)

[The Crisis Text Line analyzed 75 million texts to pinpoint the best way to ask if someone's suicidal](#)  
(Mashable)

[Suicide hotline shares data with for-profit spinoff, raising ethical questions](#) (POLITICO)

[988 Lifeline](#)

[Reporting on Suicide](#)

[4 Things You Shouldn't Say To Someone Having A Panic Attack](#) (Thought Catalog)

[You Can Teach Yourself to Turn Down Your Self-Doubt](#) (Science of Us)