



Intermediate Unit 1

Self-Care Cookbook

Reflections, Recipes, and Resources for Teachers

by Paul K. Fox, PMEA Council for Teacher Training, Recruitment & Retention

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A. Session Description

Do you find the harried pace of our profession overwhelming and even at times crushing when buried beneath decades of keeping your nose to the grindstone and putting everyone else's needs above your own? Do you feel you are at the end of your rope, plagued by one ailment after another, constantly tired, and wondering how you're going to "keep it all together" even for five more minutes? If your health is interfering with your ability to do your job and find success, balance, and meaning in your life, **it is time for a change.**

The purpose of this session is to empower teachers with skills and attitudes needed to make informed decisions to promote their own lifelong health and wellbeing, and to remediate stress and burnout. With the introduction of new resources for self-assessment and study, we will explore these essential questions:

- Why is it essential to personal health to achieve balance in our lives, and how can we achieve it?
- How does dedication to wellness impact the risk of illness, injury, and the quality of a person's life?
- What are the consequences of our choices in terms of time and stress management?
- How do effective decision-making skills and goal setting influence healthier lifestyle choices?
- What are suggestions, strategies, and samples for the development of a personal self-care plan?

Motivating beliefs and core values (from *Fewer Things, Better* by Angela Watson) :

- "I am worthy of better and change is possible for me right now."
- "I set my own expectations in life and in teaching."
- "I know what is important and allocate time accordingly."
- "I ensure my needs are met to prevent overwhelm and exhaustion."

B. Targets

Attendees will understand the variety of physical, mental, emotional, and social issues that affect personal wellness, comprehend concepts related to health promotion, disease prevention, and a life/work balance, and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of health and wellness, stress and burnout, time management and self-care goals

C. Clinician

Paul K. Fox is State Retired Member Coordinator for the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA), member and Past State Chair (2016-2024) of the PMEA Council for Teacher Training, Recruitment, and Retention, Artistic Director of the South Hills Junior Orchestra, Steering Committee/ School District Representative of the UPPER ST. CLAIR TODAY magazine, Announcer for the Upper St. Clair High School Marching Band (40+ years), Director of Communications and Fine and Performing Arts Committee Chair for the Community Foundation of Upper St. Clair, and Volunteer Escort for St. Clair Hospital.



He retired in June 2013 from 35 years of public-school music teaching and administration. His final job assignment was Performing Arts Curriculum Leader and orchestra/string teacher (grades 5-12) employed by the Upper St. Clair School District (Western Pennsylvania). As a music educator, he also taught choral music (grades 7-12), vocal/general music (grades K-8), elementary band (grade 4), plays/musicals (grades 4-12), and music theory (grades 10-12).

Since 2012, he has presented 80+ professional development workshops and has written more than 200 articles about care/health/wellness of educators, creativity in education, interview techniques, leadership, marketing professionalism, pre-service training, educator ethics, and retirement resources for a variety of websites and publications, most of which are archived at his website: <https://paulfox.blog/>.

Mr. Fox graduated with University Honors from Carnegie-Mellon University, earning degrees in Bachelor of Fine Arts in Music/Viola (1977) and Master of Fine Arts in Music Education (1979).

D. References for Further Study

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