

Self-Care

What is Self-Care & Why is it Important?

- Self-Care is the simple act of attending to your own mental and emotional needs. It includes all the things you can do to promote your own physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional wellbeing.
- Self-care is not just for people with emotional problems; it's also for people who want to avoid emotional problems (ie, *everyone!*).
- Whereas *self-help* involves fixing something you feel is broken inside, *self-care* is about enjoying the great parts of yourself and rewarding yourself for all your hard work.
- Self-care is a key ingredient in emotional wellbeing. It's a reminder that you're valuable, it promotes self-esteem, it prevents rumination over problems, and it re-energizes you when you feel stressed out.
- With the rise of technology, modern life can intrude into your personal time and cause burnout like never before. That means self-care is more important than ever.
- No one else can know *exactly* what you're experiencing. You're the person who can best meet your inner needs, especially during difficult or chaotic times. It's great to receive care from others, but *self-care* has the greatest capacity to promote wellness because it's within your control.
- Other people need you at your best. On a plane, for example, they tell you to put on your oxygen mask first if there's an emergency. Once you're okay, you can help other passengers with their masks. The idea is that you need to meet your own needs before you can help others with theirs.

What Can I Do?

- Take some "me time." Ideally, you should focus on your own needs at least one-hour each day, one-day each week, and one-week each year.
- Make sure you get a healthy amount of sleep. Most people need about eight-hours of sleep each day, but that varies from person to person. You should feel well rested and ready for each day.
- Ninety-percent of Serotonin – a key chemical needed for bright mood – is made in the gut. That means a healthy diet can contribute to emotional wellbeing.
- Talk to your doctor about exercise. In most cases, it can help your body produce endorphins, which are chemicals that naturally improve mood.
- Feel okay about saying "No." Limit-setting is a crucial part of preventing burnout.
- Stimulate your brain with some natural sunlight! If you can't get outside, try sitting near a window whenever the sun peaks out.
- Stay organized. A chaotic environment can lead to chaotic feelings.
- Do you miss reading? Do you miss girls-night? Get back to the things that bring you joy!
- Set personal goals that have nothing to do with work. Become the best baker in the world! Do things that give you a sense of accomplishment.
- Reconnect with old friends ... not just on social media, but in the real world.
- If you feel the need, see a therapist. A little extra help and support never hurt anyone!

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