

Self-Care

What is Self-Care?

How we feel mentally, physically, and emotionally each day has a big impact on our overall well-being and health. There are many experiences that play a role in what impacts our well-being such as stress, anxiety, depression, social and family relationships, physical health, and so many other factors that we experience each day. Just as we know it is important to exercise and eat healthy, it is also important to take part in activities that are considered self-care. Practicing self-care each day can have many benefits such as:

- Decrease in stress
- Decrease in anxiety
- Improvement in energy
- Improvement in mood
- Lower risk of physical illness
- Improvement in self-esteem

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**SELF-CARE IS ONE OF THE ACTIVE
WAYS THAT I LOVE MYSELF. WHEN
YOU CAN AND AS YOU CAN, IN
WAYS THAT FEEL LOVING, MAKE
TIME AND SPACE FOR YOURSELF.**

– TRACEE ELLIS ROSS

What Does Self-Care Look Like?

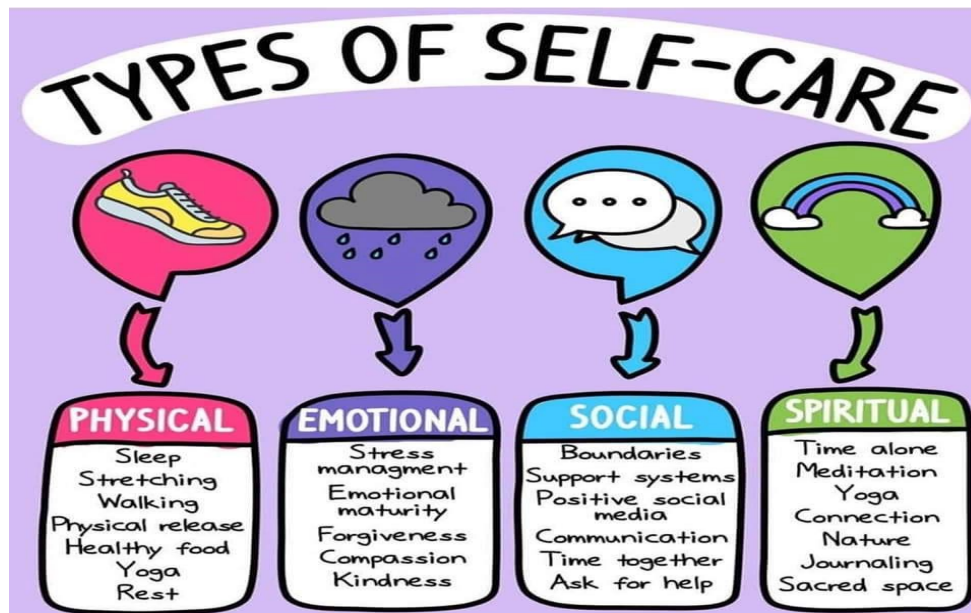
What comes to mind when you hear the word self-care? You may think of going to the spa, getting a massage, exercising, or even going on a vacation. While those activities are all forms of self-care, self-care can come in many forms. **Self-care can be any activity or action that brings you joy and helps you relax and reset!** This care can even take the form of meeting your basic needs such as drinking enough water, eating enough, getting better sleep, and daily hygiene. Some activities may take you as little as 30 seconds or a few minutes, while others may take you thirty minutes or an hour to complete. You can practice self-care at home, at school, outside, at the mall, you can care for yourself and your well-being anywhere!

In order to make self-care as helpful as possible, it is important to **find a few forms of self-care that work best for you**. A common factor that holds people back from taking care of themselves is **time**. Life can feel busy, and it can often be difficult or feel like an additional task or inconvenience to practice and find time to take part in caring for yourself. To avoid feeling as if self-care is a chore, **ask yourself these few questions below** that can help guide you towards finding the most helpful form of self-care for you!

- What activities bring me joy?
- What do I want to achieve from practicing self-care?
- What do I find to be relaxing?
- How much time do I have available in my day to practice self-care?
- What are some activities that I could add to my daily routine?

Keep in mind that as you begin to practice self-care, it may feel difficult to fit activities into your daily routine and it is common for people to feel guilty when they begin to prioritize themselves and their well-being. Remind yourself that **you are important** and that taking care of yourself each day, even if it is only for a few minutes, will help you mentally, physically, and emotionally in so many ways!

Common Forms of Self-Care:



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Other forms of self-care include baking/cooking, drawing/painting, taking a nap, spending time outside, listening to music, deep breathing, and many more activities!

Tips to Make Self-Care Easier:

Pick three: Decide what forms of self-care will be most helpful for you!

- Pick 1 form of self-care that takes 1-5 minutes.
- Pick 1 form of self-care that takes around 30 minutes.
- Pick 1 form of self-care that takes around 1 hour.
 - Depending on what your day looks like, decide which of your self-care options would be best for you!

Plan your time: Just as you may plan time to complete homework, do your chores, or go to class, also plan time in your schedule for self-care.

- Utilize a planner, schedule, or agenda to add self-care into your daily routine!

Remind yourself of the benefits of self-care: At times you may find it difficult to remain consistent with practicing self-care or you may feel guilty when taking time to care for yourself.

- Remind yourself of the reasons why practicing self-care each day is important and how this practice can help you mentally, emotionally, and physically.
- Use daily affirmations to remind yourself that you deserve to use self-care.
 - State to yourself: “I am worthy”, “I deserve to relax”, “I am allowed to take a break”, “I do not have to feel stressed”, etc.

Recommended Reading:

- “The Self-Care Kit for Stressed-Out Teens: Helpful Habits and Calming Advice to Help You Stay Positive” by Frankie Young
- “Self-Care Check-In: A Guided Journal to Build Healthy Habits and Devote Time to You” by GG Renee Hill
- “The Book Every Teen Should Read: Discovering Your Self-Worth, Positive Mindset, and Personal Values” by Nicole Gonzalez

Recommended Apps:

- Booster Buddy: Free and available on iPhone and Android
- Calm App: Free and available on iPhone and Android
- Happify: Free and available on iPhone and Android

References:

- Adapted from: National Institute of Mental Health (n.d.)
- Adapted from: Mental Health America (n.d.)

