



Caring for YOU Guide

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What is Self-Care

Self-care is the on-going, intentional act of caring for yourself and your own well-being. It can include periodic indulgences such as taking a vacation, going to the spa, or getting a massage; however, complete self-care involves daily care for and attention toward yourself.

Benefits of Self-Care

- Strengthen stress coping skills.
- Improve physical, mental, and emotional health, awareness, and well-being.
- Increase ability to care for and be present with others.
- Improve relationships.
- Foster resiliency.

Dimensions of Self-Care

Self-care is comprised of six dimensions: physical, environmental, professional, social, emotional, and spiritual.

Physical Self-Care

Taking care of your physical body by:

1. Getting regular exercise
 - Adults aim for 30 minutes 5-7 days per week; children and teens 1 hour 5-7 days per week.
 - Incorporate a variety of cardiovascular, strength, and flexibility training.
2. Eating a healthy diet
 - Practice portion control.
 - Cover half your plate with fruits and vegetables.
 - Make at least 50% of grains whole grains (e.g. oats, brown rice, whole wheat pasta, whole wheat tortillas, whole wheat bread, etc.).
 - Reduce intake of added sugar, high sodium, and processed foods.
3. Prioritizing sleep
 - 7-9 hours per night.
 - Turn off all screens at least one hour before bed.
 - Establish a calming bedtime routine.
 - Avoid caffeine after 2pm (e.g. coffee, energy drinks, soda, etc.).
 - Learn and listen to hunger/satisfied cues coming from the body.
4. Observing routine preventive care
 - Yearly checkup with doctor.
 - Bi-annual dental visits.
 - Routine vaccinations and immunizations
 - Cancer screenings; blood pressure, diabetes, cholesterol, and other checks.
5. Practicing personal hygiene
 - Shower or bath at least every other day.
 - Brush teeth twice per day.
 - Floss teeth once per day.

- Use deodorant.
 - Wear clean clothes every day.
 - Wash hands: after using the bathroom, before/after handling food and eating, after touching pets, spending time outside, handling tools or machinery, and when they're dirty or soiled.
6. Following safety precautions
- Wear a seatbelt every time you get in a vehicle.
 - Always wear a helmet when riding a bicycle, skateboard, longboard, ATV, motorcycle, or dirt bike.
 - Drive within the speed limit.
 - Never text and drive.
 - Never drive under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
 - Never get into a vehicle with a driver who is under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
 - Wear other protective equipment such as eyewear, masks, and face shields when appropriate.
7. Engaging in risk reduction
- Consume alcohol in moderation (women 1 drink per day, men 2 drinks per day), if at all.
 - Eliminate or avoid tobacco (including cigarettes, cigars, chew, vapes, e-cigarettes, snus, and snuff) and marijuana use.
 - Avoid the use of opiates and other drugs.
 - Practice safer sex
 - Use condoms correctly and consistently to protect from sexually transmitted infections and diseases.
 - Use other forms of birth control (IUD, pill, etc.) correctly and consistently in conjunction with condoms.
 - Seek regular sexually transmitted disease and infection testing.
 - Ensure ongoing, enthusiastic consent among sexual partners.

Benefits of Physical Self-Care

- Mood stabilization.
- Reduce risk for long-term health complications: heart disease, stroke, and some cancers.
- Lessen and help manage symptoms of depression and anxiety.
- Improve quality of life.

Environmental Self-Care

Creating and occupying spaces that are safe, healthy, clean, and calm through:

1. Ensuring the safety and security of your living spaces
 - Make sure locks on all doors and windows are functioning.
 - Remove weapons from the home or store all weapons in a locked safe.
 - Regularly check outdoor lighting (front and back porches) to make sure they're working.
 - Is there violence (verbal, physical, emotional, or other) happening in the home?
 - Survey the neighborhood:
 - Is it safe?

- Does it have adequate lighting?
- Is there violence within the neighborhood?

**It may be difficult to address some aspects of environmental safety. If it is possible and would be better for your safety, health, and well-being, consider moving.*

If you or someone you know is in an unsafe living situation (e.g. physical, emotional, financial, or verbal abuse), there are resources available in your local community to help.

2. Maintaining a clean and clutter-free living space
 - Make bed daily.
 - Put dirty clothes in a hamper or basket, and launder dirty clothes regularly.
 - Put clean clothes away.
 - Wash all used dishes daily.
 - Wipe down countertops and other surfaces, like table and chairs, daily.
 - Put leftover food in sealed containers in the refrigerator or cupboards.
 - Avoid leaving uneaten food sitting out.
 - Throw trash into a garbage can, and take out the garbage when it is full.
 - Sweep and mop hard floors, and vacuum carpets, at least every other week.
 - Clean the bathroom (toilet, sink, shower/bath, and floor) at least every other week.
 - Go through clothing every 3-4 months and donate/get rid of clothing no longer wearing, fitting, or with holes/stains/etc.
 - Do not donate any clothing you would not buy because it is torn, stained, dirty, or other.
 - Go through personal belongings (books, movies, household items, etc.) at least every 6 months and get rid of/donate items.
 - Do not donate anything you wouldn't buy because it is broken or malfunctioning.
 - Organize important paperwork and documents.
 - Toss out junk mail on a daily basis.
3. Practicing environmentally conscious behaviors
 - Actively commute (walk, bike, run, etc.) to destinations within 1-2 miles of home or work.
 - Plant a small garden outdoors or in pots indoors.
 - Eat, reuse, or compost leftover food instead of throwing it out.
 - Recycle.
 - Avoid letting water run unnecessarily.
 - Turn off lights when leaving rooms.
 - Lower heater temperature in winter and increase air condition temperature in summer.
 - Replace showerheads and lights with high efficiency options.
4. Remaining situationally aware
 - Look both ways before crossing the street.
 - Cross at intersections with the green light.
 - Be aware of the terrain you're walking on.
 - Keep an eye out for pedestrians, cyclists, pets, and other vehicles while driving.
 - Follow safety policies and procedures at work.
 - Leave events or places when feeling unsafe or like something is off.

Benefits of Environmental Self-Care

- Soothe body and mind.
- Signal to brain that you are in a safe place.
- Increase productivity and creativity.
- Reduce feelings of anxiety and stress.

Professional Self-Care

Developing/maintaining habits and practices that promote enthusiasm, engagement, efficiency, and a sense of accomplishment around work by:

1. Inventorying time spent on work tasks and taking breaks
 - Schedule time to work on specific tasks.
 - Schedule and take short breaks.
 - Avoid skipping lunch.
 - Take lunch breaks to eat, workout, or do non-work related tasks.
2. Establishing healthy relationships with coworkers
 - Spend a few minutes each day chatting with coworkers.
 - Practice active listening during meetings and conversations.
 - Express gratitude and appreciation for the talents, skills, and contributions of others.
 - Avoid gossip.
 - Set and enforce boundaries around how much time you spend socializing at work and what topics you will and won't discuss.
 - Be friendly to all coworkers, even those with whom you do not get along.
 - In conflict:
 - Look back on the positive history with the other person.
 - Focus on mutually beneficial goals and the things you have in common, rather than differences.
 - Accept accountability for your own behavior and role in the matter.
3. Maintaining a positive attitude toward daily tasks.
 - Acknowledge the significance of your contributions.
 - Seek out opportunities that excite and challenge you.
 - Take on more responsibility with a mindset geared toward skill development and growth.
 - Focus on how work benefits your personal life.
4. Leaving work at work.
 - Avoid bringing work tasks home.
 - Do not get notifications for work email on personal devices. If this is not an option, set rules about when you will reply.
5. Detaching from work at the end of the day.
 - Establish an after work relaxation routine to mentally separate from work (e.g. deep breathing, exercising, walking, hobby, etc.)
6. Speaking with your employer about workload and expectations if work is regularly carrying into personal time.
7. Assessing resources (time, money, staff, supplies, etc.) that you need to do a good job.
 - Speak to your employer/supervisor about unmet or insufficient needs.

Benefits of Professional Self-Care

- Reduce stress levels.
- Boost mood and energy.
- Increase productivity at work.
- Reduce absenteeism.
- Improved job satisfaction.
- Better sleep.
- Healthier mindset about the connection between work and personal fulfillment.

Social Self-Care

Establishing and maintaining healthy relationships, connection with others, and a strong support system by:

1. Connecting with others
 - Spend quality, enjoyable time with friends and family.
 - Take inventory of your relationships to ensure they feel fulfilling.
 - Surround yourself with positive, supportive, and uplifting people.
 - Allow yourself to limit contact with or walk away from individuals (including family and friends) who are abusive, negative, or disrespectful of boundaries.
2. Practicing open, honest communication
 - Establish relationships with people who are safe and trustworthy.
 - Accept accountability for your decisions, words, and actions.
 - Share your feelings honestly and appropriately.
 - Ask for support or help.
 - Express gratitude toward those who help, support, and guide you.
 - Actively listen to others when they share.
 - Listen to understand, rather than to respond.
 - Let down walls of defensiveness when being told you've hurt someone.
 - Apologize and seek to repair when you've hurt someone.
 - Be as support as possible without over-extending yourself.

3. Setting and enforcing clear boundaries.

Healthy boundaries establish a clear line for what we will and will not accept from others. A lack of boundaries can expose us to being influenced or controlled by other people. It is crucial to establish our own individual boundaries, as well as to listen to, honor, and respect the boundaries others set. There are two types of boundaries people set:

- a) Physical boundaries: which involve your body, personal space, and privacy.
 - Violations of physical boundaries can be standing too close; physical touching; looking at another person's phone, private messages, or journal; among other.
- b) Emotional boundaries: which is separating your feelings from the feelings of other.
 - Violations include taking responsibility for someone else's feelings (or expecting someone else to take responsibility for your feelings); letting the feelings of others dictate yours; sacrificing your needs to please others; blaming others for your problems, actions, words; and accepting responsibility for the words and actions of others.

Tending to this piece of social self-care can be achieved through:

- Identify your own physical and emotional boundaries.

- Learn how it feels when your boundaries are being crossed.
 - E.g. discomfort, anxiety, stress, resentment, fear, and guilt, among others.
 - Learn the verbal and non-verbal cues others give when their boundaries are being crossed.
 - Practice setting boundaries with safe, trusted people.
 - Cut ties with people who regularly disregard yours and others' boundaries.
 - Listen with an open mind when others set boundaries.
 - Avoid becoming defensive when someone shares that you've crossed a boundary.
4. Asking for and accepting support/help from others
- Identify your current level of comfort with asking for help.
 - Challenge negative, unhelpful beliefs and ideas that stand in the way of asking for help.
 - Open up to the help others offer to give.
 - Reach out to a professional like a therapist for help.

Benefits of Social Self-Care

- Improve self-esteem and confidence.
- Strengthen sense of belonging and connection.
- Increase motivation.
- Reduce feelings of anxiety, depression, loneliness, and isolation.

Emotional Self-Care

Identifying, feeling, and nurturing your feelings and inner world through:

1. Developing and strengthening your emotional awareness
 - Tune into your body and notice emotions: where are they located? How do they feel? What sensations do they bring?
 - Build a vocabulary of emotions – anger, sadness, joy, excitement, love, fear, etc.
 - Name emotions when they come.
 - Grow an awareness of what situations, people, places, things, etc. activate feelings.
2. Understanding and reshaping (if necessary) how you express your emotions
 - Challenge beliefs that there are “bad” emotions.
 - Feelings and emotions are natural and ok.
 - Avoid ignoring or repressing emotions.
 - Give yourself permission to feel feelings, and share them in a safe, healthy, appropriate manner.
 - Avoid letting emotions build until they explode.
 - Develop healthy skills to process and express feelings.
3. Showing compassion toward yourself and others
 - Label behavior not people.
 - “That behavior was bad” instead of “that person was bad”
 - Avoid speaking negatively about others and thinking negatively about yourself.
 - Learn from mistakes, and avoid beating yourself or others up for mistakes.
 - Apologize for inappropriate or hurtful behavior and make a deliberate effort to not repeat.
 - Avoid holding things against people when they sincerely apologize.
 - Strive to avoid making judgments about others.

- Challenge expectations you set for yourself and others that may be too harsh.
- Find common ground with others, rather than focusing on differences.
- 4. Regularly engaging in activities that interest you
 - Spend time on hobbies or other enjoyable activities:
 - Hiking, rock climbing, fishing, running, yoga, carpentry or martial arts.
 - Gardening, listening to music, painting or drawing, cooking or baking, or photography.
 - Trying new foods, watching documentaries, playing board games, or knitting.
 - Explore new activities you are interested in trying:
 - Do I enjoy doing things alone or with others?
 - Is there a particular skill I'd like to learn or strengthen?
 - Do I enjoy physical activity?
 - Are there things I enjoyed in childhood that I'd like to revisit?
 - What kinds of benefits would I like my hobby to provide me?
 - Allow at least 30 minutes each week to engage in a hobby or enjoyable activity.
- 5. Spending at least 5 minutes each day in thoughtful silence:
 - Visualization, meditation, prayer, progressive muscle relaxation.
 - Body scans
 - Journaling
 - Gratitude
- 6. Being open to seeking help from a therapist
 - Challenge internal stigmas about therapy, and push back against negative thoughts.
 - Notice feelings you have about therapy without judgment.
 - Be curious about where your beliefs, thoughts, and feelings about therapy come from and ask yourself:
 - How would I respond to a loved one who told me they were seeking therapy?
 - What if they told me it would make them feel better?
 - Would I criticize them? Why or why not?
 - Would I support them? Why or why not?
 - Take small steps to get into therapy:
 - Set a goal to call a therapist and schedule an appointment
 - Attend an appointment
 - Ask a supportive friend/loved one to go with you and wait while you're in the session.
 - Set a second appointment or ask the therapist for recommendations of others who may be a better fit.

Benefits of Emotional Self-Care

- Increase confidence and optimism.
- Develop/strengthen healthy coping mechanisms for emotional and mental stress.
- Reduce stress levels.
- Improve mood.
- Increase resiliency and belief in self to navigate challenging times.

Spiritual Self-Care

Identifying what is meaningful to you, connecting to your sense of purpose, and feeling as though you are a part of something bigger than yourself.

It can include a religious practice, but it is not a required piece of positive spiritual wellness.

Spiritual self-care can be tended to through.

1. Assessing what gives you a sense of meaning and purpose in life
 - Identify your inner strengths that.
 - Reflect on and connect with your passions and the things that fill you with joy and enthusiasm.
 - List out things that you truly enjoy.
 - List out activities that have always interested you but you've never gotten around to.
 - Identify problems in your community, state, or the country that you care about and find ways to make a difference.
2. Allowing yourself to feel a sense of hope
 - Identify what hope feels like in your body.
 - Notice self-talk about hope.
 - Is it positive and encouraging?
 - Do you stop yourself from feeling hopeful?
 - Challenge and reframe negative thoughts and experiences.
 - List out hopeful possibilities, and allow feelings of excitement and joy to sit with you.
3. Navigating and seeking comfort during difficult times in a healthy way
 - Build a circle of support full of people who are kind, compassionate, trustworthy, encouraging, and optimistic.
 - Avoid people who fuel fears and anxiety.
 - Develop and strengthening inner coping skills:
 - Identify strengths that help you see tough times through.
 - List out strategies that have worked before to help navigate difficulties.
 - Add new coping strategies you've tried that worked.
 - Reach out to safe, trusted people when managing on your own feels isolating or too difficult.
4. Being open to other people's views about, and experiences in, life?
 - Take in media (books, movies, art, music, etc.) by people from all walks of life - women, men, LGBTQ+ people, people of color, those from various religious backgrounds and spiritual practices, to name a few.
 - Listen to other people's stories and learning more about them.
 - Focus on similarities, rather than differences, you have with others.
 - Examine internal biases and rigid beliefs, and softening them.
 - Practice deep breathing when you feel uncomfortable with or defensiveness about someone else's views.
5. Understanding your personal values and how they guide your decision making
 - Listen to your gut and make decisions that are best for you.
 - Identify your core values. (See "Values Activity" worksheet; pages 33-34)
 - Make decisions using your core values as a guide.

- Check in with yourself on a daily basis to determine how in alignment your decisions during each day were with your values; identify areas where you can make small changes to ensure they are aligning.

Benefits of Spiritual Self-Care

- Sense of reassurance and comfort during turmoil.
- Deeper sense of understanding and compassion toward own and others' suffering.
- Greater connection with others.
- Feeling a sense of purpose and meaning in life.

Strengthening Self-Care

Enhancing self-care is a balance between incorporating new practices into your life while maintaining current behaviors that support positive self-care.

Lifestyle Behaviors Self-Assessment: Healthy stress management and coping are important pieces of overall self-care, certain lifestyle behaviors can help or hinder one's ability to cope with stressful situations. Conduct a self-assessment of your current lifestyle behaviors to see where you may be able to incorporate additional healthy lifestyle behaviors and/or eliminate unhealthy ones. ("Current Coping Mechanisms" worksheet; pages 15-17).

Current Self-Care Assessment: Small behaviors many people engage in on a daily basis are considered self-care activities; identify what you currently do in each dimension of self-care to take care of your own wellbeing as a starting point for developing a plan to add others. ("Self-Care Assessment" worksheet; pages 18-20).

- Choose one or two dimensions you feel you could strengthen self-care in and identify some goals you would like to work toward achieving.

Goal Setting: determine new self-care practices you'd like to explore implementing in each dimension, try focusing on the dimensions you feel you could benefit the most from concentrating on. ("Prepare to Add Self-Care" worksheet; pages 21-26).

- Acknowledge and celebrate existing self-care habits.
- Select one new practice or habit you'd like to explore.
- Think about and write down the importance of this new practice how it will enhance your life.
- Identify barriers you may face as well as some strategies you can use to overcome these barriers and empower yourself to see your goal through.
- Choose other practices you are interested in within each dimension that you're open to considering further down the road.

Build a Self-Care Plan: this plan will guide the addition of one new self-care practice into your lifestyle. Although the "Prepare to Add Self-Care" worksheet guided you in identifying goals to explore in each dimension, you will choose only one goal to add at a time so as not to overwhelm yourself. ("My Self-Care Plan" worksheet; pages 27-28).

At this stage in your planning, it is important to ask yourself:

- Am I able to add this new self-care strategy into my life?

- Resources, time, knowledge, support, finances, etc.
- Am I willing to make this commitment?
 - Desire, motivation, belief in yourself, etc.

A “yes” to both of these questions is a strong indicator that you are ready to take this goal on. If you answer “no” to either, you may need to build your resource toolkit or consider adding a different self-care practice that you feel more prepared and confident in taking on.

- Identify all the dimensions your goal behavior will touch.
- Establish a timeline.
 - Select a date you’d like to have your new habit fully incorporated into your lifestyle. This is your long-term goal.
 - Realistically how long do you think it will take you to fully incorporate this practice into your routine?
 - Set milestone goals, these are short-term goals that will build upon one another and help break up the overall goal into manageable pieces; they also offer an opportunity for you to see and celebrate success along the way.
- Consider attaching your new self-care practice to an existing one, also known as “habit stacking”. This can increase the likelihood that you’ll make the time for it in your schedule and can also serve as a cue to remind you to do it.
- Recruit support from positive, encouraging people who you trust.
 - Share your goal with them as well as your timeline.
 - Tell them exactly what you would like from them during your process (e.g. routine check-in, accountability, words of encouragement, etc.)
 - Reach out to them when you need to, and be open to their reaching out to see how things are going.
- Establish a method or tracking that works best for you. Tracking your progress throughout this practice implementation helps with accountability, provides a visual means to see accomplishments, and presents an opportunity to reflect upon what’s working and what’s not to allow for adjustments that will ensure greater success. (See “Self-Care Tracker” worksheet for one example; pages 29-30).

Be mindful of maintaining your current self-care practices while adding this new one. Developing stronger self-care is about creating a lifestyle full of small, positive, sustainable behaviors that support your wellbeing.

Example Self-Care Goal

Goal: I will add 10 minutes of deep breathing or meditation into my daily routine in three months’ time.

Dimensions this goal will benefit: spiritual, emotional, social, professional.

Current behaviors I can attach this behavior to:

- Morning routine – I will do this first thing after waking up, right before I brush my teeth
- Workout – I will do this at the end of my workout, as part of my cool down.
- Gratitude Journaling – I will begin or end my gratitude journaling time with this.

Milestones:

1. For the first 3 weeks, I will practice 5 minutes of deep breathing on Sunday, Wednesday, and Saturday.

2. For the second 3 weeks, I will practice 10 minutes of deep breathing on Sunday, Wednesday, and Saturday, and 5 minutes on Monday and Friday.
3. For the third 3 weeks, I will practice 10 minutes of deep breathing on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday; and 5 minutes on Tuesday and Thursday
4. For the fourth three weeks, which will get me to the end of my 3 month goal date, I will practice 10 Minutes of deep breathing every day, Sunday – Saturday.

Emergency Self-Care Plan

We all have moments in life where things come up or happen that leave us feeling overwhelmed, stressed, shut down, or distressed. Having an emergency plan for how you will navigate these situations can increase your ability to cope during these difficult times, while eliminating the burden of having to figure things out, by providing you a roadmap consisting of coping skills and tools you know work for you. Keep this plan in a place you will easily find it when you're feeling overwhelmed. It is best to make this plan when you are in a clear and calm state of mind, and when you have some time to focus solely on the plan and what will work best for you. ("Emergency Self-Care Plan" worksheet; pages 31-32)

Worksheets

Caring for YOU

Current Coping Mechanisms

Name: _____

Date: _____

The way you live your life can have an impact on your well-being, as well as how well you cope with the stressors of life. By assessing how well or not you take care of yourself currently, can help you identify ways to better manage your stress and set you on a path of high quality self-care.

Please check the boxes below that apply to you. This is not a space for you to judge yourself or beat yourself up; it is simply a tool to help you see where you're at currently. Please be honest in your answers.

Lifestyle Behaviors					
<i>To help manage stress do you:</i>	Yes	No	<i>To help manage stress do you:</i>	Yes	No
Overeat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Exercise for a least 30 minutes, three days per week.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Under eat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sleep 7-9 hours every night.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drink more than 2-3 cups of coffee or other caffeinated drinks (soda, energy drinks, etc.) per day.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Eat a healthy diet consisting of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drink alcohol (women more than 1 drink and men more than 2 drinks per day).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make time to relax.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Watch more than 3-4 hours of television per day.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spend time engaged in fun activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Play video games for more than 3-4 hours per day.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spend time with family.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spend a lot of money.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spend time with friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have angry outbursts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maintain healthy routines.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Withdraw from people or engage in silent treatment type behavior.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Find ways to reduce and navigate stress that are healthy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ignore or deny stress symptoms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Think optimistically and positively.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Smoke/use tobacco (cigarettes, cigars, e-cigarettes, vapes, chew, snus, and snuff).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make plans for the future.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Engage in self-harming behaviors (e.g. cutting, burning, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Celebrate accomplishments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Engage in self-destructive relationships (e.g. ghosting, clinging, co-dependent, controlling, abusive, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reframe thoughts and perspective to ones that are more hopeful and positive.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overuse over-the-counter medications.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Practice deep breathing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Misuse/Overuse/Abuse pain medication.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	See a therapist.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Take illegal drugs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
These are unhealthy self-care behaviors.			These are healthy self-care behaviors.		

Which healthy coping strategies do I use that I am most proud of? (Choose at least 3)

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Take a moment to feel satisfaction with, pride in, and gratitude toward yourself for using these strategies.

Which unhealthy strategies would I like to use less or eliminate entirely?

1) _____		
What help might I need to be successful?	Am I willing/able to seek this out?	
• _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
• _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
• _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
• _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
• _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

2) _____		
What help might I need to be successful?	Am I willing/able to seek this out?	
• _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
• _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
• _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
• _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
• _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

3) _____		
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What help might I need to be successful?	Am I willing/able to seek this out?	
• _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
• _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
• _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
• _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
• _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Note:

- If you are **unable** to seek out a resource or assistance in reducing or eliminating an unhealthy coping strategy, consider what you will need in order to be able to.
- If you are **unwilling** to seek out a resource or assistance, give yourself some grace and acknowledge that you are not ready for this change yet. Explore what you will need to feel more willing and open to this particular change.

Caring for YOU Self-Care Assessment

Name: _____

Date: _____

Below are lists or self-care practices within each dimension. This is designed to give you a clearer picture of where your current level of self-care is at, and can also assist in deciding what you might want to add into your routine. Put a check mark next to each activity you currently do. Please be honest in your answers.

Physical Self-Care

- Eat regularly (breakfast, lunch, dinner)
- Eat fruits and vegetables at each meal
- Exercise 30 minutes at least 5 days per week
- Sleep 7-9 hours per night
- Take a shower at least every other day
- Wear clean clothes every day
- Brush my teeth twice per day
- Floss my teeth once per day
- Go to the dentist for routine cleanings twice per year
- Go to the doctor for my preventive visit once per year
- Wear a seatbelt when I get in the car
- Wear a helmet while riding a motorcycle, bicycle, skateboard, etc.
- Drive within the speed limit
- Avoid using drugs
- Abstain from alcohol or drink in moderation (1 drink per day for women, 2 drinks per day for men)
- Avoid using tobacco (i.e. cigarettes, cigars, e-cigarettes, vapes, snus, chew, etc.)
- Practice safe sex (i.e. using condoms, birth control, etc.)

Environmental Self-Care

- Make my bed every day
- Clean my bedroom/living space/house every week
- Have functional locks on the doors and windows of my living space
- Have no weapons in my household, or all weapons are stored in a locked safe
- Declutter my bedroom/living space/house 3-4 times per year
- Organize my personal files 1-2 times per year
- Toss out (or donate) things I no longer use or need
- Walk or bike instead of drive to places within 1-2 miles of my home
- Recycle
- Have an indoor or outdoor garden
- Use high efficiency shower heads
- Turn off lights every time I leave a room
- Avoid leaving water running when not in use
- Look both ways before crossing the street
- Cross at crosswalks and with lights
- Drive with awareness of other cars, motorcycles, bicycles, pedestrians, and pets
- Follow safety policies and procedures at work
- Trust my instincts when a situation isn't safe, and leave

Professional Self-Care

- Take a break during the workday (e.g. lunch)
- Take time to chat with co-workers
- Make quiet time to complete tasks
- Identify projects or tasks that are exciting and rewarding
- Set limits with colleagues and clients
- Balance my workload so that no one day or part of a day is “too much”
- Arrange work space, if possible, so it is comfortable
- Check in regularly with supervisor
- Negotiate for needs (benefits, pay raise, support)
- Say “no” to additional work, if possible, when you don’t have the capacity to take on more
- Ask for reprioritization of tasks when you’re unable to say no to taking on more
- Avoid bringing work home
- Take time at the end of the workday to relax and shift from “work me” to “home me”

Social Self-Care

- Schedule time with friends
- Call, check in on, or see loved ones
- Schedule regular dates with my partner (if applicable)
- Schedule regular activities with my children (if applicable)
- Keep in touch with faraway friends and loved ones
- Ask for help when I need it
- Allow others to do things for me when they offer
- Set and enforce boundaries for what is and is not comfortable for/ok with me
- Respect and honor others’ boundaries
- Share openly and honestly with trusted people
- Practice active listening when others are talking to me

Emotional Self-Care

- Identify and acknowledge my emotions
- Trace my emotions and feelings back to their source
- Express my feelings in a healthy and safe way
- Provide comfort to myself
- Reach out to others when I am needing more support
- Allow myself to cry
- Make time to sit quietly and focus on my breath
- Stay in touch with important people in my life
- Have a hobby or interests that I make time for regularly
- Identify comforting activities, people, places, and things and seek them out
- See a therapist – or willing to see a therapist

Spiritual Self-Care

- Make time for quiet reflection
- Find a spiritual connection or community
- Aware of non-material aspects of life
- Give back to my community (e.g. donate, volunteer, etc.)
- Have an understanding of what is meaningful to me

- _____ Meditate or pray
- _____ Contribute to causes in which I believe
- _____ Read inspirational literature or listen to inspirational talks/music
- _____ I am open to not knowing
- _____ Spend time in nature
- _____ Regularly express gratitude (e.g. gratitude journal, thank you cards, etc.)
- _____ I know my core values
- _____ My core values guide my decisions

1. Which dimension are you strongest in?

2. Think about this dimension and write about why you think this is your strongest.

3. Which dimension do you have the fewest self-care practices in?

4. Think about this dimension and write why you think it has not been one you focus on.

Caring for YOU

Prepare to Add Self-Care

Name: _____

Date: _____

Engaging in self-care involves a balance between maintaining current self-care practices and incorporating new ones into your lifestyle. In this exercise, you will acknowledge the ways you presently practice self-care in each dimension and then identify new strategies you are interested incorporating. You are not going to take on each of these new practices all at once, this exercise will simply help guide your self-care planning for each dimension in the long-term. Pay close attention to dimensions that you have not been as strong in up to this point.

There may be dimensions you do not have 3 (or any) current practices you feel solid in; that is okay. Your honesty in answering these questions is more important than filling out all 3 open spaces.

Physical Self-Care

Current physical self-care practices I am strongest in, feel are solid habits, and am committed to maintaining.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

New physical self-care practice I can implement into my routine.

Adding this new practice is important to me because: _____

Barriers I may encounter

How I will remind myself to practice self-care

- | | | |
|---------|---|-------|
| • _____ | > | _____ |
| • _____ | > | _____ |
| • _____ | > | _____ |
| • _____ | > | _____ |
| • _____ | > | _____ |

Other practices to try:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

Environmental Self-Care

Current environmental self-care practices I am strongest in, feel are solid habits, and am committed to maintaining.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

New environmental self-care practice I can implement into my routine.

Adding this new practice is important to me because: _____

Barriers I may encounter

How I will remind myself to practice self-care

• _____	>	_____
• _____	>	_____
• _____	>	_____
• _____	>	_____
• _____	>	_____

Other practices to try:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

Professional Self-Care

Current professional self-care practices I am strongest in, feel are solid habits, and am committed to maintaining.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

New professional self-care practice I can implement into my routine.

Adding this new practice is important to me because: _____

Barriers I may encounter

How I will remind myself to practice self-care

- | | | |
|---------|---|-------|
| • _____ | > | _____ |
| • _____ | > | _____ |
| • _____ | > | _____ |
| • _____ | > | _____ |
| • _____ | > | _____ |

Other practices to try:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

Social Self-Care

Current social self-care practices I am strongest in, feel are solid habits, and am committed to maintaining.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

New social self-care practice I can implement into my routine.

Adding this new practice is important to me because: _____

Barriers I may encounter

How I will remind myself to practice self-care

- | | | |
|---------|---|-------|
| • _____ | > | _____ |
| • _____ | > | _____ |
| • _____ | > | _____ |
| • _____ | > | _____ |
| • _____ | > | _____ |

Other practices to try:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

Emotional Self-Care

Current emotional self-care practices I am strongest in, feel are solid habits, and am committed to maintaining.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

New emotional self-care practice I can implement into my routine.

Adding this new practice is important to me because: _____

Barriers I may encounter

How I will remind myself to practice self-care

- | | | |
|---------|---|-------|
| • _____ | > | _____ |
| • _____ | > | _____ |
| • _____ | > | _____ |
| • _____ | > | _____ |
| • _____ | > | _____ |

Other practices to try:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

Spiritual Self-Care

Current spiritual self-care practices I am strongest in, feel are solid habits, and am committed to maintaining.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

New spiritual self-care practice I can implement into my routine.

Adding this new practice is important to me because: _____

Barriers I may encounter

How I will remind myself to practice self-care

- | | | |
|---------|---|-------|
| • _____ | > | _____ |
| • _____ | > | _____ |
| • _____ | > | _____ |
| • _____ | > | _____ |
| • _____ | > | _____ |

Other practices to try:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

Caring for YOU

My Self-Care Plan

Name: _____

Date: _____

Now that you've assessed your current self-care practices and identified some new ones you are interested in implementing over time, it's time to develop a plan for adding one new self-care practice.

Refer to "Prepare to Add Self-Care" work-sheet to choose a practice for this plan.

1. I will implement the following self-care practice into my routine:

2. Some self-care practices will benefit you in various dimensions. Think on the ways this new practice will benefit your life, and select the dimensions of self-care you will address by adding this into your life. Put a star next to the dimension you originally chose this practice to address.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional | <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual |

3. Identify 3 current healthy behaviors that are part of your routine that you can connect this new practice to.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

Timeline

When making changes you want to last a lifetime, it is helpful to take them on in small pieces. Break the implementation of your new practice into small pieces, creating milestones to work toward in shorter time periods.

Start date: _____

	<u>Milestone</u>	<u>Timeline/Complete Date</u>
1:	_____	_____
2:	_____	_____
3:	_____	_____
4:	_____	_____
5:	_____	_____

Accountability

Being accountable to yourself in following through on your plan to implement new self-care strategies is important. Create a self-accountability plan that includes some positive and supportive ways you will help yourself see this through.

I will hold myself accountable to seeing this through by:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

For some, self-accountability is all that is needed; for others, however, an accountability partner may be more helpful. Consider recruiting a supportive friend or loved one to help you be accountable to your self-care plan. This person should be positive, encouraging, supportive, and helpful (avoid choosing someone who will attempt to sabotage your success, mock your goals, let you off easy, or berate you for not following through on something).

I have recruited, _____, to be my accountability partner.
I have asked them to support me by:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

Caring for YOU Self-Care Tracker

Name: _____

Date: _____

This is an example tracker you can use to track your current self-care behaviors and any new ones you choose to add during this series. If this tracker does not work for you, it is absolutely okay to create and use your own. Use whatever will work best for you and your goals.

	Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
<i>Physical</i>							
<i>Environmental</i>							
<i>Professional</i>							
<i>Social</i>							
<i>Emotional</i>							
<i>Spiritual</i>							

Caring for YOU

Emergency Self-Care Plan

Name: _____

Date: _____

We all experience moments in our lives when things feel much more difficult to handle and navigate than they do at other times. It is important to make a plan ahead of time for what you will do when you're faced with overwhelming events and stressors. This plan is designed to help you feel prepared just in case something pops up. Keep this plan in a place you will see it often or know where to find it easily when you're under stress.

1. Make a list of what you can do when you feel upset (i.e. sad, fearful, angry, overwhelmed, etc.) that will be healthy and helpful for you.

- a. What will help me relax? (E.g. deep breathing, reading, exercising, journaling, etc.)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

- b. What do I like to do when I'm in a good mood?

- c. What can I do that will help me throughout the day?

2. Make a list of people you can contact if you need support or distraction.

- a. Who can I call if I'm depressed or anxious?

_____	_____
-------	-------

- b. Who can I call if I'm lonely?

_____	_____
-------	-------

- c. Who will come over to be with me if I need company?

_____	_____
-------	-------

- d. Who will listen with an open mind and heart?

_____	_____
-------	-------

- e. Who will encourage me to get out and do something fun?

_____	_____
-------	-------

- f. Who will remind me to follow my self-care plan?

_____	_____
-------	-------

3. Make a list of positive things to say to yourself when you are giving yourself a hard time.

4. Make a list of who and what to avoid when you are having a hard time.
What you choose to avoid when you're having a hard time should be people, places, and things that bring you down, keep you feeling "stuck" in your feelings, are harmful, trigger negative or unpleasant emotions, etc.

<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

Caring for YOU Values Activity

Name: _____

Date: _____

Our values help us grow and create the future we want, as well as make decisions that reflect who we are and what we believe. This activity is designed to help you identify your core values.

- From the list below, choose every value that resonates with you. Don't overthink your choices, just select the words that you feel have meaning to you.

Abundance	Daring	Intuition	Preparedness
Acceptance	Decisiveness	Joy	Proactivity
Accountability	Dedication	Kindness	Professionalism
Achievement	Dependability	Knowledge	Punctuality
Advancement	Diversity	Leadership	Recognition
Adventure	Empathy	Learning	Relationships
Advocacy	Encouragement	Love	Reliability
Ambition	Enthusiasm	Loyalty	Resilience
Appreciation	Ethics	Making a Difference	Resourcefulness
Attractiveness	Excellence	Mindfulness	Responsibility
Autonomy	Expressiveness	Motivation	Responsiveness
Balance	Fairness	Optimism	Security
Being the Best	Family	Open-Mindedness	Self-Control
Benevolence	Friendships	Originality	Selflessness
Boldness	Flexibility	Passion	Simplicity
Brilliance	Freedom	Performance	Stability
Calmness	Fun	Personal Development	Success
Caring	Generosity	Proactive	Teamwork
Challenge	Grace	Professionalism	Thankfulness
Charity	Growth	Quality	Thoughtfulness
Cheerfulness	Flexibility	Recognition	Traditionalism
Cleverness	Happiness	Risk Taking	Trustworthiness
Community	Health	Safety	Understanding
Commitment	Honesty	Security	Uniqueness
Compassion	Humility	Service	Usefulness
Cooperation	Humor	Spirituality	Versatility
Collaboration	Inclusiveness	Stability	Vision
Consistency	Independence	Peace	Warmth
Contribution	Individuality	Perfection	Wealth
Creativity	Innovation	Playfulness	Well-Being
Credibility	Inspiration	Popularity	Wisdom
Curiosity	Intelligence	Power	Zeal

- Now, look at all the words you've selected above. Choose the 10 words that connect with you most, write down these 10 words in the space below.

a. _____ f. _____
 b. _____ g. _____

- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____
- h. _____
- i. _____
- j. _____

3. From your top 10, choose your top 5. These are your core values.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____