

“I’m always busy with work, family and life in general. How do I make time for myself?”

Self-care is central to living a life that is productive, fulfilling and happy. To be able to be your best self and care for the people you love, you must first take care of yourself. Good self-care can improve mood, increase energy, decrease anxiety and improve your relationships.

What is self-care?

Self-care is intentionally performing activities which have positive effects on your emotional, physical, spiritual, social and occupational well-being. It is about making yourself a priority. When people pay attention to their own well-being and health needs, they are better able to handle the challenges of work, home and family. Self-care requires you to learn life-balance. By routinely practicing self-care techniques, you can learn to better manage stress. Stress can lead to chronic diseases including hypertension, heart disease, obesity, diabetes, depression and anxiety.

Forms of self-care

Emotional - Caring for your mind and emotions allows for clear thinking, a positive attitude and good decision making.

- Keep a daily journal.
- Build a self-care kit. Include things like essential oils, journal, stress balls or lotion.
- See a therapist, even if it's for a few sessions of general personal development.
- Let yourself cry when you need to.
- Encourage yourself to laugh.
- Learn how to set boundaries and say no.

Physical - Keeping your body fit, rested and well-fed can help boost your mood and reduce stress and anxiety, not to mention helping attain or maintain a healthy weight.

- Exercise regularly.
- Eat healthy.
- Get enough sleep. Nap when you need to. Just 20 minutes can make you feel refreshed.
- Practice relaxation exercises.

Spiritual - Spiritual self-care involves reflection around your values, beliefs, and may or may not include religion.

- Keep a daily meditation or mindfulness practice.
- Spend time in nature.
- Attend a service, whether it is religious or spiritual.
- Make a daily list of five to ten things that make you feel grateful.
- Say affirmations that ground your sense of self and purpose.

Social – Develop or maintain healthy, supportive, authentic relationships with diverse groups of people. This may include co-workers, family, friends, neighbors, social groups and hobby groups.

- Make a date to have lunch or dinner with a friend.
- Reach out to someone you haven't seen in a while.
- Consider joining a group of people who share your interests or who struggle with the same things you do.
- Sign up for a class to learn something that you've always wanted to do.
- Stop socializing with those who undermine or disempower you. Surround yourself with positive people!

Occupational – Being attuned to and understanding what you need at work will help you be constructive, effective and authentic. This is essential to manage stress and prevent burnout.

- Take time for regular short breaks. Eat lunch away from your workspace.
- Plan your next career move. Create a vision for the future of your career.
- Create a healthy and comfortable workspace. This may include pictures of loved ones, plants, different lighting or other items like artwork.
- Take vacation, sick and personal days.
- Avoid working during days off or after work hours. Leave work at work.
- Schedule regular meetings with your supervisor to discuss your progress and address any questions or concerns about your role and responsibilities.
- Learn new skills and be open to change.

Take a moment to discover what you can do for yourself today!