

Self-Care

The term **self-care** describes the actions that an individual might take in order to reach optimal physical and mental health. It is care provided “for you, by you.”. Self-care is about taking proper care of yourself and treating yourself as kindly as you treat others. Self-care is any activity that **we do deliberately** in order to take care of our mental, spiritual, emotional, and physical health.

Physical Self-Care

- Get enough sleep
- Eat regularly (e.g. breakfast, lunch and dinner)
- Eat healthy
- Exercise
- Get regular medical care for prevention
- Get medical care when needed
- Take time off when needed
- Get massages
- Dance, swim, walk, run, play sports, sing, or do some other physical activity that is fun
- Take time to be sexual—with yourself, with a partner
- Wear clothes you like
- Take vacations
- Take day trips or mini-vacations
- Make time away from screen time and electronics

Psychological Self-Care

- Make time for self-reflection
- Have your own personal psychotherapy
- Write in a journal
- Read literature that is unrelated to work
- Do something at which you are not expert or in charge
- Decrease stress in your life
- Let others know different aspects of you
- Notice your inner experience—listen to your thoughts, judgments, beliefs, attitudes, and feelings
- Engage your intelligence in a new area, e.g. go to an art museum, history exhibit, sports event, auction, theater performance
- Practice receiving from others
- Be curious
- Say “no” to extra responsibilities sometimes

Emotional Self-Care

- Spend time with others whose company you enjoy
- Stay in contact with important people in your life
- Give yourself affirmations, praise yourself
- Love yourself

- Re-read favorite books, re-view favorite movies
- Identify comforting activities, objects, people, relationships, places and seek them out
- Allow yourself to cry
- Find things that make you laugh
- Express your outrage in social action, letters and donations, marches, protests
- Play with children

Spiritual Self-Care

- Make time for reflection
- Spend time with nature
- Find a spiritual connection or community
- Be open to inspiration
- Cherish your optimism and hope
- Be aware of non-material aspects of life
- Try at times not to be in charge or the expert
- Be open to not knowing
- Identify what is meaningful to you and notice its place in your life
- Meditate
- Pray
- Sing
- Spend time with children
- Have experiences of awe
- Contribute to causes in which you believe
- Read inspirational literature (talks, music, etc.)

Workplace or 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 your clients and colleagues
- Balance your caseload so that no one day or part of a day is “too much”
- Arrange your work space so it is comfortable and comforting
- Get regular supervision or consultation
- Negotiate for your needs (benefits, pay raise)
- Have a peer support group
- Develop a non-trauma area of professional interest

Balance

- Strive for balance within your work-life and workday
- Strive for balance among work, family, relationships, play and rest

