

My Self-Care Preventive Plan

Everyone has stressful days. What counts is how we deal with those days. Will you perpetuate the negative spiral, or will you pick yourself back up again? This plan is intended to help prevent overwhelming stress and burnout and promote self-care.

- 1. List 10 things you are grateful for in life:**

- 2. Describe the perfect day of your dreams:**

- 3. What one, realistic thing could you do for yourself today that captures the essence of your fantasy day?**

- 4. What is the best compliment you've ever received? What has someone said to you that always makes you smile?**



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Self-Care Assessment

The following worksheet for assessing self-care is not exhaustive, merely suggestive. Feel free to add areas of self-care that are relevant for you and rate yourself on how often and how well you are taking care of yourself.

Rate the following areas according to how well you think you are doing:

3 = I do this well (e.g., frequently)

2 = I do this OK (e.g., occasionally)

1 = I barely or rarely do this

0 = I never do this

? = This never occurred to me

Physical Self-Care

- ___ Eat regularly (e.g. breakfast, lunch, and dinner)
- ___ Eat healthily
- ___ Exercise
- ___ Get regular medical care for prevention
- ___ Get medical care when needed
- ___ Take time off when sick
- ___ Get massages, acupuncture, manicures, etc.
- ___ Dance, swim, walk, run, play sports, sing, or do some other fun physical activity
- ___ Take time to be sexual - with myself, with a partner
- ___ Get enough sleep
- ___ Wear clothes I like
- ___ Take vacations
- ___ Other:

Psychological Self-Care

- ___ Take day trips or mini-vacations
- ___ Make time away from telephones, email, and the Internet
- ___ Make time for self-reflection
- ___ Notice my inner experience - listen to my thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, feelings



- ___ Have my own personal psychotherapy
- ___ Write in a journal
- ___ Read literature that is unrelated to work
- ___ Do something at which I am not expert or in charge
- ___ Attend to minimizing stress in my life
- ___ Engage my intelligence in a new area, e.g., go to an art show, sports event, theatre
- ___ Be curious
- ___ Say no to extra responsibilities sometimes
- ___ Other:

Emotional Self-Care

- ___ Spend time with others whose company I enjoy
- ___ Stay in contact with important people in my life
- ___ Give myself affirmations, praise myself
- ___ Love myself
- ___ Re-read favorite books, re-view favorite movies
- ___ Identify comforting activities, objects, people, places and seek them out
- ___ Allow myself to cry
- ___ Find things that make me laugh
- ___ Express my outrage in social action, letters, donations, marches, protests
- ___ Other:

Spiritual Self-Care

- ___ Make time for reflection
- ___ Spend time in nature
- ___ Find a spiritual connection or community
- ___ Be open to inspiration
- ___ Cherish my optimism and hope



- ☐ Be aware of non-material aspects of life
- ☐ Be open to not knowing
- ☐ Identify what is meaningful to me and notice its place in my life
- ☐ Meditate
- ☐ Pray
- ☐ Sing
- ☐ Have experiences of awe
- ☐ Contribute to causes in which I believe
- ☐ Read inspirational literature or listen to inspirational talks, music
- ☐ Other:

Relationship Self-Care

- ☐ Schedule regular dates with my partner or spouse
- ☐ Schedule regular activities with my children
- ☐ Make time to see friends
- ☐ Call, check on, or see my relatives
- ☐ Spend time with my companion animals
- ☐ Stay in contact with faraway friends
- ☐ Make time to reply to personal emails and letters; send holiday cards
- ☐ Allow others to do things for me
- ☐ Enlarge my social circle
- ☐ Ask for help when I need it
- ☐ Share a fear, hope, or secret with someone I trust
- ☐ Other:

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 clients and colleagues
- ___ Balance my workload so that no one day or part of a day is "too much"
- ___ Arrange work space so it is comfortable and comforting
- ___ Get regular supervision or consultation
- ___ Negotiate for my needs (benefits, pay raise)
- ___ Have a peer support group
- ___ (If relevant) Develop a new area of professional interest

Overall Balance

- ___ Strive for balance within my work-life and work day
- ___ Strive for balance among work, family, relationships, play, and rest

Other Areas of Self-Care that are Relevant to You

- ___
- ___
- ___

(Adapted from Saakvitne, Pearlman, & Staff of TSI/CAAP (1996). Transforming the pain: A workbook on vicarious traumatization. Norton.



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Self-Care Worksheet

Self-care is the act of taking care of yourself. Establishing self-care habits that work for YOU are an important part of living a healthy and happy life.

1. List the self-care habits you are using now to manage stress and stay healthy:

Example: I get at least 8 hours of sleep each night.

I ...

- a.
- b.
- c.

2. List the self-care habits you would like to use, but are not currently practicing:

Example: I want to take a regular yoga class.

I want to ...

- a.
- b.
- c.

3. Identify the obstacles keeping you from practicing these habits:

Example: I am not taking a yoga class now because I feel like I don't have the time and I think it might be too expensive.

I am not _____ because ...

- a.
- b.
- c.

4. What solutions can you come up with to address the obstacles you listed?

Example: I could look for discounted or free yoga classes. I could free up time for myself by cutting back on my volunteer work, asking my neighbor to watch my children after school once a week, and sharing the cooking responsibilities with my family.

I could ...

- a.
- b.
- c.



5. Take a moment to reread the self-care habits you wrote down for item 2. Select one of the *habits* you would like to begin practicing and complete the sentences below.

Example: Today, I commit to taking a weekly yoga class. I want to do this because I want to improve my flexibility, learn a new skill, and have some time for myself each week. I will accomplish this by finding and enrolling in a free or low-cost class and by easing up on my commitments and asking for help from others.

Today, I commit to . . .

I want to do this because . . .

I will accomplish this by. . .

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