



## Simplified Self-Care

Many people say they don't have time for self-care. They will claim that it is too luxurious, too expensive, too time-consuming, and yet another thing they would have to put on their to-do list. Others say that they don't deserve self-care. They only use care as a reward and dole it out to themselves when they feel they've earned it. If you have people-pleasing tendencies, you are especially likely to feel as if you need to earn your self-care and to feel guilty when you're doing anything that might resemble being kind and gentle to yourself. People with anxious attachment often withhold self-care because they are constantly chasing a benchmark that is subjective and rarely met.

However, neglecting your self-care—meaning that you don't do the things that help you live well and support your physical and mental health—can lead to a cascade of negative consequences to your overall well-being, cause difficulty in goal attainment, and lead to productivity loss and substandard relationships. It is essential for you to have a self-care plan, especially if you struggle with people-pleasing and are constantly putting other people's needs ahead of your own.

You can't get water from a dry well, and no matter how much you care for the people you are in relationship with, not taking the opportunity to take care of yourself will make it

harder to have positive interactions with your loved ones. There are six areas of self-care that will enhance your health, emotional well-being, and relationship with others.

- **Emotional self-care:** Activities that help you connect, process, express, and reflect on a full range of emotions. Examples include writing in a journal, creating art, playing music, dancing, working with a therapist, or watching a movie or TV show that sparks emotional reactions.
- **Social self-care:** Activities that nurture relationships and help you feel connected with others. Examples include calling a friend, having lunch with a family member, helping a neighbor with a chore, joining a club, or attending a get-together.
- **Mental self-care:** Activities that stimulate your mind or add to your skill sets. Examples include reading a book, going to a museum, solving a puzzle, learning something new, or practicing a new hobby.
- **Practical self-care:** Tasks you complete that fulfill core aspects of your life to prevent stressful situations. Examples include washing the dishes, brushing your teeth, taking a shower, creating and managing your budget, or doing your laundry.
- **Physical self-care:** Activities that improve your physical being. Examples include taking a walk, sleeping well, staying hydrated, eating a healthy diet, stretching, exercising, getting a haircut, or going to the doctor.
- **Spiritual self-care:** Activities that nurture your spirit and help you to think about things bigger than yourself. Examples include meditation, yoga, spending time in nature, going to a place of worship, practicing gratitude, or reflecting on your values.

The true benefits of self-care appear when you make time to tend to your needs every day. To that end, we're going to create an easy three-step plan to start incorporating self-care into your life. The goal is to find a set of activities that nurture all aspects of yourself that you can build into a reliable rotation. Copy the chart below into your journal and let's get started!

1. Brainstorm several activities in each of the six areas of self-care—emotional, social, mental, practical, physical, spiritual—and write them down in the corresponding spaces.
2. Do one activity every day, rotating among the six areas. For example, you could do Mental Mondays, Social Tuesdays, and so on. On Sundays, select an activity from your favorite of the six areas.
3. Rate your level of enjoyment immediately after doing the activity on a scale of 1 (least enjoyable) to 5 (most enjoyable). Ditch anything lower than a 3 by crossing it off your chart, but keep everything else in rotation for your self-care tool kit. Each week, consider adding another self-care idea in each of the six domains, and repeat the process of doing the activity, rating your enjoyment, and ditching anything lower than a 3.

Self-care can be practical and doesn't need to take a lot of time—especially on busy days. The most important thing is that you are intentional about your self-care. Commit to a plan, follow through, and continually assess to learn what works best for you.

Use the chart below to note your activities and level of enjoyment.

<b>Day of Week</b>	<b>Type of Self-Care</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Enjoyment (1-5)</b>
Monday	Emotional		
Tuesday	Social		
Wednesday	Mental		
Thursday	Practical		
Friday	Physical		
Saturday	Spiritual		
Sunday	Social		