

Embracing Self-care as a Core Competency in Child Welfare: Build Your Own Self-care Toolkit

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Self-Care Assessment

This worksheet for assessing self-care is not exhaustive, merely suggestive. Look for patterns in your responses. Are you more active in some areas of self-care and ignoring others? Are there items on the list that make you think, "I would never do that?" Listen to your inner responses, your internal dialogue about self-care and making yourself a priority. Take particular note of anything you would like to include more of in your life.

Rate the following items according to how often you do them:

3 = I do this often

2 = I do this occasionally

1 = I rarely do this

0 = I never do this, or this never occurred to me

Physical Self-Care

- Eat regularly (e.g. breakfast, lunch, and dinner)
- Eat healthy
- Exercise
- Get regular preventive medical care (e.g. health check-ups, screenings)
- Get medical care when needed
- Take time off when sick
- Get massages or other physical therapy
- Dance, swim, walk, run, play sports, sing, or do some other fun physical activity
- Get enough sleep
- Wear clothes I like

Psychological Self-Care

- Take vacations/time off from work
- Make time away from electronics (e.g. TV, phone, social media, Internet)
- Make time for self-reflection
- Notice my inner experience – listen to my thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, feelings
- Talk through personal challenges with a professional counselor or therapist
- Write in a journal
- Read literature that is unrelated to work
- Do something at which I am not expert or in charge
- Focus on 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

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

Social/Relationship Self-Care

- _____ Schedule regular dates with my partner, spouse, or close friend
- _____ Schedule regular activities with my children (if applicable)
- _____ Make time to see/connect with friends
- _____ Call, check on, or visit my relatives
- _____ Spend time with pets/animals
- _____ Stay in contact with faraway friends
- _____ Make time to reply to personal emails or 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

Professional/Workplace Self-Care

- _____ Take a break during the workday (e.g. lunch, afternoon stretch)
- _____ Take time to chat with co-workers
- _____ Make quiet time to focus on tasks or projects
- _____ Identify projects or tasks that are exciting and rewarding
- _____ Set healthy limits with clients and colleagues
- _____ Balance my workload so that no one day or part of a day is “too much”
- _____ Arrange my workspace so it is comfortable and comforting
- _____ Get regular supervision or consultation
- _____ Advocate for my needs (e.g. benefits, promotion, resources)
- _____ Have a professional peer support group
- _____ Develop a non-trauma area of professional interest

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
- _____ Embrace 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 me and notice its place in my life
- _____ Meditate
- _____ Pray
- _____ Sing
- _____ Have experiences of awe
- _____ Contribute time and/or money to causes in which I believe
- _____ Read inspirational literature or listen to inspirational talks or music

Overall Balance

- _____ Strive for balance within my worklife and workday
- _____ Strive for balance among my work, family, relationships, play, and rest

Identify Your Self-Care Needs

Daily Self-Care Strategies

Area of Self-Care	Current Practices	Practices to Try
Physical (e.g. eat regular and healthy meals, good sleep habits, regular exercise, medical check-ups)		
Emotional (e.g. engage in positive activities, acknowledge personal accomplishments, express emotions in a healthy way)		
Psychological (e.g. take time for myself, disconnect from electronic devices, journal, pursue new interests, learn new skills, counseling, life coaching)		
Social (e.g. healthy relationships, make time for family/friends, schedule dates with partner/spouse, ask for support from family/friends)		
Professional (e.g. pursue meaningful work, maintain work-life balance, positive relationships with co-workers, time management skills)		
Financial (e.g. understand how finances impact my quality of life, create a budget or financial plan, pay off debt)		
Spiritual (e.g. read inspirational literature, self-reflection, spend time in nature, meditate, explore spiritual connections)		

Emergency Self-Care Strategies

Emergency Self-Care Tools	Helpful (What To Do)	Harmful (What To Avoid)
<p>Relaxation/Staying Calm Which activities help you to relax (e.g. deep breathing, taking a walk)? Which activities make you more agitated or frustrated (e.g. yelling, swearing, or drinking)?</p>		
<p>Self-Talk Helpful self-talk may include, "I am safe/I can do this." Harmful self-talk may include, "I can't handle this/I knew this would happen/I deserve this."</p>		
<p>Social Support Which family members and friends can you reach out to for help or support? Which people should you avoid during times of stress? Be honest about who helps and who zaps your energy.</p>		
<p>Mood Which activities support a positive mood for you (e.g. listening to uplifting music, being in nature)? What should you avoid when times get tough (e.g. staying in bed all day, avoiding social activities)?</p>		
<p>Resilience What, or who, helps you to get through difficult times or bounce back? What or who feeds negativity for you?</p>		

My Self-Care Plan

My DAILY Self-Care Plan						
<i>List your favorite practices for each category.</i>						
Physical	Emotional	Psychological	Social	Professional	Financial	Spiritual
My Top 3 POSITIVE Coping Strategies						
<i>List 3 strategies you want to get in the habit of using.</i>						
#1	#2		#3			
My EMERGENCY Self-Care Plan						
Helpful (To Do)				Harmful (To Avoid)		
<i>List your top 5 emergency self-care practices.</i>				<i>List 5 practices, people, places, or things to avoid during times of crisis or stress.</i>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 			

Now that you've created your self-care plan, look at it *regularly*. It takes time to form healthier habits. Make a commitment to yourself to practice your self-care routine as often as possible – *you're worth it!*

Adapted from "Building a Self-Care Plan" by Homewood Health, Inc.