The Importance of Self-Care

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What is Self-Care?

Self care is the **foundation of connectedness** with **ourselves, others**, and our **surroundings**.

Self-care is thus **not a selfish act**.

Only by **loving & caring for ourselves**, can we effectively **assist others & nature**.
Self-Care Is Rooted in Seeing Our Connectedness & Interdependency

The more we deliberately increase our awareness of our inherent connectedness with ourselves, others, and the natural environment the more healthy, joyful & resilient we become.
Key Elements of Self-Care
Deliberate awareness and care for our:

**Physical Health:**
- Eating moderate amounts of healthy food
- Moderate consumption of alcohol and other substances
- Regular exercise and sufficient sleep

**Mind/Body Connections**
- Mind/Body regulation
- Connecting with our skills, resources, and networks of support
- Awareness of thoughts, assumptions, controlling beliefs

**Spiritual or Non-Material Needs**
- Regular spiritual or religious practice
- Connecting with the natural world
- Regularly practicing gratitude
Taking Care of Ourselves by Awareness, Regulating, and Calming Our Mind and Body

**Body-Based (Somatic) Skills**  
(The Trauma Resource Institute)

- Tracking
- Resourcing
- Grounding

**Breath-Based Skills**

- Controlled breathing
- Six-second breathing

**Awareness-Based Skills**

- Awareness of breath, thoughts, emotions
- Mindful eating, walking, movement
Caring for Yourself by Connecting With Your Skills and Internal and External Supports

Your “Circles of Support”

**Personal Skills**
Ability to use healthy methods to stay calm, get exercise, eat well, be assertive, reach out to others

**Internal Supports**
Images of experiences, places, role models that bring peace and calm

**Social Supports**
2 or more family & friends who provide unconditional emotional support and practical assistance.

**External Supports**
Physical places like a room in the house, garden, place in town, emergency kit, that bring peace and calm

**Ecological Supports**
The sun's rays, air you breathe, water you drink

Does your residence have a:
- Yard
- Trees
- Garden
- House plants
- Pets

Does your community have:
- Green space
- Trees
- Walkways/trails
- Plants
- Wildlife
- Streams
- Watershed

How aware are you of these & other ecological systems?
Can you find a way to connect with them?
Gratitude are **thoughts** and **emotions** grounded in **deep appreciation** and **gratefulness** for someone or some things.

Gratitude signals our **recognition of small and large beneficial things** other **people** or **processes** have **provided us** and/or the **miracle** and **wonder** of **being alive**.

Practiced regularly, gratitude can become **embedded** in the **brain’s neural systems and structure** leading to:

- A more **peaceful mind and body**
- Better **mental health**
- Better **physical health**
- **Greater resilience** for all types of adversities
• Be intentional by setting limits, saying no, and asking for help.

• Make time to care for your inner self (meaningful relationships, gratitude, spirituality) as well as your physical health.

• Keep balance in your life: laugh, play, and love as much as you work for good.

Practice These As if Your life Depends On It -- For It Surely Does!