



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 ASKING
YOURSELF WHAT YOU
NEED—EVERYDAY—
AND THEN MAKING SURE
YOU RECEIVE IT

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

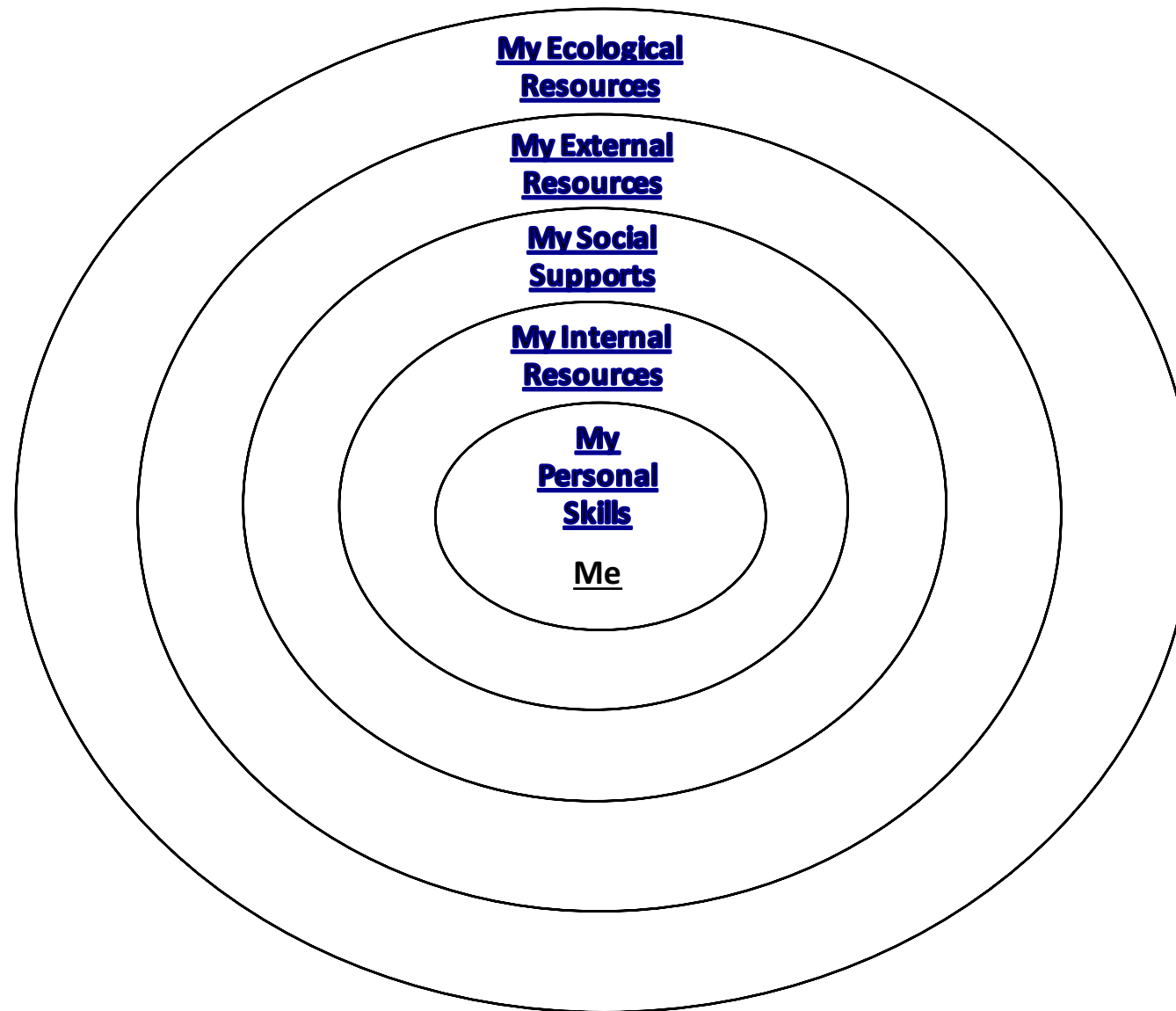
Images of experiences, places, role models that bring peace and calm

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?

Taking Care of Ourselves by Practicing Gratitude



- 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



Self-Care Suggestions

- 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!