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**Self-Care is not a luxury, it’s a priority.**

* Stress is a normal part of life. It has a cumulative effect, sometimes making us overreact to a minor event, from stress build up. Excess stress can make us ill, physically and emotionally.
* Stress isn’t going to go away, so rather than stress management, we can focus on energy management. Self-care is the way we top up our energetic bank balance. The way to do this is to aim for micro moments of self-care, dotted throughout our days to nourish us.
* Self-care is nourishment for your head, heart and body. Self-care can get labelled as being ‘too hard to do’ ‘selfish’ or ‘an indulgence’
* Self-care helps you to be a more compassionate, human being.
* It helps us cope and recover from illness, stress, loss and change.
* Self-care offers us a protective function. Meditation and kindfulness have a cardio protective benefit, forming a buffer against stress.
* Self-care helps us flourish as individuals and be the best version of ourselves.
* Don’t wait for life to throw you a curveball to think about self-care; that’s when it is hardest to be creative and resourceful.
* Give yourself permission to take time out for yourself.
* Repeat after me; ‘self-care isn’t selfish’ keep repeating this until you believe it.
* Make an appointment with yourself, plan your time and fill it with something that nurtures your head, heart and body.

**Self-care acts.**

* Getting enough sleep, rest and relaxation.
* Breathing, mindfully, breathing exercises and just spending time being with your breath.
* Movement, walking in nature, yoga, whatever exercise you enjoy doing will be the one to engage in.
* Nutrition, we all know that foods that nourish us make our bodies function and feel better, but don’t forget everything in moderation, so don’t sweat the odd naughty treat.
* Your environment, be it your bedroom, or your favourite outdoor space. Beauty, in whatever form, lifts your spirits and opens you up to an experience of awe.
* Create your own relaxation library, be it books, magazines, photos, art, films, a gratitude journal, take a meditative shower, bath or half hour of time doing whatever you enjoy to feed your soul.
* Tap into your creative side, whatever that maybe and don’t judge your creations. It’s about enjoying the journey, not what the end result is.
* Mood boosters, music, singing, clothing, especially colour, scent, laughter, play, stand tall and open your chest, look up into the sky,
* Find your coping tools, your gems of advice to repeat to yourself. For example, ‘can I stick a pin in it?’ ‘can I delegate this?’ ‘Is this within my control?’
* Book yourself an appointment to have a massage, a facial, whatever keeps you feeling relaxed.
* Find kind ways to say ‘no’ (Let me think about it. I can’t today, how about… I’m sorry, but I can’t.)
* Set good boundaries.
* Give yourself permission to feel as you do, in all its colour. Just the act of thinking, or saying, I feel…can help to dissipate a strong emotion.
* If you can’t engage in self-care for yourself, then do it for the people around you. If it helps you, think of self-care not as ‘me first’ but ‘me as well’.
* Be kind to yourself, take your own advice, as if you were talking to your best friend.

**Stand up and take six mountain breaths.**

* Stand with your feet hip-width apart, your arms by your sides, gazing forwards.
* Inhale and reach your arms up and overhead, gazing up towards your thumbs.
* Exhale and lower your arms back down and gaze forwards.
* Feel the fullness of your breathing and enjoy growing taller with every repetition.

**Take a mindful minute.**

* Set yourself a timer for one minute
* Gently close your eyes and take your focus to your breathing, not changing anything just noticing the breath.
* Count your breaths, in and out, one and so on.
* Stop when the timer goes off.

**Make your self-care acts non-negotiable and remember**

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 Karen Bradley, Intuitive Guide