

The art and renewal of Selfcare

Image from Kimo no Na wa (Your Name)
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You're often caring for others. But when you're on your own, who is caring for you?

“Learning to care for yourself is the foundation to everything- it is the only to stand tall.”

(Gray, J, 2020, the little book of Self-Care, p.174)

Self-care is taking care of yourself, mentally, emotional, and physically. It keeps you healthy, increases efficiency in work and help you care for others too. Let us explore the art and renewal of selfcare...

Why is self-care important?

Self-care is important for keeping your mind, emotions, and your physical health healthy; it can help manage daily stressors in your life and increase productivity. Lawler (2023) tells us that 'research suggests that self-care promotes positive health outcomes', these outcomes include 'fostering resilience, living longer, and becoming better equipped to manage stress'. You're a human being just like your friends, family, and the people around you. Your wants and needs *are* important too. That's not to say that their wants and needs aren't important, but sometimes you need to address your own needs. **It's all about balance.**

Types of selfcare

Emotional- dealing with difficult emotions in healthy ways.

Physical self-care- Eating well, sleeping well, exercise.

Social- taking a break from social media and sometimes taking a break from socialising.

Selfcare vs self-indulgence

It can be quite easy to mistake selfcare and self-indulgence; the two tend revolve around self.

Selfcare is taking control over health and responsibilities, engaging in activities to nourish our body, minds, and souls. On the other side, self-indulgence is self-centred; indulging on activities that distract us from our problems, engaging in behaviours that temporarily gratify. This can develop into unhealthy coping strategies like impulse buying due to stress. Selfcare extends beyond the self; it also nourishes others; you are able to recharge and help others.

How do I look after myself? Where do I start?

To start, you need to make some time for yourself, whether that's 10-30 minutes up to an hour. Perhaps you want sleep better? Maybe you want to manage emotions better? Find activities that bring you joy and restore your energy. Focus on one activity at a time and feel free to add more when you're ready. Reflect on how you feel and be honest. If you're stuck, try asking yourself these questions:

How are you feeling?

What is bothering you?

Is there anything you can do to manage it?

What is your body trying to tell you?

Do you need a break?

Gratitude and treating yourself. (10-30 minutes)

Sometimes with all that's going on in life, it can seem mundane and miserable. We often forget to appreciate the little things in life. Try writing down a list of things you're thankful for. This will help you appreciate the small things in life and it's a good way to keep you in the moment.

Also, awarding yourself is really important; it can keep you motivated and make your day a little brighter. It doesn't have to be something really expensive. It could be something like playing video games or reading a book after a long day of working hard.

Affirmations (5-10 minutes)

We're nice to others, we encourage others but sometimes we're not nice enough to ourselves, often tearing ourselves down. Sometimes we need to give ourselves a bit of encouragement too. Create a list of positive affirmations to say to yourself. This could be "I am loved" or "I am enough", I'm valuable. These positive affirmations can increase self-compassion and feelings of kindness towards others.

Speak the statements as if they're true. According to Azman, T (2022), 'short, positive statement that are said on a daily basis to reprogram your mind to capture empowering beliefs, habits'.

Talking to someone.

Sometimes we have emotions so powerful or emotions so great in volume that it feels like the weight of the world on our shoulders. Simply talking to someone you trust can help unload the heavy burdens of emotions and offer a new insight on how you may feel. It may be very uncomfortable, but you will feel better afterwards. And remember that it's okay to ask for help or seek professional medical help if needed.

Personally, I've found selfcare really beneficial; it has helped me to manage day-to-day worries and helped me to be kind to myself and remind myself that I'm doing the best I can.

Selfcare has so many benefits you can reap if you just take the time. Addressing your problems, worries and simply doing things you enjoy can help you so much with your mental and physical health. It can help you build the resilience you need to manage stress and help you move forward.

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