

# Self-Care

## More than a bubble bath and cup of tea

Self-care has become popularized in the helping professions and also across mainstream culture, but what does it mean? We often think of self-care as a “to do” list of behaviors that will help us relax and cope during high-stress times, and for some it can be. However, more generally, self-care is daily intention that increases the ability for us to “show up” for those we help. Self-care can be preventative or in the moment. Self-care creates more time, energy, and space to be present and available in our work.



YOU HAVE TO NOURISH  
 TO FLOURISH

## Self-care can help protect against:

### Burn Out

- Physical and emotional exhaustion
- Cynicism and detachment
- Feelings of inefficacy
- Fatigue or insomnia
- Forgetfulness, lack of attention/concentration
- Physical symptoms/illness
- Emotional changes; increased depression, anxiety, anger and irritability
- Pessimism
- Isolation
- Feelings of apathy and hopelessness
- Diminished productivity/poor performance

### Compassion Fatigue

- Feeling burdened by the suffering of others
- Blaming others for their problems/suffering
- Isolating
- Loss of pleasure in life
- Denial
- Physical/mental fatigue
- Frequent complaining
- Others commenting about your work and/or attitude
- Compulsive behaviors (overeating, gambling, substance use)

### Secondary Traumatic Stress

- Intrusive thoughts
- Chronic fatigue
- Emotional changes; sadness, anger, helplessness, hopelessness
- Lack of trust/confidence in decisions
- Fearfulness/hypervigilance
- Absenteeism
- Physical symptoms/illness
- Sense that one can't do enough, guilt
- Diminished creativity
- Minimizing, inability to embrace complexity
- Dissociation/detachment/numbing

**Try this:** Use the Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL) quarterly to assess and monitor for Burnout, Compassion Satisfaction, and Secondary Traumatic Stress (find it here: [http://www.proqol.org/uploads/ProQOL\\_5\\_English\\_Self-Score\\_3-2012.pdf](http://www.proqol.org/uploads/ProQOL_5_English_Self-Score_3-2012.pdf))

Self-care is creating daily rituals to take care of mind, body, and spirit.

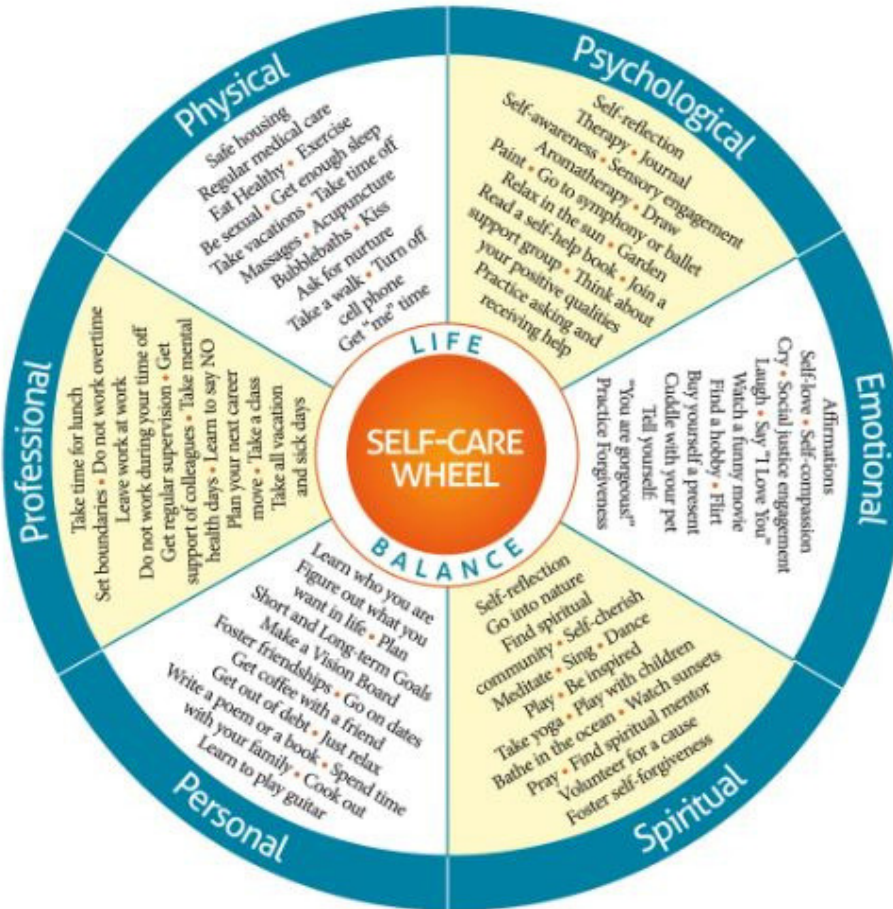
Self-care isn't selfish

Self-care can rejuvenate and restore. Self-care promotes self love.

# Self-Care Strategies

## Take an individualized approach

### SELF-CARE WHEEL



### Resources:

- *Trauma Stewardship: An Everyday Guide to Caring for Self While Caring for Others*
- *Self-Care Revolution: 5 Pillars to Prevent Burnout and Build Sustainable Resilience for Helping Professionals*
- *Compassion Fatigue Workbook*
- Calm App, or [www.calm.com](http://www.calm.com) for silent or guided meditation
- Provider Resilience App
- To create your own self-care wheel visit: [http://www.olgaphoenix.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/ACGD\\_SelfCareWheel\\_templatejan2016\\_A3-1.pdf](http://www.olgaphoenix.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/ACGD_SelfCareWheel_templatejan2016_A3-1.pdf)

This Self-Care Wheel was inspired by and adapted from "Self-Care Assessment Worksheet" from *Transforming the Pain: A Workbook on Vicarious Traumatization* by Saakvitne, Pearlman & Staff of TSI/CAAP (Norton, 1996). Created by Olga Phoenix Project: Healing for Social Change (2013). Dedicated to all trauma professionals worldwide.

[www.OlgaPhoenix.com](http://www.OlgaPhoenix.com)

### Preventative Activities:

Setting healthy boundaries, yoga, healthy eating/sleeping habits, exercise, social time or "me" time, therapy, journaling, delegate tasks, positive self-talk

### In the Moment Activities:

Deep breathing (try box or belly), tense and release, take a walk, call a support person, mindfulness

Develop a personalized self-care plan to put your intentions in writing. Write down 3 self-care activities you can do everyday, every week, every month, and every year. Share it with a support person.

Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually
1)	1)	1)	1)
2)	2)	2)	2)
3)	3)	3)	3)