



# Taking Care of Yourself



This dimension involves attending to personal physical, psychosocial, and spiritual needs (1, 2). Self-care may include a range of activities, such as exercising, eating well, connecting with loved ones, and taking time to relax and rejuvenate.

*Inspired by true stories... Taking care of yourself is good for you!*

**#SelfCare:** Sometimes self-care is about stepping away, turning it off, and changing your focus. You see things and experience things differently. Time slows down, and we have to find that balance - April Banks (3)

**#HealthValue:** I think that I am doing things to manage my illness better than I used to. When I'm in control, I have peace of mind - Anonymous (4)

## What About You?

What are you currently doing?

What have you done in the past few years?

How do you feel about it? (Please circle)



## Goal Setting

In the next \_\_\_\_\_ months/year, I would like to:

To do this, I will need to:

Remember: What you do everyday matters to your health and well-being!





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## Clinician Guide

**When?** This document can be used to empower clients to think beyond their own problems or limitations to identify strengths and talents that they could share with others.

**Why?** Research shows that the most commonly reported strategies used to improve or maintain mental well-being include physical exercise, spending time with family and friends, relaxing, and engaging in pleasurable activities (5). Self-care may also involve actively managing one's medical condition, health care and its associated life changes (6, 7).

**How?** The worksheet can be used with individuals or groups, to guide reflection on the importance of taking care of yourself. See below for questions to prompt reflection and goal setting for change.

## What About You? - Reflection Questions

How do you currently take care of yourself?

- Describe (who, what, where, when, why?)
- How satisfied are you with your current self-care practices?
- Benefits? Challenges?

What have you done in the past few years that were meaningful and contributed to self-care?

- What has changed?
- Is there something from these past experiences that you would like to have in your life now?

## Goal Setting Guide

What could you do differently in your current routine to care for yourself?

- How meaningful would this be for you? (7-point Likert scale low to high)
- How much time would you like to commit to this? (Engagement)
- How much choice/control do you have over making this change?
- Could it interfere with other things you want or need to do? (Balance)

What personal or external issues might get in the way of meeting your goal?



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### References:

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2. Cleantis, T. (2017). *An Invitation to Self-Care: Why Learning to Nurture Yourself Is the Key to the Life You've Always Wanted, 7 Principles for Abundant Living*. Hazelden Publishing.
3. Indongo, N. (2017, July 8). Taking care of yourself through art and culture | CBC News. Retrieved from <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/take-care-of-yourself-exhibit-the-main-1.4192544>
4. Collins, M. M., Bradley, C. P., O'Sullivan, T., & Perry, I. J. (2009). Self-care coping strategies in people with diabetes: a qualitative exploratory study. *BMC endocrine disorders*, 9(1), 6.
5. Hansson, A., Hillerås, P., & Forsell, Y. (2005). What kind of self-care strategies do people report using and is there an association with well-being?. *Social Indicators Research*, 73(1), 133-139.
6. Lorig, K. R., & Holman, H. R. (2003). Self-management education: history, definition, outcomes, and mechanisms. *Annals of behavioral medicine*, 26(1), 1-7.
7. Grady, P. A., & Gough, L. L. (2014). Self-management: a comprehensive approach to management of chronic conditions. *American Journal of Public Health*, 104(8), e25-e31.

### Other suggested readings:

1. Keng, S. L., Smoski, M. J., & Robins, C. J. (2011). Effects of mindfulness on psychological health: A review of empirical studies. *Clinical psychology review*, 31(6), 1041-1056.
2. Köhn, M., Persson Lundholm, U., Bryngelsson, I. L., Anderzén-Carlsson, A., & Westerdahl, E. (2013). Medical yoga for patients with stress-related symptoms and diagnoses in primary health care: a randomized controlled trial. *Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine*, 2013.
3. Manuel, D. G., Perez, R., Bennett, C., Rosella, L., Taljaard, M., Roberts, M., ... & Manson, H. (2012). *Seven more years: the impact of smoking, alcohol, diet, physical activity and stress on health and life expectancy in Ontario*. Retrieved from <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/seven-more-years.pdf?la=en>