
Slide 1

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Self-Care:
The Care and Keeping of You

Presentation by:
MHN Training & Development

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Participant Handbook

Slide 2

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Learning Objectives

- Discuss different types of self-care
- Consider what self-care means to you personally
- Explore how personality influences self-care
- Present ways to incorporate self-care activities into your day
- Identify action steps

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Americans Rate Poorly in Self-Care

Topic	Rating
Mental Health	1 in 4 Americans have a mental health disorder, of which 1 in 17 have a severe mental illness. Many of these disorders go untreated.
Exercise	81.6% of Americans do not participate in an adequate amount of exercise.
Obesity	More than 1/3 of Americans are obese.
Oral health	Fewer than 1/2 of all Americans saw a dentist in the last year to protect their oral health.
Substance Abuse	22 million Americans struggled with drugs and excessive alcohol use in the last year, and 1 in 5 Americans continue to use tobacco products.
Depression and Suicide	Suicide is a leading cause of death for Americans of all ages.

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Types of Self-Care

- Physical
- Psychological/Mental
- Spiritual
- Interpersonal/Social

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4

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Physical Self-Care

- Healthy lifestyle
 - Healthy diet, hydration, exercise, sleep, being smoke-free, drinking alcohol in moderation
- Health issue management
 - Treatment regimens
- Preventative health
 - Physicals, age-appropriate exams and seeking medical attention when ill
- Feel good activities which are satisfying and nourishing for the body

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5

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Physical Self-Care - Benefits

- Reduce risk of high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol
- Support brain health and decrease risk of dementia
- Boost your overall energy
- Enjoy better sleep
- Improve your ability to manage stress
- Ease pain and stiffness in your body
- Reduce risk of osteoporosis, bone fractures
- What else?

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6

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Psychological/Mental Self-Care

Definitions of Mental Health

“Mental health is a level of psychological well-being or an absence of mental illness.”
-Nami.org

“A state of well-being in which [an] individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.”
-World Health Organization

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7

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Psychological/Mental Self-Care

- Medications as prescribed*; therapy
- Strategies to change negative thinking
- Practices that help to manage stress
- Acknowledgement of worth; contributions
- Therapy
- Time/ability to grieve a loss/losses
- Confidant, friend or family member
- Social connections
- Creative outlets; ways to express
- Recreation and fun
- Healthy diet
- What else?

**If living with mental illness*

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Psychological/Mental Self-Care

Benefits:

- Experience ease; sense of well-being
- Experience moods which are generally positive
- Identify and manage your emotions
- Work through conflict with others
- Feel connected to and supported by others; positive relationships
- Have a balanced view of strengths and weaknesses
- Possess a positive sense of self-worth
- Able to navigate changes and stressors
- Work productively and fruitfully; make contributions

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Spiritual Self-Care

Spirituality is defined as any avenue through which a person finds meaning, hope, comfort, and inner peace.

- Time observing/being in nature
- Communal worship
- Religious education
- Meditation
- Prayer
- Service to community
- Time in a place of significance

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Spiritual Self-Care

Benefits:

- Ease mental and emotional distress
- Bring about a sense of calm and well-being
- Produce or reinforce positive thinking
- Improve physical health

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Social Self-Care

- Outings with friends
- Dinners with family members
- Social clubs
- Events or functions with colleagues

Ongoing relationships that you enjoy!

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Social Self-Care

Benefits:

- Helps us face and deal with difficult challenges as we age
- Supports brain health
- Has a positive impact on longevity

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Getting Started - How Do I Know What Self-Care Means to Me?

1. Start with the basics:

- Exercise regularly (4-5 times per week)
- Eat the recommended amount of fruits and veggies every day
- Sleep seven to eight hours per night
- Drink plenty of water
- Get routine check ups based upon your age
- Address any issues you're having with ongoing pain or physical discomfort by seeing your physician

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Getting Started - How Do I Know What Self-Care Means to Me?

2. Have an understanding of who you are, what you enjoy, and that you feel your life has purpose and meaning.

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Getting Started - How Do I Know What Self-Care Means to Me?

Still don't know...

3. Try enlisting a trusted family member or friend to provide you with insight into the things you most enjoy.
4. If that doesn't work, go see a counselor or social worker for a few sessions to address these questions.
5. Think you're "over-thinking" this, then try be spontaneous!

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Self-Care Style

How is your personality influencing your attitude and behaviors around self-care?

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How to Bring Self-Care into Your Day

- Decide that you deserve time to yourself each day
- Commit to a minimum of 15-20 minutes of daily "me" time
- Create a daily ritual
- Add it to your calendar
- Ask for support from your spouse/partner
- Evaluate the things that are wasting your time each day
- Learn to say "no"
- Ask for help and delegate

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Action Steps

Where do you want to go from here?

What steps (or first step) are you ready and willing to take?

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Closing

**BECOME A PRIORITY IN
YOUR LIFE.**

-PositiveLifeTips.com

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Slide 21

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Resources

Books

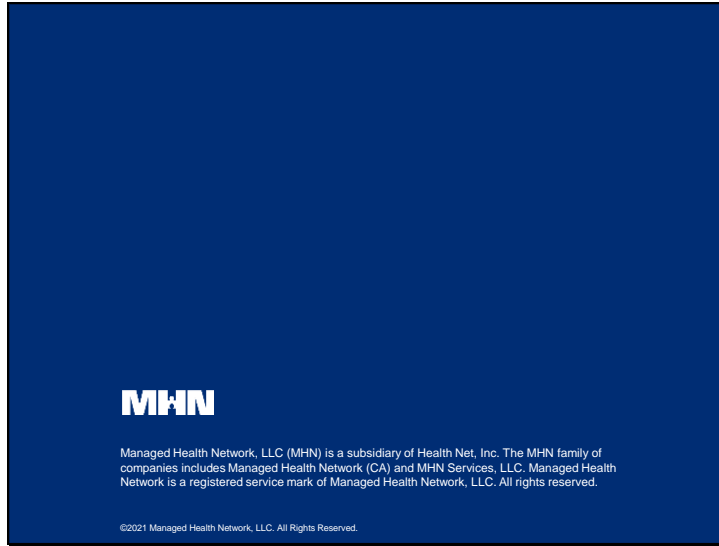
1. The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who you are, by Brene Brown
2. The Art of Extreme Self-Care: Transform Your Life One Month at a Time, by Cheryl Richardson
3. The Power of Habit by Charles Duhigg

Websites

- www.MHN.com
- www.self-compassion.org
- Dietary Guidelines:
<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/dietary-guidelines>
- Physical Activity Guidelines:
<http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/HealthyLiving/PhysicalActivity/FitnessBasics>
- Sleep Guidelines:
<https://sleepfoundation.org/media-center/press-release/national-sleep-foundation-recommends-new-sleep-times>

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Slide 22



Handout A: “Change Your Thinking: Cognitive Reframing”

Reframing is a technique to change the way you look at things in order to feel better about them. There are many ways to interpret the same situation, so pick the perspective that you like! Reframing does not change the external reality, but it helps you view things in a different light and less stressfully.

We all fall into negative thinking that may thwart or derail our best of intentions in diet and exercise changes. The key is to recognize these patterns and re-frame our thoughts into positives. Some examples of cognitive reframing are:

Challenge the “Shoulds”: When “should” is present in a thought, it creates a heavy obligation and unnecessary guilt follows if the “should” is not met. Example: I should always be on time to every meeting.

Also, **watch out for the words “must”, “have to” and “ought to”.** They often substitute for should. If a “should” statement crops up in your thinking, and it represents a genuine value of yours, try replacing the “should” with “want” or “could”. Your statement becomes a desire or intention upon which you choose to act, without the added burden of guilt. Example: I want to be on time to every meeting.

Avoid “All or Nothing” thinking. This pattern can increase the failure rate because a person creates a very rigid “black or white” view towards events or actions in our lives. Example: If I don’t exercise at least four times a week for at least 60 minutes, then my exercise routine is a failure. Again, how could this statement be reframed to be more positive, and thus less stressful?

Re-frame “failures” as new opportunities. Everyone makes mistakes. The key is to learn from the mistakes made, and then move on. Mistakes and failure, while difficult on the ego, can be wonderful chances for learning and new discoveries about yourself or life situations.

Be compassionate with yourself. Don’t beat up on yourself if you have a temporary lapse or make a mistake. Speak to yourself as kindly as you would with your good friends.

Focus on the present. Keep an eye on what you can accomplish today. Try to avoid being preoccupied or worrying about the future (also known as “future tripping”). Tomorrow will come to you tomorrow. You can plan ahead, but focus on living in today.

Embrace optimism: Focus on using positive thinking to aid in reducing stress. “The glass is half full, rather than half empty”.

Handout B: Basic Physical Self-Care Guidelines

If you don't think that you take care of yourself in the ways you want to or know you should, and you're not sure where to begin, start with the basics. These are the things that your doctor would tell you to do if you asked about self-care during an appointment. You don't yet need any compelling self-insight before getting started with these basics.

Note: If you have any health issues or concerns you should seek advice from your doctor before starting an exercise program or making significant changes to your diet.

- Exercise, if you're physically able.
 - If you're already active, great! Exercising at a moderate pace for 30 minutes, 4-5 times per week is a great goal! Strength training a couple of times a week is also recommended.
 - Not active at all? Taking small steps to get started can be a great approach! Begin by taking the stairs at work instead of the elevator. If you park close to the front of your office building, change it up. Park further away. Gradually increase the frequency and length of time that you exercise. A great initial goal is to walk three times a week, beginning at 10 minutes and building up to 30 minutes per walk.
*If you are interested in developing a walking plan check out: *list website link*
- Eat a healthy diet (low in saturated fat and sodium with plenty of fruits and veggies)
 - Taking small steps here is again, a great approach! For instance, if currently you eat only one vegetable or piece of fruit a day, bump it up to two. Do that for a week. And then bump it up again, until you get to 5-7 servings a day. Or, if you currently eat 3 bags of potato chips a week, bring it down to 2... and then 1....
- Sleep seven to eight hours per night.
 - The average person needs 7-8 hours of sleep a night.
- Drink plenty of water.
 - The recommendation is (8) 8 oz. glasses per day. If you exercise a lot, drink more!
- Get routine checks up, being mindful of the types of check-ups/labs etc. that your doctor recommends, based upon your age, health and health history.
- Address any issues you're having with ongoing pain or physical discomfort by seeing your physician.

Resources:

1. Dietary Guidelines: <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/dietary-guidelines>
2. Physical Activity Guidelines:
http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/HealthyLiving/PhysicalActivity/FitnessBasics/American-Heart-Association-Recommendations-for-Physical-Activity-in-Adults_UCM_307976_Article.jsp#.V8X3eo-cH4g
3. Sleep Guidelines: <https://sleepfoundation.org/media-center/press-release/national-sleep-foundation-recommends-new-sleep-times>

Handout C: “Self-Assessment”

The following questions are intended to help you begin homing in on the self-care practices that can make a difference in your life:

1. How have you seen self-care bring positive outcomes to your life?
2. What do I most enjoy doing with my time? (Your answer shouldn't include work or chores.)
3. What activities make my heart feel at rest and at peace?
4. When do I feel most full of life and greatest sense of well-being?
5. When do I feel the tension release from my neck, shoulders, and jaw? What am I doing when this tension goes away?
6. Which people provide me with energy, strength, and hope, and how much time do I spend with them compared to the people who drain my sense of well-being with negativity and guilt?
7. When do I feel my life is full of purpose and meaning?

Adapted from: McCoy, Mary. What Is Self-Care – Definition, Tips & Ideas for a Healthy Life <http://www.moneycrashers.com/self-care-definition-tips-ideas/>. August 8, 2010

Handout D: Self-Compassion Style Assessment

Read the questions under each style. The more questions you relate to and are saying "Yes, that's me!", it's likely that style fits you (circle those that fit). *Try to approach this with curiosity (not self-judgment).*

Style (self-compassion)	Questions
<u>Caregiver</u>	Do you minimize your struggles, thinking other people have it much worse than you do? Do you worry a lot about your loved ones? (If I worry enough, he or she will be safe.) Do you offer a lot of support to others, but perhaps get attached to a specific outcome? Do you feel selfish for taking care of your own needs?
<u>Intellectual</u>	Do you get stuck in your head? Do you obsess a lot? Do you try to solve problems using rational thought?
<u>Perfectionist</u>	Do you feel like you're never good enough? Do you feel inadequate? Do you tend to criticize yourself?
<u>Individualist</u>	Do you have trouble sharing your feelings? Do you value being strong and in control? Do you pride yourself on being self-reliant?
<u>Survivor</u>	Do you feel you don't deserve <u>love</u> and attention? Do you <i>feel</i> badly about yourself, therefore you think you <i>are</i> bad? When you start to be kind to yourself, do you experience intense/unpredictable feelings? Do you tend to shut down emotionally, even when feeling good?
<u>Workhorse</u>	Do you have trouble slowing down? Are you constantly working? Are you frequently in the "doing" mode versus the "being" mode?
<u>Butterfly</u>	Do you easily grow tired of things? Do you have difficulty following through with projects? Do you tend to jump from one thing to another? Do you have trouble with consistency?
<u>Outsider</u>	Do you feel like you don't fit in? Do you feel invisible? Do you feel disconnected, not whole?
<u>Floater</u>	Do you live in the moment? Do you have trouble committing yourself to one thing? Do others describe you as easy-going, even detached? Do you have trouble making decisions?
<u>Moralist</u>	Do you become easily indignant with people when they behave badly? Do you have a strict sense of right and wrong? Do you feel surprised when people don't behave as you think they should? Do you feel disillusioned by others? Do you avoid taking care of yourself because it feels self-indulgent?
<u>Introvert and Extravert</u>	Are you energized by your inner life? Are you energized by time alone? If so, you're likely an introvert. Are you energized by being around other people? If so, you're likely an extravert.

Source: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/living-the-questions/201405/quiz-whats-your-self-compassion-style>

Style	Self-Care Tips
<u>Caregiver</u>	Remember, you have to put your oxygen mask on first, before you can help others. Taking care of yourself will put you in a better position to take care of others effectively. Realize you may not know the best outcome; it's tough, but letting go of control is often what's needed.
<u>Intellectual</u>	Realize that not everything can be solved; some things just are. Emotions can be difficult and messy, but they can be great sources of information and a pathway to healing.
<u>Perfectionist</u>	To be human is to be imperfect; we are all in the same boat. Forgive yourself for any mistakes you've made (or think you've made). There's no perfect way to do self-care!
<u>Individualist</u>	Consider how good you feel when you help others; give this same opportunity to others and reach out for help. Know that it's not a sign of weakness to ask for support. It's often a sign of strength.
<u>Survivor</u>	Give yourself permission to practice self-care and self-compassion in small doses at first. "Shutting down" can be a survival method you've learned; reassure yourself that you're safe now. Self-criticism is common if you've heard negative messages repeatedly as a child. Realize that these "voices" are from long ago.
<u>Workhorse</u>	There will never be the perfect time to take care of yourself. Something will always get in the way if you let it. Watch out for turning your self-care practice into just another thing to check off your to-do list.
<u>Butterfly</u>	Consider the true cost of jumping from one activity to another (you never get the full benefit of one particular practice). Utilize the support of others to help you stick to one thing (for example, meeting a friend for a yoga class).
<u>Outsider</u>	Notice the circumstances when you most feel you don't fit in. Allow yourself to experience your feelings with as much tenderness as possible. Remember that it's okay to be different. Many of our great works of art and music, for example, were created by unique souls who may not have fit into conventional society. In other words, it's okay to be weird!
<u>Floater</u>	Watch out for "easy-going-ness" turning into passivity or avoidance. Ask yourself, "What matters most?" to help guide you in your self-care and compassion practice.
<u>Moralist</u>	Ask yourself whether your preoccupation with other's behavior leads to suffering for yourself? All of us have the seeds of bad behavior within us; if we acknowledge this fact, we're more likely to be compassionate to ourselves when we make mistakes.
<u>Introvert and Extravert</u>	Find a healthy balance between solitude and time with others. No two people will have the exact same ratio of alone time to people time; that's okay. You may need different things (alone time/time with others) depending on the day and the circumstance.

Now consider the following questions...

Which of these personality styles predominate in your own life?

How have your predominant styles helped with taking care of yourself?

How have your predominant styles hindered your taking care of yourself?

Are the tips useful? Can you think of others?

Handout E: 45 Simple Self-Care Practices for a Healthy Mind, Body, and Soul

By Ellen Bard

It's the constant repetition of many tiny habits, which together soothe you and make sure you're at your optimum—emotionally, physically, and mentally. The best way to do this is to implement tiny self-care habits every day. To regularly include in your life a little bit of love and attention for your own body, mind, and soul.

The following ideas are tiny self-care activities you can fit into a short amount of time, usually with little cost. Pick one from each category, and include them in your life this week.

TINY SELF-CARE IDEAS FOR THE MIND

- 1. Start a compliments file.** Document the great things people say about you to read later.
- 2. Scratch off a *lurker* on your to-do list,** something that's been there for ages and you'll never do.
- 3. Change up the way you make decisions.** Decide something with your heart if you usually use your head. Or if you tend to go with your heart, decide with your head.
- 4. Go cloud-watching.** Lie on your back, relax, and watch the sky.
- 5. Take another route to work.** Mixing up your routine in small ways creates new neural pathways in the brain to keep it healthy.
- 6. Pay complete attention to something you usually do on autopilot,** perhaps brushing your teeth, driving, eating, or performing your morning routine.
- 7. Goof around for a bit.** Schedule in five minutes of “play” (non-directed activity) several times throughout your day.
- 8. Create a deliberate habit,** and routinize something small in your life by doing it in the same way each day—what you wear on Tuesdays, or picking up the dental floss before you brush.
- 9. Fix a small annoyance at home that's been nagging you**—a button lost, a drawer that's stuck, a light bulb that's gone.
- 10. Punctuate your day with a mini-meditation** with one minute of awareness of your thoughts, feelings, and sensations; one minute of focused attention on breathing; and one minute of awareness of the body as a whole.
- 11. Be selfish.** Do one thing today just because it makes you happy.
- 12. Do a mini-declutter.** Recycle three things from your wardrobe that you don't love or regularly wear.
- 13. Unplug for an hour.** Switch everything to airplane mode and free yourself from the constant *pings* of social media and email.

14. Get out of your comfort zone, even if it's just talking to a stranger at the bus stop.

15. Edit your social media feeds, and take out any negative people. You can just “mute” them; you don't have to delete them.

TINY SELF-CARE IDEAS FOR THE BODY

1. Give your body ten minutes of mindful attention. Use the body scan technique to check in with each part of your body.

2. Oxygenate by taking three deep breaths. Breathe into your abdomen, and let the air puff out your stomach and chest.

3. Get down and boogie. Put on your favorite upbeat record and shake your booty.

4. Stretch out the kinks. If you're at work, you can always head to the bathroom to avoid strange looks.

5. Run (or walk, depending on your current physical health) for a few minutes. Or go up and down the stairs three times.

6. Narrow your food choices. Pick two healthy breakfasts, lunches, and dinners and rotate for the week.

7. Activate your self-soothing system. Stroke your own arm, or if that feels too weird, moisturize.

8. Get to know yourself intimately. Look lovingly and without judgment at yourself naked. (Use a mirror to make sure you get to know all of you!)

9. Make one small change to your diet for the week. Drink an extra glass of water each day, or have an extra portion of veggies each meal.

10. Give your body a treat. Pick something from your wardrobe that feels great next to your skin.

11. Be still. Sit somewhere green, and be quiet for a few minutes.

12. Get fifteen minutes of sun, especially if you're in a cold climate. (Use sunscreen if appropriate.)

13. Inhale an upbeat smell. Try peppermint to suppress food cravings and boost mood and motivation.

14. Have a good laugh. Read a couple of comic strips that you enjoy. (For inspiration, try Calvin and Hobbes, Dilbert, or another.)

15. Take a quick nap. Ten to twenty minutes can reduce your sleep debt and leave you ready for action.

TINY SELF-CARE IDEAS FOR THE SOUL

- 1. Imagine you're your best friend.** If you were, what would you tell yourself right now? Look in the mirror and say it.
- 2. Use your commute for a "Beauty Scavenger Hunt."** Find five unexpected beautiful things on your way to work.
- 3. Help someone.** Carry a bag, open a door, or pick up an extra carton of milk for a neighbor.
- 4. Check in with your emotions.** Sit quietly and just name without judgment what you're feeling.
- 5. Write out your thoughts.** Go for fifteen minutes on anything bothering you. Then let it go as you burn or bin the paper.
- 6. Choose who you spend your time with today.** Hang out with "Radiators" who emit enthusiasm and positivity, and not "Drains" whose pessimism and negativity robs energy.
- 7. Stroke a pet.** If you don't have one, go to the park and find one. (Ask first!)
- 8. Get positive feedback.** Ask three good friends to tell you what they love about you.
- 9. Make a small connection.** Have a few sentences of conversation with someone in customer service such as a sales assistant or barista.
- 10. Splurge a little.** Buy a small luxury as a way of valuing yourself.
- 11. Have a self-date.** Spend an hour alone doing something that nourishes you (reading, your hobby, visiting a museum or gallery, etc.)
- 12. Exercise a signature strength.** Think about what you're good at, and find an opportunity for it today.
- 13. Take a home spa.** Have a long bath or shower, sit around in your bathrobe, and read magazines.
- 14. Ask for help**—big or small, but reach out.
- 15. Plan a two-day holiday for next weekend.** Turn off your phone, tell people you'll be away, and then do something new in your own town.

LITTLE AND OFTEN WINS THE DAY

With a little bit of attention to your own self-care, the fog will lift.

You'll feel more connected to yourself and the world around you.

You'll delight in small pleasures, and nothing will seem quite as difficult as it did before.

Like that car, you must keep yourself tuned up and not wait until you need a complete overhaul.

Incorporating a few of these tiny self-care ideas in your day will help keep you in tune.

Source: <http://tinybuddha.com/blog/45-simple-self-care-practices-for-a-healthy-mind-body-and-soul/>

Handout F: Self-Care Actions Steps

If you're ready to take a step or to make a commitment to yourself, write it down in the space provided. Make it as specific as possible and include when you'll do it!

Example (Specific)	Example (Vague)
I will set my alarm 20 minutes earlier each morning (Monday through Friday) so that I can drink my coffee leisurely for that 20 minutes. I'll start tomorrow morning.	I will get up earlier every morning.

Write steps/commitments you are ready to take. Include <i>when</i> you plan to do it!
1.
2.

If you're not ready to take a step, write down what your concern is and then answer the question: what might you try if the concern (or obstacle) didn't exist? Or, how might you work around that obstacle or constraint?

Sample Statement (concern/obstacle)	Ask Question	Answer
I don't think I can realistically carve out 15-20 minutes a day.	If that thought didn't exist, what would you try?	I would eat lunch away from my desk every day so that I actually take a lunch break.

Statement	Ask Question	Answer
1.	If that thought didn't exist, what would you try?	
2.	If that thought didn't exist, what would you try?	