



ASSESSING SELF-CARE

Given the physical, psychological, spiritual, and emotional stresses of our work, there isn't one of us who doesn't need to improve in some area of self-care. Workers/Caregivers are notoriously poor at self-care and too often get worse rather than better as their work responsibilities increase.

Many workers only implement those types of self-care that directly help others (e.g. "I'll take time off when I am sick because that models self-care to my clients"). Work is a part of life, but not its totality. We need a balance between work and leisure, action and reflection, giving and taking. Integrate all of the many aspects of ourselves. We are serious, playful, careful, spontaneous, sexual, intellectual and much, much more. We are complex and we are human. Our self-care needs to reflect our diversity and complexity.

The following pages to assess your self-care are not exhaustive, merely suggestive. Feel free to add areas of self-care that are relevant for you and rate yourself on how often and how well you are taking care of yourself these days.

When you are finished, look for patterns in your responses. Are you more active in some areas of care and ignore others? Are there items on the list that make you think, "I would never do that"? Listen to your inner responses, your internal dialogue about self-care and making yourself a priority.

Rate the following areas in frequency:

- 5 = Frequently
- 4 = Occasionally
- 3 = Rarely
- 2 = Never
- 1 = It never occurred to me

PHYSICAL SELF-CARE

___ Eat regularly (e.g. breakfast, lunch and dinner)

- ___ Eat healthily
- ___ Exercise
- ___ Get regular medical care for prevention
- ___ Get medical care when needed
- ___ Take time off when sick
- ___ Get massages
- ___ Dance, swim, walk, run, play sports, sing, or do some fun other physical activity
- ___ Take time to be sexual – with yourself, with a partner
- ___ Get enough sleep
- ___ Wear clothes you like
- ___ Take holidays
- ___ Take day trips or mini-holidays
- ___ Make time away from telephones
- ___ Other:

PSYCHOLOGICAL SELF-CARE

- ___ Make time for self-reflection
- ___ Have your own personal therapy
- ___ Write in a journal
- ___ Decrease stress in your life
- ___ Notice your inner experience – listen to your thoughts, judgements, beliefs, attitudes and feelings
- ___ Let others know different aspects of you

- ___ Engage your intelligence in a new area, e.g. go to an art museum, history exhibit, sports event, auction, theatre
- ___ Practice receiving from others
- ___ Be curious
- ___ Say no to extra responsibilities sometimes
- ___ Other:

EMOTIONAL SELF-CARE

- ___ Spend time with others whose company you enjoy
- ___ Stay in contact with important people in your life
- ___ Give yourself affirmations, praise yourself
- ___ Love yourself
- ___ Reread favourite books, re-view favourite movies
- ___ Identify comforting activities, objects, people, relationships, places and seek them out
- ___ Allow yourself to cry
- ___ Find things that make you laugh
- ___ Express your outrage in social action, letters, donations, marches, protests
- ___ Play with children
- ___ Other:
- ___ Spend time with nature
- ___ Find a spiritual connection or community
- ___ Be open to inspiration

- ___ Cherish your optimism and hope
- ___ Be aware of nonmaterial aspects of life
- ___ Try at times not to be in charge or the expert
- ___ Be open to not knowing
- ___ Identify what is meaningful to you and notice its place in your life
- ___ Meditate
- ___ Prayer
- ___ Sing
- ___ Spend time with children
- ___ Have experiences of awe
- ___ Contribute to causes in which you believe
- ___ Read inspirational literature (talks, music, etc.)
- ___ Other:

WORKPLACE OR PROFESSIONAL SELF-CARE

- ___ Take a break during the workday (e.g. lunch)
- ___ Take time to chat with co-workers
- ___ Make quiet time to complete tasks
- ___ Identify projects or tasks that are exciting and rewarding
- ___ Set limits with clients and colleagues
- ___ Balance your caseload so no one day or part of day is “too much”
- ___ Arrange your work space so it is comfortable and comforting

- ___ Have a peer support group
- ___ Develop a non-trauma area of professional interest
- ___ Other:

BALANCE

- ___ Strive for balance within your work-life and workday
- ___ Strive for balance among work, family, relationships, play, and rest

OTHER AREAS OF SELF-CARE THAT ARE RELEVANT TO YOU