

### What is self-care?

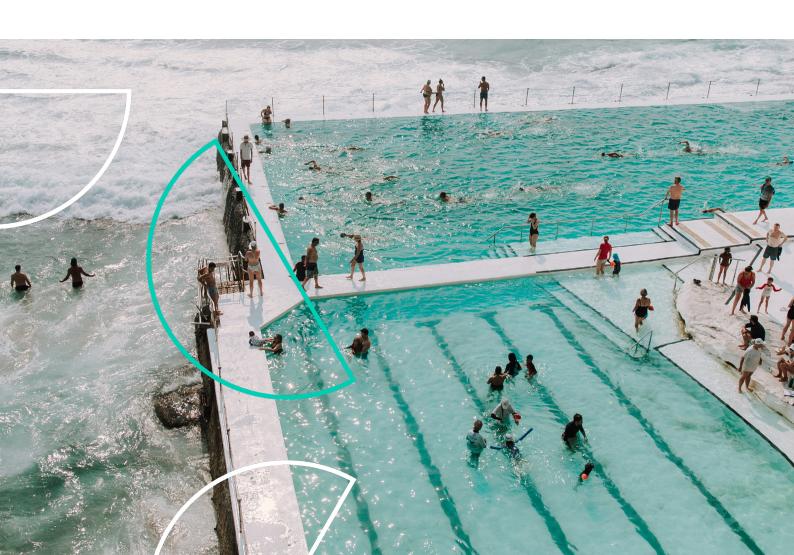
Self-care refers to activities that support and enhance our physical, emotional, social and mental health, and overall wellbeing. It is an ongoing commitment to look after ourselves through helpful practices and actions that protect us during periods of stress.

Paying attention to what is happening to us physically, socially and emotionally helps to identify when something is impacting us. It is important to take time out when we need it to reduce feelings of stress and protect our mental health and wellbeing.

# When should you practice self-care?

Self-care differs for everyone and isn't just in response to stress or challenges. It is about participating in activities that improve our mental and emotional wellbeing on a day-to-day basis. This helps to limit a negative outcome that may develop in response to the stressor and promote positive effects through enhancing our wellbeing.

Self-care is not an 'emergency response plan' to be activated when stress becomes overwhelming. Instead, it is an intentional way of living by our values, attitudes and actions and integrating them into our day-to-day routines.



# Ways to practice self-care

Self-care can be considered within the following domains. It is important to identify activities and behaviours that work for us as individuals and will be most beneficial for our own personal wellbeing.

Here are some examples of activities that might inspire your own.



### **Physical**

- · Getting enough sleep
- Eating nutritious foods and a balanced diet
- · Moving the body, e.g. stretching, walking, playing sport, gardening



### Relationships and connecting with others

- Spending time with family and friends
- Joining a group or taking part in community activities
- Recognising when help from others is needed and reaching out for support



#### Work

- Communicating with supervisors to ensure workload is manageable
- · Implementing organisational or time management practices or tools
- Taking regular breaks and allocating time outside of work for enjoyable activities



### Thoughts and emotions

- Being self-aware and practising mindful reflection, e.g. journaling, mindfulness
- Using gratitude to focus on positive emotions
- Understanding that negative emotions are normal and can be worked through, but recognising when support may be needed to manage them



### **Spirituality**

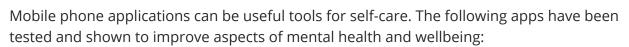
- · Taking time for regular spiritual practice
- Meditating
- · Spending time in nature
- Connecting with places that help to feel calm and safe

# How can self-care be incorporated into our lives?

Incorporate self-care by identifying activities and behaviours that will benefit our wellbeing and that we can practically implement. A 'self-care action plan' can be a valuable tool and reminder to incorporate self-care activities into our lives.

My self-care action plan				
Self-care domain	My self-care goal	What do I need to achieve this goal?	How can I achieve this goal?	How did achieving this self- care goal make me feel?
Physical	Example: Attend a gym class once a week	Example: Scheduled time to go when I don't have other commitments	Example: Organise for partner to pick up kids on a Tuesday. Pack change of clothes and go straight after work.	Example: Energised and calm
Relationships				
Work				
Thoughts and emotions				
Spirituality				

# Self-care apps





- MoodGYM: a free, structured five-module course covering information, assessments, self-help skills and exercises.
- MyCompass: a free resource with a focus on building resilience and good mental health providing tips and exercises to maintain good mental health.
- **Sleep Ninja:** a free, evidence-based smartphone app to help young people develop healthy sleep habits and improve sleep quality.
- **HeadGear:** designed with a male audience in mind, but suitable for all adults, this app guides users through daily activities to support mental fitness and resilience.
- **Smiling Mind:** a free mindfulness app that has been shown to has been shown to help manage stress, resilience, anxiety and depression, and improve general health and wellbeing.

## **Support services**

There are a number of 24/7 support services available by phone with further information and resources listed online. Talking to a family member, a friend, your doctor or one of the many 24/7 services available can make all the difference.

#### Adult

Lifeline: 13 11 14 | Text 0477 131 114

lifeline.org.au

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467

suicidecallbackservice.org.au

Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636

beyondblue.org.au/forums

MensLine Australia: 1300 789 978

mensline.org.au

**Standby Support After Suicide:** 

1300 727 247

#### Youth

Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800

kidshelpline.com.au

headspace: 1800 650 890

headspace.org.au

ReachOut: Reachout.com

#### Other

Head to Health: mental health portal

headtohealth.gov.au

Life in Mind: suicide prevention portal

lifeinmind.org.au

**SANE:** 1800 187 263 | saneforums.org

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander: 13YARN.org.au | 13 92 76

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex: 1800 184 527 | qlife.org.au

Culturally and linguistically diverse: embracementalhealth.org.au

Everymind acknowledges the contribution of the Life in Mind Champions and their input into the development of this resource.



<sup>\*</sup>Everymind encourages the use of apps that have been tested and are evidence-based, however does not endorse one app over another.