



Life in Mind

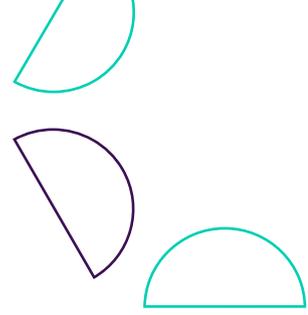
A guide to self-care



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What is self-care?



Self-care refers to activities that preserve and maintain one's physical, emotional and mental health. It is an ongoing commitment to look after yourself through helpful behaviours that protect your health during periods of stress.

Paying attention to what is happening to your body, both physically and emotionally, helps you to identify when something is affecting you. It is important to take time out when you need it to reduce feelings of stress and protect your mental health.

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.

When should you practice self-care?

Self-care is different for everyone and isn't just for reacting to stress. It is about participating in activities that improve your mental and emotional wellbeing. There is no specific time frame or frequency for it to occur, but it is important to try and practice self-care everyday.

Self-care isn't designed to be an emergency stress relief plan. It is something that can be incorporated into everyday activities to maintain a positive wellbeing.

How can self-care be incorporated into your life?

Self-care can be incorporated into your life by listening to your body, heart, mind and the voices of trusted friends. However, it is up to you to identify activities and behaviours that will be most beneficial to your own wellbeing.

A 'self-care plan' can become a valuable reminder of:

- Practical ways and activities that support your wellbeing
- A trusted support person you can contact
- Ways to look after yourself to get through difficult times
- Who you can contact in an emergency

Some activities such as ongoing social support, mindfulness exercises and physical activities are known to support and maintain physical and mental health.

There is no formula for self-care. Each self-care plan will be unique and change over time. Ultimately, self-care is identifying activities that support your wellbeing.

Ways to incorporate self-care into your life?

People benefit from self-care activities and actions in different ways. It is important to identify activities and behaviours that will be most beneficial to your own wellbeing.

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



Physical

- Make time for activities you enjoy and that help you to relax.
- Monitor and manage your stress in positive ways e.g. meditation, walking.
- Ensure you have enough sleep and rest.



Relationships

- Spend time with family and friends. Close personal relationships can be especially important during challenging times.
- Recognise when you need help from others and ask for support. This can be from friends, family, a GP, a psychologist or another health professional.



Work-life balance

- Try to achieve a balance between your professional role and your personal life, and leave space outside of work for things you enjoy.
- Get involved and join a group with common interests.



Spirituality

- If you have spiritual beliefs, take time for regular spiritual practice or spend time with others who share your beliefs.

Find self-care activities that work for you and your needs, listen to your own mental and physical health and take time out when you need it.

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.

Support services

Lifeline: [13 11 14](tel:131114) lifeline.org.au

Suicide Call Back Service: [1300 659 467](tel:1300659467) suicidecallbackservice.org.au

Beyond Blue: [1300 224 636](tel:1300224636) beyondblue.org.au

Kids Helpline: [1800 551 800](tel:1800551800) kidshelpline.com.au

headspace: [1800 650 890](tel:1800650890) headspace.org.au

ReachOut: ReachOut.com

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander: healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and intersex: [1800 184 527](tel:1800184527) qlife.org.au

Culturally and linguistically diverse: mhima.org.au

Other resources

Head to Health: headtohealth.gov.au

Life in Mind: lifeinmindaustralia.com.au

SANE: saneforums.org

Self-help 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.

Snapshot: adults can measure and monitor mental health and lifestyle factors that influence wellbeing.

ToolBox: allows young people to work out health and wellbeing goals, then download recommended Apps for each goal.

A guide: Self-care action plan

My self-care action plan			
My self-care goal	What do I need to achieve this goal?	How can I achieve this goal?	How did completing this self-care goal make me feel?
<i>Example: Read a book in the garden</i>	<i>Example: Time away from the children</i>	<i>Example: Ask my partner to look after the children</i>	<i>Example: Relaxed and calm</i>

More information

To access further self-care information please visit: www.lifeinmindaustralia.com.au.

For more information on the *Life in Mind* National Communications Charter Champions, please visit: www.lifeinmindaustralia.com.au/the-charter/champions.