

1 Physical self-care plan

What is self-care?

When you take the time to do things to improve your mood and lower your stress levels, you are practising self-care. It is the action you take to maintain or improve your mental, emotional and physical health, especially during times of stress.

Use this worksheet to create a self-care plan. It's easy to say you want to take more time for yourself, but it can often be hard to actually find the time. You will have to consciously make the time and set self-care goals.

As a caregiver, if you are not physically well, you will not be able to take care of your loved one.

What do I already do to stay healthy? Check all that apply.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I eat a well-balanced diet that includes a variety of fruits and vegetables, proteins, whole grains and healthy fats. | <input type="checkbox"/> I exercise for 30 minutes at least three times a week. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I drink at least eight 8-oz glasses of water or fluid a day (an 8x8 goal). | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not smoke or use tobacco. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I sleep well each night and wake up feeling rested. | <input type="checkbox"/> I only drink alcohol in moderation. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> I keep up with my own medical needs, such as getting an annual checkup from my primary care provider and getting regular dental cleanings. |

Did you leave statements unchecked? If so, you may need to consider improving those aspects of physical self-care. Talk to your primary care provider about ways to improve your health and well-being.

My goals for physical self-care.

How can I improve my physical well-being?

Example: Drink more water to stay hydrated.

My short-term goals to improve my physical well-being.

Example: I will keep a water bottle with me throughout the day.

2

Mental and emotional self-care plan

Taking care of your mental and emotional health is just as important as caring for your physical health. It's important to take time for yourself each day and to keep up with activities that you enjoy. With the daily responsibilities of caregiving, you may forget to do these things.

Activities that I enjoy. Check all that apply.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listening to music, playing an instrument or singing | <input type="checkbox"/> Activities with friends or family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading or listening to audiobooks | <input type="checkbox"/> Practicing personal care, such as taking long baths, having manicures or using face masks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exercising or participating in group exercise classes | <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking or baking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playing sports or organized games with friends | <input type="checkbox"/> Watching movies or TV shows |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking, fishing, or other outdoor sports | <input type="checkbox"/> Playing video or computer games |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meditating or practicing yoga | <input type="checkbox"/> Yard work or gardening |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Painting, drawing, or other artistic pursuits | <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Journaling or creative writing | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attending religious or spiritual services | _____ |

Any of these activities can be part of a self-care plan. Pick one or two of your favorite activities and make them a priority in your day-to-day life.

My goals for emotional self-care.

I will set aside time to _____ once a day.

Examples: Drink coffee on the front porch, meditate and stretch, write in a journal.

I will set aside time to _____ once a week.

Examples: Have dinner with friends, attend a religious or spiritual service, go to an art or exercise class.

Change the activity and frequency to accommodate your lifestyle and needs, but do make sure that you make the time for yourself.

3 Stay calm strategy

When caring for a loved one with cancer, there will be times that are difficult and emotional. It's unavoidable. Prepare for these moments by having a strategy in place to help yourself calm down if you feel anxious or overwhelmed. Having a plan, in advance will help you better manage unexpected intense emotions.

Try these activities.

- Do a breathing exercise.
- Repeat a meaningful mantra, affirmation or prayer.
- Close your eyes and sit in silence.
- Stand up and stretch.
- Take a quick walk outside.
- Call a close friend or family member.

When I feel overwhelmed I will

4 Ask for help and delegate tasks

As a primary caregiver for a loved one with cancer, you may worry that if you don't take care of your loved one, then no one else will. More than likely, there are friends and family members who really want to help—they just may not know how, so let them know!

Tasks I could delegate to someone else.

Task	Helper	Notes
<i>Example: Take John to appointment on Monday.</i>	<i>Aunt Susan</i>	<i>Aunt Susan doesn't work on Mondays and lives close by.</i>



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