Self-Care Tips
for Youth & Young Adults

If you search the internet for "*What is self-care?*" you will get a lot of different responses! In recent years, the buzz around self-care has really taken off. We hear more and more about it – but do we understand it? Do we practice it? Where do we even begin?
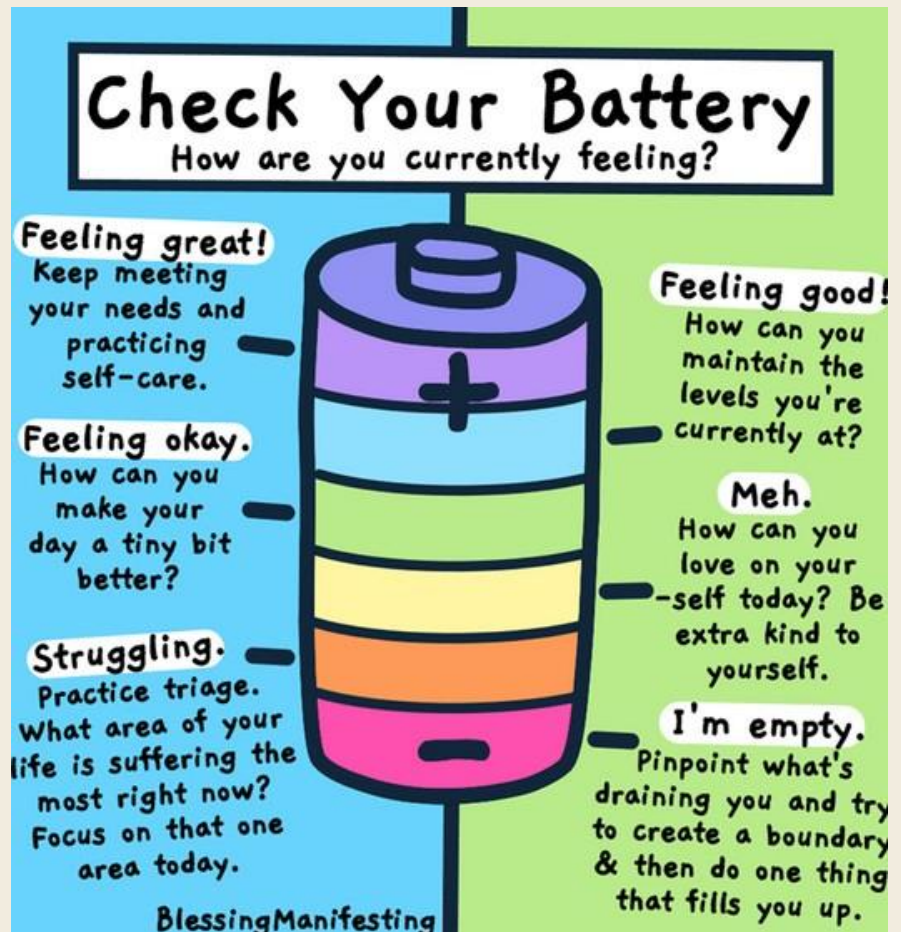
Definition

Self-care can be defined in terms of physical or mental well-being, but at its most basic, self-care is comprised of "productive strategies for staying physically, emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually healthy" (AAS, 2013).

Stress

Stress is your body's way of preparing for a threat or a challenge ("fight or flight").

Too much stress can wear on the body and can lead to heart trouble, headaches, ulcers, depression, anxiety, and many other types of problems.

Check Your Battery
How are you currently feeling?

Feeling great! Keep meeting your needs and practicing self-care.

Feeling okay. How can you make your day a tiny bit better?

Struggling. Practice triage. What area of your life is suffering the most right now? Focus on that one area today.

Feeling good! How can you maintain the levels you're currently at?

Meh. How can you love on yourself today? Be extra kind to yourself.

I'm empty. Pinpoint what's draining you and try to create a boundary & then do one thing that fills you up.

BlessingManifesting

Assessing Your Own Self-Care

Often, the first step to figuring out our self-care plans is "self-assessment." The word "assessment" is not a comfortable one for many young people - many of us have filled out countless surveys, intake forms, and scales about how we feel, what we do, and who we are. It can be empowering for many young people to "take back" this idea of assessment. It can be like a self-check-in! In fact, journaling, keeping a mood diary, or habit tracking are all forms of self-assessment. Try the resource below to check in with yourself and maybe you'll find something new to add to your own plan for self-care.

Self Care Assessment Worksheet https://www.mentoring.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/MARCH_2015_Self_Care_Assessment.pdf

Acknowledging your own limits

Discussing strong emotions that may come up

Planning leisure time and activities you enjoy into your schedule

Taking care of yourself physically

Reframing negative topics you may be working on

Being aware of your own thoughts outside of work

Practicing mindfulness and meditation techniques

Finding distractions

DIMENSIONS OF WELLNESS

Traditional wellness models have focused on basic physical fitness and nutrition and considered a person "well" if they were free of illness or disease. While physical wellness is important, we've come to realize that there are many other dimensions of wellness, and they all interact and affect others. SAMHSA has identified eight dimensions of wellness to focus on to optimize health.

Physical – **Nutrition, sleep, movement**
Emotional – **Coping effectively with life and creating satisfying relationships**
Financial – **Satisfaction with current and future financial situations**
Social – **A sense of connection, belonging, and a well-developed support system**
Spiritual – **Expanding one's sense of purpose and meaning in life**
Occupational – **Satisfaction and enrichment derived from one's work**
Intellectual – **Recognizing creative abilities and finding ways to expand knowledge and skills**
Environmental – **Occupying pleasant and stimulating environments that support well-being**

Reflection Activity

Personal Mission Statement

Objective: **To reflect and create a personal mission statement to ground participants in their purpose when youth work is hard. These statements can and should be revisited, reassessed, and reworked over time with more experience and as roles change.**

Source: **Worcester Youth Workers' Alliance. Worcester, MA. November 2018.**

Instructions: **On the following worksheet, answer the questions in the first 2 boxes honestly and authentically to craft your own personal mission statement in the third box. Keep this worksheet close by so you can revisit it from time to time.**

Example: **I am a supportive young adult who values kindness, empathy, tactful criticism, and self-care. I believe no young person wakes up and wants to be unsafe or unloved; Every young person, with the right positive support, can live their fullest life and be a valued member of beloved community.**

My Personal Mission Statement

Who am I?

What do I stand for?

What do I do?

Why do I do it?

Nouns that describe you:

Successes you've had with youth:

What are your values?

How do you impact others in your work?

Write your personal mission statement here: