

Dec  
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# Self-care

Give and accept support for self-care

When you consider what has happened in the last year or so, you may find yourself struggling to keep your head above water. This can present itself as anxiety or feeling overwhelmed with both small and large events in your life. These feelings are unhealthy if they affect your quality of life and prevent you from functioning normally. When you feel overwhelmed, there are many things you can do to help yourself and those you care for. One of the biggest ways to cope with stress is practicing good self-care.

Self-care can help you manage stress, lower your risk of illness, and increase your energy. Even small acts of self-care in your daily life can have a big impact. One of the first steps is to identify where in your life you need attention. Self-care looks different for everyone, and it may take trial and error to discover what works best for you. Looking at your whole self can help with this. Ask yourself, "Do I need more sleep, exercise, or interaction with others? Do I need more quiet time that doesn't isolate me, but allows me to relax and focus on things that matter?"

Refrain from relying on bad habits that are not healthy ways to engage in self-care. Practicing unhealthy habits are a way to avoid your struggles instead of dealing with them. Are you drinking one too many glasses of wine? Perhaps you are watching too much TV or staying online to avoid your stress. If these things are happening, then it's time to listen to your internal voice, and reach out for help if necessary.

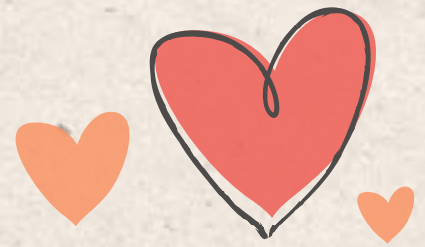
The same applies if you see someone else struggling with their emotions or daily life. Look for signs, even in nonverbal communication. Remember to ask the obvious questions as well as the not-so-obvious such as, "How are you doing? What has life been like for you lately? Are you getting enough time in your week to do you?"

If you learn to pay attention to signs of distress in others you will likely pay close attention to your own signs. If you would tell someone to go seek help for an overwhelming situation, be sure you can take that same advice. We can't share with others a resource that we lack ourselves. Talk about your concerns with a medical provider, who can refer you to a mental health specialist if needed.



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## 31 Day Self-care Challenge

- Make a list of things you're grateful for
- Restart an old hobby
- Make a music playlist
- Eat your favorite dinner
- Take a walk outside in nature
- Go an hour without any technology
- Make a list of your future plans
- Binge watch your favorite TV show
- Try out a new recipe
- Dress up in your favorite outfit
- Go a whole day without social media
- Listen to your favorite podcast
- Write down all your thoughts on a blank sheet
- Pick up a new skill or hobby
- Remove all unwanted apps and push notifications from your phone
- Message 3 of your friends to say hi
- Clean something for 20 minutes
- Do a quick workout
- Mail a letter to a family member or friend
- Watch your favorite movie
- Deep clean your living space
- Eat your favorite dessert
- Clean out your junk drawer
- Look at some old photos
- Stop procrastinating on something
- Plan a vacation
- Try doing some yoga
- Read a favorite childhood book
- Create a vision board
- Have a spa night
- Choose your favorite challenges and do them again!

Text, call, or chat online with the [NAMI HelpLine](#) if you need support.

Read this [article](#) to learn how to manage holiday stress.

Allow yourself a few moments to relax with this guided meditation [video](#).

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