

Self-Care Essentials

Low-Time Commitment
Low-Cost

Most women struggle with creating time and giving themselves permission for self-care, so it's important you understand that self-care is mutually beneficial – it's NOT selfish. When you make yourself feel good, you allow the people who rely on you to benefit as well. When you run on empty, those in your life feel it, no matter how hard you try to hide it or take pride in being a martyr. You must continue to take care of yourself so you will be emotionally and mentally present for those who need you.

When you feel burnt out, stressed, depressed, etc., take that as a sign that it's time to dial up the self-care – while also allowing yourself to feel all your feelings!

Self-care falls into four buckets. You'll feel your best if you contribute to each bucket daily, including:

1. Physical.
2. Mental.
3. Emotional.
4. Spiritual.

Make a list of what fills your soul for each of these four areas so when you start to feel stressed, overwhelmed, blah, or in need of some love, you can quickly glance at your list and be in action to turn things around.

Here are 13 low-cost, low-time commitment self-care essentials:

1. Take a 5-Senses Shower.

- *FEEL* the water against your skin. Tenderly massage the shampoo around your scalp. Lather soap on your body with the love and care you give to a newborn baby.
- *SMELL* the natural scents of your shampoo or shower gel.
- *SEE* the water droplets dance and change shape as they land on your body or the ground.

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- *HEAR* the quiet behind the sound of the shower. Notice any other sounds you hear, being mindful to solely witness any sounds, rather than attach to or create a story around them.
- Open your mouth and *TASTE* the water (as long as you're not in Mexico!). What does it taste like?
- Compliment one part of your body. See its beauty, wonder, and magnificence.

2. Ensure you have something to look forward to tomorrow.

If there's nothing on your schedule, build it in: a special cup of your favorite tea in the afternoon, a lunch or Facetime date with a friend, 5-minute end-of-work-day transition dance party, new Netflix show snuggle time with hubby once the kiddos are down, take-out from your favorite Thai restaurant for dinner, a 30-minute stop at your favorite art gallery on the way home... Choose something that gets you excited to keep you energized throughout the day.

3. Leave space in your schedule for lazy mornings or weekend afternoons.

Extra couch cuddles with your kids or an afternoon nap with your beloved will fill your soul(s).

4. Set a gratitude alarm clock to go off 3 times throughout the day.

When it goes off, check in with the thoughts going through your head. Are you focusing on what you want to create more of in your life? If not, don't beat yourself up. Right now, I'm only asking you to notice what you're thinking about and focusing on, because awareness is the first step to any change. And where our focus goes, energy flows. To bring your focus to creating more good, list three things you are grateful for right here, right now. Write them down in a gratitude journal, tell them to a friend, or get your kids involved in the fun.

5. Watch the sun rise outside or by a window.

Take in the rich colors, sounds, and the world waking up. Be open to the possibility that comes with every new beginning, including every new day.

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6. Watch the sun set.

Consciously close out all the events of your day as you witness nature do its magic. Let all that happened in your day be, knowing that it unfolded just as it was meant to. Trust that the life lessons you learned will support you as you prepare for restful sleep.

7. Meditate for 5 – 10 minutes first thing in the morning.

This is a daily non-negotiable. If you only complete one self-care act on this list, let this be the one.

8. Spread an act of kindness.

Send an appreciation text. Call a friend or family member who's on your mind or may be lonely. Give a 100% tip for your take-out food. Take out the garbage for a neighbor. Bonus points if its anonymous!

9. Identify: What's the one thing I can do right now to make me feel good?

Then go do it! Think long-term good, not instant gratification. Six cookies can make us feel good in the moment, but after the sugar high ends, we tend to crash and feel worse. Self-care is about long-term well-being and abundance.

10. Mindfully enjoy a treat.

Have one cookie, glass of wine, or a fully loaded slice of pizza. Instead of shoveling it in your mouth in front of your computer, do nothing else but eat/drink it and take in every single bite like it was your last meal. Slow down and relish the delicious flavors and honor all living things who made your treat possible.

11. Put on clothes that feel good.

When buying new clothes, try it on to first see how it feels on you, before even looking in the mirror. Then if you feel like a million bucks with it on, check the mirror to ensure its worth the purchase. When our clothes fit us well, feel good, and reflect our personal style, we feel sexier, more confident, and like our best self.

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12. Break down your exercise excuses.

Exercising is a self-care act that can check off all four of the necessary self-care buckets we discussed earlier. Yet so many of us choose not to exercise -- even though we know its so good for us! Take three minutes right now to list out all the excuses that get in your way of exercising. Then, knowing you have the ability to figure it out, rip apart that excuse and write down why it's BS. Finally, identify any ways you can support an exercise habit vs. exercise excuse.

For example:

- My excuse is I have no time. My support is I will go for a 20-minute walk during my lunch break or run the stairs in my house while the kids are in the bath tub.
- My excuse is I don't like to exercise. My support is I'll accompany my friend to that hip hop dance class she keeps raving about or I'll throw a dance party for myself as I work up a sweat.

Do what you can with what you've got – no excuses!

13. Go outside.

Follow an ant on its journey. Count how many different shades of green exist on one little leaf. Feel the wind in your hair and the sun or rain on your skin. Hear the message the birds are singing to you. Drink in the colors of the sky and the artwork of the clouds. We are nature, so as we spend time in nature, our body regulates back to its natural state of ease.

xO

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“Self care is giving the world the best of you, instead of what's left of you.” ~Katie Reed

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