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## What is Self-Care Anyway? \*

Self-Care is the gentle ways to support your mind, body, and nervous system.  
Self-care isn't just bubbling baths and productivity hacks.

Sometimes it looks like drinking water, canceling plans, crying honestly, asking for help, or eating something nourishing before your body crashes.

### ***Self-care is not about perfection.***

It is about creating small moments of safety, stability, and care for yourself — especially during difficult seasons.

### **Emotional Self-Care**

- ☐ Journal thoughts or emotions (keep it simple, don't use big words, doesn't have to be pretty - and consider a ritual of removing once finished)
- ☐ Talk with a safe person (develop a friendship that allows for ten minutes of unfiltered / no input talk )
- ☐ Practice self-compassion (you ARE doing the best you can and sometimes life is just like this)
- ☐ Allow yourself to cry (if this is hard watch sad movies)
- ☐ Take breaks from emotionally draining people ( be prepared: set a mental timer and an excuse to leave or exit before interactions)
- ☐ Limit comparison and social media overload (think - "Government of China" theory - they only show you what they want to show you... not how it really might be!)
- ☐ Practice gratitude (this builds resilience silently)
- ☐ Attend therapy consistently
- ☐ Name what you ACTUALLY feel instead of pushing it away

### **Nervous System Care**

- ☐ Practice deep breathing exercises (four square/ breathe prayers)
- ☐ Stretch or move gently (gentle arm swings / twisting at the waist)
- ☐ Go outside for fresh air and sunlight (horizontal morning light works just as well)
- ☐ Listen to calming music (give classical violin study music a try)
- ☐ Lower noise and stimulation (consider eye masks and ear reducing loops / or ear plugs )

\* The resources provided here are intended solely for education, self-reflection, and personal organization. They are not substitutes for therapy, legal advice, medical advice, crisis counseling, or consultation with a licensed professional. Utilizing these tools does not create a therapist-client relationship with Mallory Counseling PLLC.

- ☐ Take a warm shower or bath (consider using a favorite scented soap or lotion as well)
- ☐ Rest without guilt (keep a favorite plush blanket just for this signaling to yourself and others it is time for rest)
- ☐ Walk slowly instead of rushing (carry a favorite warm beverage to practice walking slowly and regulate breath)
- ☐ Practice grounding exercises (i.e., deep breathing / square breathing or stand in the grass during daylight or moonlight without shoes or socks)

### **Physical Self-Care**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Drink enough water</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Eat balanced meals with protein and fiber</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Get adequate sleep</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Take medications/vitamins consistently</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Move your body gently</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reduce excessive caffeine or sugar</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Take breaks from screens</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Keep medical appointments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow your body to recover when tired</li> </ul> |
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### **Connection & Support**

- ☐ Spend time with supportive people
- ☐ Attend church, community, or support groups
- ☐ Ask for help when overwhelmed
- ☐ Spend time with pets (or friend's pets)
- ☐ Set boundaries with unhealthy relationships (early and often - means establishing time and exit strategy / or / space and time between visits)
- ☐ Allow yourself to receive encouragement (rehearse your response - thank you! I'm learning how to accept such lovely compliments)
- ☐ Reach out instead of isolating (go out and compliment three people today while you are out)

### **Joy & Identity**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Read for enjoyment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Listen to music</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Decorate or organize your space</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Engage in creative hobbies or art</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Garden or spend time outside</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Watch something comforting</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Try something new</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Wear clothes that help you feel confident</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Do something simply because you enjoy it</li> </ul> |
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### **When You're Emotionally Overwhelmed**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Have I eaten recently?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Have I had water today?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Do I need rest?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Am I overstimulated?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Do I need support instead of isolation?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What would help me feel 5% safer or calmer right now?</li> </ul> |
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