

Self Care For The Caregiver

Looking after yourself when caring for someone else.



SELF CARE IS THE FUEL YOU NEED, TO BE THERE FOR YOUR CARE RECIPIENT EACH DAY.

“ There are only four kinds of people in the world. Those who have been caregivers. Those who are currently caregivers. Those who will be caregivers, and those who will need a caregiver.”

- ROSALYN CARTER



This booklet
is yours to
use in
whatever way
helps you
best.

WHAT IS SELF CARE?

Self care describes a conscious act you take to promote your own physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health.

There are many forms self care may take. Finding what resonates with you is the key.

WHY IS SELF CARE IMPORTANT?

Caregiving can be all encompassing.

As caregivers we tend to focus on the health and safety of our care recipient and may put off our own mental well-being and self care.

Self care is important in order to increase effectiveness, maintain relationships and prevent burnout.

The saying, “Put your own oxygen mask on before helping others,” is crucial.



*“ The little things?
The little moments?
They aren't little.”*

- JON KABAT-ZINN



Reflection

**WHAT I DO FOR MY CARE RECIPIENT
EVERY DAY:**

Need more room?

Reflection

WHAT I DO FOR MYSELF EVERY DAY:



Did you get down this far?

Reflection

THINGS I NOTICE ABOUT MYSELF WHEN I NEGLECT MY OWN NEEDS:

For example:

I have less patience. I am tired. I have trouble sleeping.

*“ Some days there won't
be a song in your heart.
Sing anyway.”*

- EMORY AUSTIN



Reflection

THINGS I NOTICE WHEN I CARE FOR MYSELF:

For example:

I am easier to be around. I have more energy. I sleep better.

*“ Sometimes your joy is
the source of your smile, but
sometimes your smile can
be the source of the joy.”*

- THICH NHAT HANH



Practice

STEP 1

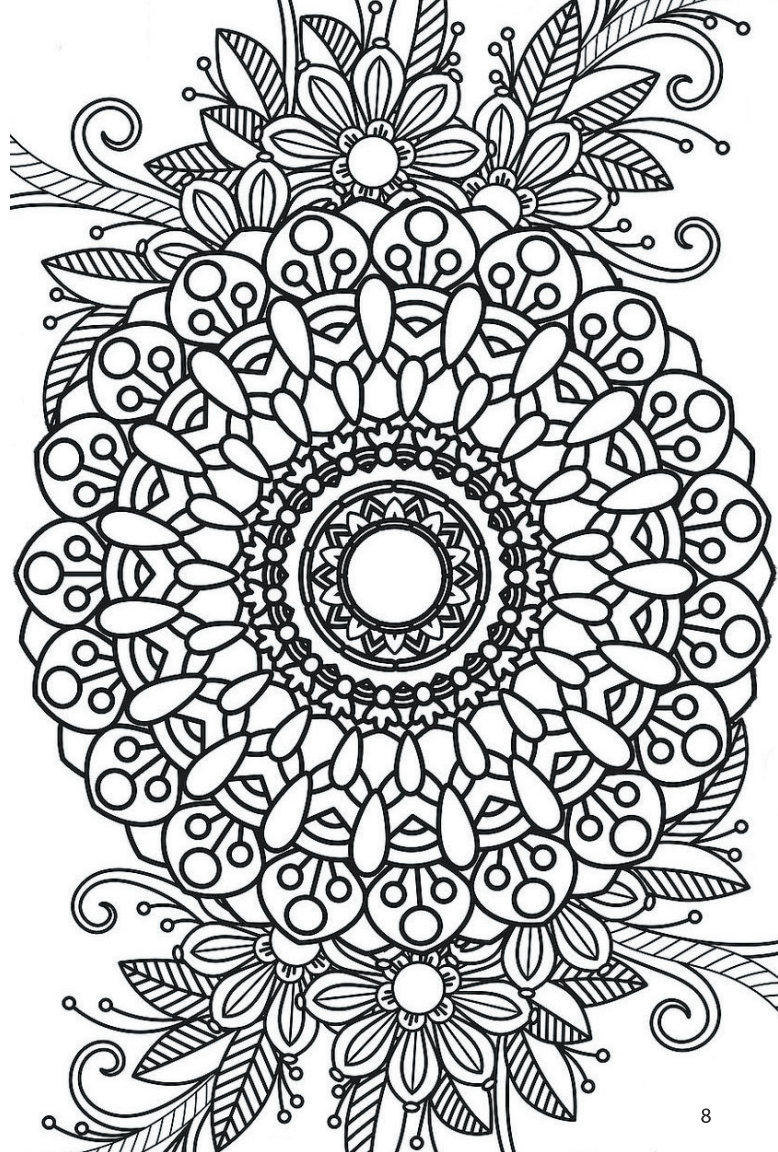
List the first 3 things on your mind right now.

STEP 2

Colour the mandala for 5 minutes with coloured pencils, felts, pencil or pen. Whatever you have.

STEP 3

List the first 3 things on your mind right now.



Practice

MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be present. It helps us put some space between ourselves and our reactions.



The aim of mindfulness is not quieting the mind, or attempting to achieve a state of eternal calm. The goal is simple: we're aiming to pay attention to the present moment, without judgment.

SET ASIDE SOME TIME

You don't need a meditation cushion or bench, or any sort of special equipment to access your mindfulness skills, but you do need to set aside some time and space. Put any devices on silent and use a timer so you know when your practise is over. Even 1–5 minutes is helpful and validated by science as having a positive effect.

OBSERVE THE PRESENT MOMENT

Observe the sensations of the breath at the nostrils or abdomen as you inhale and exhale.

LET YOUR JUDGMENTS ROLL BY

When we notice judgments arise during our practice, we can acknowledge them and let them pass.

BE KIND TO YOUR WANDERING MIND

Don't judge yourself for whatever thoughts come up, just practice recognizing when your mind has wandered off, and gently bring it back to the sensations of the breath.

RETURN TO OBSERVING THE PRESENT MOMENT AS IT IS

Our minds often get carried away in thought. That's why mindfulness is the practice of returning, again and again, to the present moment.



Try a free app like Insight Timer, Calm or Smiling Mind. Paid apps include Headspace or Buddhify.

No smart phone? YouTube has videos and your local library has resources.



I have 5 minutes to give myself some focus.

How will I spend it?

- Sit and listen to sounds
- Enjoy a cup of tea
- Cuddle a pet
- Do a body scan
- Stretch

My ideas: _____

“ You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf.”

- JON KABAT-ZINN





I have 15 minutes to give myself some focus.

How will I spend it?

- Look for a new recipe
- Do Breathing Exercises
- Connect with a friend
- Dance
- Walk
- Read an article
- Journal
- Make a 'thankful' list

My ideas: _____

“ Smile, breathe and go slowly.”

- THICH NHAT HANH

SELF CARE IS LISTENING



SELF CARE

- Fueling with food that helps you improve mentally & physically.
- Drinking water.
- Being kind to yourself.
- Setting healthy boundaries.
- Spending time with people that enrich you.
- Moving your body.

SELF SABOTAGE

- Skipping meals & eating unhealthy food.
- Substance abuse.
- Negative self-talk.
- Saying yes too often because you are a “nice person.”
- Avoiding everyone.
- Not asking for help.
- Procrastinating.



I have 30 minutes to give myself some focus.

How will I spend it?

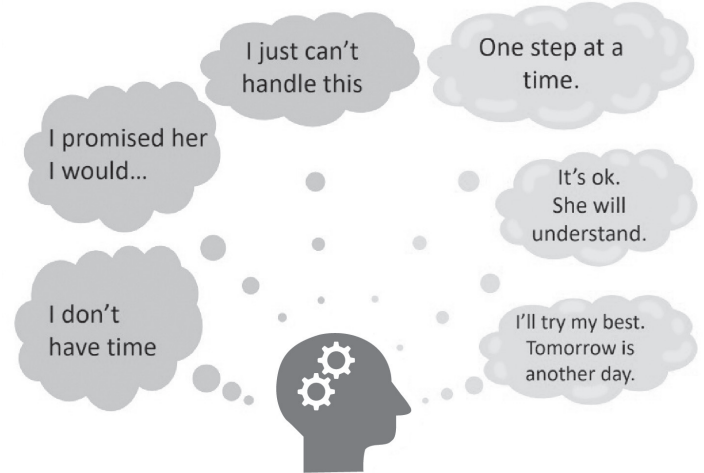
- Go outside and take some photos
- Read a book
- Call a friend
- Dance
- Walk
- Work on a craft or hobby
- Practice Mindfulness
- Write to a faraway friend or family member

My ideas: _____

“ Sometimes asking for help is the most meaningful example of self-reliance.”

- CORY BOOKER

HOW WE SPEAK TO OURSELVES MATTERS



Be aware of negative self-talk.

“ Tell yourself stories that heal your soul. Practice self-talk soaked in honey.”

- JAIYA JOHN



I have more time to give myself some focus.

How will I spend it?

- Have lunch with a friend
- Listen to a favourite podcast
- Get a haircut
- Go for a long walk
- Try a new recipe
- Dig in the garden
- Work on a puzzle
- Read a book

My ideas: _____

“ *Take care of your body. It's the only place you have to live.*”

- JIM ROHN

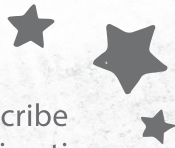
Self care happens in the decisions you make every day. It may be hard in the moment, but it almost always leads to long-lasting change. We can't just care for ourselves when things get bad and hope for a miracle.

Real self care requires practice, commitment, and introspection. It requires putting yourself first, **EVEN FOR A SHORT TIME** and getting in touch with what you really need, so you can meet the needs of your care recipient every day.

IT'S OKAY

- To be yourself
- To do what works for you
- To make mistakes
- To have challenging days

Sleep Hygiene



Sleep hygiene is the term used to describe habits that promote sleep. The following tips can help with sleep difficulties. Remember that long term sleep deprivation is detrimental to your health. Speaking to your doctor, care team and having respite options are all necessary should sleep disruption be ongoing.

- **Routine** Try to go to bed and get up at the same time each day, but try to sleep only when you feel tired.
- **Don't lay there** If you are still awake after about 20 minutes or more, get up and do something calming and in low light. When you feel ready, try again.
- **Rituals** Develop your own nightly rituals to cue your body that it is time to sleep. Take at least 30 minutes to stretch, breathe, and calm yourself as you prepare for sleep. Try listening to calming nature sounds or the same music each night.
- **Keep Track** Keeping track of your routine for 2 weeks can help you be aware and set a bedtime routine that works for you.

● **Be Active** What you do during the day affects your sleep at night, but avoid strenuous exercise late in the day.



- **Diet** A healthy, balanced diet with lots of fruits and vegetables allows better sleep.
- **A hot bath** 1-2 hours before bedtime raises body temperature. As your body temperature lowers, it can induce sleep.
- **The bedroom** It is important that your sleeping space is tranquil - reduce light, noise & temperature. Cooler is better.

What To Avoid

- Avoid caffeine, alcohol, nicotine and sugar (all the fun stuff!) for 4-6 hours before going to bed.
- Avoid using your bed for anything other than sleeping and sex, so you associate your bed with comfort.
- Avoid frequently checking the clock during the night. This can wake you more fully and reinforce negative thoughts about sleep.
- Avoid naps. If you need a nap, aim for less than an hour and before 3pm.

I KNOW THAT:

- Caring for myself is important. I am worth it. It may be difficult sometimes.
- I will commit to doing my best to care for myself, so I can continue to be available for my care recipient.

WILL I ACCEPT THE INVITATION?

Fill in a goal for each day and reward yourself with a smiley face when you're done. 😊

5 Days Of Self Care Invitation		
	GOAL	SMILE!
DAY 1		◯
DAY 2		◯
DAY 3		◯
DAY 4		◯
DAY 5		◯

This booklet incorporates assets from Family Caregivers of BC and Alzheimer Society BC (How You Say It Matters) and the following websites: mindful.org, pexels.com, all-free-download.com, 30seconds.com, clipart-key.com. The generosity of these artists and contributors has helped in the creation of this important self care resource.



Toll Free Support Line: 1-888-212-2337
 Direct Line: 250-505-4272
 Email: wkbcsp@gmail.com

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PRACTICE GRATITUDE

LISTEN TO MUSIC

LOOK AT FAMILY PHOTOS

Create

READ A BOOK

DO EFT TAPPING

MEDITATE

SING A SONG

HUG SOMEONE

TAKE A BATH

BAKE

JOURNAL

BE Mindful

BREATH DEEPLY

Connect

I CAN PAUSE

CUDDLE WITH A PET

GO FOR A DRIVE

AND

CALL A FRIEND

SAY AFFIRMATIONS

Relax

GO FOR A WALK

GARDEN

GET Outside

SWIM

SIT ON THE PORCH

CROCHET

SPLASH WATER ON MY FACE

EXERCISE

HAVE A DANCE PARTY

www.wkbcaregiver.org