

THE SELF-CARE IMPERATIVE

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CT Association of
Schools (CAS)

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And on the seventh day God tried to relax, but He didn't have the healthiest work/life boundaries, so he distractedly watched a few old episodes of "30 Rock" with a Google Doc called "MORE Earth Ideas" open in another tab.

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Our "New Normal" is Ever Evolving

To evolve positively we must:


- ✓ Understand the importance of self-care to mitigate the negative effects of stress
- ✓ Learn the why & how of practicing self-care
- ✓ Appreciate that practicing self-care doesn't have to be time-consuming
- ✓ Learn a variety of self-care strategies



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CRISIS 101

- ✓ A typical crisis has a clear beginning and ending.
- ✓ There is usually a clear population of victims, survivors, and their family and friends.
- ✓ We usually know who is likely to have acute stress and potential traumatic stress symptoms.
- ✓ In a pandemic:
 - We can't predict the future.
 - We are all vulnerable.
 - We are all experiencing loss and/or grief.
 - Maslow's Hierarchy...loss of safety, belonging/connectedness and we can't promise safety



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WHAT is SELF-CARE?

Self-care is the **intentional, proactive** pursuit of **integrated** wellness; **balancing** mind, body and spirit personally and professionally.*

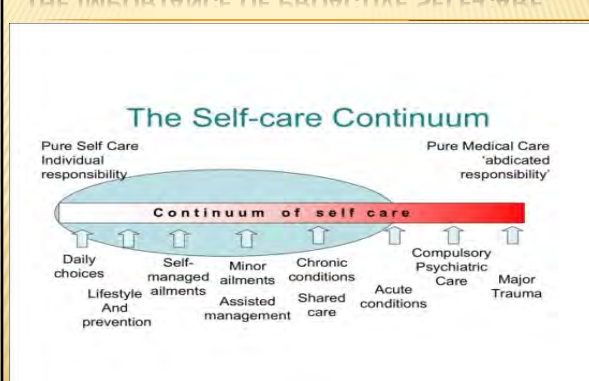
* One person's self-care should not be at the expense of another's self-care

* Self-care is not always easy

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THE IMPORTANCE OF PROACTIVE SELF-CARE

The Self-care Continuum



Pure Self Care Individual responsibility

Pure Medical Care 'abdicated responsibility'

Continuum of self care

Daily choices

Lifestyle And prevention

Self-managed ailments

Minor ailments Assisted management

Chronic conditions Shared care

Acute conditions

Compulsory Psychiatric Care Major Trauma

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WHY practice SELF-CARE?

1. TO PRACTICE ETHICALLY (DO NO HARM)
2. TO COMBAT BURNOUT (DO NOT WAIT UNTIL YOU'RE SICK & TIRED TO REPLENISH YOUR RESOURCES)
3. TO PROVIDE A MODEL OF SELF-REGULATED PRESENCE (DO IT FOR THE KIDS!) (& COLLEAGUES/SIGNIFICANT OTHERS)

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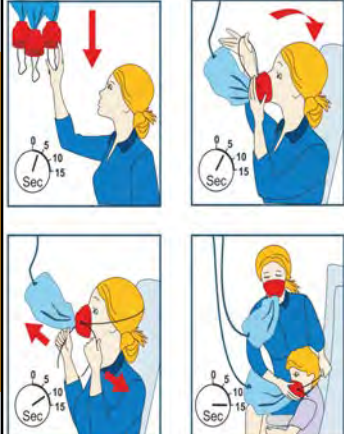
THE ETHICAL MANDATE OF SELF-CARE

The universal ethical principle across ALL disciplines is "DO NO HARM."

To counteract the negative MENTAL HEALTH effects of stress and burnout, practitioners must take care of themselves BEFORE they can care for others, otherwise those with whom they work may be put at risk.



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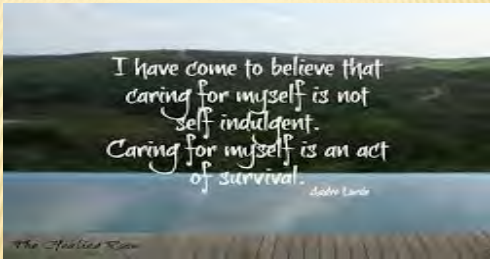


THE OXYGEN MASK PRINCIPLE

YOU MUST TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF BEFORE YOU CAN DO ANYTHING FOR ANYONE ELSE.

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A SIMPLE ILLUSTRATION OF WHY SELF-CARE IS IMPORTANT FOR ETHICAL PRACTICE



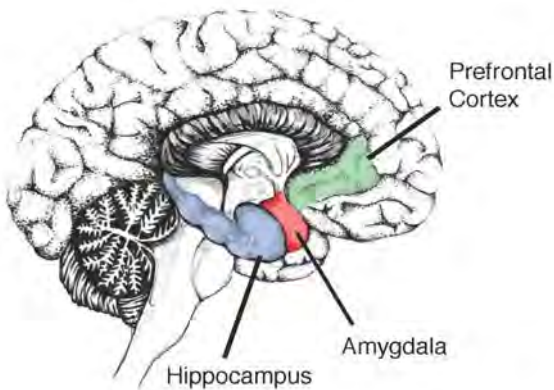
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3U02A2p-19A>

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Compassion fatigue is a condition characterized by emotional and physical exhaustion leading to a diminished ability to empathize or feel compassion for others (Figley, 2002).

SELF CARE means giving THE WORLD the best OF YOU INSTEAD OF WHAT IS LEFT OF YOU

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IDENTIFYING YOUR STRESS - *WORKSHEET* page 2

TAKE 3 MINUTES TO IDENTIFY 1 or 2 STRESSORS THAT WEIGH HEAVILY ON YOU AND IF ALLEVIATED, WOULD MAKE YOUR LIFE QUALITATIVELY BETTER. AS WE GO THROUGH THE PPT LOOK FOR PRACTICES TO ADDRESS THE STRESSOR.

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Who thinks you don't have time for self-care?

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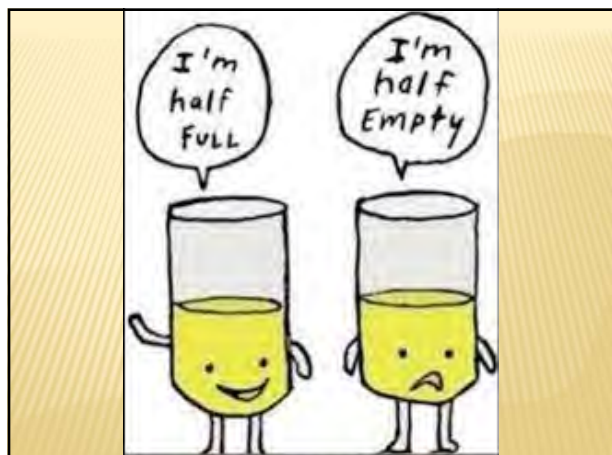
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WORKSHEET PAGE 1

SELF CARE WHEEL

TAKE 3 MINUTES TO REVIEW THE SELF-CARE STRATEGIES.

CHECK THOSE THAT YOU'VE ENGAGED IN THE LAST MONTH.

STAR THOSE THAT YOU'VE ENGAGED 3-4 TIMES IN THE LAST WEEK.

(www.OlgaPhoenix.com)

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SELF-CARE PLAN	
Personal	Professional
READ BIBLE. in AM* READ FOR FUN	Write article about self care Set timer to take ultradian rhythm breaks every 1 1/4 hr.
Practice yoga/walk in nature 4-5x/wk. in am SHOWER MINDFULLY* Hip exercises in bed in am*	Eat lunch* Eat protein before class Practice chair yoga
PRAY DAILY WITH RAY* PRACTICE MINDFULNESS WHILE DRIVING	Using an app - do 3 deep breath pauses a day Drive back roads to field visits.
As Needed Eat dark chocolate 1x/day* Watch funny videos SAY "NO" MORE according to priorities	In the Background DIFFUSE MY FAVORITE OILS AT HOME & WORK* PLAY WITH BEETHOVEN* PLAY PANDORA PIANO JAZZ*

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3 TYPES OF SELF-CARE PRACTICES	<i>Temporary self-care</i> practices can relieve stress during the activity by releasing “feel good” hormones and neurotransmitters (oxytocin, endorphin, dopamine, serotonin) that subside after the activity ends
	<i>Enduring self-care*</i> practices can develop a non-judgmental awareness that strengthens certain neurological functions, such as focused attention and self-regulation.
3 NEURAL PROCESSES	<i>Enduring self-care*</i> practices can rewire the brain for positivity, counteracting the natural tendency towards negativity.

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EVIDENCE-BASED SELF-CARE PRACTICES

Loving Kindness *What brings you joy?*
 Minimum Effective Dose

MINDFULNESS
BUSYNESS
 SLEEPER LEANINGS
 CREATING POSITIVE HABITS
TLC

Honoring Ultradian Rhythms
BOUNDARIES

TAKING IN THE GOOD/SAVORING
 gratitude *social support*

Self-care in the background

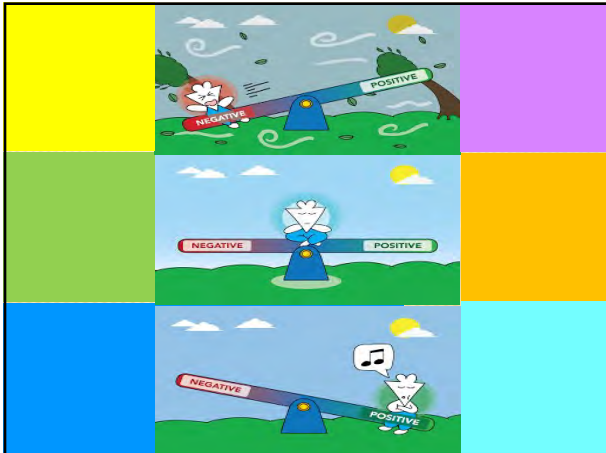


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Mindfulness is “the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally to the unfolding of experiences moment by moment” (Kabat-Zinn, 2003, page 145)



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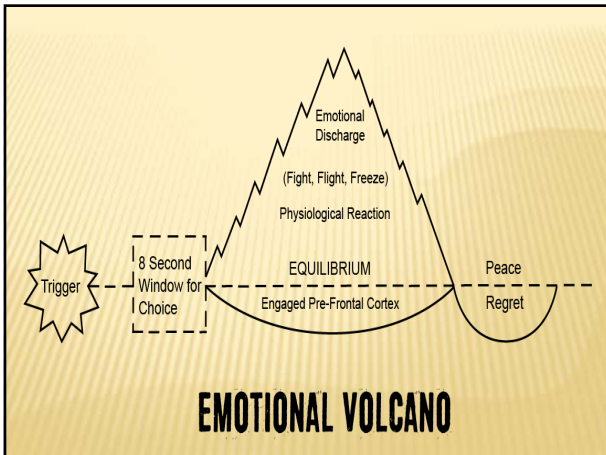
Research has found the benefits of mindfulness include:

- ❖ Reduce stress
- ❖ Reduce depression
- ❖ Lessen effects of PTSD
- ❖ Increase compassion for self and others
- ❖ Strengthen the immune system
- ❖ Help reduce self-focus and quiet the mind wandering that leads to rumination, worrying, and unhappiness.
- ❖ Lead to improvements in health, including decreasing pain & inflammation; and increasing immunity & longevity.



<https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/mindfulness/article/why-practice-mindfulness>

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What you
do speaks
so loud
that I
cannot hear
what
you say.

Ralph Waldo Emerson
makoodle.com

Especially when
working with
children,
**WHAT YOU DO
IS ALWAYS
MORE
IMPORTANT THAN
WHAT YOU
SAY.**

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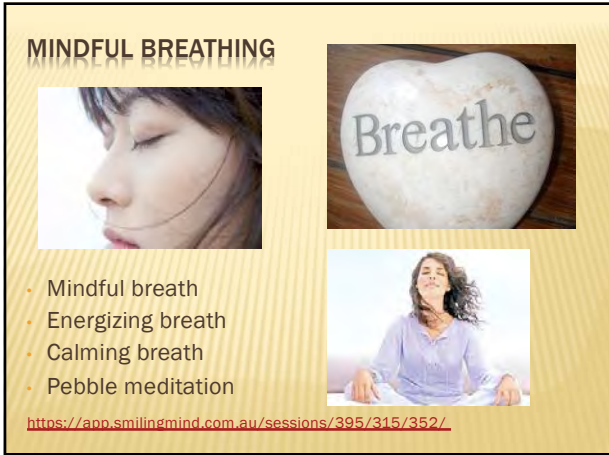
TWO TYPES OF MINDFULNESS PRACTICES

<p>FORMAL – SETTING TIME ASIDE TO PRACTICE BRINGING FOCUSED ATTENTION TO THE PRESENT MOMENT</p>	<p>INFORMAL – BRINGING FOCUSED ATTENTION TO ANY THING YOU DO</p>
	

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GRATITUDE RESEARCH OUTCOMES
https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/gratitude/definition#why_practice

- ✓ Gratitude **brings us happiness, optimism**, joy, pleasure, enthusiasm, and other positive emotions.
- ✓ Gratitude **reduces anxiety and depression**.
- ✓ Gratitude is **good for our bodies**, including strengthening immunity, reducing perceptions of aches and pains.
- ✓ Grateful people **sleep better**.
- ✓ Gratitude makes us **more resilient**.
- ✓ Gratitude **strengthens relationships**.
- ✓ Gratitude **promotes forgiveness**.
- ✓ Grateful people are **more prosocial**.
- ✓ Gratitude is **good for kids** and **good for schools**.

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WAYS TO PRACTICE GRATITUDE
https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/ten_ways_to_become_more_grateful1

- ✓ **Three Good Things**: Tune into the positive in your life.
- ✓ **Write a gratitude Letter**: Deliver it in person.
- ✓ **Mental Subtraction of Positive Events**: appreciate what you have by imagining your life without it.
- ✓ **Give It Up**: Taking a break from something to appreciate it more.
- ✓ Keep a **gratitude journal**.
- ✓ **Thinking hard about our own mortality** makes us more grateful for life; and **praying** increases gratitude.
- ✓ Create a grateful school climate by **fostering gratitude among staff** and getting buy-in from leaders.

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How do we build our MINDFULNESS “muscle” when we don’t even have time to eat lunch?



Whenever you’re anchored and focused in the present moment, NOT dwelling on the past or lost in the future, YOU’RE PRACTICING MINDFULNESS.

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INFORMAL MINDFULNESS



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EVERYDAY MINDFULNESS

- Washing the dishes
- Taking the trash out
- Vacuuming
- Folding laundry
- Grocery shopping
- Baking or cooking
- Bathing
- Playing with your pet
- Driving to work
- Listening to music
- Lifting weights
- Shaving
- Grooming
- Eating
- Making the bed

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MINDFUL EATING*

https://eaja.berkeley.edu/practice/raisin_meditation

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SAVOR THE GOOD*

- 1) Look for positive facts and let them become positive experiences.
- 2) Savor the positive experience:
 - Sustain it for 10-20-30 seconds.
 - Feel it in your body and emotions.
 - Intensify it.
- 3) Sense and intend that the positive experience is soaking into your brain and body – registering deeply in emotional memory.

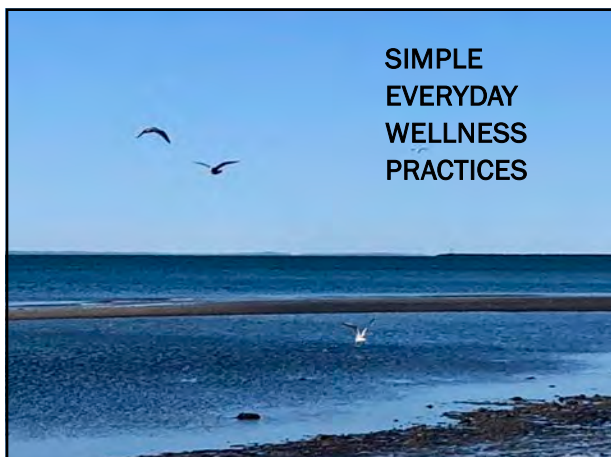
“Whatever we repeatedly sense and feel and want and think is slowly but surely sculpting neural structure.”

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DEEP SENSORY MINDFULNESS*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GEI-Qu7ApGQ&feature=related>

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SOCIAL SUPPORT*

"Decades of research suggest that the quality of our social ties might be the single biggest predictor of our well-being" including contributing to happiness, physical health, longevity & life satisfaction (Retrieved from https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/social_connection/definition#why-practice-social-connection)

Familial and extra-familial social support are protective factors for resilience (Werner, 1993, Rutter 1987)

Social support reduces the risk for traumatic stress and other negative mental health outcomes following school crises (e.g., Banks & Weems, 2014; Charuvastra & Cloitre, 2008; Dyb et al., 2014; Haden, Scarpa, Jones, & Ollendick, 2007; Hahn, Hays, Kahn, Litwin, & Ganz, 2014; Ma et al., 2011; Trickey et al., 2012; Zhang, Jiang, Ho, & Wu, 2011)

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REDUCING PERCEPTIONS OF BUSYNESS

Busyness is indicative of "cognitive overload" which inhibits executive functioning and more

Strategies:

- ✓ Be awe inspired-awe - inspired people feel like they have more time and are less impatient
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jBnseji3tBk>
- ✓ Create flow - stop multi-tasking and create a distraction/interruption free workspace
- ✓ Enact an anti-busyness ritual - brains are calmed by repetitive behavior

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WORKSHEET PAGE 2

CREATE DAILY SELF-CARE HABITS

CREATE AT LEAST 1 **SELF-CARE HABIT** TO TAKE BETTER CARE OF YOURSELF.

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HABIT LOOP - 3 Parts

(1) CUE/TRIGGER (tells the brain to go into autopilot) →

(2) BEHAVIOR/ROUTINE (habit) →

(3) REWARD (reinforcement)

EXAMPLES:

When I am asked to do something extra (TRIGGER), I will say yes only if it aligns with my priorities (BEHAVIOR/ROUTINE), and I will not feel as overcommitted (REWARD).


After I put down my backpack in my office (TRIGGER), I will turn on my diffuser and Pandora radio (BEHAVIOR/ROUTINE), and I will benefit from self-care in the background (REWARD).

(TRIGGER) (BEHAVIOR/ROUTINE) (REWARD)

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MINIMUM EFFECTIVE DOSE (CARTER, 2015)

Doing **SOMETHING** is better than doing **NOTHING**.

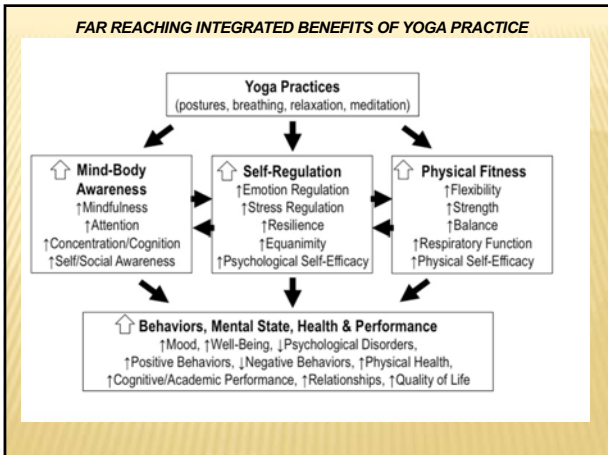


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Yoga with Adriene
<https://www.youtube.com/user/yogawithadriene>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X3-gKPNyrTA&t=3s>

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SAY A
STRATEGIC
“NO”
 IN ORDER TO
 CREATE SPACE
 FOR AN
INTENTIONAL
“YES”

**B
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“Compassionate people ask for what they need. They say no when they need to, and when they say yes, they mean it. They’re compassionate because their boundaries keep them out of resentment.”
- Brene Brown



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ALWAYS HAVE SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO*

Sleep in on Saturday;
Go to your favorite creamery;
A virtual game night with extended family;
Paint rocks while watching football;
Take a weekday walk at the beach after work;
Watch Hamilton – again;
A weekend away;
Plan a post-COVID vacation





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WORKSHEET PAGE 3

- smell of fresh cut grass
- purple
- Trader Joe’s 72% dark chocolate
- driving back roads
- walking at Walnut Beach
- potting petunias
- having class outside
- celebrating birthdays
- clean kitchen counters
- summer pedicures

When you recover or discover something that nourishes your soul and brings joy, care enough about yourself to make room for it in your life.
Jean Shinoda Bolan

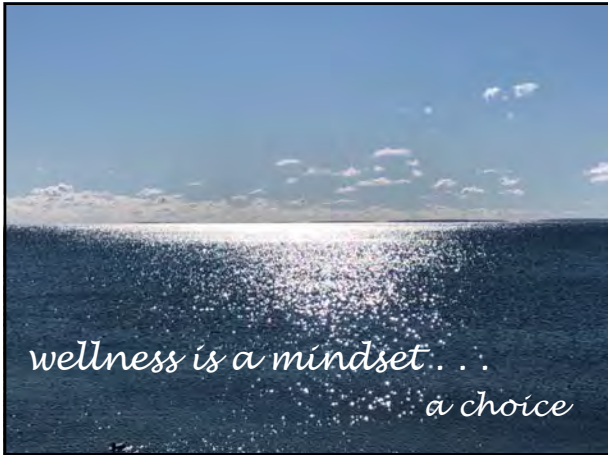
TAKE 1 MINUTE TO WRITE DOWN AS MANY THINGS AS YOU CAN THINK OF THAT BRING YOU JOY.

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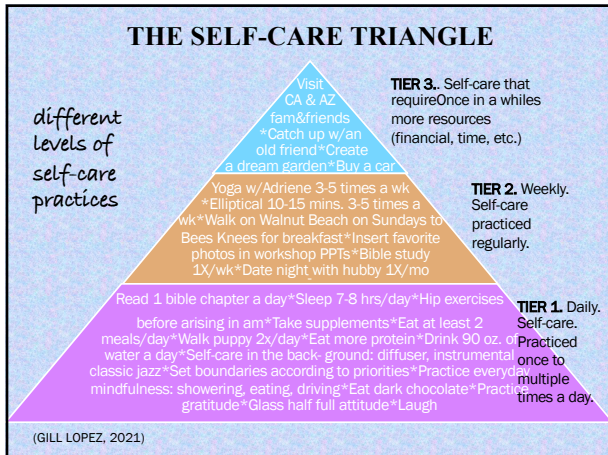
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MINDFULNESS RESOURCES

- ✓ **Science of the Greater Good:** sponsors groundbreaking scientific discoveries—and turns them into stories, tips, and tools for a happier life and more compassionate society. Since 2001, the GGSC has been at the fore of a new scientific movement to explore the roots of happy and compassionate individuals, strong social bonds, and altruistic behavior—the science of a meaningful life. It also offers free articles and a newsletter to spread information about emotional health and overall wellbeing. <http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/>
- ✓ **Smiling Mind:** Smiling Mind is now considered to be one of the world's leaders in the free pre-emptive mental health space and Australia's go-to expert for youth- and adult-based mindfulness programs. <https://app.smilingmind.com.au>
- ✓ **UCLA Health Website:** free guided meditations that offer mindfulness meditation to both English and Spanish speakers. Examples include loving kindness meditations, body scans, and Spanish meditations for eating with more mindfulness. <http://marc.ucla.edu/mindful-meditations>
- ✓ **Inner Health Studio:** free relaxation scripts to work on coping skills related to stress management, anxiety, panic attacks, anger, pain relief, and insomnia. The website also has relaxing imagery available for download. <http://www.innerhealthstudio.com/relaxation-scripts.html>
- ✓ **Calm:** a mindfulness meditation company. Calm offers quiet music, relaxing sounds, and peaceful imagery to relax its users. Calm also has an app that can be downloaded on mobile devices. <https://www.calm.com/>
- ✓ **Yoga with Adriene:** Our mission is to reach as many people as possible with high-quality free yoga videos. We welcome all levels, all bodies, all genders, all souls! Browse our library of free yoga videos to find a practice that suits your mood or start a journey toward healing. <https://www.youtube.com/user/yogawithadriene>

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