How Are You Handling Self Care?

Brought to you by the Prevention Department at

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How to Take Care of Me!

It is so important to take care of ourselves every day. However, during this time of **isolation** and **uncertainty** due to the COVID-19 pandemic, taking care of ourselves maybe way down on our list of priorities. Also, due to the stress or anxiety we may be feeling we may not even remember how we should take care of ourselves.

Taking care of yourself is **never** out of season! It may seem selfish, but remember a flight attendants' advice, "In case of a cabin pressure emergency, **put on your own mask first** before assisting others." A simple concept that makes sense. You can't help others for very long if you don't take care of yourself **first**. Taking at least 30 minutes to one hour out of your day to focus on yourself can enhance mental and physical health and break down stress that may have been present before the pandemic.

Practicing self-care allows us to present our best self to those in our lives and this can help make relationships with our parents, siblings, and friends stronger. The happier you are with yourself, the more chances that your happiness will spread to others. **BE KIND TO YOURSELF**.

If you're not sure how to begin the self-care process, this outline will help you get on the right track.
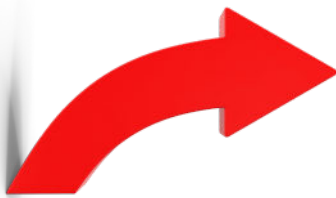
What is Self-Care?

It is the process of taking care of yourself mentally and physically.

Love Your Self

Types of Health:

Mental Health

Physical Health

Mental Health:

Mental health is the condition that your mind is in - your emotional and psychological well-being.

What you feel when you are not taking care of your mental health:

You may feel mad or be stressed all the time, or you could also be sad or depressed. Feeling stress and anger every day is not healthy, because when it is not addressed it can be released in unhealthy ways. Those unhealthy ways can include: yelling at loved ones, getting mad at things you cannot control, throwing or damaging things in your house when you are angry, or physically hurting yourself.

Example of someone who isn't managing their emotions well:

When you receive work online from your teacher. You begin to get frustrated and angry and you start to get mad at things that usually would not make you angry. You may feel overwhelmed and don't know how to handle the added stressors of working by yourself.

Helpful Mental Health Tip:

In order to maintain mental health, you should try and remove yourself from the situation for 30 minutes and take time for yourself.

How do I practice this?

When you feel overwhelmed and stressed out take a break from your assignment and do something fun for 20-30 minutes. You could play a game with your parents or read a book. This will give you time to decompress and then you're better able to think clearly about the task at hand and have an easier time doing it. Through this process you've also decreased those angry feelings.

This example shows you were able to calmly focus on the assignment after taking a break from the online work.

How do I practice this?

There are many ways to work out your feelings when you feel overwhelmed. If you are feeling uneasy, lonely or angry about something that happened in your family or among friends get some paper and draw, scribble or paint. Making a mess of the page is totally ok and can be lots of fun.

Also, try creating a song or poem without worrying about how the song sounds or if the poem rhymes. Yes, you have permission to laugh if it's silly or funny. Then, you can share your song or poem with family and friends. Challenge them to write a song or poem then have a virtual talent showcase.

Remember, you can do all or parts of this suggestion - it's totally your decision. This example shows you were able to calmly focus on the assignment after taking a break from the online work.

This example shows ways to calmly handle feelings and be creative at the same time.
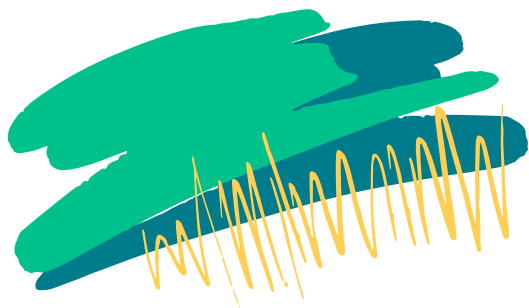
Physical Health:

Physical Health is the condition that your body is in.

In order to maintain physical health, you must practice good hygiene, stay away from toxins, exercise and eat well.

(Toxins Examples: Bad food, poor sleeping habits, intake of too much junk food, etc...)

What can affect my physical health in a negative way?

Some bad practices are eating a lot of junk food, poor hygiene, lack of exercise/outdoor activities.

Practicing bad habits can lead to diseases in the long run such as diabetes and severe heart disease.

To cope, some people, make poor decisions that can lead us to drink alcohol or smoke.

Drinking alcohol and smoking also increases your chances of heart, lung, liver and kidney failure.

Example: You stay on the couch all day without showering while you watch Netflix and eat chips all day.

This example shows that the person is not physically taking care of themselves. Not practicing good hygiene, not eating nutrient based foods, and not finding a good sleeping pattern can do more bad than good. Remember a body in motion stays in motion, so keep in mind that moving everyday should be a top priority.

What are some ways that I can positively impact my physical health?

This individual eats nutrient based foods like fruits, vegetable and meats. They also practice good hygiene such as showering and brushing their teeth. The individual will actively engage in some form of exercise. When a person takes care of their physical health, they have a lower risk of developing diseases such as diabetes or severe heart disease. If a person lives his or her life free of alcohol and other drugs, they have less of a chance that their heart, lungs, liver, and kidneys will fail.

Example:

You wake up and the first thing you do is shower and brush your teeth. Next you eat a **complete** breakfast with grains, proteins and fruit. Later in the day you decide to go play tag or sports with your friends. In this example, it shows that the person took the time to practice good hygiene, eat proper nutrients, and do exercise-based activities.

Ways to Take Care of Me:

Physical health:

Fuel your body - by eating a healthy, well-balanced diet and drinking plenty of water. Make sure that each meal you have has vegetables, fruits, grains (i.e., potato, rice, and bread) and proteins. (Meats and fish)

Aim to get 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night - Everyone needs at least 8 hours of sleep in order to have the most energy during the day for accomplishing tasks. Sleep at night, and you will have energy to take on anything that comes your way.

Exercise every day - go outside with your friends or your siblings and play outside. It can be an actual structured workout activity or just playing games involving physical movement.

Avoid risky or destructive behaviors – Using alcohol or drugs will put you at greater risk for making poor decisions and can lead to issues and heartache with your parents, school and law enforcement.

Ways to Take Care of Me:

Mental health:

Set and maintain a routine at home: Stay mentally active and get your mind moving by establishing a routine at home. Give yourself a schedule of the things you need and want to accomplish daily. This will decrease being bored at home and you'll be impressed by how many things you are able to do.

Focus on things you can control: By focusing on things you can control it gives you the power over your life. If you focus on the things you cannot control you will start to feel lost and lose track of your life.

- **Example of something you can control**: How much work you get done for school.
- **Example of something you cannot control**: When will this time of isolation end?

Use technology to maintain social connections with your loved ones: Contact your loved ones you have not seen in a while on the phone or Facetime. This will help you keep in touch and maintain connections.

Ways to Take Care of Me:

Mental health:

Focus your thoughts on the present and things to be grateful for today:
It is a gift to be alive during this time of isolation. I get to spend more time at home with my loves ones. Take some time to be thankful for all that you have today. I have a roof over my head and I have food to eat. By doing this you will be more appreciative of things and be grateful for what you have.

Listen to music or read books: Destress by listening to your favorite music or by reading your favorite book. It will help you keep your mind off what's stressing you out.

Activities to help with Self-Care:

Mental health:

These are activities to help realize what you need to do in order to maintain both **Mental** and **Physical Health**.

Self-Care Bingo:

This Bingo game is to help you keep track of the things that you need to do. Draw a new chart on a piece of paper to make the chart creative. As you do each activity on the card, mark the activity off. Once you have completed the activity, it should spell out the word BINGO.

If you complete the card, you are definitely off to a great start to learning about Self-Care.
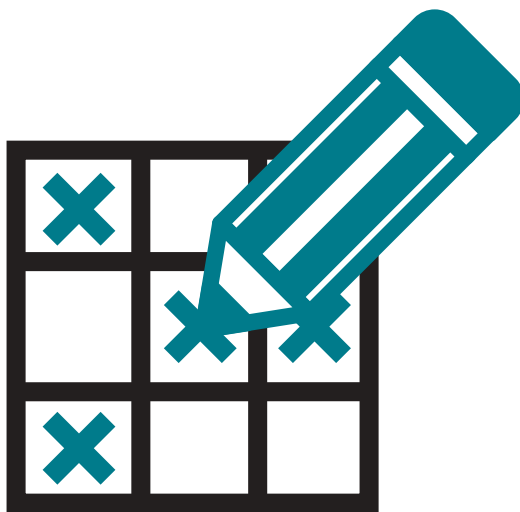
Self-Care Bingo:

B	**I**	**N**	**G**	**O**
Brushed your teeth	Took a shower	Played basketball outside	Did pushups	Brushed your hair
Laughed	Go for a walk	Did Jumping Jacks	Play with your pet	Go for a jog
Played a board Game	Ate a nutritious breakfast	Free Space	Played soccer outside	Ate a fruit
Ate a vegetable	Ran outside	Talked to loved ones	Spent time with parents	Read a book
Drank water	Spent time with siblings	Helped parents clean the living room	Cleaned your room	Ate a nutritious lunch

The I Love Myself Activity

The I Love Myself Activity

We all know that who we are as individuals includes both our strengths and our weaknesses. Too often, adults and children can more easily identify their weaknesses than their strengths and may need help refocusing on the positive. We can focus on our strengths and gain self-confidence by identifying positive qualities about ourselves and encouraging our children to notice when they really shine.

Write the words "I AM" in large block print allowing room to write inside the letters.

Then identify positive traits about yourself or help your children identify their strengths.

(Suggestions include words like creative, smart, athletic, outgoing, organized, funny, kind, good listener, helpful, silly, good decision maker, hard worker, etc. You can also draw pictures such as a rainbow, a beach, or any object of interest and write positive things on the picture.)

The I Love Myself Activity

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Use prompts like:

☐ I feel good about myself when…

☐ I am proud of myself because…

☐ I am special because…

☐ I am good at…

☐ I am most happy when…

☐ I am a good friend when…

☐ I am kind when…

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