

100 ways to Self-Care



ONE LIFE - MENTAL HEALTH AND
WELLBEING

HELEN DUYVESTYN



WHAT IS SELF-CARE?

Self-care is often thought of as a luxury - something that helps us feel good in the moment; a massage, a bubble bath or a sleep-in - short term relaxation or time out. However, self-care can also be a big plate of vegetables and paying your bills.

Self-care is about doing what is necessary at the time for your present self - while taking into consideration your future self - 'the practice of taking an active role in protecting one's own well-being and happiness, in particular during periods of stress.'

Self-care (caring for oneself) is a necessary part of staying well. It involves basic things such as choosing the right food to eat, engaging in exercise, nurturing relationships, committing to forming good habits and paying your taxes on time, as well as sleeping in, getting a massage, speaking up or walking out.

In 2019, I ran a '100 days of self-care' Instagram project. I really wanted to rethink how we thought about self-care. I wanted people to understand that it's not always fun and that self-care comes in many shapes and forms - but it is all something we have the ability to do and that it helps form an important part of our well-being.

The contents of that project are now the result of this booklet. It contains 100 ways to care for you - be they moments to enjoy (sleep-in), or endure (the dentist) it's all part about keeping you mentally, physically and holistically in shape.

Enjoy reading through - I hope this inspires you to self-care more.

Helen x

THE SELF-CARE PYRAMID



THE SELF-CARE PYRAMID

The pyramid helps you to address the essentials - right up to the non-essentials. These are in flow - they need attention at different periods of your life, depending on your stress levels, lifestyle factors and where you are at. But, the bottom essentials will have the most impact on your well-being.

LEVEL ONE: These are the essentials to survival. There are many levels among these, however; getting the best quality of all these things are the basics of self-care.

LEVEL TWO: These are shown in research to contribute to longevity - the opposite (loneliness) is one of the top contributors to an early death.

LEVEL THREE: Positive employment (paid or unpaid), passion and purpose highly contribute to mental health and well-being. Unhappiness in employment has a significant impact on mental and physical health

LEVEL FOUR: Deepening mental and spiritual well-being

LEVEL FIVE: The sweet stuff; fun, holidays, experiences and adventure

LEVEL SIX: The superfluous! Luxuries, indulgences, short term pleasures

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Being present, being in the moment and being mindful of the here and now is an important way to support our health and well-being.

When we are in the present moment, we are focused on what we are doing, seeing, hearing and feeling at this very time. We are not thinking about the past (which we can not change), or worrying about the future - we are simply in the here and now. This helps us make decisions which are in our best interest, reduces the 'auto-pilot' of poor habits, impulsive behaviours and mindless activity.

Practice being present. In this very moment for the best self-care results.



Move



100 Days of Self Care



Get a check-up



100 Days of Self Care



ESSENTIALS

Drink water



100 Days of Self Care



Breathe



100 Days of Self Care



Moving, drinking enough water and being aware of how you breathe are important fundamentals which affect your well being. Your physical health is important and will impact your mental health. Get a check-up from your GP every couple of years to ensure you are staying in good health.

The way we breathe can affect our mood, our stress levels and how we sleep. Breathing helps to stimulate the parasympathetic nervous system (the rest and digest, relaxing and calming) and oxygenates your body and mind. Ensure your breathing is gentle, through the nose whenever possible and low and deep into the belly.

BODY

Women's Health

Along with a general checkup from the doctor, make an appointment to get your breasts checked (especially if you are over 50 or have a family history of breast cancer), and get a smear done. It's so easy to put these things off - but so important to keep an eye on those precious lady bits! You men - you have different bits to get checked!

Get your breast check / smear



100 Days of Self Care



Teeth!



100 Days of Self Care



Dental Health

This is one of those self-care deeds that doesn't actually feel very nurturing at the time (by your body or your pocket!). But the health your teeth and gums have a very strong connection to the health of your body, including cardiovascular disease. A yearly check-up will ensure your mouth is healthy. And a little pain now may save years of pain or discomfort in the future

Supplement

In order for our brains and bodies to function properly, we often need a helping hand. We don't always eat well, we sometimes drink too much alcohol, we are exposed to things which might deplete nutrients (toxins, heavy metals), and we behave in ways which reduce nutrient absorption (eat too fast, don't chew our food). Modern grown practices often mean we are getting quantity, not quality.

Invest in supplements



100 Days of Self Care



EAT

Cook real food

Some of these may seem like a chore - but if you think of it as nurturing your body, mind or soul, you can have a totally different energy about it. Cooking your favourite meal is great self-care, especially if it is nourishing you too!

Take your time, put on some music and enjoy the experience.

Cook a favourite meal



100 Days of Self Care



Eat some veges



100 Days of Self Care



Eat your greens (and yellows)

Vegetables offer us so much nutrition. We tend not to eat enough - but encouraging more of these in our everyday diet is a long term exercise in self-care and can support our neurotransmitter production - essential for mental well-being. Eat as many colours as you can to bring in all the different plant phytochemicals.

Get Organised

Planning a meal (or two) in advance - can help with the 5pm - "I don't know what to cook, and I'm hungry" (so I'll just eat cheese and crackers).

Planning a few meals can make life simpler in the long run, even though it might take a little more effort in the short term.

Alternatively - consider the ready to cook delivery services out there - they take the guesswork out and any thinking and planning too!

Plan a meal



100 Days of Self Care



ENJOY

The Food of the God's

A special treat - and if you want to go RSF, DF (refined sugar-free, dairy-free) you can easily make your own hot chocolate with cacao and coconut (or other alternative milk) and add a little honey. Chocolate has antioxidants (yes! it's good for you!) and well, let's face it... it tastes delicious and just makes you feel good!

Have a hot chocolate



100 Days of Self Care



Have a Cuppa

The perfect cup of tea. Whether on your own or shared. Made fresh from herbs, or good old gumbout tea in your favourite teapot. In a hectic day, take some time out and enjoy a therapeutic cuppa. A simple self-care routine.

Tea also offers many benefits with polyphenols which have been shown to increase calorie expenditure and reduce body fat.

Cup of Tea



100 Days of Self Care



Coffee!

Ah yes.... who can bypass the ultimate treat - the cafe coffee. Whether by yourself (with a treat on the side) or with a friend - the art of sitting, relaxing, enjoying and appreciating a delicious cup of coffee (or turmeric latte or your drink of choice!) is a real treat. Limited cups of coffee (if you don't have a caffeine sensitivity) isn't bad for you at all, and like tea - has some positive benefits.

Cafe Visit



100 Days of Self Care



Connect



100 Days of Self Care



Share a problem



100 Days of Self Care



CONNECT

Meet with a friend



100 Days of Self Care



Volunteer



100 Days of Self Care



A problem shared is a problem halved. Friends, therapists, counsellors, colleagues - are all people you can reach out and share with. Just talking out loud can help you find some answers.

Loneliness, is shown to be one of the biggest predictors of death and illness. So making connections where you can in an important part of self-care.

Volunteering connects you to others and is good for your mind and body. Volunteering helps counteract the effects of stress, anger and anxiety. The social contact aspect of helping and working with others can have a profound effect on your overall psychological well-being. Working with pets and other animals has also been shown to improve mood and reduce stress and anxiety.

Hug



100 Days of Self Care



Have a hold

Research has shown that hugging someone you like or love; increases oxytocin, decreases cortisol, stress, blood pressure, and reduces depression. It elevates our immune response and mood. Some people suggest you can also hug yourself and get a similar response! Of course, children and pets can often be wonderful hugging companions too!

Phone a friend



100 Days of Self Care



Phone a Friend

When you feel you need a little pick me up, or to connect with someone - sometimes the best thing is a good long phone call with a long lost friend. Or a new one! Connection with others improves our wellbeing. As being lonely is the biggest predictor of morbidity and mortality - phoning a friend can literally be a lifesaver!

Bake a cake



100 Days of Self Care



Share food

For some - this is not at all nurturing or enjoyable - for others busying themselves in the kitchen is a wonderful mindful activity, when they can leave the cares and woes behind then and create. Afterwards, this creation can be shared, enjoyed and appreciated. Baking for others, to donate to a school fundraiser may end up being double pleasurable - the gift of giving and the joy of creating.

PARTICIPATE

Help someone



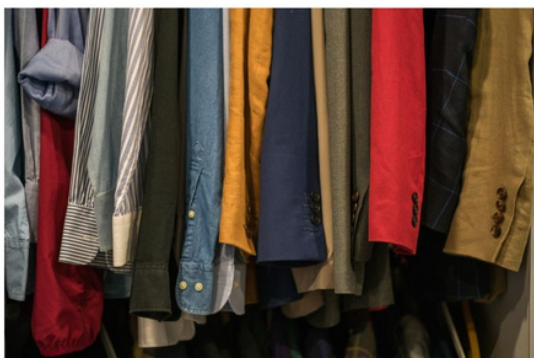
100 Days of Self Care



Helping hand

It doesn't need to be big. Opening a door for someone, helping someone out with small change, letting someone go before you when driving. Kindness promotes empathy and compassion; which in turn, leads to a sense of interconnectedness with others. This alone can help improve our sense of wellbeing. You can do random acts of kindness or volunteer on a more permanent basis - each kind deed may have a ripple effect also - you just don't know how you might be changing the world.

Op Shop



100 Days of Self Care



Recycling & Reusing

Op shopping (buying recycled goods and clothing) can be a fantastic way to stock up a wardrobe on a limited budget. Possibly even better for the soul is sorting out a space and donating old unwanted goods to an op shop - which then on-sells goods to support the local community. You can make a few people feel good, by supporting the local op shops - including yourself! Create some self-care by creating some space, then have some fun revamping your look!

Do a good deed



100 Days of Self Care



Do Good

Contributing to others or the community that you live in helps to foster positive emotions. It can also enhance connection with others. It can also improve your environment which can lead to improved well-being. It doesn't matter what it is - picking up a litter, planting trees, helping to remove graffiti, picking up rubbish on the beach. Good deeds support your own well-being. You matter, you can make a difference.

Give



100 Days of Self Care



Giving

Giving can help us feel good! A smile, a verbal pat on the back. A compliment, a hug, a flower picked from the garden. It's so important ~ that the New Zealand Mental Health Foundation consider it one of the five ways of wellbeing. Sometimes self-care means you get to kill two birds with one stone - make someone feel good and reaping the benefits!

Smiling

A smile actually tells your body and your mind that you are okay - and can improve your mood and your sense of well-being. A simple smile is all you need. A smile may also support someone else to smile - which lifts not only your spirits - but someone else's too. This works *even if you don't feel like smiling.*

Smile



100 Days of Self Care



Join a book club



100 Days of Self Care



Books & people

Joining a book club can help you read some interesting books (which you might otherwise never have chosen) and get to meet some other people with similar interests. It may develop into deeper friendship and you may find you have more in common than just books (think cheese and wine)

Vit D



100 Days of Self Care



Do a nature walk



100 Days of Self Care



HEAL

Do a Yoga class



100 Days of Self Care



Walk in the sunshine



100 Days of Self Care



Healing comes in many forms. We need vitamin D to support our immune system and to support healthy bones - and it's also been shown to support mental health too! Exposing parts of your body that don't usually get sun is the quickest way to get a boost. (Be careful not to burn!) Walking in a bush, park, forest, beach or by a river or by the sea - provides a number of benefits. Green spaces improve moods and healing.

Yoga is good for the mind, body and soul. It stretches our limbs, helps us to be focused, supports a deep breathing technique and connects us with bodies. Yoga is not about how far you can bend, twist or stretch - it's about being on the mat, focusing on your body, being in tune with where you are at and working with that.

Take a break

Having a 30-minute nap can help refresh your brain, give you some energy for the afternoon help re-calibrate for the rest of the day. Don't sleep too long or it will backfire - leading to feeling groggy and unable to sleep that night. Is there anything more pleasant than laying in a sunny spot, or snuggling back into bed for a wee afternoon nap? Sometimes you just need to do it!

Nap



100 Days of Self Care



Cry



100 Days of Self Care



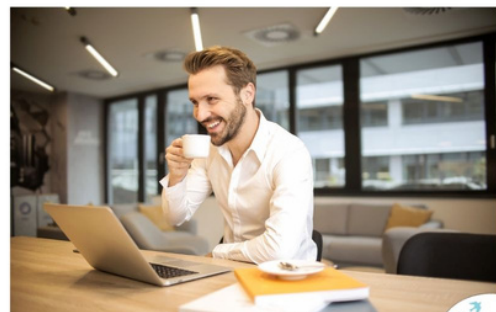
Tears

I know. This probably isn't what you were expecting. Sometimes you just have to let it all out. Crying is an expression of your grief. Not only is it totally ok, but it's totally necessary sometimes. Be gentle with yourself. Be kind. Crying is part of processing your emotions. And it is part of the healing journey.

Laugh

One of my top tips, when we are feeling a little down in the dumps, is to head over to your favourite cartoon funnies/stories (eg 'damn you autocorrect') and laugh until we cry (in a good way).

Find some funnies



100 Days of Self Care



Facial



100 Days of Self Care



Mani or pedi



100 Days of Self Care



TREAT

Get a haircut



100 Days of Self Care



Get a massage



100 Days of Self Care



Whether you give yourself one or have someone do it for you - a manicure, pedicure or a facial is a little bit of self-care.

If you are not in need of a haircut but enjoy a hair wash - you can just pay to get your hair washed and forgo the actual hair cut! You will look and feel better.

Massage is a wonderful way to experience touch, healing, relaxation, but also to deal with stiff sore muscles.

If you are struggling for funds - see if there is a massage training college near you - you can often get massages at hugely discounted prices.

INDULGE

Breakfast in Bed

Breakfast in bed, a good book, snuggled up in the blankets if you are lucky with some sun coming into the room. Nurture yourself with a Sunday lie-in and breakfast in bed! A great way to unwind, take some time out and relax.

Breakfast in bed



100 Days of Self Care



Flowers

Brighten up your space, brighten up your mood. You can buy flowers - but you can also pick some flowers too - they don't need to be flash - some weeds also can add colour to a room. Put them in a small vase and enjoy.

Pick or buy flowers



100 Days of Self Care



Bathe

Another great place to relax, unwind, complete the day, make extraordinary plans for the future. Bubbles, scented water, essential oils and maybe a glass of wine or a cup of tea! A great thing to do at the end of a working week. Add some magnesium salts for extra relaxation.

Take a bath



100 Days of Self Care



Escape into a novel



100 Days of Self Care



ESCAPE

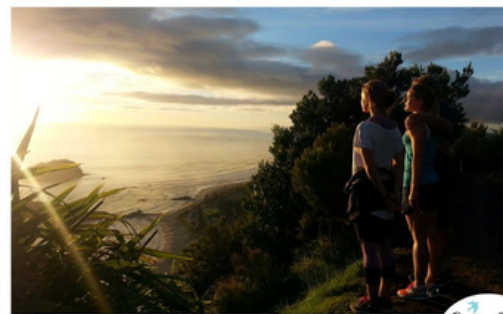
Read

Have some time out escaping into a novel - which can take you to faraway places! It can happily calm your mind and expand your horizons.

Sunrise

Something so beautiful and magical happens every day on this planet - and if you are anything like me - you don't see too many of them. A special morning watching the sunrise is a beautiful moment to take in. If you are travelling on a bus/train/ferry early in the morning. Take a moment to lift your head, look outside and notice the light and the beauty of the sunrise.

See the Sunrise



100 Days of Self Care



Eat a treat



100 Days of Self Care



Food Escape

So often we eat food with little attention or we eat with feelings of guilt or shame. Food is such a special part of our culture, we enjoy it with family and friends, it can be comforting and nurturing, whether it's hot chicken soup or a chocolate-covered biscuit. So when you're in the mood, mindfully choose a food you love, and escape with the flavours.

Be near a river
or the sea



100 Days of Self Care



Garden



100 Days of Self Care



TIME IN NATURE

Walk barefoot



100 Days of Self Care



Sunset



100 Days of Self Care



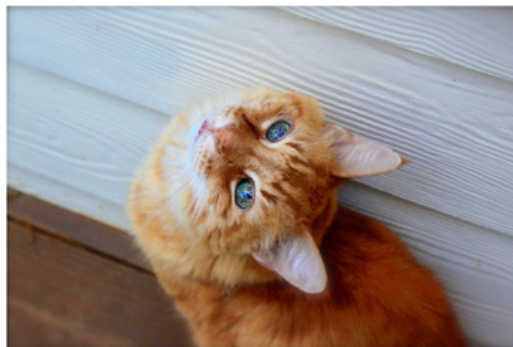
There is something magical about time in nature, time by yourself, time to think creativity - time away from screens/computers/phone - a chance to soak up some vitamin d and do some exercise. Gardening, also provides you with the joy of watching things grow. Some mindful walking can help bring yourself to the present moment and calm your mind.

There are some theories and some research which suggests that even standing on the earth or grass barefoot can reduce your cortisol levels. A sunset is a way of being in the moment - head out and watch the sunset, notice the colours, the cooling down of the temperature as the sunsets.

Pet love

The benefits of owning and caring for a pet are many. Reduced asthma is one of them. You certainly get a more diverse microbiome, and then there is all the love you get from them in return. Patting a pet is calming too. Petting a dog can trigger the release of the bonding hormone oxytocin. Feeling that fur can also lower your heart rate and blood pressure. Spending quality time with a dog, cat or other animals can have a positive impact on your mood and your health

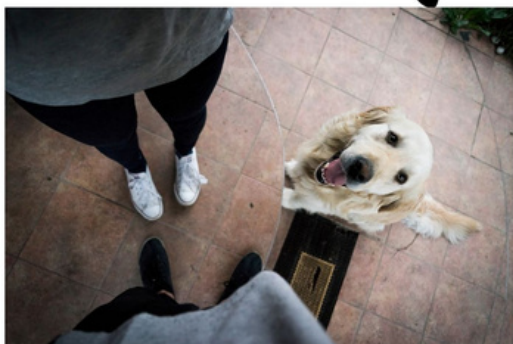
Pat a pet



100 Days of Self Care



Walk a dog



100 Days of Self Care



Walkies

Even if you don't own a dog - you can offer to take your neighbours or a friends dog for a walk. Good for physical health, good for mental health, good for companionship and probably doing your neighbour/friend a favour also.

Bird song

Any time you are outside, see if you can connect with hearing a bird; the call of a tui or the twitter of a fantail. A nice way to let go of whatever might be going on in your mind and be mindful of the present moment.

Listen to the birds



100 Days of Self Care



Time with a pet



100 Days of Self Care



Pet time

Dogs especially with the close human bonds show an incredible ability to provide their owner with feelings of love, support and loyalty. However, whether it's throwing a ball to a dog, sitting with a cat on your lap, feeding your pet chickens/lamb/goat/bird - some good quality time spent with an animal can be incredibly nurturing and healing.

Swim

Swimming can give you wonderful downtime or good thinking time. And if you can do it in an ocean or a lake - even better. It has the benefit of being in nature and a little cold immersion therapy!

Swim



100 days of Self Care



Picnic



100 Days of Self Care



Friends and Food

This one serves a few purposes. You get to eat yummy foods, spend time with friends and spend time outdoors. Phone a friend (or two), pack some of your most delicious food, grab a flask of tea/coffee/hot chocolate, a picnic blanket and spend some time making memories.

EXCELL

Keep Learning

There is always an opportunity to learn more about yourself, about your condition, about how to improve your situation - or simply study about a topic that is of specific interest for you. There are Loads of online courses (see: Coursera and Edx for two internationally run free online education providers).



Pat on the back

We all need a little pat on the back sometimes! Some days we struggle to believe that we can do anything worthwhile. And yet, when we look back - we all have moments where we have achieved something, often something quite amazing. If you are having one of those days - remind yourself of things you have achieved in the past, difficulties that you overcame, moments when you excelled or did something which surprised even you!



Listen

Have a long drive ahead of you? Stuck in traffic? About to sit on a plane for a few hours? Download a podcast before you head off. Plug it into your ears, press play and get entertained and educated. You never know what you might learn or what might spark some inspiration. Find a topic you are interested in: health, business, photography, travel, writing and pick up some tips.



GET CREATIVE

Getting creative can be a wonderful distraction from negative thoughts, a ruminating mind or an anxious brain. Channel that creativity into making something, designing something, writing, drawing, baking etc. Anything that takes your fancy. Enjoy the process. Don't be concerned about the results. Relax. Let it flow - if it turns out great - fantastic. If not, you have learned something. Many of the people that have achieved great things in life have done so through their creativity and imagination.



What do you want?

You don't need to be cutting out pictures of red Ferrari's or of million-dollar mansions. Just sit, think about some things which are really important to you and that you would like to have as part of your future. It can be as simple as how to want to feel in the future, the relationships you might have, the living space, place, town, country. You can draw, write, colour, create in any way you like. Make it fun, colourful, descriptive and then hang it up in a place where you will see it everyday.

Best Possible Future Self

Imagine yourself in a not too distant time in the future (2-5 years) where everything you have worked hard at, or everything you have planned has come to fruition. The job you have been working towards, the move you have wanted to make, the friendships you have gained anything and everything you can imagine which contributes to the life you want to be living. Write about this. What it will look like, what it will feel like. Who will be in your life, what sort of work will you be doing?



Journal



100 Days of Self Care



Writing

There are many ways to make journaling work for you. You can, of course, write down your thoughts and feelings, this can sometimes help to 'get things out of your mind' that may otherwise go around in circles. It may also help you make difficult decisions. You can journal things you are grateful for, you can journal about your goals and the steps you are going to take to get there. All in all - journaling can be highly therapeutic, a wonderful form of self-care.

Art

Art journaling can be a simple, yet empowering experience of "telling without talking", which is great for people who have difficulty putting their thoughts into words. This can help decision making, can be a way of expressing emotions, away from our logical minds. It uses different parts of the brain than the language centres and enables a person to get very creative with their goals, intentions, steps and healing.

Art Journal



100 Days of Self Care



Write



100 Days of Self Care



Writing therapy

Studies done by Auckland University a number of years ago by students writing about a difficult time in their life showed an increased immune response to vaccinations. Writing can help clear the mind - especially useful to do just before bed. Putting it on paper gets it out of the mind which can help you relax and therefore sleep better. Brainstorming can also be a great way of coming up with ideas and solutions to difficult problems.

BE ENTERTAINED

Movie



100 Days of Self Care



Needing to erase your mind of the day's events? There is nothing like a good movie as a distraction, some downtime and as a bit of an escape. We all need a total break sometimes, something to switch our brain off or distract it from the day's events. Sometimes self-care is actually allowing some pure brain-free relaxation time.

Movies

Why not treat yourself to the full experience and pop along for an hour or two of entertainment? You don't even need a friend - even if you feel a bit strange going out on your own - once you are in the movie you will appreciate being able to watch with full attention! It's a great distraction if you've got a lot on your mind or have had a hard day.

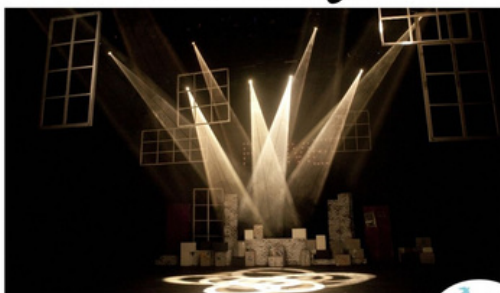
Go to a movie



100 Days of Self Care



Go to the theatre



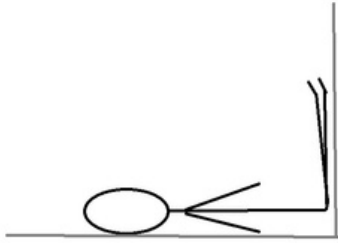
100 Days of Self Care



Theatre

A live show! Perhaps not so much self-care, but definitely something which can give you joy (which is a form of self-care!) Whether it is the ballet, the opera, a new play - absorbing yourself in some human art and talent can be hugely uplifting to the mind, body and soul.

Legs up the wall



100 Days of Self Care



Duvet day



100 Days of Self Care



REST

An early night



100 Days of Self Care



Take time out



100 Days of Self Care



Rest is a fundamental part of recovery. If you are depressed and all you do is work on improving your sleep - you are likely to see an improvement in your mood. Poor sleep is associated with poor mental health - well before mental health diagnosis has occurred. Your brain 'sweeps itself clean' during this time, your body heals and rejuvenates. Poor sleep takes years off your life and can encourage weight gain

Turn the phone off, put the laptop away, put the 'to do' list down, turn the television off and take some real time out. Do nothing. Relax. Breathe. Rest your mind. Close your eyes, or watch the grass grow, the ants forage and the flowers bloom.

Once in a while, it's okay to stay in your PJ's til the afternoon, to rest, to snuggle, to read a great book....

Unplug



100 Days of Self Care



UNPLUG

In our crazy busy world, we very really find some time to totally unplug, unwind and completely relax. We are constantly busy, thinking, looking, reading, watching. Take a few moments just to be. To notice the sounds around you, to notice what you see, to notice your breathing and to disengage the brain.

Cloud Watching

Lay on your back, on the ground and stare up into the sky. Whether it's cloud watching or star-gazing, let your mind go free and the brain expand.

Find shapes in the clouds, enjoy the weather - whatever it is and be still.

Watch the clouds



100 Days of Self Care



Essential Oils



100 Days of Self Care



Essences

There is a lot of science about the effectiveness of essential oils. The calming effects of lavender oil in a rest home, the effect of lemon essential oil in reducing airborne bacteria. The limbic system of the brain is what processes smells - the limbic system also deals with emotion, memory, and feelings - hence why smells can bring back memories so instantaneously. But apart from all that - essential oils generally smell good and are a great way to help bring yourself into the present moment. Mix a few of your favourite oils together for a bath, put them in a burner or mix with a carrier oil and put them on your skin.

UNWIND

Dancing

Dancing is good for the mind, body and soul. It's exercise for a start (which we all know is good for us), it usually involves some sort of music which in itself is a positive thing, it involves creativity (get those moves on) and is stimulating to the brain. You don't need a partner, you can do it anywhere, it's good to shake off the day's events, can give you energy and puts you in a good mood.



Puzzles

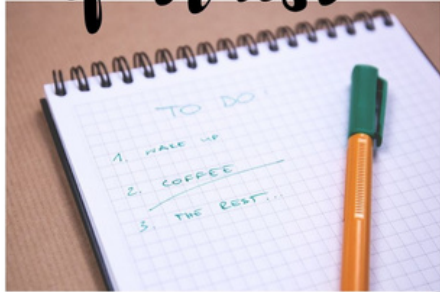
Doing a daily puzzle helps to challenge our thinking and exercise our minds. Solving puzzles help reinforce existing connections between our brain cells. This, in turn, improves mental speed and thought processes. Puzzles require us to take different approaches to try and solve a problem since there's a lot of trial and error involved. We also learn the value of formulating theories, testing hypotheses, and changing our perspectives when something doesn't work out according to plan - really - just like real life!

Make Believe

It's can be much easier when you have children to do this with. Borrow your friend's child, your niece or nephew for the afternoon and have fun playing dress-ups. Or throw a dress-up party or a dinner with your best friends which includes dressing up. It's not often we get time, creativity or the opportunity to put on our finest clothing, put on makeup (or alternatively dress as another character, movie star, clown or animal) - but it's incredibly freeing, can be a lot of fun It can lighten the mood, bring in some laughter, certainly a conversation starter. Even just upping your usual daily outfit with a piece of jewellery or a beautiful scarf can be a nice addition to your day.



Get a job off your list



100 Days of Self Care



Change the sheets



100 Days of Self Care



BE PRODUCTIVE

Tidy up



100 Days of Self Care



Clean



100 Days of Self Care



Picking something to do off the 'to-do' list can be incredibly rewarding - help you feel productive and sometimes even gives you a bit of a lift in energy. Tip: try to get a couple of the easy things off first - this does help to give you the motivation to do more. Why is it self-care? It's a form of looking after your space. Giving yourself a sense of pride. Caring about your surroundings and it makes you feel good!

An indulgence of a different kind, clean sheets and a well-made bed. It's a little bit of self-care which you know you will look forward to when you crawl into bed this evening. Putting off tidying up can really wreak havoc with your sense of calm. A minimalist approach to a desk might be what you need.

Do something your
future self will
thank you for



100 Days of Self Care



Future Self-Care

Sometimes, self-care is about doing something for your future self... Preparing some meals which you freeze for future busy times, getting your car serviced before it's actually due, buying presents for upcoming birthdays so you won't be panicking when the actual birthday comes along, or getting that health check-up or procedure done which you have been putting off..

Donating

Whether it's donating time, money, clothing, used goods, baked goods. We know that giving can help us feel better too. It can also be a way to get rid of 'junk' which other people may want or need; blankets and towels can go to animal shelters and are often desperately needed.

Donate



100 Days of Self Care



Plan a trip



100 Days of Self Care



Planning

Planning a trip - even just a day trip or a picnic in a place not too far away can be a wonderful thing to look forward to. It inspires your creativity and your imagination. Planning a trip with a friend can be even better. Planning a longer holiday, break, timeout is definitely self-nurturing and has been shown to improve mood!

Indulge Mindfully



100 Days of Self Care



Eat Mindfully



100 Days of Self Care



MINDFULNESS

Mindful Action



100 Days of Self Care



Meditate



100 Days of Self Care



There are many ways to meditate, many styles and forms. It is simple, yet challenging, as one learns to just be with the present moment, with the coming and going of thoughts, feelings and emotions. The rising and falling of the breath is rhythmic and calming and can be a great object of meditation and mindfulness. Mindful action is being with whatever you are doing, whether it's the dishes or brushing your teeth.

Mindful eating has a number of benefits. In essence, it's about slowing down, paying attention to what you are eating. Noticing how the food looks, tastes and smells. Notice if you are even actually hungry. Eat slowly, spoon by spoon. Chew the food a number of times before swallowing. Really savour the taste. It can help you make better choices and even eat less.

Gratitude



100 Days of Self Care



Attitude of Gratitude

A gratitude practice has been shown to lift mood. Doing a small gratitude exercise each evening can help you see the good things that have happened during the day and can help you retrain your brain to focus on the positive things in your life. It helps build resilience and recover from setbacks quicker. It's an easy and quick way to move your mood from a negative to a positive.

Letting go

Whether it's an old lover, a job that you have outgrown or getting rid of things you no longer need - letting go helps you to create space for new things to come into your life. It helps to de-clutter your mind and your physical space.

Let go



100 Days of Self Care



Exercise



100 Days of Self Care



Exercise

Some people do way too much, some do too little. Exercise has been shown to relieve the symptoms of depression. It can support your organs to function better, helps to reduce stress, clears the mind and let's face it you generally feel better. So if it's a walk, a swim, a run, dancing, horse riding, cycling, yoga, CrossFit or weightlifting - two-three hours a week is all you need to improve your mood. Most importantly - do something you enjoy.

Holiday



100 Days of Self Care



New Places

Holiday for a few hours or a few days. Even taking yourself out to a museum, being a tourist in your own town - can be a way to do something different and stimulate some neurons.

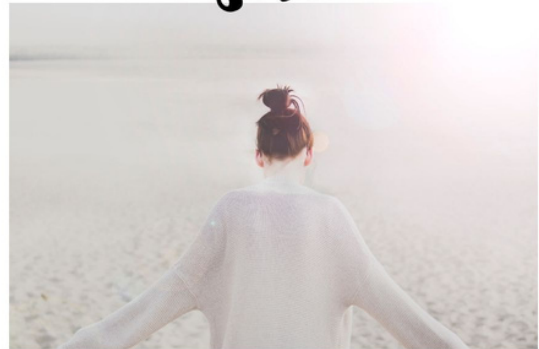
Choose a different cafe, a different way home, go to the nearest 'tourist spot' and make-believe you are on holiday.

Or simply go on a holiday!

On your own

I know that this can be a real challenge for some people. Sometimes you really want to go somewhere (movies, concert, dinner) but you have no one to go with. I encourage you to go alone. Wonderful things happen when you travel alone - when you eat alone when you go to conferences on your own. You are forced to talk to others - or others will seek you out as they can see you are on your own and ask you to join them. You can fill a need or a desire without compromising or waiting for someone else to do it with.

Do Something solo



Turn a challenge into a game!



Take on a challenge

When we take the seriousness and emotions out of our situation, we can have a change of attitude, look at things differently, feel ok about asking for help and feel ok with the wins and the losses that we may have along the way. The results of doing this can be remarkable - and can help recover from illness, injury and mental health conditions. Check out "Superbetter" for more information.



BOUNDARIES

Speaking up, saying no, placing boundaries around us, leaving an abusive or unhappy situation whether it be at work, in a relationship or within a family. Practising assertiveness is a very important part of self-care and keeping yourself safe.

Speak up

Number one, is you. Some times to preserve your sanity, sleep, stress levels - you need to speak up and speak out. An assertiveness course can help - or there are many online communication courses to help you communicate what you need.



Say No

Sometimes, the best, kindest most loving thing you can do for yourself is to say "No". It might be a simple no to a birthday or dinner invitation because you have so much on, or it may be - no, no thanks, not for me, never in your life, please don't call/ask again.

Music



100 Days of Self Care



Listen to music

Music has the ability to move you and move emotions within you. It's an incredibly powerful resource. The beat, the tempo, the tone, the style. Listening to angry music might help you shout out some bad feelings, dancing music might help make you move. Gentle music may invoke a feeling of calm. Music from a long time ago can stir memories. Take yourself away, give yourself a treat. Put on your favourite music, close your eyes and let yourself be taken away.

Listing Joy

Sit down and write ten things which give you joy. Notice how often you do these things. How can you do more of them? If joy is a difficult world - think about things you appreciate or things which give you comfort. They can be small (a beach walk, a sunset, listening to birdsong).

Joy



100 Days of Self Care



Fast

Fasting has many benefits for your health and well-being. Simply having a minimum of a 12 hour overnight fast is helpful for your gut.

Intermittent fasting, such as the 5 & 2 diet can help you to build a healthier microbiome, improve insulin resistance, improve your microbiome, can lower blood pressure and cholesterol. Because it's intermittent and doesn't involve difficult food restrictions - it's often very manageable with great results.

Fast



100 Days of Self Care





When you are feeling a little 'wobbly', stressed, tired, anxious, sad, unhappy, lost, lonely or any other myriad of human conditions... Ask yourself: 'What do I need right now?'

The answer might be: * a hug * a (mindful) glass of wine * a walk * a cup of tea * food * water * a talk * a distraction * vegetables (sometimes you just need a big bowl of broccoli ~ it's true!)

When you are in touch with yourself in a deep sense, the answer will often present itself. All you need to do is listen.

Connect
with me!



<https://www.facebook.com/OneLifeNZ>



<https://www.instagram.com/onelifenz/>



onelifenz@mail.com