

Self-Care and Its Undeniable Importance for Mental Health

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Most people are proactive when it comes to their physical health. They get their flu shots, see a doctor when they're sick, and take certain precautions to prevent bodily injury. However, when it comes to mental health, many people can be downright neglectful. But the truth is, caring for one's mental and physical health is one in the same. The [mind and body](#) are intrinsically connected. If one suffers, the other will follow suit.

Self-care is a necessary and very important part of every person's overall health. This blanket term refers to everything we do to ensure our well-being, from the boring (scheduling an annual physical, eating your vegetables, etc.) to the indulgent (getting a professional [massage](#), spending a whole day relaxing, etc.). The core of self-care is composed of a lot of basic but often overlooked practices. If you want to overhaul your wellness habits in favor of supporting your mental health more, these are great places to start.

Create a Calming Environment

Your home is a place where you can escape the chaos of outside work to relax and rejuvenate. If your home environment is a mess, you will have a much harder time accomplishing this. Clutter and disorganization are proven to cause feelings of [depression and anxiety](#). Clearing it out as best you can is essential for optimal mental health. Of course, getting rid of possessions isn't easy for everyone. It's perfectly fine to gather up things you can't part with and keep them out of sight and out of mind in a basement or even an inexpensive self-storage unit where they will be safe. Self-storage units can be fairly reasonable depending on the size and span of time rented. Over the past six months, the average [monthly price](#) for a self-storage unit in Seattle costs as little as \$127.85, certainly within the average household budget. Plus, you can't put a price on a clean and stress-reducing environment.

Cope with Stress in Healthy Ways

Stress is inevitable. Certain types of stress are even healthy. However, too much chronic stress can harm both your physical and mental health. Establishing [healthy coping mechanisms](#) for anxiety is a big part of caring for your mental health.

- **Exercise.** Not only does exercise give you an outlet for pent-up frustrations, but the feel-good [neurotransmitters](#) your brain releases during a good workout relieve the symptoms of anxiety.
- **Meditate.** [Meditation](#) is free and available for everybody, everywhere. Even mini-meditations are effective for relieving stress and anxiety. Meditating trains your brain to be present and in the moment so you are less affected by troubling thoughts when they pop up.
- **Socialize.** Humans are social animals, and we need to be with others to tap into our best selves. Make plans with friends or loved ones when you're feeling overwhelmed and need to be reminded about the important things in life.

Commit to Better Sleep

You are supposed to spend at least a third of your day sleeping, yet many of us treat this essential time of rest as an afterthought. During the time you spend asleep, your brain and body complete several essential processes for optimal functioning. If you don't practice good [sleep hygiene](#), those processes are not as effective and you'll end up suffering from it the next day and in the long term. If you want to commit to better sleep, come up with an effective bedtime routine that gives your body enough time to wind down before you turn in. Shut down your devices and spend at least an hour before bed doing something that relaxes you such as [reading](#), meditating, or taking a [scented bath](#). Lower the lights and the temperature in your bedroom to signal to your body that it's about time to fall asleep. Invest in budget-friendly [blackout](#) shades or a sound machine to help you drift off more easily. Remember: If you are consistent with your bedtime routine, it becomes easier and easier to fall asleep quickly and rest soundly every night.

Self-care doesn't refer to anything specific, it's a general term for everything we do to support our wellness. If you want to be more proactive about caring for your mental health, start with some basic but often overlooked healthy habits like reducing clutter, finding good coping methods for stress, and committing to a steady bedtime routine. Over time, these habits will have you feeling better in every way.

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