



# SELF-CARE GROUP EXERCISE

## USE THIS RESOURCE TO

DISCUSS WAYS TO PRACTICE  
AND MAKE TIME FOR SELF-  
CARE IN YOUR LIVES

### SELF-CARE TO DO LIST

1. **Think about what you enjoy doing.** This could be anything from a walk around the block during lunch to a weekend trip to the national park. Self care looks different for each of us.
2. **Schedule a time to do it each day, week, or however often you feel it is needed.** Put time on your calendar for it to remind yourself to do it and to not schedule other things for those times.
3. **Think of ways to incorporate relaxing activities in your day to day schedule.** This could be anything from closing your laptop while you eat your lunch to leaving your phone in your bag while you commute to work or school.
4. **Spend time with those that make you happy.** Surround yourself with people that are fun and supportive.
5. **It's okay to say no.** If you feel like your body or mind will not benefit from doing something, take a break to rest or do something you do enjoy and that feels relaxing.
6. **Take care of your body.** If you are feeling tired, try to get to bed just a few minutes earlier each day.
7. **Think about why you are doing the self care activity.** Remind yourself why you are taking time out of your day to do something that is not for work or school - it is for you! Self care helps us recuperate from a stressful or busy schedule and to be more productive afterwards.

## HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

Gather a group of students to discuss ways to practice and make time for self-care in your lives. If you do not have the capacity to present the information, pass these examples out or post them around campus as a reminder for students to think about ways to practice self-care.

## WHAT IS SELF-CARE?

Self care is the act of doing an activity you personally enjoy in order to preserve your mind and body. In the field of sexual violence, self care is especially important to remember to fit into our schedules. The exposure to trauma and disclosures can lead to vicarious trauma or secondary trauma. Self-care is something you do for yourself and can look different for each of us. Remember: you cannot best support others if you aren't supporting yourself.

## WHAT IS VICARIOUS TRAUMA?

Vicarious or secondary trauma is defined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as trauma-related stress reactions and symptoms resulting from exposure to another individual's traumatic experiences, rather than from exposure directly to a traumatic event.

## MAKE YOUR OWN SELF-CARE TO-DO LIST

Everyone's list for self-care will look different. Grab a pen and take 5 minutes to begin writing your own self-care list. Take your list and build on it. Use it regularly - self-care does not need to only be used when you reach your emotional limit, your physical and mental health are always a priority.

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