

# The Parent's Corner

we're in your corner

We've heard the words before -- "self-care". We may hear it from our employers who tell us it's important, or from family and friends we confide in about our stress. As parents with busy schedules and children to take care of, even the idea of self-care can, at times, feel like just another thing to add to the to-do list. However, psychologists say self-care does not always have to mean a week-long vacation or developing a new skill. There are ways to incorporate self-care into your life to help alleviate stress and leave you feeling happier and more present at work, home, and with your children.

According to Health Coach Institute, there are 7 categories of self-care that we should be practicing in our day-to-day lives:

## 1 **Emotional Self-care**

When we are in heightened emotional states, such as feeling stressed, worried or sad, this affects other areas of life, both personally and professionally. It is vital to our well-being to take time to identify what we are feeling and regulate our emotions. This may be by talking with a therapist, spiritual mentor, or friend, or by creating a list of coping skills that help you relax (journaling, meditation, art or hobbies).

## 2 **Physical Self-care**

Physical self-care is generally what people think about when they think self-care. This consists of activities that will enhance your physical well-being, such as taking a walk, riding a bike, or taking a fitness class. With physical self-care, you are also taking note of your body and how it feels, and making choices to move, eat foods that make you feel good, and (most importantly!) rest when needed.

## 3 **Mental Self-care**

Mental self-care is anything that stimulates or challenges your mind. Listening to a podcast like "Mental Health Matters", reading a book, doing a crossword puzzle, or learning about a subject you don't know as much about are great examples.

## 4 **Social Self-care**

Social self-care can feel difficult when you are managing many relationships. It may feel like you don't always get to spend time with friends or family, especially during this pandemic. Social self-care can be simple--sending a text to someone you haven't spoken with in a while, spending time with a pet, or mailing a card to a loved one. On the flip side, social self-care is about boundaries, of looking at relationships that no longer serve you in positive ways and deciding if you need them.

## 5 **Spiritual Self-care**

Even those who are not religious can practice spiritual self-care; it is anything that helps you engage and nurture your soul. Taking time in nature or volunteering for a cause you care about is spiritual self care.

## 6 **Practical Self-care**

Practical self-care involves activities that help reduce your daily stress and meet your core needs. Meal prepping, deleting old e-mails, creating a budget or tidying up your home can all be practical ways to care for yourself.

## 7 **Professional Self-care**

Lastly, work is a common cause of stress for many people. Take lunch breaks. Spend time with co-workers. Take a mental health or sick day when you need to, and notice if work is feeling so unbearable that re-evaluating may need to take place.

As we end the year, take some time to figure out the areas where your self-care may be slipping. Create a plan for the new year to implement small things daily. Taking positive steps for yourself not only is needed, it also creates a positive environment for your children.

**\*If you continue to have concerns, contact your school counselor to make a plan for a success—they're full of ideas, and are always in your corner!\***