

PHYSICAL SELF CARE

Take care of your body by taking time to listen and address its needs daily: thirst, hunger, pain, stress, tension, fatigue

Exercise through walking, running, aerobics, and yoga are a good way of working off stress while also ensuring your body is kept in shape

Eating well balanced meals that meet individual nutritional needs is essential to maintaining ones physical well being

Practice body calming activities such as yoga, knitting, meditation, baking, walking, or swimming that encourage a calm state

EMOTIONAL SELF CARE

Ask for help when you need it. No one can do everything alone, and it is necessary to offload some of the feelings, hardships, and expectations in your life

Practice gratitude and reflection as a means of addressing points of positivity within your life and defining points of improvement to be worked on

See a therapist to work through difficult emotions or experiences, or simply to have someone to act as a filter for your thoughts and feelings

Talk about your emotions and address feelings of stress and hardship within your life in order to address negative feelings

PSYCHOLOGICAL SELF CARE

Mental self care is the act of reducing stress levels and decluttering your mind as a means of addressing your overall mindset and improving your general state of being

Turn off your screens. Remove excess light, noise, and information and allow yourself a moment to decompress

Take time weekly to connect with friends and loved ones via phone, email, visits, or video calls. Connection is vital to maintaining a healthy emotional state

AGE FRIENDLY LOUISVILLE

SELF CARE AND STRESS MANAGEMENT FOR THE AGING ADULT

Self care can be defined as the practice of taking an active role in protecting one's own well-being and happiness, in particular during periods of stress, or: the practice of taking action to preserve or improve one's own health

RESOURCES ON SELF CARE AND AGING

The American Psychological Association
<https://www.apa.org/news/apa/2020/03/self-care-older-adults>

National Institute on Aging
<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/topics>



HEALTH BENEFITS OF SELF CARE

Self care triggers a relaxation response in an individual, which benefits the mental state of a person due to the release of endorphins and the bodies response to the actions

Self care triggers a chemical reaction that raises an individual's mood and elevates energy levels in response to acts of physical self care (exercise, meditation, sleep, etc.)

Acts of self care encourage the body to function and feel better due to the regulation of the bodies system

Scheduling moments in advance each day to take the time to address your stress levels and emotional state will benefit your happiness and decrease chronic stress levels, which is beneficial to your health and emotional well being overall

Attending to your emotional and mental needs helps to ensure that your overall health is not neglected because it creates a pattern of noticing and addressing needs

Self care encourages compassion towards ourselves, which is then seem reflected on our treatment towards other

Self care impacts the Parasympathetic Nervous System which in influences the immune system and is beneficial to restoring the bodies defense systems

How can you practice self care?

Self care is accessible to all people, and though every older person is different, and the needs of each individual are dependent upon where they lay upon the wide

spectrum of aging, individual needs can be met in a variety of ways

Acknowledging that a situation is overwhelming is the basis for establishing a self care routine that befits your personal needs

A good starting point for addressing your individual needs is to pinpoint points of stress and points of joy within your daily life in order to define ways to meet your daily needs

Applying Self Care to Your Life

Once you have defined your personal needs (ex. stress relief, physical exertion, emotional exhaustion, physical or psychological stress, etc.), you can then begin to identify activities that seek to release those negative feelings and instead, enhance your emotional state

Find your balance: self care has many different appearances and the combination of any of them will reflect benefits on your life once you find which match your personal needs

Schedule time each day or week to do something just for you. A 15 minute walk or ten minutes of quiet time can do wonders in settling your mind and resting your body