



Self-Care Secrets

by Lori Kearney, Certified Integrative Health Coach, Wellness Educator + Owner

Self-care is not self-indulgence. Self-care is self-respect.

Below are some essential and fundamental self-care secrets that can keep you functioning well during life's challenges and daily stressors.

1. TRY SOMETHING NEW. The secret to getting different results is to try different things! It sounds simple, but it's the truth. Experiment. Give yourself permission to be brave to try something new and find what works for you and your body. Look at your experiences as feedback, not as failure.

2. MOVE YOUR BODY, MOVE YOUR SOUL. When exercise feels like something we're supposed to do instead of something we really want to do, it's really easy to move our workouts off our priority list. Explore different exercise classes and fun activities to find a way to move your body that moves your soul too.

3. GO OUTSIDE. Spending time in nature has been shown to lower stress levels and shows a shift toward more positive moods. Go outside for around 10-20 minutes to get a good dose of healthy vitamin D.

4. PRACTICE YOGA. Yoga is a mind-body practice that combines physical poses, controlled breathing, and meditation. Yoga brings the mind and body in harmony with each other and helps manage our inner state, plus almost anyone can do it.

5. MEDITATION. A few minutes of meditation per day can help ease anxiety. Research suggests that daily meditation may change the brain's neural pathways, making you more resilient to stress. Simply, close your eyes and focus on your breath or a positive mantra such as "I feel at peace".

6. GET A MASSAGE. Research on the benefits of massage therapy gives strong evidence for including massage as part of an approach to staving off pain and relieving stress and anxiety. When there's no professional masseuse in sight, try DIYing a hand massage for instant relaxation.



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7. EAT REAL FOOD. A diet lacking nutrients can make you more vulnerable to stress. Avoid or limit processed food (or faux food), esp. food with a long list of unpronounceable ingredients. They tend to lack the nutrients your body needs.

8. CREATE A BEDTIME RITUAL. A nightly bedtime ritual can help you turn off your brain and get your body ready for sleep. Sleep is essential for your emotional and physical well-being. Lack of sleep can negatively impact your ability to handle stress, be productive, and function properly.

9. TAKE A BATH. It might feel luxurious, but did you know baths can also be good for your health? Add a cup of Epsom salts with your favorite essential oils to add minerals and more relaxation to your bath. An easy way to remember this bath is 2-2-20. Two cups Epsom salts, plus two cups baking soda for 20 minutes.

10. BE GRATEFUL. Keep a gratitude journal to write down all of the things that are good in your life, aim for at least three a day. Being grateful for your blessings cancels out negative thoughts and worries. When you feel stressed, look through your notes to remind yourself what really matters.

11. ELIMATE THE NEGATIVES. Experiment with eliminating (or limiting) watching the sad news stories, reading the angry opinion pages and scanning the loads of negative social media. Figure out what things trigger negative responses in you, and avoid or limit them if you can.

12. SAY AFFIRMATIONS. Give positive messages to yourself instead of negatives by reframing your perspective. Instead of a negative statement like "Nothing goes right for me", give yourself positive messages like "I'm doing my best" or "I can do whatever I put my mind to". We can't always change how things are on the outside, but when we change our inner world, we experience our outer world differently.

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13. CREATE A SELF-CARE ACTION PLAN. At a minimum, you should have one thing each week that you do for fun and that is just for you. Taking time to re-charge yourself daily, weekly and monthly is your secret weapon to being able to give freely of yourself to others in your life. You can't pour from an empty cup, so take care of yourself first.

List at least one thing you are already doing well when it comes to self-care is:

What will you commit to doing to improve your self-care over the next week?

What will you commit to doing to improve your self-care over the next month?

BONUS. To discuss your action plan in future detail, please contact me directly at 612.720.1335 or info@mindfulhealthwithlori.com to arrange a **complimentary discovery health coaching session**. I meet with clients via video conferencing, phone or in-person, so you can be located anywhere in the world. Integrative Health Coaching is perfect for anyone motivated to improve his/her health. I coach each person differently, depending on their own unique needs. Investing in yourself is the best investment one can make. Please note, I typically have a wait-list, so please contact me today!

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