Frameworks

Self-care is the practice of taking an active role in prioritizing your well-being and happiness, particularly in times of stress. It is an ongoing, everyday commitment to yourself to balance all your responsibilities with caring for yourself. This list offers 50 strategies for self-care based on the five Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies to help you cultivate a well-rounded self-care practice.

Self-Awareness

1. **Build self-awareness of your stress triggers** to help you be proactive about addressing or avoiding them.
2. **Practice gratitude** by writing down three things you sometimes take for granted but are grateful to have (running water, electricity, sunshine).
3. **Do one kind thing for yourself every day** such as giving yourself a compliment or doing an activity you enjoy.
4. **Embrace uncomfortable emotions** by setting a timer to feel, process, and move through uncomfortable emotions so that they do not build up.
5. **Focus on what is in your control** and do your best in those areas while letting go of what you cannot control.
6. **Adopt an empowering mantra** such as "My current situation isn't my permanent destination" or "I will be grateful for small moments of happiness."
7. **Do a feelings and needs checklist** by asking yourself "What am I feeling? What do I need to move through this feeling?"
8. **Practice journaling** using guided prompts or a free-flow style to express and process comfortable and uncomfortable emotions.
9. **Focus on watering and growing your grass** rather than comparing or complaining that the grass is greener on the other side.
10. **Celebrate the small victories** because little victories add up to big victories over time.
11. **Seek professional help** from a mental health counselor to process emotions and explore solutions to challenges.
12. **kNOw your limits** by making choices that work for you, sometimes you have to say "no" to put limits on your time and capacity.

Self-Management

1. **Manage your mindset** by making an effort to replace unhelpful or negative thoughts with positive, growth-focused ones.
2. **Get outside** and get some fresh air and sunshine even if it is just for a minute.
3. **Play Categories** in your head or on a piece of paper when you need to shift your focus from uncomfortable thoughts or feelings.

4. **Get creative** with a crafty hobby or project to engage your brain in a different way.
5. **Stick to your routines** as best you can to give you comfort and keep you grounded.
6. **Limit your exposure to the news and social media** by setting a daily timer or taking an extended break.
7. **Schedule intentional downtime each day** so you can block off time for rest in your in busy schedule, even if it's only for a few minutes.
8. **Try progressive muscle relaxation** by holding tension in different muscle groups for a few seconds and then relaxing them starting with the top of your body and progressing down to your feet.
9. **Do a puzzle** like a jigsaw or crossword to engage the critical thinking part of your brain in a different way.
10. **Do some stretches** to release tension and relax your body.
11. **Limit screen time before bed** and replace it with something else you find relaxing such as an audiobook or meditation.
12. **Keep a to-do or to-remember list** so you can focus on the present without worrying about forgetting anything.

Social Awareness

1. **Give grace and space** to yourself and others by remembering we are all doing the best we can with what we have.
2. **Welcome humor** through funny videos, laughing with a friend, or being silly with your students.
3. **Practice the 5-4-3-2-1 grounding technique** when you feel overwhelmed by identifying five things you can see, four things you can hear, three things you can touch, two things you can smell, and taking one deep breath in.
4. **Be flexible and realistic with your time** by changing plans when needed and saying "no" to requests you cannot meet.
5. **Spread kindness to help generate a positive community** by complimenting someone or helping them out and encouraging them to do the same for others.
6. **Treat yourself like you would treat a friend** in how you talk to and think about yourself.
7. **Practice the "Three for One" rule** by identifying *three positives* for every *one negative* you think about yourself or others.
8. **Access and accept support** from other people or organizations when it is needed and/or offered.

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Relationship Skills

1. **Have a buddy system** with a friend or colleague and check in on each other every day.
2. **Prioritize (genuine) connection** by calling a close friend or having a phone-free dinner with family.
3. **Surround yourself with supportive and positive people** who will help lift you up and keep you encouraged.
4. **Apologize and forgive** to spread compassion and reduce emotional burdens.
5. **Strive to accept (and believe) compliments** from others to improve your connection to others and boost self-esteem.
6. **Maintain eye contact** to enhance the feeling of connectedness during conversations.
7. **Send a letter or card** to a loved one or community hero.
8. **Connect with an online interest or support group** through Facebook, Google Educators, and Meetup.

Responsible Decision-Making

1. **Keep a to-do or to-remember list** so you can focus on the present without worrying about forgetting anything.
2. **Limit screen time before bed** and replace it with something else you find relaxing such as an audiobook or meditation.
3. **Eat healthy foods** that you like to help fuel your body and keep healthy snacks on hand when you need to eat on the go.
4. **Take things one step at a time** to help big tasks or problems feel more manageable.
5. **Move your body daily** in a way that is fun and energizing to produce the body's natural mood boosting chemical, endorphins.
6. **Stay hydrated** by keeping a water bottle with you and taking small sips throughout the day.
7. **Re-evaluate your priorities** and set new, supportive goals by asking yourself "Is this helping or hurting me right now?" and "What can I change?"
8. **Replace mindless scrolling or binge-watching** with a productive or enjoyable activity that will help you feel good or accomplished.
9. **Clean up one thing** in your environment every day to boost feelings of accomplishment and reduce clutter.
10. **Complete a chore or errand you have been putting off** to keep tasks from piling up.