



SELF-CARE & SELF-COMPASSION

Self-care refers to the ways we intentionally care for ourselves—our physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Just like the battery on our phone, we require recharging. What constitutes self-care—what feels rejuvenating and recharges us—will be unique to each of us and to each situation and phase of life (e.g., when we are more stressed, we may require more intentional self-care).

Self-care is an essential aspect of mental health and overall well-being. Self-care is most effective when integrated throughout our daily living (i.e., finding ways to make what we already do rejuvenating; e.g., if I have to commute, I can listen to a podcast or music I enjoy or call a close friend). This handout will help you begin to explore what tools may be helpful to have in your self-care toolkit (check out our self-help section on our website for more ideas!).

Examples of Self-Care

- **Practice Self-Compassion.** Our relationship to ourselves is arguably one of the most impactful relationships we will ever have; yet, we rarely focus on this relationship. Self-compassion refers to our ability to be compassionate toward ourselves—through self-kindness/self-love, awareness of our humanness, and mindfulness of our experience/needs. *A place to start can be talking to yourself how you would talk to someone you love.*
- **Create a Sleep Routine.** Sleep has profound impacts on mental and physical health. Start exploring evening and morning routines to aid in restful and restorative sleep.
- **Take Breaks.** Research supports the importance of breaks—that we actually perform better when we take breaks. Try finding creative ways to take breaks when studying (e.g., 15 minutes to step outside/talk to a friend/watch a funny video).
- **Be in Tune with Your Body and Prioritize Meeting its Needs.** Check out the Feeling My Feelings handout to start practicing being in tune with your body and finding ways to meet your moment to moment needs.

What's Next?

- **Test Your Level of Self-Compassion.** Take the self-compassion questionnaire on the self-compassion.org/ website to discover your self-compassion strengths and areas of growth (and check out the great resources on Kristin Neff's website while you're there!).
- **Get Creative with Self-Care.** There are many forms of self-care (e.g., physical, mental, emotional, spiritual). Expand your self-care repertoire; see the 50 Ways to Take a Break handout on our website for ideas!
- **Get Connected.** Contact the Counseling and Testing Center by calling or visiting our website to learn more about the many services available.