

Your participation in the Research Program at the World Trade Center Health Program plays a vital role in the treatment of your condition and improves care for all members .

Self-Care: Including Yourself in Compassion

Potential Impact/Population: Regular self-care can increase our sense of well-being and prevent burnout among caretakers. Self-care is a crucial part of wellness, especially for people who take care of others in their home and/or work-life.

Tips for Self-Care: Modern research has shown the benefits of ancient wisdom and simple practices that support health and healing. The following is a brief overview of research-based tips for better physical and mental health:

- **Exercise:** Move each day. Activities like walking, strength training, or yoga can help ease symptoms and even prevent some physical or mental health issues. Even regular short bursts of gentle movement can help.
- **Healthy Food:** Aim for a “rainbow diet.” Add more colorful fruits and vegetables to your plate and include some oily fish like salmon or sardines, which are rich in omega-3 oils and low in mercury. Try to avoid eating too many calories and ask your doctor about supplements like Vitamin D or fish oil.
- **Nature:** Being outside in nature is a time-tested way to improve our thought process and overall sense of well-being.
- **Relationships:** Good relationships are key to both physical and mental well-being. This ancient idea is now supported by considerable research. Take time to connect with family, friends, neighbors, or pets.
- **Have Fun:** Involvement in enjoyable activities, like a favorite hobby or pastime, can be more than just fun. It can bolster our sense of well-being. Even the word recreation shows why it’s important: “re-creation!”
- **Religious/Spiritual Connection:** In general, religious or spiritual involvement is most likely to have health benefits when it centers on themes such as love and forgiveness. It can also a good way to connect with supportive relationships.
- **Volunteering and Service:** Since ancient times, helping others has been seen as a virtue that can benefit both the giver and receiver. Helping others can reduce unhealthy mental feelings such as greed, jealousy, and being ego-centric. It can also increase healthy feelings like love, joy, and generosity.
- **Relaxation/Stress Management:** Mindfulness meditation and mind body practices can be very valuable skills to help improve physical and mental well-being.

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