Self Care

What is self-care?

Self-care is how you take care of yourself - your diet, exercise, daily routine, relationships, and how you are feeling. It can be hard to do self-care, however, self-care is essential - a vital act of self-kindness - allowing us to take care of ourselves. Instead of using it relative to how we are feeling, we should view it as the fuel to keep up going.

Self-care includes essential acts of care, but it also includes things that nourish, comfort, calm and make us feel good. Self-care can vary from person to person, and it's important to find out what it looks like for you. Sometimes self-care acts aren't things we enjoy doing - this is known as boring self-care and can include things like taking medication or paying a bill. It doesn't really matter what self-care is, what matters is how it makes us feel.

Self-care doesn't need to cost a lot (or any) money. It can be hard sometimes to keep all of our acts of self-care going. It's important to remember that trying, or doing a bit of something, still counts - we aren't striving for perfection. When we engage in self-care, it signals to ourselves and others what our standards our for ourselves.

Why is self-care important?

Self-care is important because a lot of the acts are aimed at keeping ourselves either mentally or physically healthy, or both. It can help us to learn when we are becoming unwell (either because we feel unwell despite doing our self-care, or because we notice our self-care is getting harder), and it can help us to identify any triggers for becoming unwell. Some acts of self-care can have direct impacts on our health. Self-care can help to reduce burnout, and increase resilience, too. Some acts of self-care can directly impact our mental health by boosting our self-esteem and sense of worth. Even really small tasks can make us feel like we are making progress and achieving something (have you ever noticed how much better you sometimes feel after taking a shower, or even brushing your teeth?) – because we are achieving something.

Mental illness can make us believe that we don't matter, and self-care counters that because it involves taking time to do something just for our own good. This shows us that we are worthy of attention and care (which everyone is).

see mentalhealth.usi.ie for sources of help with your mental health.

Self-Care Plan

Daily self-care non negotiables:

Boring self-care:

Fun self-care:

Self-care for when I'm starting to struggle:

Self-care action for tough times:

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