

SELF CARE PLAN ADAPTED FROM WWW.REACHOUT.COM

ASPECT	WHAT AM I CURRENTLY DOING?	WHAT COULD I DO?
Workplace & Professional Conduct		
Psychological		
Emotional		
Physical		
Relational		
Spiritual		

- Make a list of the activities that you are currently doing?
- For you current activities
 - Highlight / circle the activities that are working/ make you feel energised, calmer, contribute to your wellbeing?
 - Cross –out those that are not working / feel more of a chore than self-care?
- Add any new activities that you want to try in the “What Could I Do?” column
- Make sure you have at least one activity for each aspect , but be realistic and be specific – just writing “do more exercise” will probably result in doing nothing as will “going to run a marathon each day”
- Ask yourself does the plan look to be in overall balance
- Complete the table below asking yourself “What might get in the way?” How can I manage this / remove the barriers?”

What Might Get in the Way?	How Do I Manage This?

- If you can’t remove the barriers them you might want to adjust what you are going to do.
- Think honestly about whether you have any unhealthy coping mechanisms & how to minimise them.

Unhealthy Coping Mechanisms	How Do I Minimise Them?

- Have an aim, something to measure against?

If I implement the plan, what changes so I hope to see in the way I feel?

Once you have made the plan most importantly:

- Keep it visible - perhaps share it with someone who will support you
- Stick to it & practice the activities regularly – even when you are feeling fine
- Re-assess how you are going at the end of one month and then three months
- After a time do the exercise again to see how effective it has been / how it may need to change

Heart Breath Exercise

Intentionally slowing your heart and breathing rate can have a powerful impact on the nervous system and level of anxiety – coming back into window of tolerance – turning off the trauma reaction

Inhale slowly and deeply for 5 seconds into your diaphragm so that your stomach rises.

Exhale slowly over 5 seconds. As breath in or out think, say “In...2...3...4...5” “Out...2...3...4...5”

If can't manage 5 seconds, start with 4 – gentle and slow breathing – not holding breath or inhaling too quickly

Do this for at least a minute or six cycles (in and out).

Then imagine someone or something for which you feel appreciation, a supportive friend, act of kindness, special place, meaningful song, special gift etc.

Continue the breathing practice and as you do so ponder on the thing that you appreciate and the feeling of appreciation.

In trials using different feelings, the feeling of appreciation seems to have the most powerful effect. Growing scientific evidence that gratitude and appreciation are significantly important for mental well-being

Mental Health Resources

- **MIND:** www.mind.org.uk 0300 123 3393 extensive information to assist in understanding mental health issues
- **Mind and Soul** www.mindandsoulfoundation.org information for individuals and churches
- **Mental Health Foundation** – information on mental health issues and maintaining mental well-being www.mentalhealth.org.uk/

Carers Resources

- **Carers UK Helpline:** 0808 808 7777 www.carersuk.org Information & advice on all aspects of caring
- **Age UK** www.ageuk.org.uk
- **Action for Children** www.actionforchildren.org.uk Support for young carers