# PRACTICING SELF-CARE

*A toolkit from 2-1-1 San Diego*

# What is Self-Care?

Self-care is:

- Any activity done to take care of your **mental, emotional, and physical health**
- Meant to help **recharge and refuel**
- Different for everyone. Some people need quiet relaxation while others need an energetic activity to refresh. **Find what works for you.**

## Why is self-care important?

- Improves **mood**
- Reduces **anxiety**
- Helps foster and maintain **good relationships** with oneself and others
- Allows you to **recharge** and get ready to face the next day with energy and a positive outlook
- Increases **resilience** and makes it easier to handle stressful situations

# What can I do for Self-Care?

*Focus on resilience.*

**Resilience** is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress. The Central Florida Police Stress Unit used research to define the **6 R's of Resilience**. These are the areas we should focus on in order to develop and maintain our resiliency:

RESILIENCE

RELATIONSHIPS    REFLECTION    RESPONSIBILITY    RELAXATION    REFUEL    RECREATION
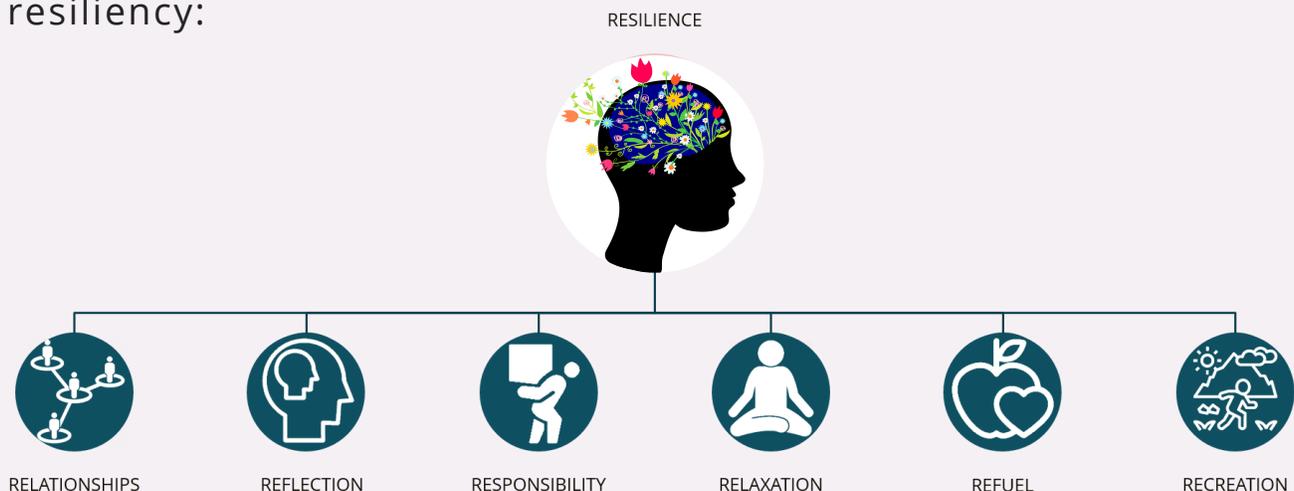
## RELATIONSHIPS
- Maintain and invest in relationships
- Think about and manage relationships

## REFLECTION
- Know your triggers for stress
- Know your signs for distress
- Check your work/life balance
- Do you have meaning and purpose?

## RESPONSIBILITY
- Understand where your responsibility begins and ends
- Establish and understand your priorities

## RELAXATION
- Enjoy music regularly; engage in meditation or yoga
- Schedule "worry time"
- Schedule time by yourself

## REFUELING
- Be aware of food contents (avoid sugar, caffeine, fats, fried foods)
- Eat a balanced diet
- Take breaks
- Get enough sleep by exercising, keeping the same schedule all week, and winding down at bedtime

## RECREATION
- Have fun with your family and friends
- Reconnect with nature; engage in gardening, go for a walk or hike
- Playtime with your pet
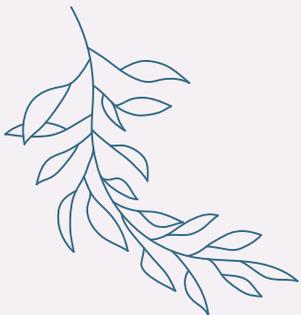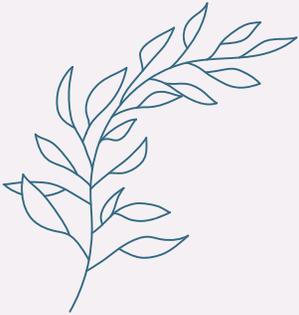
# Create a Self-Care Plan

Use the template below to make yourself a self-care plan to follow.

## WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE WHEN I'M WELL?

Physical?

Emotional?

Intellectual?

Spiritual?

## WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE WHEN I'M NOT WELL?

Physical?

Emotional?

Intellectual?

Spiritual?

## WARNING SIGNS (INTERNAL)

## TRIGGERS (EXTERNAL)

## MY SUPPORTS

Primary:

Secondary:

## PLAN OF ACTION: HOW DO I GET BACK TO WELL?

## WHAT DO I NEED FROM OTHERS?

## WHAT ELSE DO I NEED?

# Self-Care at Work

## 1 Take care of your body.

↳ **Stretch!** Click here for some stretches you can do right at your desk.

↳ **Take a walk** during your break or lunch

↳ Do a few minutes of **yoga** while on your break or during lunch

↳ Protect your eyesight using the **20-20-20 method**. Every 20 minutes, look up from your screen and focus your gaze on something 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds.

## 2 Be careful with nutrition.

↳ Feed your brain and body **nutritious food** including fruits, vegetables, and whole grains

↳ **Avoid excessive caffeine and sugar**--those can increase the body's stress response and lead to crashing

↳ **HYDRATE!** Drinking enough water is so important for your body and brain

## 3 Focus on your breathing. Try out some breathing exercises.

↳ **4-7-8 Breathing**

↳ Click here for a tutorial on **box breathing.**

Breathe Out
8
SECONDS

Breathe In
4
SECONDS

REPEAT 4 X

Hold Breath
7
SECONDS

THE DEEP SLEEP CO.
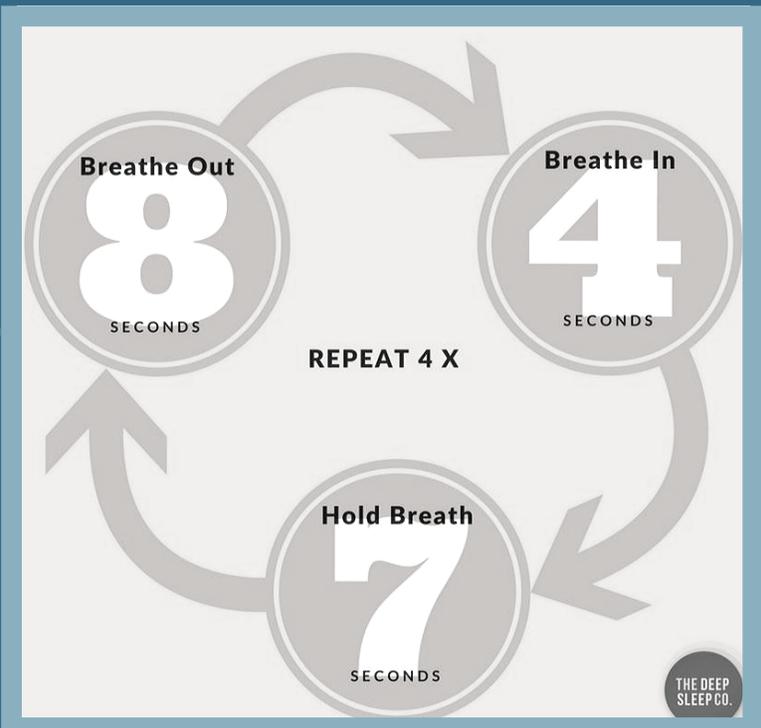
# Self-Care after Work

The bread-and-butter ways you should care for yourself every day.

**1**

### PRACTICE WORK/LIFE BALANCE

Have an End of Shift Routine. Whether you are in the office or working remotely, create a routine for the end of each shift. It can be as simple as tidying up your workspace and turning off your computer, or shutting the door on your home office for the night. Doing the same thing at the end of each day helps trigger your brain to know that work is done, and now it is time to rest and reset.

**2**

### TUNE OUT/TURN OFF

Avoid over-saturation of the constant news cycle. You get updates all day at work about what's going on in the world. After work is the time to focus on yourself and your loved ones. Give yourself screen-free time--that means no TV, no computer or tablet, and no phone. Let your brain and your eyes rest.

**3**

### MOVE YOUR BODY

Engage in some form of movement. This can include running, walking or hiking; dancing in your living room; yoga (find free classes on YouTube); online workout videos; doing squats or lunges while holding your child, making dinner, etc.; anything that gets your body moving!

**4**

### FOCUS ON NUTRITION

Again, feed your brain and body nutritious foods including fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Avoid caffeine at night--it dirsupts your ability to get rest. And **HYDRATE**! Make sure you are drinking enough water.

**5**

### REST

Find time to relax, even if it's while reading a book or talking with loved ones. Try to get 8 hours of sleep if possible Sleep allows the brain to rebuild and the body to recharge for the next day. Without adequate sleep, we are setting ourselves up for a crash eventually.

**6**

### ASK FOR HELP

You are not in this alone. Talk to your supervisor or to HR if you need anything, and use the resources provided to you for additional support.

*Self Care*

# Self-Care after Work

Additional little things you can do to care for yourself every day.

SELF CARE ISN'T SELFISH
SELF CARE ISN'T SELFISH
SELF CARE ISN'T SELFISH
SELF CARE ISN'T SELFISH
SELF CARE ISN'T SELFISH
SELF CARE ISN'T SELFISH

## 1

### CREATIVE EXPRESSION

Find a way to create; this helps move energy through the body and can help you sort through your thoughts and emotions in a different way.
Try:
- Painting
- Drawing
- Crafts/Sewing
- Writing
- Anything that speaks to your creative side!

## 2

### RELAXING MUSIC

Relaxing music means different things to different people. Find a type of music that helps you relax and feel at ease. Most music apps also offer curated playlists based on your mood, so leverage that resource if you have access to it.

## 3

### RELAXING SCENTS

Try aromatherapy to help you relax.
Try:
- Candles
- Essential oils
- Diffusers
- Scented lotions
- Scented bubble baths or bath bombs

## 4

### SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

If you have spiritual practices you regularly engage in remember to make time for them, as these help guide and help recharge you.

## 5

### MEDITATION

Try meditating; it's a great way to allow your body and your mind to relax! Here are some videos to try:

- ▶ One Minute Meditation
- ▶ Mini Breath Meditation
- ▶ Body Scan Meditation