

Self care is learning how to nurture ourselves so we can boost our wellbeing, resilience and maximise our compassionate care. As rates of stress and burnout in healthcare professionals reach an all time high its even more important to look after ourselves.

We all need self-care to help us cope with and heal from life's inevitable stresses and we need to proactively engage in self-care to keep us resilient in the face of future curveballs.

Self-care becomes all the more crucial for those involved in healthcare. If we want to prevent burnout and offer compassionate care we must tend to our energetic bank balance.

Self-care needn't be grand, time consuming or expensive. It can be as simple as dotting 'micro moments of nourishment' through your day, like using a soothing mantra, feeling the sensations of your breathing, taking some shoulder rolls, standing tall to tap into a feeling of empowerment and remembering your professional 'why' to stay anchored in purpose.

## KEY POINTS

Reflect on your current self-care practices - write them down and add to the list any activities you'd like to reclaim or new rituals or skills you'd like to explore.

Just the act of writing them down will help you get self-care on the radar.

Include in your list small actions that you can turn to throughout your day to release tension and re-energise.

As you move through your day, regularly check in, notice how you are feeling and take action to meet your needs. If there is an ache, take a short moment to stretch.

If you're feeling overwhelmed press the back of your hand to your forehead and feel how this soothes the nervous system.

If you've had a challenging experience at work, reach out for support and give voice to your feelings.

Even when there is no time to stop, extend towards yourself tenderness and compassion.

Ask at work what can your organisation do to support team health? Could you set up reflective practise groups, huddles or organise a team yoga class each week?

Self-care is health care and your health is of utmost importance too.

## FURTHER READING

There is some wonderful self-care inspiration available from the Blurt Foundation and author Jayne Hardy

Suzy Reading offers Monday Micro Moment live Instagram sessions at @suzyreading on building the self-care habit and her book 'The Self-Care Revolution' provides a framework from which to build your own self-care toolkit.

<https://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/2017/11/02/matt-morgan-poor-hospital-design-has-an-impact-on-staff-patients-and-healthcare/>