

# 4 Steps to Self-Discovery

Take these steps to connect to your mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual self-care.

## Step 1. Assessment

- Assess your daily and weekly schedule. Use the [Weekly Schedule](#) handout to jot down what your week looks like.
- Review your weekly schedule using the [Weekly Reflections](#) exercise. Taking time to review your schedule and reflecting upon it is self-care journaling.

How much time did you give yourself to practice a self-care activity? Not enough? Explore your self-care in the next exercise. Find out what areas you can improve upon.

### Self-care activities

Place an X in the box next to the activity you are able to practice today and for the rest of the week. Now place a G next to five activities you would like to practice in the next month.

Emotional	Physical	Spiritual	Mental
Receiving words of affirmation	8 hours of sleep	Meditation or praying	20 minutes of reading (not work-related)
Giving words of affirmation	20-minute nap	Attending a religious organization	Strategy games
Joining friends for dinner, outing, or activity	20-minute workout	Practicing yoga	Practicing yoga
Journaling	Practicing yoga	Journaling	Meditation
Spending time with family (e.g., dinner, outing, or activity)	Hydrating and eating nutritional/healthy food (e.g., vegetables, salads, foods rich in omega3's and fatty acids)	Practicing mindfulness	Journaling, drawing, painting, gardening, budgeting
Calling a friend	Getting a massage	Spending time in nature	Practicing positive self-talk
Blocking out 30 minutes for yourself that isn't considered a lunch break (i.e., setting boundaries)	Listening to music, gardening, singing, dancing	Asking for forgiveness; finding purpose and meaning	Blocking out 30 minutes for yourself that isn't considered a lunch break (i.e., setting boundaries)

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## Step 2. G is for goal

You have assessed what areas of self-care need improvement. Make a list of your G activities. Review the strategies below and set a goal to achieve in the next month. Self-care exercises improve stress management and focus and clarity; benefit physical, psychological, and mental health; and help you deal with anxiety, depression, and addiction.

### Strategies for self-care

1. Practice self-compassion and listen to your intuition and your body. Stay hydrated, eat healthy foods, and remember to rest.
2. Simplify your commitments and do things you enjoy by setting boundaries. Give yourself permission to do what you want and what feels good to you. Understand there will always be distractions. Learn to navigate through and around them.
3. Take time to celebrate the little things and encourage support.
4. Find out what renews your self-care. Maintain focus by creating instead of reacting in a negative way. Now, set a goal!

## Step 3. Practice self-awareness

With added stressors, self-awareness can become cloudy. Self-awareness is the ability to see oneself in the context of relations, thought, actions, and outcomes. Practice the exercises below to improve your self-awareness and maintain a positive cycle of self-care.

### Positive reframing

**Write down two negative phrases you have heard at work.**

Example:

Does it really matter?

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Now reframe each negative phrase as a positive.

Example:

My ideas matter, and I have the right to communicate them. My ideas matter and could lead to positive change.

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There is power in a pause. Delaying and rephrasing your reactionary responses can improve your positive talk. You can delay your response with a good distraction, for example, by focusing on something visual such as a color or view, or on a pleasant sound. The positive distractions can be self-soothing and at the same time improve your communication skills.

Learn to let go and move on from the action or comment that causes the emotion. Vulnerability to negative emotions can lead to an impoverished individual well-being. Knowing where to place stress, shame, grief, and disappointment will improve your emotional competence. You do not

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have to face these emotions alone, but you do have to practice to self-care in order to place them elsewhere. Home in on your skill – whether is to deflect or disengage, or to forge ahead to the next subject matter that is relevant, *not* subjectively relevant. Be accountable to yourself. Your expectations are not always everyone else's. Accept this and move on.

## Step 4. Are you on track?

You set a goal. It is now a month later. Were you able to put an X by another activity? Follow these next steps to get back on track.

1. Has your schedule changed? If so, repeat step 1 and fill out a new Weekly Schedule.
2. If not, take a minute to reflect on your schedule and fill out the Weekly Reflections exercise.
3. Decide on one activity on your goal list that you can accomplish.

Things happen; sometimes we get off track. Remember your self-care is important for you and for those around you.

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Sources:

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