


Tips for Self-Care

HERE ARE SOME MINDFUL AND CREATIVE WAYS TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF...

-  **Create a ritual.** We all need quiet time in our lives for connecting with our inner spirit. What could you do each day to create a meaningful routine? Perhaps you have an altar where you can light a candle and set your intention for the day.
-  **Breathe with your belly.** When we're stressed our breath can get shallow. Begin to breathe from your belly by relaxing your shoulders, lengthening your spine, deepening your breath, and allowing your belly to rise and fall with each inhale and exhale. Keep your eyes closed with your hand on your belly.
-  **Step into nature.** Nature is healing. Your nature time can be as simple as walking around the block and noticing the vastness of the sky. It can be time spent sitting under a tree. Or it can be a visit to the nearest park.
-  **Take time to play.** What did you love as a kid, climbing jungle gyms? Coloring with crayons? Playing dress up? Give yourself an afternoon or even just an hour to play with child-like wonder and curiosity.
-  **Prepare your favorite foods.** Cook yourself a meal (or order out) and sit down to really enjoy the food, eating slowly and mindfully, savoring each bite and feeling nourished.
-  **Love your body.** Your body is a vehicle for your spirit and it deserves to be nurtured and loved exactly as it is. This can include sensual self-loving, dancing, yoga stretching, getting massages, taking warm baths, eating well, and affirming love every time you look in the mirror.
-  **Enjoy naps.** It's okay to take a break from the world and hit the reset button with some well deserved sleep. Wrap yourself in a comfy cocoon of blankets and pillows. You can even use a scented eye pillow. Breathe deeply. Consciously relax. Let go.
-  **Write your heart out.** Writing can help you get your thoughts and feelings onto paper. Your journal can also be an art journal--containing sketches, scribbles, doodles, cut-out images, and anything that makes your heart smile. Begin by answering the phrase "Right now I feel..."
-  **Express creatively.** Sing your emotions, paint them, or dance them. There are countless ways to express yourself and you don't have to be an artist to do so. You are a creative being, so give yourself the space to express, whether it's in a sketchbook or on a canvas in the corner of your room or with a camera or with your vocal chords.
-  **Use gentle self-talk.** Start paying attention to how you talk to yourself and notice if your self-talk becomes abusive. Imagine that you are talking to a child whom you love dearly. If necessary, write out some affirmations for yourself that you can put in a visible place, such as "I am a beautiful being worthy of love."
-  **Ask for support.** When you're feeling overwhelmed, that's the time to seek help from the support systems in your life. Call your therapist (or find one), join a support group, or attend a workshop. It's helpful to keep a list of friends or professionals you in your journal or in a nearby place that you can call when you feel disconnected. Know that you are not alone.

