

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

Outlining your plan

The spaces provided in this Self Care Worksheet each represent a self-care domain. In each space, fill in the activities that you already engage in ("current practice") and those you would like to add ("new practice"). Both current and new practices will comprise your Maintenance Self-Care Plan – the regular activities you engage in to take care of yourself.

Obstacles to Implementation

Once you have identified these practices, it is useful to identify possible barriers or obstacles that could get in the way of implementing and/or maintaining them. You can revisit this topic and revise your list as necessary. For now, though, think about what you anticipate these barriers/obstacles to be (try to list at least 3 or 4 in the spaces provided), how you can address them, and how you can remind yourself to follow your plan. Write these solutions on the last page of the My Self Care Worksheet as well. If you have chosen to limit or eliminate a negative coping strategy that you currently use, note this as well.

Making a Commitment to Yourself

Preparing a plan is important; it identifies your goals and the strategies to achieve them. However, your success in implementing your plan is ultimately based on the level of genuine commitment you make to your own self-care. This kind of commitment is only possible when you recognize that your own health and well-being are essential and you acknowledge the importance of honoring yourself and your needs. If you find this to be a challenge, then take some time to explore your reservations. One reservation might be the tendency to put the needs of others first (a tendency that may be overrepresented among professional care providers!). The truth is that your self-care is not only essential to your well-being (and that is a good enough reason in and of itself), but it is also a necessary precondition for you to be effective and successful in honoring your commitment to CTL. Remember: Just like the flight attendant says, you need to put on your own oxygen mask first before you can be of help to others. So, take a moment, think it over, and then make your personal commitment to your own self-care.

Share Your Intentions

Once you have developed your plan and made your commitment, you may find it helpful to share your self-care plan with other CTL staff and volunteers so you can exchange ideas/strategies and enlist support and encouragement. Group supervision can be a great place to discuss these ideas if necessary.

Be Prepared

Fill out Section 3: Developing Your Emergency Self Care Plan and work through each question carefully. Developing an Emergency Self-Care Plan helps to organize your thinking and resources before you are faced with a crisis or feeling overwhelmed. This is not to suggest that you will invariably face such a situation; the idea is to be prepared just in case. Think of it in the way you would think about preparedness for other possible emergency situations: it is important to figure out your plan in advance when you have the time, wherewithal, and concentration to do so effectively!

Follow Your Plan

Once you have completed the assessments and worksheet described above you will have identified the core elements of your personal Self-Care Plan. The final step is to implement your plan and keep track of how you are doing. Keeping track of your progress will help you recognize your successes and identify and address any difficulties you may not have anticipated. Don't forget that you can revise your plan as needed – self-care is always a work in progress. (Remember, also, to employ your emergency plan when and if you need to.)

Personal Mission Statement

Completing Section 4: The Self-Care Plan Mission Statement can help focus you on why you have chosen the mental health world as your profession, what you currently do that's great, and where you'd like to improve. There is no right or wrong answers to the questions in this section. Fill them out as generally or specifically as you'd like – this is meant to explore your early memories of getting into the caring profession and how those have evolved over time. If you're new to the profession it'll be great to look back on as a reminder if necessary. This can be a great source of empowerment and inspiration in the future for you!

SECTION 2: SELF CARE PLAN WORKSHEET

Consider what you do now for self-care and list those activities within each dimension of self-care on this worksheet (or you can add new dimensions at the end that represent other aspects of your life). Identify new strategies that you will begin to incorporate as part of your ongoing maintenance self-care plan – pay particular attention to domains that you have not been addressing in the past. On the last page identify barriers that might interfere with ongoing self-care, how you will address them, and any negative coping strategies you would like to target for change.

MIND	BODY
Current Practice	Current Practice
New Practice	New Practice

<p style="text-align: center;">EMOTIONS</p> <p>Current Practice</p> <p>New Practice</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SPIRIT</p> <p>Current Practice</p> <p>New Practice</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">WORK</p> <p>Current Practice</p> <p>New Practice</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">RELATIONSHIPS</p> <p>Current Practice</p> <p>New Practice</p>
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<p>OTHER: _____</p> <p>Current Practice</p> <p>New Practice</p>	<p>OTHER: _____</p> <p>Current Practice</p> <p>New Practice</p>
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<p>Barriers to maintaining my self-care strategies:</p>	<p>How will I address these barriers?</p>
<p>Negative Coping Strategies that I'd like to use less or not at all</p>	<p>New Positive coping strategies that I will incorporate.</p>

SECTION 3: EMERGENCY SELF CARE PLAN

Why do I need one? Well – it can be very hard to think about what to do for yourself when things get tough. We're used to safety planning with our visitors however it can be very helpful to do some emergency self-care planning for ourselves. This emergency plan has five parts listed below.

Part 1: When I'm in a good mood, I like to do the following:

It can be helpful to think about what you enjoy doing on a regular basis. By writing these activities down you can prepare yourself for thinking about under what circumstances could you do these activities.

At Home	Anywhere	At Work

Part 2: When I am upset, what can I do that makes me feel better?

Some examples – When I am stressed out and very upset, the activities that calm me down the most are listed below as many activities as you can think of – if it includes talking to someone adding in their phone number can be helpful (deep breathing, writing, listening to music, reading, exercising, going outside, talking about the issue...). It's also to keep in mind what activities you can do in different circumstances – if you're at work are there different options for relaxing then when you're at home?

At Home	Anywhere	At Work

Part 3: Is there anything I do that makes me feel worse when I'm upset?

Sometimes, in moments of crisis, we forget about how our coping mechanisms sometimes make things worse for us in the long run – it's important to think about that and write down any bad habits you may have, or habits that tend to make stressful situations worse. By identifying them we can avoid these situations in the future. Some examples may be: I avoid friends, I stay in bed all day, I drink too much, etc.

At Home	Anywhere	At Work

Part 4: Is there anything else you do for YOU that helps when things are difficult?

Part 5: Reword Common Negative Thoughts into Positive Thoughts

Making a list of positive thoughts and things to say to yourself when you're feeling stressed out can help in times of stress – especially if you typically say the same kind of negative phrase to yourself – write down some of the common negative thoughts you say to yourself on the left side then reword them to be positive on the right column. These can be work related or more emotionally based.

Negative Thought	Positive Thought
<i>Ex: I know that visitor didn't like me; they were so negative throughout the text conversation.</i>	<i>Ex: That person was really struggling with a lot of difficult feelings – I'm glad we were able to work out a few next steps for them to take after we got off the conversation.</i>

Remember: Review this plan often and realize that positive coping strategies may change over time – make sure to revise these lists as necessary.

SECTION 4: PERSONAL MISSION STATEMENT

The following questions can help you think about what brought you to the helping profession and can help re-affirm your skills as a crisis counselor. You can be as general or specific as you'd like in the answers below – this is an exploration of yourself therefore there is no right or wrong approach or answer.

PERSONAL MISSION STATEMENT
<p>What is it that led you towards the profession of helping others?</p>
<p>What are the values that you will never compromise when working with visitors/clients?</p>

What are you committed to offer to visitors?

What are you committed to offer yourself?

What are your greatest professional strengths?

If you were to become your ideal caregiver, what would that look like? What would be different?

What are the challenges you face towards getting to this goal?

If your best friend (or someone you respect/love) was going through a hard time and doubting themselves, what would you say to them? Write a few self-care statements to yourself here that follow that same train of thought and reflect your strengths, assets, and goodness for when you're feeling down.