

Taking Care of Self

'Effective leaders take their own emotional, physical, spiritual and intellectual needs most seriously. They acknowledge the intricate relationship between their emotions and physical wellbeing and therefore view emotional and physical self-care as two sides of the same coin' The purpose of the following exercise is to help you reflect on the attention you pay to your physical and emotional health.

Consider how good you are at complying with the following statements. Place yourself on a scale of 1 (not good at all) to 10 (excellent)

My workspace is comfortable and comforting	1 _____ 10
I take regular suppleness/flexibility exercise	1 _____ 10
I eat healthily most of the time	1 _____ 10
I drink lots of water and alcohol in moderation	1 _____ 10
I acknowledge my strengths and reward myself for work well done	1 _____ 10
I make time to see people whose company I enjoy	1 _____ 10
I put aside quality time for those who are most important to me	1 _____ 10
I play and laugh a lot	1 _____ 10
I am as kind and forgiving with myself as I am with others	1 _____ 10
I accept that there are some things I cannot change	1 _____ 10
I show my appreciation of others	1 _____ 10
I connect with nature, whether the windowsill, garden, parks or countryside	1 _____ 10
I treat myself regularly without feeling guilty	1 _____ 10
I am able to cry for myself and for others	1 _____ 10

Review your list. Are there some areas that you find easier to consider than others? Allow yourself to dwell on each one and become aware of your feelings. Accept that this is where you are.

Self-care routines are most effective when integrated into daily life. There is a need for adequate time for nourishment, rest, exercise, hobbies, relationships with humans and animals, fun and love. Each person has to find his or her own way of working through stress and using stressful experiences as transformational processes that enable growth. If these ways don't resonate for you, what might you do instead?