

# SELF-CARE PLAN EXAMPLES

## Physical

- **Get 8 hours of sleep each night.**
- **Put away your cell phone and other electronic devices at least an hour before bedtime.** Technology use before bedtime can get in the way of your sleep.
- **Move your body daily.**
  - Participate in a new sport, invite friends to a pick-up basketball or soccer game, or go for a hike in your local public park.
  - Take a daily 30-minute walk.
  - Exercise while you call a friend or listen to music or a podcast.
  - Use exercise as an opportunity to empty your mind of everything going on around you and just move.
  - Look on YouTube for quick, basic, or advanced yoga and exercises you could try.
- **Do a 15-minute guided stretch.**
- **Take a long, warm bath.**
- **Take a nap.**
- **Treat yourself with your favorite, yummy snack.** Try to reach for something healthy!

## Emotional

- **Practice mindfulness.**
  - Focus on one of your five senses to ground yourself in the present moment. For example, what are you seeing/feeling/sensing/smelling/tasting right now? Make this a habit.
  - Try a deep breathing exercise and make it a daily habit. Try inhaling through your nose and exhaling through your mouth, like you are slowly blowing out a candle. Making the exhale longer than the inhale helps to calm down the nervous system.
- **Practice being grateful.** Set aside some time each day to think about or write down what you're grateful for in your life. When our brains realize it's important enough to write down, we start subconsciously looking for things to be grateful for. You could start a journal and do this at the same time each day to make it a habit.
- **Talk about your feelings with a trusted adult or friend.** Talking with someone about something that's bothering you can help you think things through and keep negative emotions from building up.
- **Take a break from social media.** Commit to turning off your notifications. See if you can go a day without checking social media. Keep track of your streak!
- **Unfollow social media feeds that make you feel bad.** Be aware of how certain accounts make you feel. Does an influencer, celebrity, or classmate's feed make you feel discomfort, jealousy, anxiety, insecurity, or hopelessness? If so, hit "unfollow"!
  - Change up your TikTok, YouTube, or Instagram newsfeed. Try searching for topics you are genuinely interested in and interact with content that empowers, informs, or encourages you to go after your goals or try new things. Here are some topics you might want to search for:
    - Mindfulness tips
    - Daily affirmations
    - Journaling prompts
    - Motivational quotes
    - Cute animals

- **Create a calming environment.**
  - Try minimizing clutter before settling down to relax.
  - Cut down on bright light by using a desk lamp or fairy lights instead of a harsh overhead light.
  - Light a candle with your favorite scent.
  - Make a playlist that soothes your nerves.
- **Connect with nature.** You can find nature wherever you are. It might be a local park or community garden. Listen for the sound of birds, look for butterflies or other animals, and pay attention to the clouds or the wind.
- **Talk with your parent, guardian, or another trusted adult about getting an appointment with a mental health professional** like a doctor or therapist if you think you need more support with your mental health.

## Social

- **Ask a friend to hang out.** Go on a hike, watch a movie, shoot hoops, grab something to eat, or just talk and catch up.
- **Have lunch with a family member.** Make a meal together or go to your favorite local spot.
- **Join a group or club.** What are your interests? The possibilities are endless: book club, sports team, art club, drama club, anything!
- **Volunteer or participate in a service project.** Get some friends together and plan something as a group. For example, you could volunteer to clean up a nearby stream or highway. Giving back to your community can help you meet new, like-minded people and contribute to the causes you care about.
- **Text someone you don't get to see often just to say you are thinking of them.**
- **Buy or make someone a gift.**
- **Send a handwritten card or letter to brighten someone's day.**
- **Plan an outing with a group of friends.**

## Intellectual and Creative

- **Make time to think about things that inspire you.**
- **Try something you've never done before.** Getting out of our comfort zone helps us stretch and grow.
- **Make a plan to continue your education past high school.** Talk to a parent, teacher, or school counselor to learn about your options.
- **Try a new creative hobby.**
- **Try learning a foreign language.**
- **Read a book on the *New York Times* best seller's list for young adults.**
- **Take a class in a topic that interests you.**
- **Volunteer at a shelter or other area in your community.**
- **Watch a documentary on a streaming service of your choice.** Tell someone what you learned!
- **Find a mentor.** Choose someone that you and your trusted adult know really well. They could be another family member or a family friend, teacher, coach, or community member.