MY SELF-CARE PLAN

Self-care is one of the many tools we have when comes to building resilience and managing compassion fatigue, burnout, and secondary traumatic stress. First identify the aspects of self-care that you think you are doing well. Then pick one aspect that you are not currently doing, or not doing enough of, and circle it. Practice incorporating it into your life until it becomes habit. Continue to add other aspects to your self-care routine as needed!

Physical Self-Care

___ Get good quality sleep
___ Eat regularly (e.g., at least three meals per day)
___ Eat a healthy diet (e.g., fruits, veggies, and whole grains)
___ Stay hydrated with plenty of water
___ Get regular exercise
___ Get preventative medical care (e.g., checkups, dental cleanings)
___ Practice good personal hygiene (e.g., daily showering, brushing teeth)
___ Take time off for illness and get medical care (if needed)
___ Get massages or other forms of bodywork (e.g., acupuncture)
___ Take time to play and engage in fun activities
___ Participate in hobbies outside of caregiving
___ Take vacations or daytrips

Psychological/Emotional Self-Care

___ Limit the use of electronics (e.g., phone, tablet, video games)
___ Practice gratitude
___ Keep a journal
___ Engage in intellectual activities or learn new things
___ Try to limit negative thoughts and practice positive thinking
___ Limit stress in your life
___ Watch a comedy or find other ways to laugh
___ Express yourself creatively (e.g., paint, write, play an instrument)
___ Practice setting boundaries and learn to say no sometimes
___ Engage in comforting activities (e.g., take a bubble or salt bath, cuddle with pets)
___ Participate in personal therapy or support group
___ Play with children or animals

Social Self-Care

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___ Spend time with others who are supportive and nonjudgmental
___ Take time to be intimate with your partner
___ Spend quality time with your partner
___ Spend quality time with your family
___ Meet new people
___ Spend quality time with friends

Spiritual Self-Care

___ Meditate
___ Spend time in nature
___ If religious, pray or attend place of worship
___ Be involved in an important cause
___ Live in accordance with your vales
___ Find meaning in your work and life
___ Make time to be alone

Workplace or Professional Self-Care

___ Take breaks during your work day, including lunch
___ Learn new professional skills
___ Set limits and boundaries with clients, customers, colleagues, etc.
___ Don't participate in drama or gossip
___ Keep a healthy work/life balance
___ Have interests outside of working with animals

Reflections

What did you notice about your answers?

What one thing do you want to incorporate into your life or improve upon?

Are there any barriers to improving self-care?

What needs to change to eliminate that barrier in order to improve self-care?

How will your life be different if you could improve your self-care?

What are the possible consequences of *not* improving self-care?

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