



Focusing on the Forgotten, Me

How Do You Notice You Are Stressed?

- **Physical Signs**
- **Emotional Signs**
- **Cognitive Signs**
- **Behavioral Signs**
- **Social Signs**
- **Spiritual/ Sense of Meaning**

Beliefs or Barriers to Self-care (circle the ones that ring true to you)

- There is no time to take care of myself.
- There is no money to take care of myself.
- It is selfish to focus on yourself.
- If I focus on how I feel, it could be too painful or overwhelming.
- If I don't do it, it won't get done, or it won't get done right.
- There is too much at stake, I have to be in control. I need to control the outcome.
- I just cannot say NO! If I say no, I run the risk of others being angry with me.
- It's my role, my job, my identity; I am socialized to be the caregiver.

How can you challenge or work with some of the above beliefs?

Strategies for Self-Care

- **Be flexible** and willing to make changes over time, you may need to add new alternatives to self-care options as your life changes.
- **Find free things to do**; they are available if you are open and creative.
- **Short activities** every day can help you feel better. Don't wait for vacation; add some self-care minutes to each day.



- **Plan chunks of time to get away.** Try to plan ahead for a chunk of time, for hours or days where you can have a break from your demands to focus on you.
- Make a **routine or shake up a routine.** Doing something healthy each day can help you feel refreshed, shake it up and try something new.
- **Retreat or reach out** to restore. You may restore yourself with alone time or may need to reach out for support, often a balance of both helps.

Energy out vs. Energy In

Take a look at people, places, and activities that drain your energy. Also, look at the people, places, and activities that help you. Are you putting out more than you take in? Are you out of balance? Where or how can you conserve energy and where can you add to your energy stores?

Healing Connections- Choose things you will commit to this week.

- **Physical Movement** (stretch, dance, walk)
- **Senses** (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch)
- **Emotional** (laugh, cry, journal or notice feelings)
- **Social** (call a friend, greet a neighbor, write a letter)
- **Cognitive** (meditate/empty your mind, learn something, read, imagine)
- **Nature** (notice seasons, sit outside, bird watch, plant seeds)
- **Spiritual/ Meaning** (remember your values, pray, celebrate ritual)

Visualization Exercise

When you are stressed use meditation to help you relax. Think about your favorite place in nature. Be sure to think about the sights, sounds, smells, and touch. This is your sacred space. Breathe. Relax.