# CREATING A SELF-CARE PLAN

## Part 1: Self-Care Assessment

Take a moment to complete the self-care assessment. When you are finished, look for patterns in your responses. Are you more active in some areas of self-care but ignore others? Are there items on the list that make you think, “I would never do that”? Listen to your inner responses, your internal dialogue about self-care and making yourself a priority. Take particular note of anything you would like to include more in your life.

Rate the following areas according to how well you think you are doing:

- 3 = I do this well (e.g., frequently)
- 2 = I do this OK (e.g., occasionally)
- 1 = I barely or rarely do this
- 0 = I never do this
- ? = This never occurred to me

### Physical Self-Care
- ______ Eat regularly (e.g., breakfast, lunch, and dinner)
- ______ Eat healthy
- ______ Exercise
- ______ Get regular medical care for prevention
- ______ Take time off when sick
- ______ Participate in a fun physical activity
- ______ Take time to be sexual—with myself, with a partner
- ______ Get enough sleep
- ______ Wear clothes I like
- ______ Take a vacation
- ______ Other:

### Emotional Self-Care
- ______ Spend time with others whose company I enjoy
- ______ Stay in contact with important people in my life
- ______ Give myself affirmation, praise myself
- ______ Re-read favorite movies, re-visit favorite movies
- ______ Identify comforting activities, objects, people, places and seek them out
- ______ Allow myself to cry
- ______ Find things that make me laugh
- ______ Other:

### Psychological Self-Care
- ______ Take day trips or mini-vacations
- ______ Make time away from telephones, email, and the internet
- ______ Take a weekend / evening hiatus from answering student emails
- ______ Make time for self reflection
- ______ Notice my inner experience—listen to my thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, feelings
- ______ Read literature that is unrelated to work
- ______ Do something at which I am not expert or in charge
- ______ Attend to minimizing stress in my life
- ______ Engage my intelligence in a new area, e.g., go to an art show, sports event, theatre
- ______ Be curious
- ______ Say no to extra responsibilities sometimes
- ______ Other:

### Overall Balance
- ______ Strive for balance within my work-life and work day
- ______ Strive for balance among work, family, relationships, play, and rest

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Spiritual Self Care

- Spend time in nature
- Find a spiritual connection or community
- Be open to inspiration
- Cherish my optimism and hope
- Be aware of non-material aspects of life
- Be open to not knowing
- Identify what is meaningful to me and notice it’s place in my life
- Meditate
- Pray
- Contribute to causes in which I believe
- Read inspirational literature or listen to inspirational talks or music

Other:

Relationship Self-Care

- Schedule regular dates with my partner or spouse
- Schedule regular activities with my children
- Make time to see friends
- Call, check on, or see my relatives
- Spend time with pets
- Make time to reply to personal emails and letters; send holiday cards
- Allow others to do things for me
- Enlarge my social circle
- Ask for help when I need it
- Share a fear, hope, or secret with someone I trust

Other:

Workplace or Professional Self-Care

- Take entire lunch break and “unplug” from work
- Take time to chat with co-workers about non-work related events / life
- Make quiet time to complete tasks
- Identify projects or tasks that are exciting and rewarding
- Set limits with students and co-workers
- Balance my caseloads so that no one day or part of a day is “too much”
- Arrange work space so it is comfortable and comforting
- Get regular supervision or consultation
- Negotiate for my needs (benefits, pay raise)
- Spend time with other advisors for support / comradery / debriefing
- Take part in social gatherings with advising team

Review the Self-Care Assessment that you just completed, which includes what you are doing now for self-care. On this maintenance self-care worksheet, list those activities that you engage in regularly (like every day or week) under “current practice” within each domain. Identify new strategies that you would like to begin to incorporate as part of your ongoing maintenance self-care + 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 and how you will change them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MIND</th>
<th>BODY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Practice</td>
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# Maintenance Self-Care Worksheet

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WORK</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RELATIONSHIPS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Current Practice</td>
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## Maintenance Self-Care Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers to Maintaining My Self-Care Strategies</th>
<th>How I Will Address These Barriers and Remind Myself to Practice Self-Care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative coping strategies I would like to use less or not at all</td>
<td>What I will do instead</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Be sure to re-evaluate every month or two. You can find the document at:

[http://socialwork.buffalo.edu/content/dam/socialwork/home/self-care-kit/Maintenance%20Self-Care%20Worksheet%20NEW%202.6.15.pdf](http://socialwork.buffalo.edu/content/dam/socialwork/home/self-care-kit/Maintenance%20Self-Care%20Worksheet%20NEW%202.6.15.pdf)

Adapted by Shirly Reiser, LCSW and Lisa D. Butler, PhD from materials provided by Sandra A. Lopez, LCSW, ACSW, University of Houston, Graduate School of Social Work.