

## Winter Self Care Ideas

### Practice Gratitude

Gratitude is connected to positive emotions. It promotes happiness and health and helps reduce stress. Ideas to try:

- ✓ Name 3-5 things you are thankful for today.
- ✓ Write down something that made you laugh today.
- ✓ Express gratitude! For example, write a thank you note to a friend, co-worker or family member.
- ✓ Look for good things and be grateful for them.
- ✓ Say thank you when you have the opportunity.
- ✓ Notice and appreciate things in nature.

Practicing gratitude is a great way to experience positive emotions! Work on this daily and before you know it, it'll be an automatic part of your day!

### Be Mindful

Mindfulness allows us to practice and form habits that help us calm our bodies, utilize self-control, manage stress, and feel more in control when we encounter adversity. Ideas to try:

- ✓ Focus on your breath! Practice deep breathing. Take full inhalations and exhalations, in through your nose and out through your mouth.
- ✓ Try a yoga class.
- ✓ Create a gratitude journal and write what you're thankful for each day.
- ✓ Practice mediation. Start with 1 minute. Stick with it and add time as you go.

With the busy of life, mindfulness is a great gift to give ourselves! Stick with it. It takes a while to form these habits and they may not come easy at first, but the benefits are numerous!

### Be Artsy

Art allows us to express ourselves and has a positive impact on mental health. It helps reduce stress and encourages relaxation. Ideas to try:

- ✓ Make a collage of images that describe you.
- ✓ Write your name on a piece of paper and draw or write positive words and phrases around it that describe you.
- ✓ Play and sculpt with clay.
- ✓ Create a journal and write, draw, and color in it!
- ✓ Paint a picture.
- ✓ Make art about a happy memory.

With the many benefits of art, it's great to add time in your schedule for coloring and creating! Have fun and enjoy the process!

### **Get Outside**

Being outside in nature affects our mood positively and helps reduce stress, regardless of the amount of time. Ideas to try:

- ✓ Prescribe yourself time outside! Literally write it as a must to take some time outside each day. Learn more at [parkrxamerica.org](http://parkrxamerica.org)
- ✓ Go for a walk or hike.
- ✓ Watch the sunset.
- ✓ Sit outside and take some deep breaths.
- ✓ Sit outside and listen to the sounds of nature.
- ✓ Read a book outside.
- ✓ Spend time doing yardwork or gardening.

Build outdoor time into your daily routine and you'll soon experience its many natural benefits.

### **Eat Healthy**

Eating healthy contributes to self-care through supporting systems in our bodies that help us cope. Ideas to try:

- ✓ Take a few min each day or at the start of the week to plan your meals and snacks. This helps avoid grabbing less healthy foods throughout the day and week.
- ✓ Eat regularly throughout the day to avoid binge eating at points during the day. This helps stabilize your body's systems and hence, your energy levels and moods.
- ✓ Find a new recipe you'd like and try it.
- ✓ Learn new cooking skills.

Find what works for you and avoid judging yourself. Eating healthy and finding what works best is a journey!

### **Organize Something!**

Getting organized can reduce stress and prepare you for other daily work. Ideas to try:

- ✓ Create a system and organize something you've been wanting to (e.g., closet, bookshelf, desk).
- ✓ Go through items such as clothing and donate things you no longer use (giving helps increase happiness!)
- ✓ Clean up an area of clutter.
- ✓ Create a to-do list for your week (remember to check off items as you complete them and enjoy the accomplishment!)

Find a system that works well for you, keep it simple, and give it time to become routine!