

Self-Care and Building Resilience

Self-care and **resilience** are separate but related concepts, with good self-care practices contributing to building resilience. Self-care reduces stress and anxiety, boosts self-esteem, and builds resilience against difficult situations.

Self-care is often defined as taking care of yourself and doing activities that you enjoy or that you find relaxing, usually to reduce or avoid stress. When one is practicing mindful self-care, they are paying attention to and addressing their internal and external needs.

Resilience is a dynamic process of positive adaptation in the face of adversity or challenge. This process involves the capacity to negotiate for, and draw upon, psychological, social, cultural and environmental resources.

Physical

- Eating regular, balanced meals
- Getting active
- Practicing deep breathing, yoga, or meditation
- Getting enough sleep or rest
- Balancing time (school, social life, work, and other obligations) to avoid burnout

Social

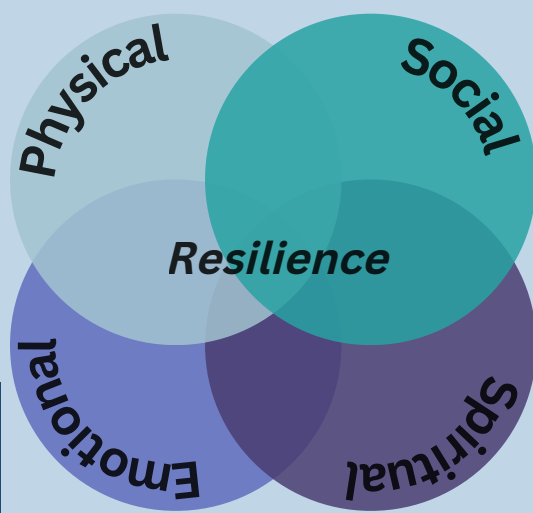
- Recognize when you are feeling socially withdrawn/isolated
- Seek out others for social activities
- Use friends, family, community, and resources for support
- Seek out new opportunities to meet people (i.e., clubs, classes)

Emotional

- Know your personal limits and set achievable goals
- Set personal limits if needed
- Establish a routine
- Find stress management resources that work for you, including enjoyable activities
- Understand *why* you are feeling a certain way

Spiritual

- Use religious and/or spiritual resources
- Connect with nature
- Read inspirational works
- Find creative ways to express yourself (i.e., pray drawing, painting, writing, etc.)
- Practice gratitude
- Spend time with those in your community



One of the ways to build resilience is to engage in mindful self-care activities. These activities look different for everyone. Self-care reduces stress and anxiety, boosts self-esteem, and builds resilience against difficult situations.

Similar to the benefits of self-care, having high resilience has been shown to decrease stress, anxiety, and depression, as well as increase positive emotionality, life satisfaction, success and other positive personal attributes. The decrease in stress levels can also have physiological (physical) benefits, such as lower blood pressure and a lower resting heart rate.

A resilient person is more equipped to handle adverse events due to their awareness of their emotional reactions, thoughts and behaviours. They are able to withstand and 'bounce back' from difficult life experiences. Again, it is important to remember that one's resiliency may change over time - this is okay.

Methods of Self-Care

Overall well-being encompasses several interconnected aspects, including:



Body
Be active



Mind
Keep Learning



Spirit
Give



People
Connect



Place
Take Notice



Planet
Care

There are many small self-care activities people can engage in daily, such as taking a walk, reading a book, painting or creating art, watching a movie, turning off your phone, and more. Put simply, "self-care" is anything that you feel reduces stress and generally brings you joy. In this section, we will cover some of the more empirically supported self-care practices. Overall, do what is good for you and what makes you happy: it is important to remember that self-care looks different for everyone based on their interests, personality, environment, etc. Self-care is not 'one size fits all'. People may need different levels of self-care at different times as well.

Some examples of self-care activities include:

PHYSICAL

- Get enough sleep
- Regular physical activity
- Eat healthily
- Balance time to avoid burnout
- Practice deep breathing

EMOTIONAL

- Know your personal limits
- Engage socially to avoid feeling isolated
- Set boundaries with others with necessary
- Use relaxation practices

SOCIAL

- Recognize feeling withdrawn
- Use others for support or engage in social activities
- Make an effort to have fun
- Seek out new opportunities to meet people

SPIRITUAL

- Use religious or spiritual resources
- Connect with nature
- Read inspirational works
- Express yourself creatively
- Practice gratitude

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