Why Self-Care Is Important for Your Physical and Mental Health

Self-care is important for your physical health as well as your mind, soul and, let's face it, your overall health. Without self-care, your relationships with others can suffer tremendously. Last week's blog explained how you can practice self-care on a budget, which is important. But true self-care doesn't have to cost a dime!

Self-care is important, but some people think it's selfish or inconsiderate. We know self-care actually makes you more effective and energetic. When you avoid things that make you feel physically and mentally well, you deplete your confidence and self-esteem. Self-care is important to maintain a healthy relationship with yourself, sometimes called self-love. It produces positive feelings, which improves confidence and self-esteem too.

Self-care is important for your family and friends too. They learn from you, so setting functional boundaries to take care of yourself shows them that they too need to put themselves first and not overextend or overwork. Unhealthy relationships come about when you don't take time for your needs.

Why I Think Self-Care is Important for Your Physical and Mental Health

Everyone I know could use a bit more self-care. The best way to do this is to implement small but important self-care habits every day. Here's how I practice self-care:

The following ideas are self-care activities you can fit into a short amount of time and while on a budget.

Inner Self-Care

- Make a date with yourself. Spend an hour alone doing something that nourishes you, not work or things on your to-do list (reading, your hobby, walking around the neighborhood, visiting a museum or gallery, etc.).
- Praise yourself when you do something awesome.
- Read books and watch movies you enjoy.
- Paint or write something that lets out your creative energy.
- Unplug.
- Journal.
- Learn something new, research something you're interested in.
- Meditate.
- Take a class for fun.
- Take a quick nap. Only 10 to 20 minutes can reduce your sleep debt and leave you ready for action.
- Learn mindfulness or connect with a spiritual practice that vibes with you.

Outer Self-Care

- Eat something you enjoy.
- Have a long bath or shower, sit around in your bathrobe, and read magazines.
- Do one thing just because it makes you happy like my flowers in the video.
- Do a mini-declutter. Recycle three things from your wardrobe that you don't love or regularly wear or clean out your backpack/purse.
- Help someone. Carry a bag, open a door, or pick up an extra carton of milk for a neighbor.
- Stretch. 5-10 minutes to get out the kinks helps your body and mind.
- Run or walk for a few minutes. Or go up and down the stairs two at a time, get your heart rate up.
- Touch a pet. If you don't have one, go to the park or animal shelter and ask to touch one.
- Give your body comfort. Pick something from your wardrobe that feels great next to your skin.
- Use lotion or a product that makes you happy.
- Spend time with real friends and other people who lift you up.