5 Self-Care Practices Proven to Improve Your Mental Health- Self-Love Day (February 13)

Your mental health is at its best when you practice self-care. However, allowing our self-care practices to fall by the wayside can be difficult to avoid. If you’ve struggled to make time for self-care, you are not alone. Life gets busy, and many of us can fall into the habit of pushing off our self-care practices until we desperately need them.

While it can be easy to forget about self-care in our hectic day-to-day life, it can also become detrimental to our mental health. Take this year’s Self-Love Day as the perfect opportunity to begin setting aside time to take care of yourself because you cannot pour from an empty cup. If you don’t know where to start, we have gathered five science-backed self-care practices proven to improve your mental health.

# **Take Care of Your Physical Health**

There is a significant relationship between your [physical health and your mental health](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29132081/). When your mental health is struggling, your physical health will begin to struggle, too. And, when your physical health suffers, so will your mental wellbeing. This is why taking care of your physical health is so important for your mental health! A few ways you can implement self-care practices that care for your mental and physical health include:

* Taking daily walks
* Exercising for at least thirty minutes per day
* Eating enough food throughout the day
* Eating food that nourishes your body
* Cutting back on alcohol and caffeine
* Getting enough sleep
* Getting to the doctor whenever you need to

# **Practice Relaxation Techniques**

[Relaxation techniques](https://europepmc.org/article/nbk/nbk513238) are exercises intended to reduce stress, tension, and anxiety- both physically and mentally. They are helpful in a variety of situations in which one is experiencing any form of depression- whether that be a high-tension situation at school or work, bouts of physical pain, or symptoms of depression or anxiety. A few self-care practices that work as relaxation techniques you can begin practicing include:

* Deep breathing
* Massage
* Meditation
* Visualization
* Yoga
* Tai Chi
* Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Many online resources can offer valuable instructions on how to begin practicing these techniques. The more you practice, the more useful your technique will become.

# **Pursue Hobbies That Bring You Peace and Joy**

Research has suggested that having hobbies can have many [benefits for your mental](https://www.headtohealth.gov.au/meaningful-life/purposeful-activity/hobbies) health, including lowering stress levels, improving one’s mood, and decreasing the symptoms of depression. So whether you love outdoor activities, getting creative, learning a new skill, or getting caught up in your latest read, making time for the hobbies you enjoy can be a great form of self-love that you should prioritize daily!

# **Have a Routine**

[Routines](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6378489/) play a key role in your mental health and overall wellbeing. This is because implementing a routine will allow you to carve out time in your day to ensure you are getting into the most important self-care habits for you. Trial and error may be needed before settling on one routine, but the effort will be well worth it.

# **Go to Counseling When You Need It**

If you feel your mental health has begun to suffer, our therapists are here for you. In counseling, your therapist can help you figure out why your mental health has been struggling, find treatment options that work well for you, and teach you skills for coping with difficult thoughts, feelings, and emotions. [Contact](http://michiganpsychologicalcare.com/contact.php) us today.

**References**

[https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29132081/](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29132081/" \t "_blank)

<https://europepmc.org/article/nbk/nbk513238>

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