

Taking an active and deliberate role in maintaining our overall health and wellbeing is important for extending the quality and length of our lives, and yet only 40% of Australians intentionally implement self-care strategies in their lives.

Self-care looks different for everyone but the positive impacts are consistent and can help address the impact of mental illness for you and the people you care for.



# Self Care

*"The strategies I use to stay well: I make sure I get enough sleep, I make sure I eat well, I make sure I get enough physical exercise most days... making sure I get enough sunlight. I make sure I surround myself with people who bring joy into my life ..."*

Chris - MIEACT Volunteer Educator living with depression

## What is self-care?

Self-care is the active and deliberate personal action we take to maximise our mental emotional and physical health. It may seem like a simple concept but it is easy to overlook when life gets busy.

## Why is self-care important?

Prioritising our own self-care helps us maintain our physical, social, emotional and mental health. Self-care prepares us to be the best version of ourselves so we can help others.

Ensuring we practise self-care regularly helps us:

- Think more clearly and focus more easily
- Feel more calm and confident
- Have more positive emotions
- Make better decisions
- Achieve our goals
- Form positive relationships with others and ourselves
- Better understand ourselves and our own personal value
- Give more to others

**mieact**

mental health & well-being  
education & training providers

[www.mieact.org.au](http://www.mieact.org.au)

## Tips to help you maintain self-care

- Actively plan self-care activities each day and write them down in a diary or phone, attach a reminder so you don't forget. Consider activities that support your physical, emotional, psychological and social wellbeing.
- Commit to a self-care activity with someone else so they can keep you accountable. Try doing a regular run or walk with a friend.
- Write down a list of things you want to try and avoid. For example: spending too much time on social media or staying up late.
- Stick to the basics. For example: SELF, Sleep, Exercise, Leisure and Food.

## What does self-care look like?

Self-care means different things to different people. What fills one person's cup and gives them energy may have the opposite effect for someone else.

To help us think about different ways to care for ourselves it is helpful to look at the four key components of wellbeing; physical, emotional, psychological and sociological.

Research is showing us that it is important to consider all four of these when maintaining our mental health and wellbeing.

## Strategies for self-care

Physical	Emotional	Psychological	Sociological
<p><b>SELF</b></p> <p><b>S – Sleep</b> At least 7 hours of good quality sleep</p> <p><b>E – Exercise</b> Regular exercise</p> <p><b>L – Leisure</b> Doing things you enjoy</p> <p><b>F – Food</b> A balanced diet with plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having the confidence to speak to someone about how you are feeling.</li> <li>• Mindful meditation checkout, <a href="http://www.headspace.com">www.headspace.com</a></li> <li>• Recognising that experiences, both positive and negative, are good in themselves.</li> <li>• Deep breathing throughout the day.</li> <li>• Write down your feelings. This can allow you the time a space to be truly honest about your feelings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive self-talk. Try talking to yourself the way you would speak to a friend.</li> <li>• Active listening. Listening actively allows us to learn from others, respond more affectively and open up lines of communication and connection.</li> <li>• Counselling or psychological support.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building positive social connections. Try reading groups, gaming, playgroups, and sporting clubs.</li> <li>• Catching up with friends and family regularly.</li> <li>• Always remember you are not alone. Even if you are a social person, you may feel lonely at times, reach out.</li> </ul>

### CANBERRA RELIEF NETWORK - 1800 421 133 - [www.canberrarelief.com.au](http://www.canberrarelief.com.au)

Supporting the community to provide food and emergency relief for those in need. The CRN consists of established emergency food relief providers along with other social and community welfare organisations that have joined specifically to support CRN during public health emergencies.