

Let's Talk about Holistic Self-Care

Welcome everyone! My name is Renee Dell'Acqua, pronouns are she/her/hers, and I'm a Senior Health Educator in Health Promotion Services here at UC San Diego.

On this episode of Live Well Be Well, I'll be discussing the importance of and strategies for practicing holistic self-care!

So I hope you get inspired, I hope you feel connected, and I hope you discover new ways to live your best life. Let's get started!

Just as we recharge our phones each day to capitalize on its full potential and capabilities, we must do the same for our bodies. Practicing holistic self-care is all about re-charging our bodies, minds, and hearts in order to be strong and healthy and meet the needs and responsibilities of everyday life. In Health Promotion Services we maintain the understanding that health is multi-faceted and holistic in nature so when we think of self-care we're thinking of how can we show love to all the elements of who we are, which include our physical, emotional, mental, social, spiritual, and intellectual selves. When we practice holistic self-care consistently and with intentionality, we maximize our capabilities and we prime ourselves to take on the world because that's what Tritons are born to do!

So let's talk about a few strategies you can take to practice self-care in a holistic way. Let's start with physical self-care. Some examples of ways in which you can practice physical self-care include: (1) get your moving your body whether that be walking, running, dancing, yoga, etc. for at least 30 mins a day. Think about it, there are 24 hrs in a day, find a 30 min chunk of time to honor your body! (2) Prioritize sleep, aiming to get 7-9 hours of sleep each night. (3) Nourish your body with colorful fruits and veggies, lean proteins, complex carbs,

and fats. (4) hydrate! Hydrate! Hydrate! Drink plenty of water! Remember the 8x8 rule: at least 8oz of water 8 times a day!

Moving onto our mental and emotional selves, some ways to practice self-care include (1) becoming aware of the way you're speaking to yourself — are you being supportive, loving, and compassionate towards yourself, especially when you're experiencing hardships? Begin to develop an awareness of your self-talk and aim to reframe your thoughts from the negative to the positive. This takes time and practice so be kind to yourself! (2) Feel your feelings! Sometimes we have the tendency to suppress our emotions for a number of reasons but it's normal to experience sadness, frustration, anger, anxiety — acknowledge these feelings and find healthy ways to cope like journaling, meditation, creative outlets, etc. (3) in line with that, Tap into your social support system and/or seek treatment from a therapist or medical professional when you feel overwhelmed, stressed, or need a little extra guidance — we're human — we all need help from time to time! (4) discover ways to relax and recharge like practicing meditation and mindfulness, yoga, breathing exercises, expressing gratitude, finding creative outlets like painting or photography. Find stress management strategies that work for you! And (5) each day take time to disconnect from technology and social media, and just be.

For social self-care, it's about establishing and maintaining connections with others. Connect with friends, loved ones, peers, and colleagues on a consistent basis, whether you're facing life challenges or not. Build and nurture these relationships by being there for them when they need you, as well as reaching out to them when you need them. Nurture these relationships by making time for them and letting them know that you appreciate them. But also it's important to set boundaries and know that it's ok to say no to others when a request adds additional stress to your life.

For spiritual self-care, this is about practicing self-reflection and engaging in activities that set your soul on fire and make you feel those positive emotions

such as joy, happiness, gratitude, and an overall sense of fulfillment. Some strategies include: (1) read inspirational works, some of my favorite writers include Maya Angelou and Brene Brown; (2) Make a point to be amongst nature; (3) practice self-reflection and discover activities that spark enthusiasm and passion; (4) Connect with communities of shared values and goals whether that be a faith-based community or a non-profit that supports a cause you're passionate about; (5) Read books, listen to podcasts, and watch documentations, not only those within genres that you naturally gravitate towards but also those that you normally wouldn't. All of these strategies transport you to new worlds and introduce you to different cultures and lifestyles. Intellectual self-care is about devoting time to stimulating your mind and expanding your interests and knowledge. Cultivate an interest in discovering new things and broadening your intellectual horizons because the ability of the human mind to explore and absorb new ideas, perspectives, and interests, is essentially endless! We just need to nurture it.

So those were just a few ideas and suggestions for practicing holistic self-care. If the idea of practicing holistic self-care is new to you, start by taking steps towards finding the strategies that work best for you in each of the areas discussed — luckily, your options are limitless! The key to practicing successful holistic self-care is to prioritize its importance and practice it consistently so much so that it becomes a part of daily living. Once holistic self-care becomes routine, you'll feel even more empowered, strong, and capable of taking on any challenge that awaits you!

So that concludes this episode of Live Well, Be Well! If you like what you heard today and would like to learn more about topics related to health and wellness, there's much more to come!

Please be sure to check out our website healthpromotionservices.ucsd.edu and also follow us on Instagram and Facebook under UCSD Health Promotion Services. Stay tuned for our next episode of Live Well, Be Well.

Until next time, be kind, be true, be you. And remember, to be well is to live well.