



Self-Care Strategies

During difficult times, it is important to periodically refresh and renew your wellbeing. Self-care will create a more solid foundation for starting the healing process, both for yourself and for others.

Consider the analogy of the airplane oxygen mask. Safety instructions tell people to put on their own mask before helping those around them. This illustrates the importance of taking care of yourself first so that you can better take care of others.

If you are coping with stressful or difficult circumstances, these self-care suggestions may help:

- **Determine what self-care means to you.** Keep in mind that what you find relaxing may be stressful to someone else.
- **Allow time for rest.** If you are unable to sleep, try closing your eyes and listening to soothing music. Take slow, deep breaths. Remove distractions (such as electronics) from your sleep space.
- **Go for a walk.** Even a short walk can improve mood and reduce anxiety. Spending time in nature is also a natural healer.
- **Choose healthy food.** A nutritious diet may improve both physical and emotional wellness.
- **Seek support.** Reach out to friends and family and access spiritual resources.
- **Give yourself permission to feel.** Avoid judging your emotions.
- **Be patient.** Allow space for healing. Remember, rebuilding resiliency takes time.
- **Stick to your routine.** If you don't have a typical routine, now may be a good time to establish one.
- **Consider delaying major life decisions.** You may not be able to objectively evaluate your options during difficult times.
- **Avoid mood-altering chemicals.** Alcohol or other drugs may intensify your reaction and delay emotional healing.
- **Engage in meaningful activities.** Replenish your emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual strength.

When to ask for help:

- If your life, work, or relationships are being disrupted
- If feelings seem overwhelming and you are unable to express them
- If you aren't sure if the way you are reacting is "normal"
- If you are using alcohol or other drugs to cope

LifeMatters is available to support you through difficult circumstances. Call 24/7/365.

1-800-634-6433

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