



  TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Youth  
Co-research  
TOOLKIT 

# How to look after your wellbeing



**CRIS**  
Centre for Resilient  
and Inclusive Societies

**YR** YOUNG &  
RESILIENT  
RESEARCH  
CENTRE

**cmj**  
Centre for  
Multicultural Youth



**WESTERN SYDNEY**  
UNIVERSITY  




# How to look after your wellbeing

Self-care is an important part of daily life and looking after our wellbeing allows us to live our lives positively and cope with life's changes and challenges. It is common at times to feel stressed and anxious, especially at work when we may feel burnt out or overwhelmed. Having a self-care plan can help us manage stressful times. A self-care plan reminds us of the activities we like to do for our physical and emotional wellbeing.

# To look after ourselves holistically, there are five aspects of self-care to think about:

## 1 | Physical

Taking care of your physical health through activities that help you to stay fit and healthy, and with enough energy to get through the day. Broadly this means having a regular **sleep** routine, aiming for a healthy **diet**, and **exercising** regularly. This could be as simple as going for a walk on your lunch break, or scheduling a walking meeting with a colleague.

## 2 | Psychological

This is all about taking care of your mental wellbeing, in other words exercising your mental muscles to keep your mind healthy and sharp. This means participating in activities that you find engaging and stimulating, including **disconnecting** from electronic devices, pursuing a non-work-related **hobby**, or reading a book. One way to look after your mental wellbeing may be through updating your workspace. A clean workspace with pictures or artwork could help you gain more mental clarity, and also serve as a reminder of people and things that matter and inspire you.

## 3 | Emotional

Emotional wellbeing focuses on being aware of our emotional needs. This means allowing ourselves to experience the full range of our emotions. This can be done through activities that allow you to **connect, reflect and process your emotions** such as by keeping a **journal** or **talking** to people you trust about your life demands.

## 4 | Social

This is about developing **healthy and supportive relationships** with family and friends and making sure that you make time for the close relationships in your life. Plan regular catch-ups with friends and keep connected in the ways that best work for you.

## 5 | Spiritual

This is about things that make you feel calm and relaxed and help you take a step back from everything to **gain a sense of perspective beyond day-to-day life**. This can be spending time in nature, self-reflection through journaling, or trying yoga, or meditation.

# Your self-care plan

Remember that self-care is very personal and the strategies that work for one person may not work for another. Your self-care plan can be as simple or as detailed as you need it to be. The important thing is to fill it with activities that you enjoy and that support your wellbeing. Remember that self-care isn't selfish!

- Try keeping the plan somewhere visible, so that you will be reminded to follow it!
- While your self-care plan might contain a lot of activities, try only adding one activity at a time into your routine, and once that becomes a habit, add another one from the plan.
- When adding to your plan, consider any barriers.
- What might get in the way of engaging in these activities?
- What can you do to remove those barriers?

Remember that practicing self-care doesn't need to take up heaps of time or be really complex!

Things I like to do...	Things I could try...
	<b>Physical</b>
	<b>Psycho-logical</b>
	<b>Emotional</b>
	<b>Social</b>
	<b>Spiritual</b>

# Your self-care checklist

- I have had conversations about my expectations and responsibilities as a co-researcher
- I have expressed my reflections and concerns to my team members
- I have taken proper breaks during the day
- I have organised my time so that I have time for self-care
- I have set boundaries for myself at work and communicated these to team members
- I have someone I can contact if I feel stressed, overwhelmed or worried about the project

Check out some of these national services, extra resources and apps to learn more about mental health and wellbeing.

## National services

[Headspace](#) is Australia's National Youth Mental Health Foundation. Their services can be accessed online or in their Headspace centres.

[ReachOut](#) provides lots of great advice for young people about self-care.

[Beyond Blue](#) provides lots of information and support about depression and anxiety.

[Black dog Institute](#) have an extensive range of research, resources, and support available on their website.

## Apps and extra resources

[Gather My Crew](#) is a free rostering app that connects friends, family, and community members to someone who needs support.

[Streaks](#) is a to-do list based app that helps you form good habits or break bad ones. The app allows you to track tasks you want (or don't want) to complete each day, with the goal of building a streak of consecutive days.

[Sleep cycle](#) helps you to wake up feeling rested, and [Shleep](#) helps you to form healthy sleeping habits.

[Headspace](#) and [Calm](#) are two great apps that focus on the basics of meditation and mindfulness. The sessions range from 3 minutes to 25 minutes.

[Five minute journal](#) is a simple gratitude journaling app that helps you to reflect on the positive things that have happened during the day.

[Aloe Bud](#) sends regular gentle nudges to check on your wellbeing, such as by reminding you to eat, drink water, and reach out to friends. You can customise these nudges to set up personalised reminders.

[This article](#) provides tips for young professionals working from home.