

A SELF-CARE
PLANNING TOOL

Self-Care Matters



PalliativeCare
AUSTRALIA

Purpose

This resource was developed primarily to support self-care planning for, and by, anyone with an interest in, or experience with, matters involving palliative and end-of-life care; however, it may also be useful for individuals outside of this context.

Disclaimer

The information provided in this document is provided as general information only. In utilising general information about self-care planning and strategies, specific issues relevant to your personal circumstances and workplace should always be considered. This document does not constitute professional advice and should not be relied upon as such. None of the information in this document is intended to serve as medical advice nor should it be interpreted as such. The information in this document should not be used to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease, nor should it be used as a substitute for an appropriate health professional's advice.

Recommended citation

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Feedback and enquiries

Palliative Care Australia welcomes feedback on this resource. All comments and enquiries should be directed to: pca@palliativecare.org.au

An electronic copy of this booklet can be downloaded at: palliativecare.org.au/resources/self-care-matters

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Overview

Why self-care matters

Death is a natural part of life, just as grief is a normal response to loss. But we're all human and vulnerable to suffering—whether it be our own, or exposure to the suffering of others.

Self-care is vital to building resilience and preventing burnout. It can support your own health and wellbeing whilst supporting others through professional or social roles that involve living with dying.

Research has shown that developing a personalised self-care plan is an effective self-care strategy for people involved in palliative care.¹

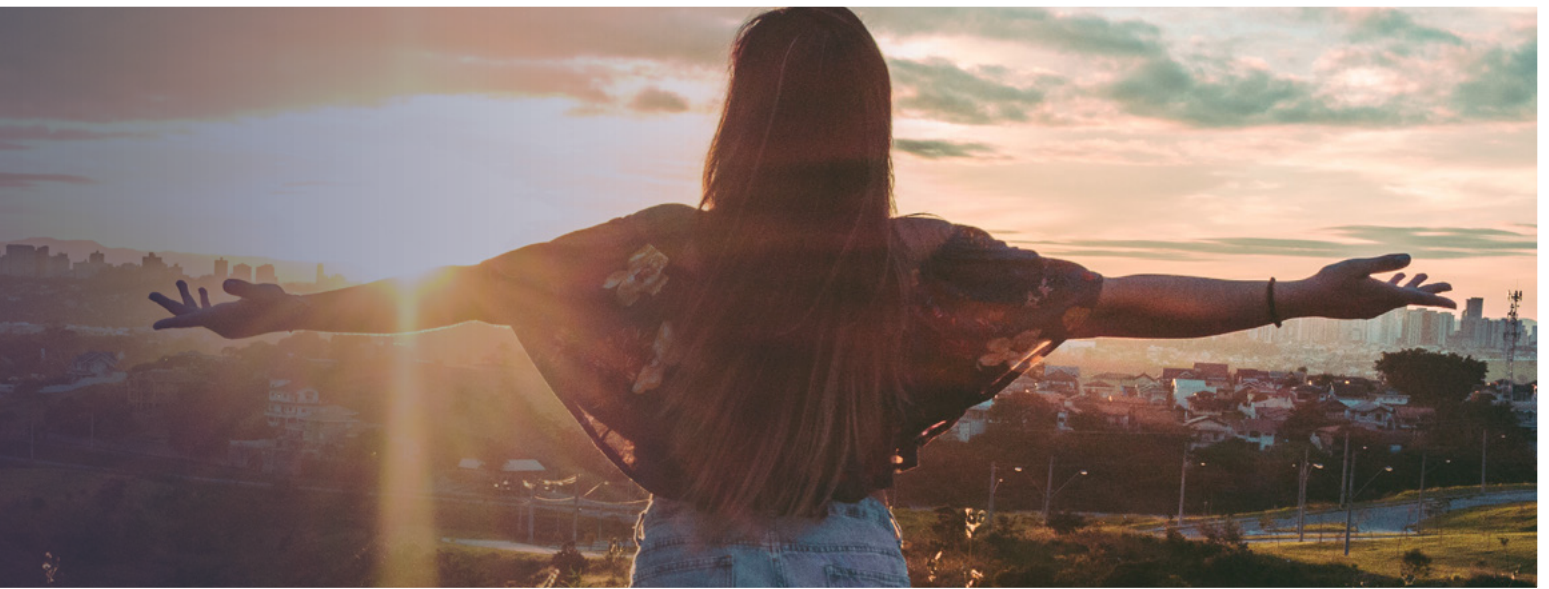
What is self-care?

Self-care can be understood as the deliberate behaviours and actions taken to look after yourself. In a context of palliative care, self-care means a proactive and holistic approach to promoting personal health and wellbeing to support professional and social roles.²



1. Mills J, Wand T, Fraser, JA. 'Self-Care in Palliative Care Nursing and Medical Professionals: A cross-sectional survey.' *Journal of Palliative Medicine*. 2017, 20(6); 625-630

2. Mills J, Wand T, Fraser, JA. 'Exploring the meaning and practice of self-care among palliative care nurses and doctors: A qualitative study.' *BMC Palliative Care*. 2018, 17; 63.



What does self-care look like in practice?

While practising self-care will look different for different people, it is important to ensure that self-care strategies are in place to address each domain of self-care. Effective self-care practice covers the domains of physical self-care, social self-care, and inner self-care.



How to use this self-care planning tool

This self-care planning tool is designed to be used as part of the full suite of Self-Care Matters resources available at palliativecare.org.au/resources/self-care-matters. If you haven't yet explored this resource, you should do so now prior to using this tool.

There are two ways that this tool can be used:

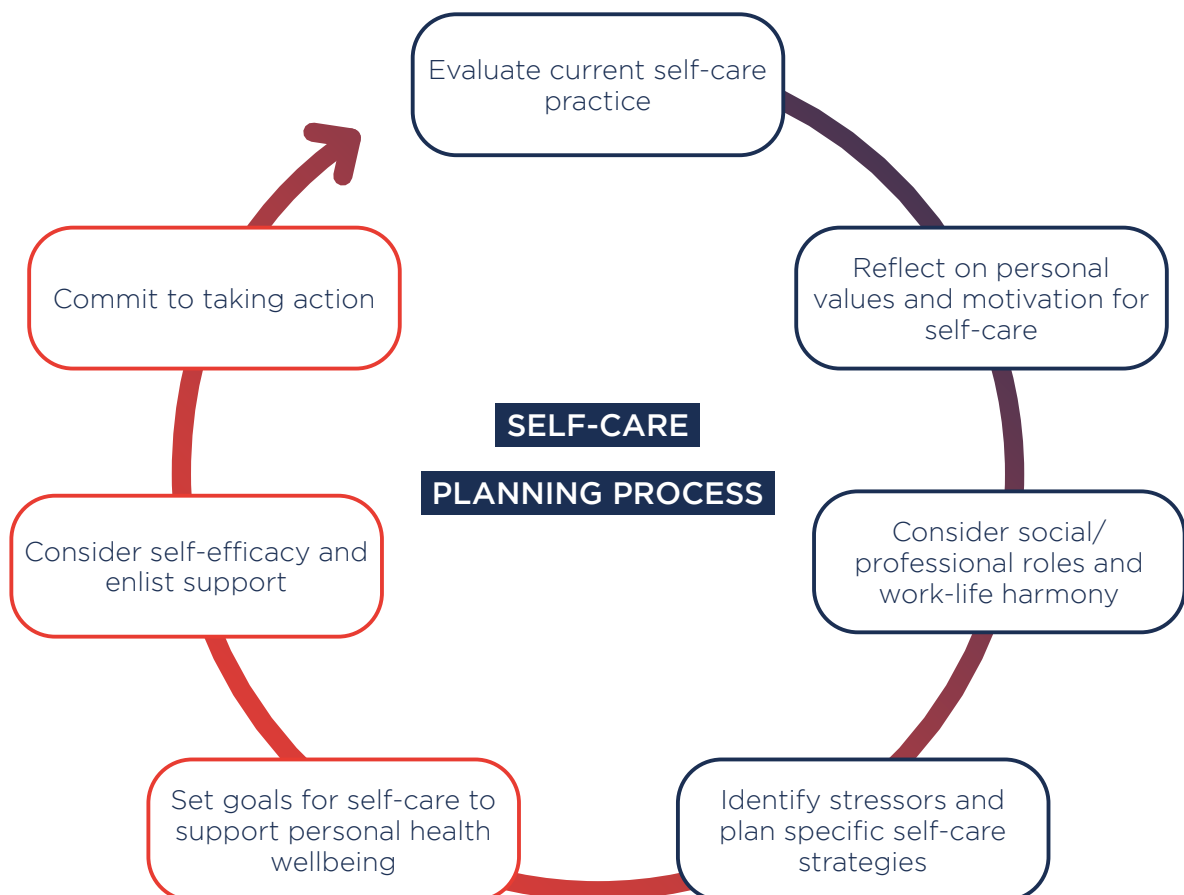
- 1 You can take this opportunity to develop and implement to your own personalised self-care plan; or
- 2 You can simply reflect on the process of planning for self-care, without documenting a formal plan.

Whichever option you choose, personalised planning for self-care can be a tremendous support for putting the theory of self-care into practice.

Self-Care Planning Process

Following the seven steps of this self-care planning process is a systematic way of ensuring that self-care practice is comprehensive and personally tailored to your individual needs.

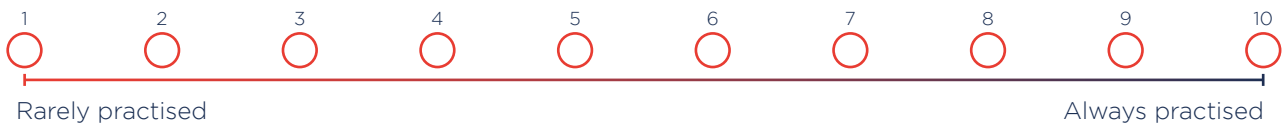
This process should be reviewed and revised as needed at regular intervals or whenever there is a significant change in personal or professional circumstances.



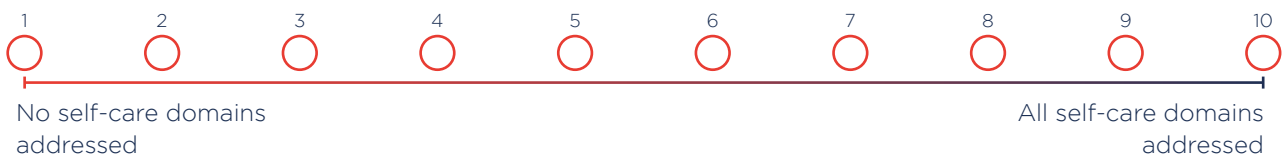


Current self-care practice

How regular is my practice of self-care?



How holistic and comprehensive is my practice of self-care?



Am I self-compassionate towards my own suffering and vulnerability?





Personal values and motivation for self-care

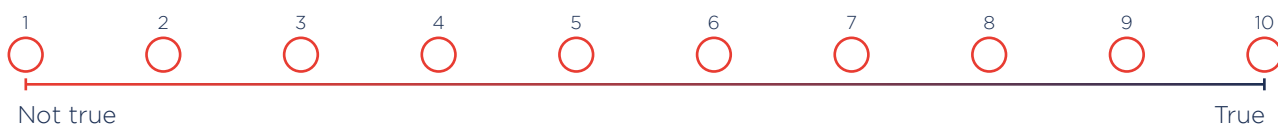
Refer to Appendix 1 for examples of common personal values

What do I value most in my personal and working life?

What is my personal motivation for practising self-care?

Social/professional roles and work-life harmony

I currently feel a positive sense of work-life harmony



What are my current social roles?

What are my current professional roles?

Stressors and self-care strategies

Current and potential personal/workplace stressors include:

Possible self-care strategies to overcome these stressors are:

Refer to Appendix 2 for detailed summary of self-care strategies used by palliative care nurses and doctors

Physical self-care:



Social self-care:

Inner self-care:

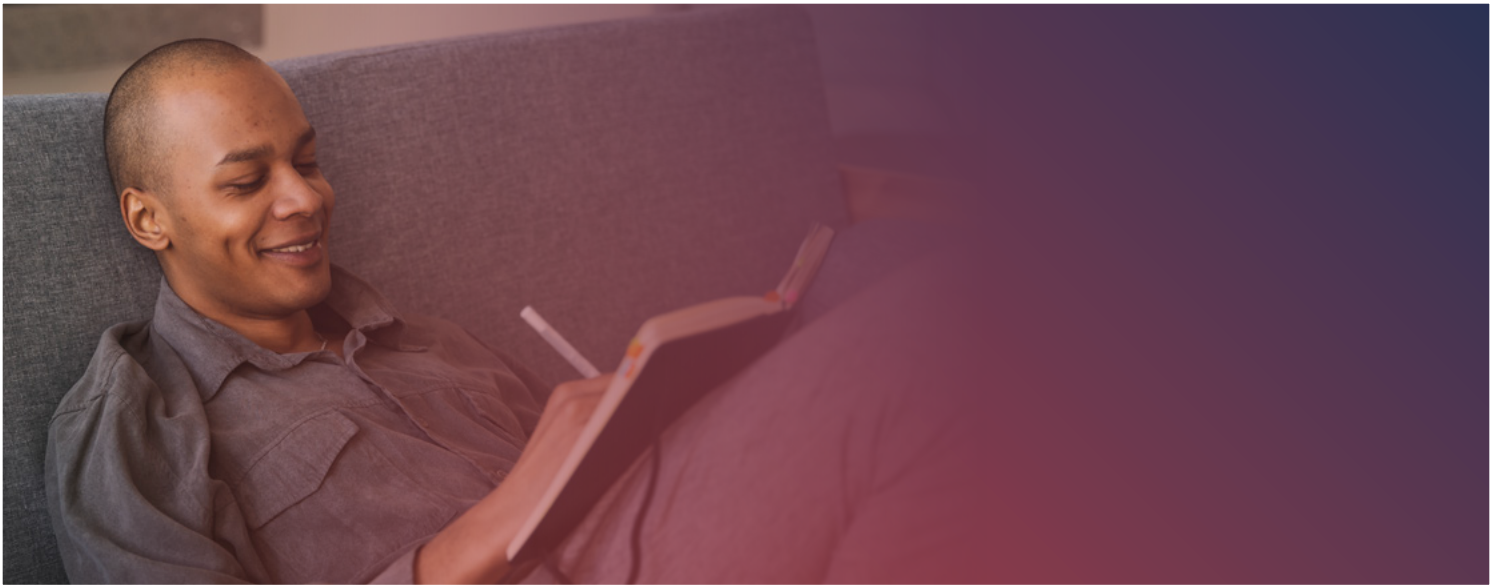
Goals for self-care

Daily self-care goals to support my health and wellbeing could include:

Weekly self-care goals to support my health and wellbeing could include:

Monthly self-care goals to support my health and wellbeing could include:

Yearly self-care goals to support my health and wellbeing could include:



Self-efficacy and support

How confident am I in being able to practise self-care and achieve goals?



What resources and support networks can I draw upon to assist me?

Personal/community:

Professional/employer:

Commit to taking action

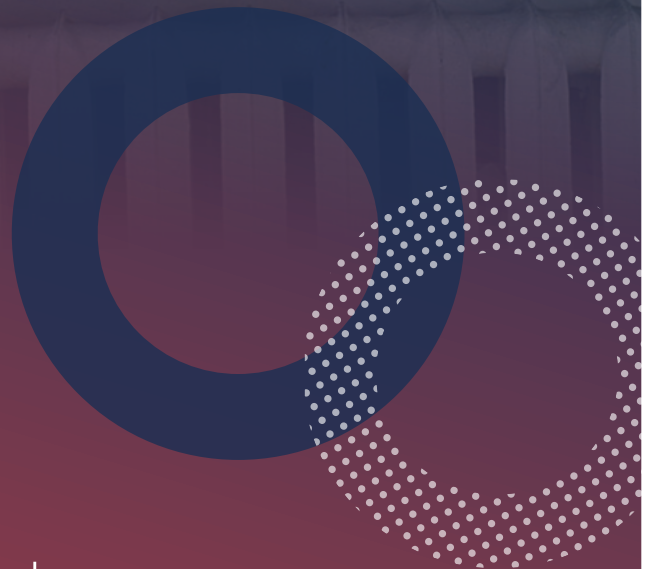
My next steps towards committing and taking action for self-care are:

List and then number in order of priority



“

“Self-care is vital to building resilience and preventing burnout.”



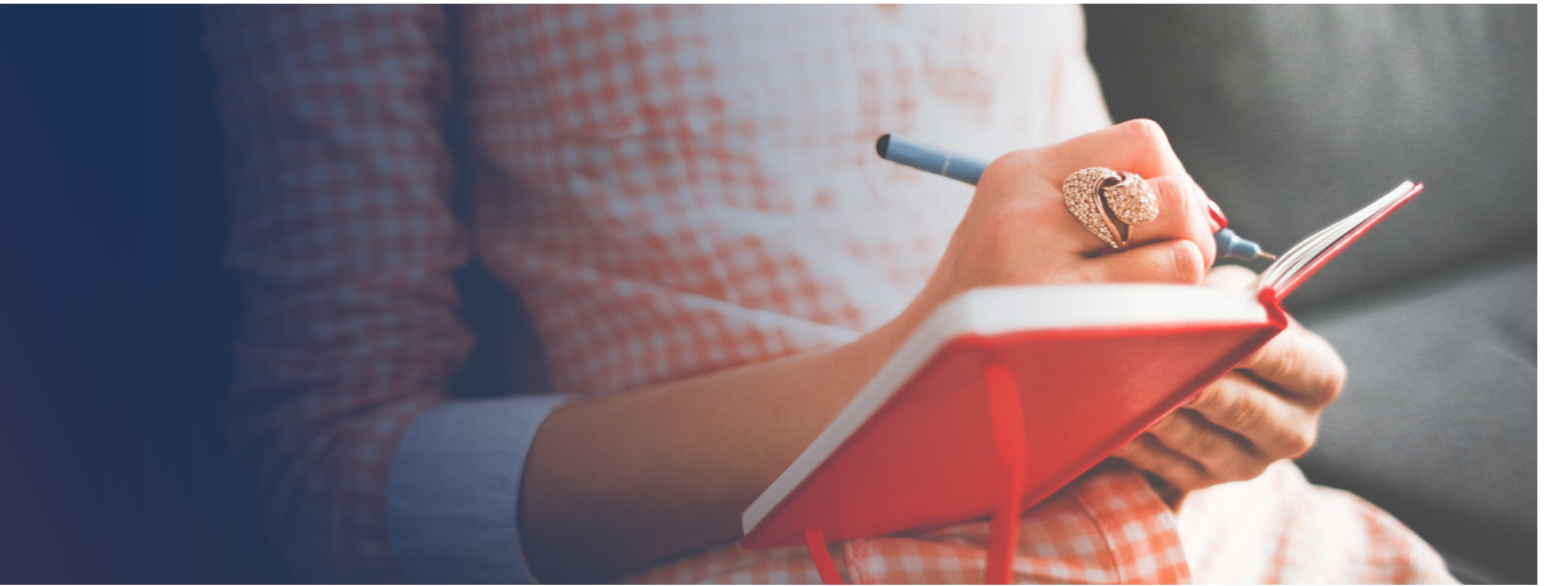
My Self-Care Plan

Name:.....

Date:.....

Motivation

I am committing to this self-care plan because:



Self-care goals

Daily:

Weekly:

Monthly:

Yearly:

Self-care strategies



PHYSICAL



SOCIAL



INNER



Physical self-care:

Social self-care:

Inner self-care:

Anticipated challenges to self-care

Personal:

Workplace:

Available supports & resources

Personal/community:

Workplace:

Review

Date I will review and update this self-care plan:.....

Appendix 1

Common values

Acceptance	Freedom	Mental wellbeing
Accountability	Friendship	Mindfulness
Adventure	Fun	Openness
Beauty	Generosity	Peace/Non-Violence
Challenge	Gratitude	Personal Growth
Collaboration	Happiness	Physical wellbeing
Commitment	Hard Work	Positive Influence
Community	Harmony	Practicality
Compassion	Health	Problem-Solving
Competence	Helping Others	Reliability
Cooperation	Honesty	Resourcefulness
Courage	Honour	Self-care
Creativity	Humility	Self-compassion
Curiosity	Humour	Self-reliance
Discipline	Independence	Simplicity
Discovery	Inner Calm	Social wellbeing
Efficiency	Innovation	Spirituality
Enthusiasm	Integrity	Strength
Environment	Interdependence	Tradition
Equality	Joy	Trust
Ethical action	Leadership	Willingness
Excellence	Lifelong Learning	Wisdom
Fairness	Love	
Faith/Religion	Loyalty	
Family	Meaningful Work	

Appendix 2

Applying the meaning of self-care in practice

A proactive and holistic approach to promoting personal health and wellbeing to support professional care of others

Meaning of self-care

- » Relational context
- » Balancing care for others with care for self
- » Promotion of health and wellbeing
- » More than just a tick-box checklist

Maintain a range of personalised self-care strategies within professional and non-professional contexts

Self-care strategies used inside the workplace setting

- » Reflective practice
- » Accessing other staff support
- » Boundaries
- » Regulation of workload
- » Work-life harmony
- » Team-care/healthy team
- » Laughter and use of humour

Self-care strategies used outside the workplace setting

- » Separating work from home
- » Meditation
- » Spiritual practice
- » Positive social relationships
- » Rest and relaxation
- » Preventative health behaviours
- » Accessing support from health care professionals

Shared responsibility

- » Individual self-care practice
- » Staff support from employer

Self-care as a personalised and ongoing practice

- » Practised according to the individual and context
- » Ongoing nature

Manage barriers and enablers to self-care practice

Facilitators of self-care

- » Recognising importance of self-care
- » Planning and prioritising self-care in a preventative approach
- » Self-awareness
- » Supportive work culture and leadership
- » Leadership/role models to normalise self-care
- » Positive emotions and relationships
- » Character strengths

Impediments to self-care

- » Unsupportive work culture and environment
- » Stigma
- » Busyness
- » Lack of planning/prioritising self-care
- » Inadequate boundaries between work and home
- » Self-criticism and low self-worth

Notes

A series of horizontal dotted lines providing space for notes.

Handwriting practice area consisting of 20 horizontal dotted lines.

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