

Self-Care

Questions With Examples

This list supplements the “Self-Care Questions” handout on my website (fromlexi.com). The questions and examples below are designed to help you clarify the way you think, speak, and behave in regards to self-care. Increasing awareness helps us better know how and where to make changes.

I hope this information helps guide you toward healthier and happier living!

From, Lexi

1. What is your personal definition of self-care?

Choose a sentence or two that describe(s) your personal beliefs and interpretation of what self-care “means” and “is.” Use words with particular meaning to you, and make sure they resonate.

2. Do you have a certain “name” or phrase for your self-care?

Ex: Me time, recharge, breather, R&R, downtime, getting away from it all, decompressing, etc.

3. What are some examples of your current self-care activities?

Ex: Play an instrument, read, cook, sit and think, do a puzzle, take a nap, take a walk, etc.

4. Do you have goals or intentions about “when” and “how often” your self-care occurs?

Ex: “I want to do self-care 2x per week... During my 10am work break... Every weekend, etc.”

5. What things “do” and “don’t” count as self-care for you?

In my view, many things can be self-care, but this one is up to your personal interpretation. See my website (fromlexi.com) for links to sample lists of self-care activities.

6. What examples of self-care did you previously do but stopped?

Ex: “I used to play the flute. It’s been forever since I read a book. I quit working on old cars.”

7. If you stopped a previous self-care activity, “when” and “why?”

Ex: “10 years ago; no time for it. Last year; we had a baby. I can’t recall; I felt embarrassed.”

8. Do you have a way to “measure” when self-care is needed? If so, what is it?

Ex: 0-10 scale, thermometer heating up, health meter decreasing, tipping scale with rocks, etc.

9. What are some emotional signs that you need more or different self-care? (How I Feel)

Ex: I feel... Overwhelmed, anxious, irritable, angry, flustered, hopeless, fed up, scattered, etc.

10. What are some behavioral signs that you need more or different self-care? (How I Act)

Ex: I might... Snap at people. Clench my teeth. Slam a door. Avoid things. Withdraw. Cry.

11. Behavioral signs include speech. What are some verbal signs that I need more or different self-care? (What I Say)

Ex: “I’m going to lose it! I can’t take any more. Leave me alone. I need a break. I give up.”

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12. What thoughts get in the way of your self-care? (What I Think)
Ex: "I'm wasting time. I'm being lazy. That's childish. People will judge me. I don't deserve it."
13. What people, circumstances, events, etc. get in the way of your self-care?
Ex: Lack of time, energy, money, or equipment, lack of supports (babysitter, transportation); work schedule; negative response from others; meeting other people's needs; mental health challenges
14. Are there people around you who comment negatively about self-care? (Re: you or in general)
Ex: "Mom says I'm being lazy and irresponsible. My partner says self-care is for people who can't handle life. A news article said self-care is overrated. My grandpa said self-care is a waste of time."
15. Do you have any positive beliefs about self-care? If so, what are they?
Ex: I believe... "Self-care is essential to my well-being. Self-care is valuable. Self-care matters. Self-care is important. Self-care is worth the time and effort."
16. Do you have any negative beliefs about self-care? If so, what are they?
Ex: I believe... "Self-care is selfish. It's just an excuse to be lazy. Self-care means I'm wasting time that should be spent on more important things. I should be able to cope without it."
17. Are there times when you could have done self-care but chose something else? If so, what were those other things? Why did you make that choice?
Ex: "I chose to do the dishes versus watching show because cleaning always comes first. I chose to work overtime versus go to the gym so my boss won't be mad. I chose to stay home versus go to a movie because my spouse is sick of watching the kids."
18. When you do self-care, in what ways does it help? What are the benefits?
Ex: Self-care helps me... "Function better. Be the best version of myself. Be patient and more relaxed. Have more energy. Have fun. Feel happy and optimistic. Maintain my sanity!"
19. Have you had times when self-care wasn't helpful or "didn't work?" In what ways?
Ex: Self-care didn't help when... "I beat myself up and felt guilty for doing it. I chose things that I didn't really like. I didn't do enough of it. I was already exhausted, so it just made me more tired."
20. Do you know anyone who has "really good" self-care? What are they doing (or not doing)?
Ex: So-and-so (insert a name here)... "Always takes two breaks at work. Schedules a day off every month. Saves a little money to go out, buy a treat, or shop. Never takes work home. Has some "me time" every Saturday morning. Has a babysitter once a month for a date night. Takes naps."

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