

# Creating a self-care plan

## Coping strategies

To create (or improve) a self-care plan, it is important to begin by understanding what strategies you currently use when you experience a stressful situation.

Everyone has their own strategies to cope with situations, but they may not always be positive for ongoing health and wellbeing. Positive strategies typically promote calm both emotionally and physically, allowing the person to relax (known as self-care). Negative strategies create the opposite effect increasing stress and agitation which can impede a person's ability to cope with a situation and in some situations even make it worse.

## Types of strategies

Positive	Negative
Deep breathing	Yelling
Listening to music	Smoking
Exercising	Pacing
Meditation	Skipping meals
Reading	Drinking alcohol to excess
Connecting with others	Withdrawal from family and friends
Engaging in a hobby	Biting fingernails

## Reflect. Examine. Replace.

To identify what strategies would work best to help promote calm and facilitate your ability to process stressful situations, consider what you value in your everyday life as well as during difficult times. Focusing on activities that leave you feeling positive will help you to create a self-care plan. Ask yourself if you are practising these types of activities or if you have developed some negative practices?

Spending time reflecting on what you want your self-care plan to look like can help you into the future, as you will be addressing your ongoing physical, psychological, emotional, spiritual, social, financial and workplace wellbeing requirements.

Strategy	Action
<b>Reflect</b>	On your existing coping strategies to identify what works and what doesn't.
<b>Examine</b>	Barriers that may be stopping you undertaking or maintaining your self-care strategies.
<b>Replace</b>	Negative coping strategies with positive strategies. Start small and pick one to address at a time e.g., replace a negative strategy, like drinking too much alcohol with a positive strategy: pick at least one day in a week where you will not drink.

## Create a self-care plan

Think about committing your self-care plan to paper and being accountable to what you write down. Share your self-care plan with someone you trust.

Start by identifying your own personal needs and any current strategies you use and then identifying some different practice you might want to consider trying. The self-care plan template is a useful resource for getting started.

Commit to reviewing your self-care plan on a regular basis, tweaking it to meet your changing needs and state of wellbeing.

## Self-care plan template

When using this template, look at your current self-care strategies and then consider what you might want to maintain or change. Consider taking inspiration from your friends, family and work colleagues, but remember to create a plan that will work for you and address your needs.

Self-care area	Current strategies	Strategies to try
<b>Physical</b>		
<b>Emotional</b>		
<b>Spiritual</b>		
<b>Professional</b>		
<b>Social</b>		
<b>Financial</b>		
<b>Psychological</b>		

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

ACT Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Ngunnawal people. ACT Health respects their continuing culture and connections to the land and the unique contributions they make to the life of this area. ACT Health also acknowledges and welcomes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are part of the community we serve.

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