



TREAT YOURSELF:

A Self-Care Guide for Busy Professionals



Gentle Reminders

While waiting for others to come in, here are some rules and reminders to keep in mind.

01

Feel free to turn your camera on or off. We want this moment to be about YOU!

02

Please avoid distractions and mute yourself to prevent any disturbances.

03

Write your questions and responses in the chat.

On our lineup for this afternoon

Here are the topics we will be discussing:



1. What is stress?
2. List the various types of stress
3. The physical, behavioral and emotional responses to stress
4. How to define self-care and various types of self-care
5. Create a self-care plan that works for you

Definition of Stress



- **Demands made by the internal or external environment that upset balance or homeostasis affecting physical and psychological well-being**
- **Perception of stress is just as important as the stressor itself**
- **Not all stress is the same**
- **Some types of stress can actually be healthy**

Definition of Coping

- **To invest own conscious effort, to solve personal and interpersonal problems, in order to try to master, minimize or tolerate stress**
- **Post Traumatic Growth: Experiences of growth while coping with cancer**
- **Spiritual development**
- **Improved relations with others**
- **New life experiences**
- **A sense of personal strength**



Definition of stress management



Definition: Wide spectrum of techniques aimed at controlling a person's level of stress, especially chronic stress

- **Usually for the purpose of improving everyday functioning and improving coping**
- **Spirituality**
- **Psychotherapy**
- **Relaxation Techniques**
- **Exercise**
- **Social Support**

Eustress

- **Beneficial and is actually necessary for our overall wellbeing**
- **Positive stress that keeps us vital and excited about life**
- **Eg. Roller-coaster ride, a fun challenge, the anticipation of a first date, the first day at a new job**

Distress

- **Emotional experience of a psychosocial, social, and/or spiritual nature that may interfere with ability to cope**
- **Reported in roughly 22%-58% of cancer patients**



Allostatic Load



- **Wear and tear on the body which accumulates as an individual is exposed to repeated or chronic stress**
- **Physiological consequence of stress**
- **Measured through biomarkers associated with the neuroendocrine, cardiovascular, immune and metabolic systems**

Biological Mechanisms Linking Stress and Health

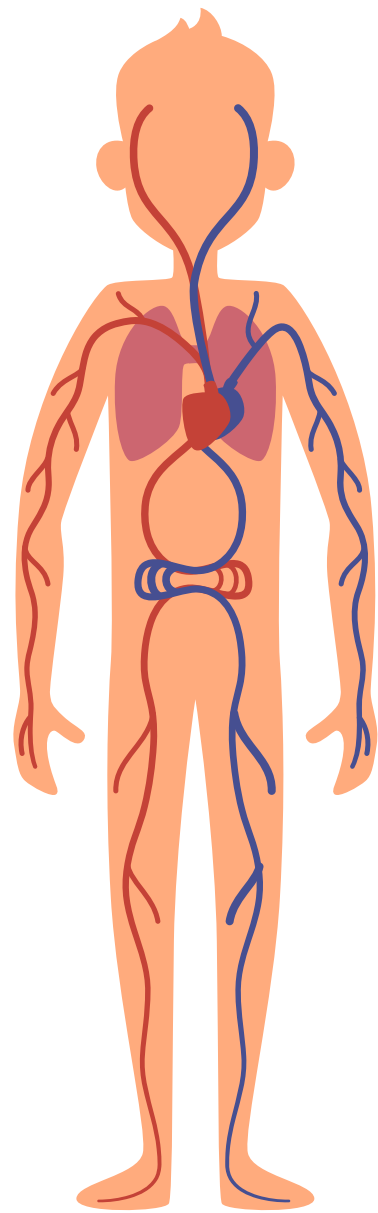


- **Our bodies naturally produce a stress hormone called cortisol**
- **Long-term exposure to cortisol can affect the whole body, including increasing a person's risk of developing:**
 - **Heart conditions**
 - **Anxiety**
 - **Depression**
 - **Obesity**

How Does **Stress** Affect General Health?



How Does Stress Affect Health?



Cardiovascular System

- **Stress may increase heart rate and stress hormones, can take a toll on the body**
- **Long-term ongoing stress can increase the risk for hypertension, heart attack, or stroke**
- **Risk differs for women, depending on whether the woman is premenopausal or postmenopausal**
 - **Premenopausal women: Estrogen helps blood vessels respond better during stress**
 - **Postmenopausal women: Lower levels of estrogen, therefore putting them at greater risk for the effects of stress on heart**

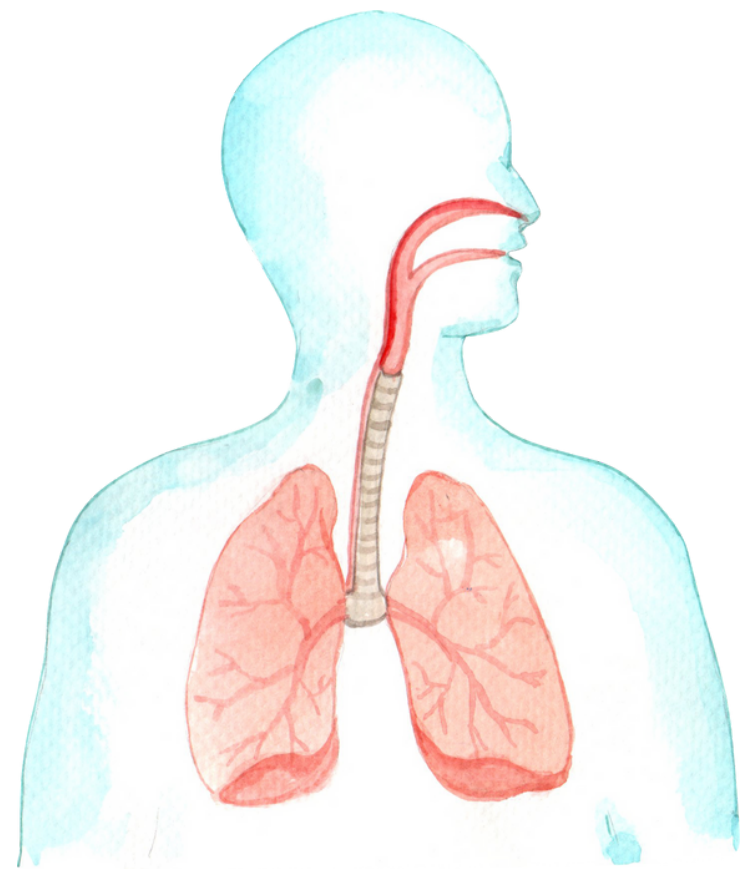
How Does Stress Affect General Health?



Musculoskeletal System

- **Muscle tension**
- **Tension-type headache and migraine**
- **Low back and upper extremities**
- **Relaxation techniques shown to effectively reduce muscle tension**

How Does Stress Affect General Health?



Respiratory System

- Can exacerbate breathing problems for people with pre-existing respiratory diseases such as asthma
- Can trigger asthma attacks

How Does Stress Affect General Health?

Cognition

- **Study:** Women who had been through significant stressors in mid-life had a significantly (65%) greater risk of developing dementia later on
- Stressful events can increase stress hormones and eventually lead to atrophy in the brain's hippocampus – the region known to be most affected by Alzheimer's disease



Let's start take the first step.

Self-Care Planning



Self-Care Plan #1

Responses to *Stress*



The first step to controlling stress is to know the symptoms- but recognizing stress symptoms may be harder than you think. Most of us are so used to being stressed, we often don't know we are stressed until we are at the breaking point. The following are some examples of common responses to stress.

Physical Responses to Stress:

These symptoms include:

- **Low Energy**
- **Headaches**
- **Frequent colds/ infections**
- **Aches, pains, tense muscles**
- **Chest pain, rapid heartbeat**
- **Upset stomach- including diarrhea, constipation, nausea**

- **Insomnia**
- **Clenched jaw & grinding teeth**
- **Dry mouth & hard time swallowing**
- **Loss of sexual desire/ability**
- **Nervousness, shaking, ringing in the ears, cold or sweaty hands/feet**

Emotional Responses to Stress:

These symptoms include:

- **Becoming easily agitated, frustrated, and moody**
- **Feeling overwhelmed, as if you are losing control or need to take control**
- **Having a hard time relaxing and quieting your mind**
- **Feeling bad about yourself (low self-esteem), and feeling lonely, worthless, and depressed**
- **Avoiding others**

- **Changes in appetite -- either not eating or eating too much**
- **Procrastinating and avoiding responsibilities**
- **More use of alcohol, drugs, or cigarettes**
- **Having more nervous behaviors, such as nail biting, fidgeting, and pacing**

Positive Behavioral vs. Negative Behavioral

- **Listening to music**
- **Meeting with friends**
- **Taking a bath**
- **Watching a movie**
- **Getting a massage**
- **Relaxation**
- **Yoga**

- **Drinking too much alcohol**
- **Emotionally or physically violent outbursts.**
- **Initiating smoking or smoking more than usual.**
- **Taking medications like sleeping pills, muscle relaxants, or anti-anxiety pills other than as prescribed.**

Positive Emotional vs. Negative Emotional

- Joy
- Gratitude
- Pride
- Serenity
- Interest
- Amusement
- Hope

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Distress
- Frustration
- Resentment
- Disgust

Stress can manifest in many ways



Suggested Best Practices to Manage Stress:

- Stress Journal**
 - Stress Action Plan**
 - Collateral From Family & Friends**
-

Identify Your Stressors



Notice Your Body.

How is your body responding in the given situation, environment, or audience? Is your body giving negative response signals?

(i.e. headaches, stomachaches, heart palpitations)

Notice Your Mood

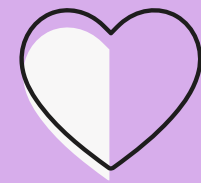
Not feeling like your normal self?

Are you more than usual:
irritable, angry, anxious, or sad

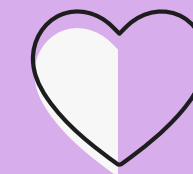
Notice Your Behavior

Changes in your behavior can be indicators of stress. (i.e. extreme change of appetite, sleep, fidgety, or restlessness)

Journaling Your Stress Away Can Help



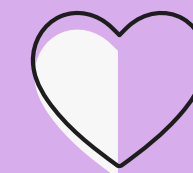
Manage anxiety and cope with depression



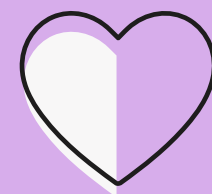
Create a practice for positive self-talk/affirmations



Control your symptoms and improve your mood



Track any symptoms day to day clues to triggers



Prioritize problems, fears, and concerns

Tips for Journaling

1

Keep your writing simple

2

Draw or doodle away!

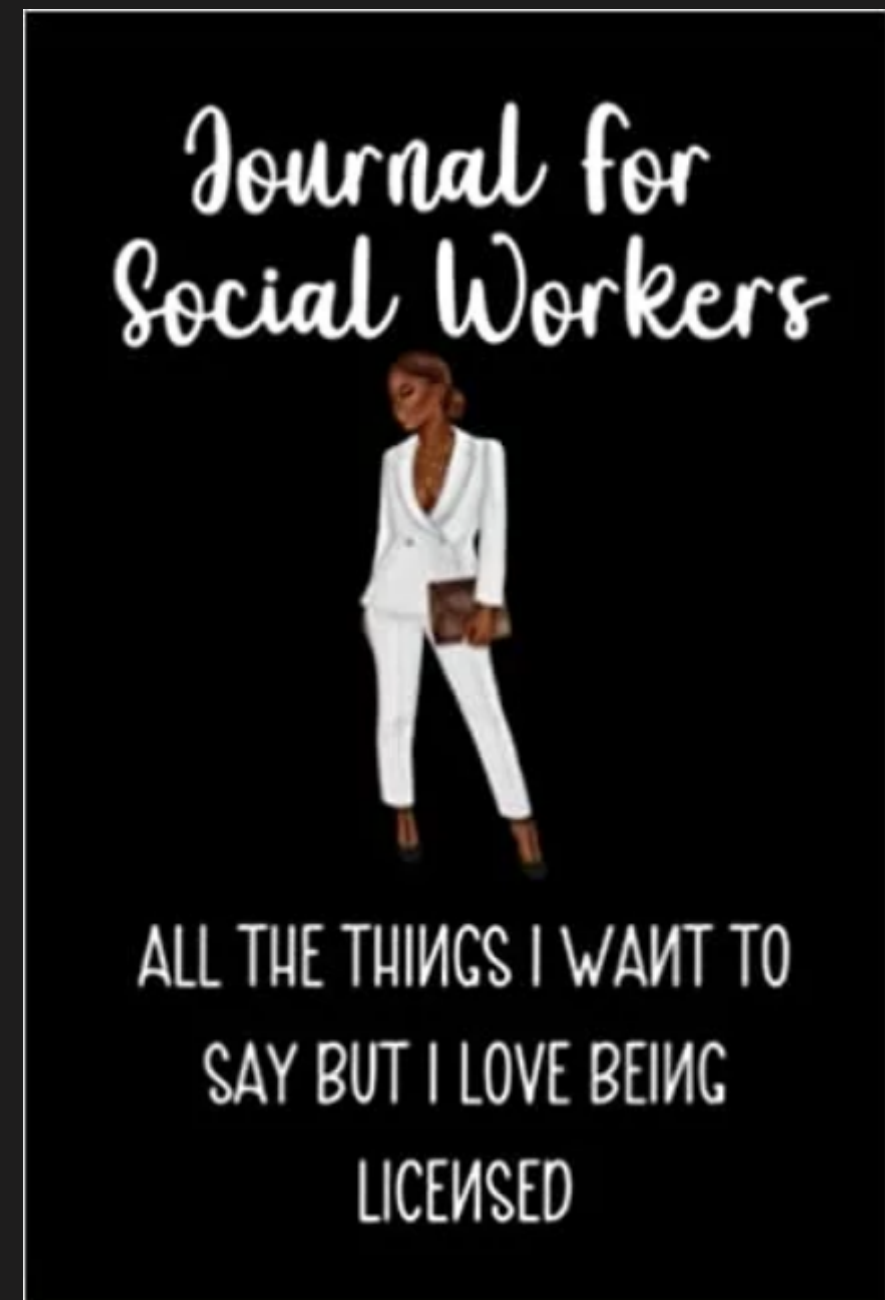
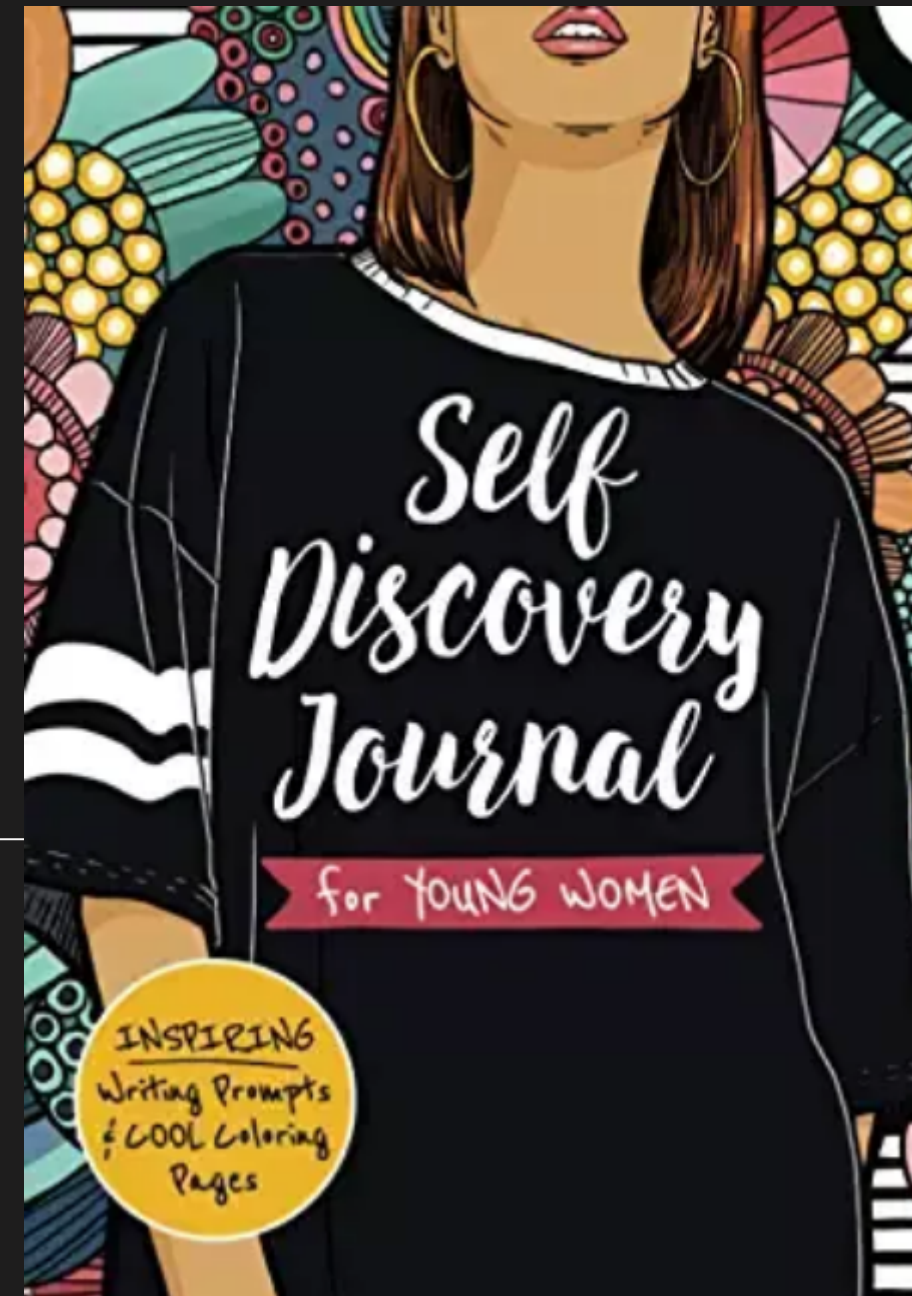
3

Use your journal as you see fit!



Types of Journals

- Affirmation Journals
- Processing Journals
- Adult Coloring Book Journals
- Composition Books
- Yes, There is an App for That!



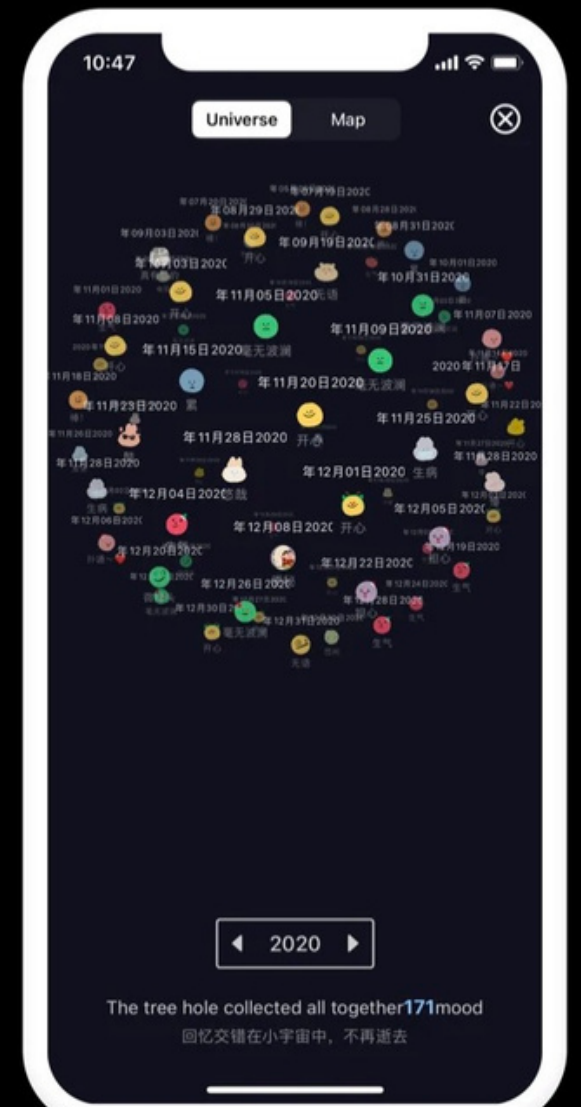
SMART PHONE JOURNALS

TRY THE EMMO APP

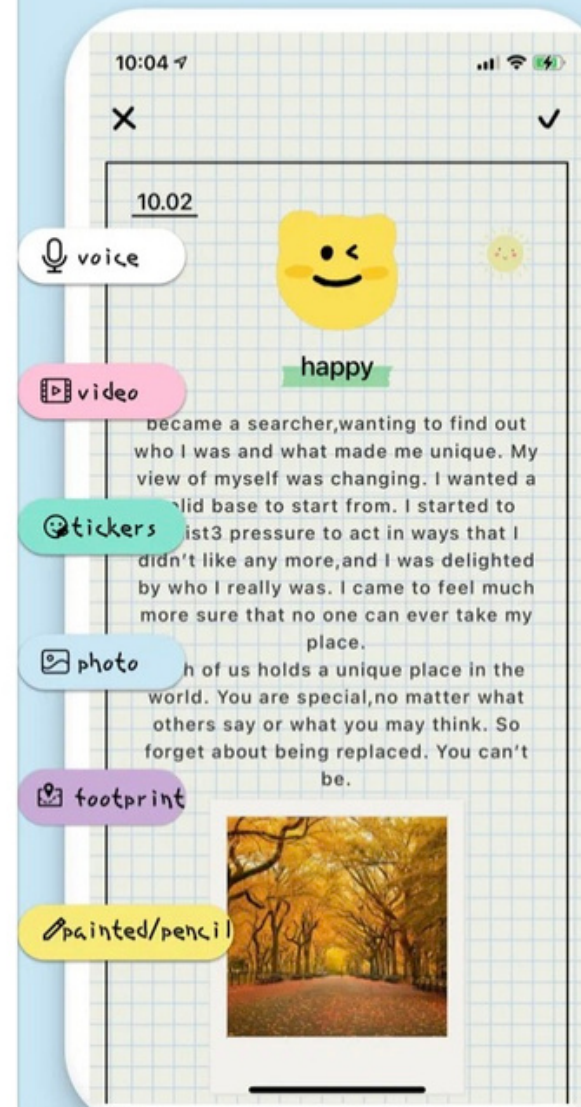
Enjoy life every single day
Record your daily expressions



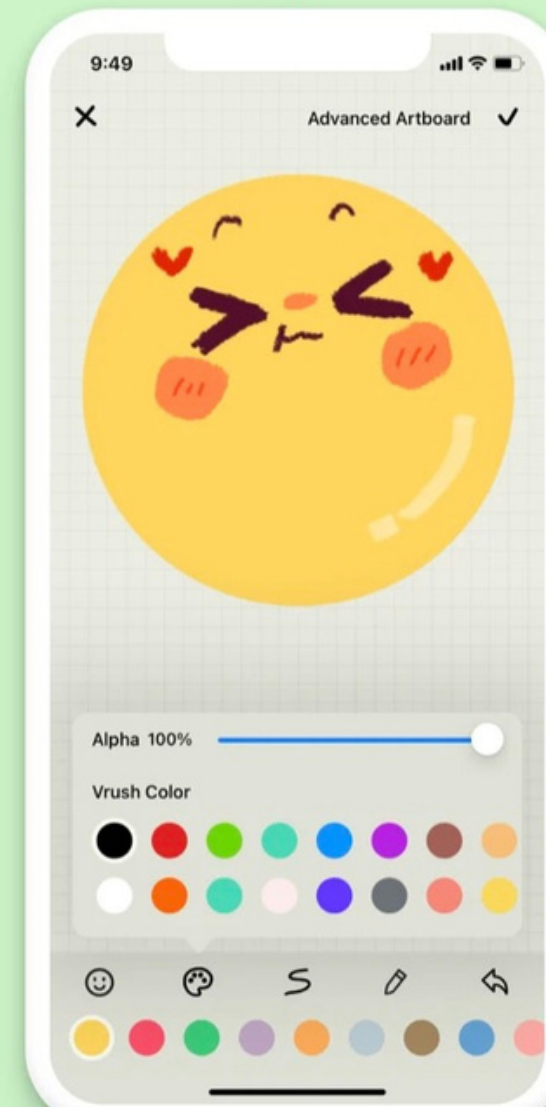
Belongs to the private mood
tree hole



A minimalist cute diary
But powerful



In the face of the self
Draw your most authentic
self



Creating a Stress Action Plan

- Identify Your Triggers
- Stay Connected to Your Community
- Get Moving
- Hit Pause-Rest
- Plan to Play
- Check and Correct Unhelpful Thinking-Even About What is Stressing to You!



Guided Imagery

<https://youtu.be/i50ZAs7v9es>

HOW DOES IT WORK?

A PERSON/RECORDING GUIDES YOU INTO IMAGINARY EXPERIENCE THAT ENGAGES YOUR FIVE SENSES. YOUR BODY AND MIND RESPONDS TO THOSE IMAGES.

WHAT IS IT?

USES THE POWER OF OUR IMAGINATION TO ACTIVATE HEALING OF MIND, BODY, AND SOUL.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BENEFITS?

- **REDUCES CHEST PAIN (ANGINA)**
- **LOWERS HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE,**
- **DECREASES HEADACHES**
- **REGULATES THE DIGESTIVE SYSTEM**
- **IMPROVES BREATHING**
- **HELPS US VISUALIZE OUR GOALS**

A photograph of three men sitting on a grassy hillside, looking out over a valley. The man on the left is wearing a maroon t-shirt, the middle man is wearing a light blue t-shirt, and the man on the right is wearing a white t-shirt. They are all looking towards the left side of the frame. The background shows rolling hills and a valley with some buildings in the distance under a clear sky.

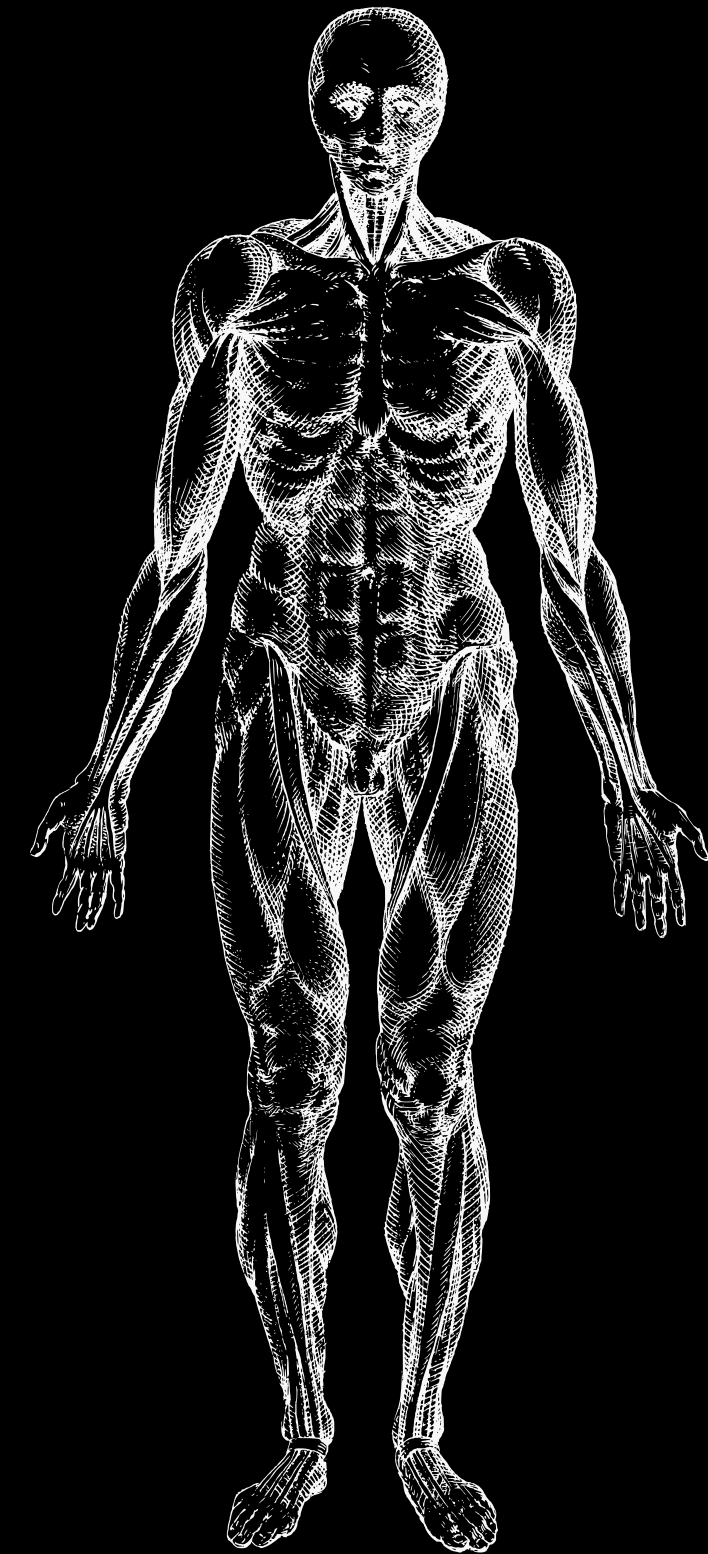
Stress Management Techniques

- **Mental Techniques = Guided imagery, positive self-talk**
- **Physical Techniques = Progressive muscle and breathing relaxation, massage, stretching**

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) is an anxiety-reduction technique first introduced by American physician Edmund Jacobson in the 1930s. 1 The technique involves alternating tension and relaxation in all of the body's major muscle groups. If you practice this technique correctly, you may even end up falling asleep.

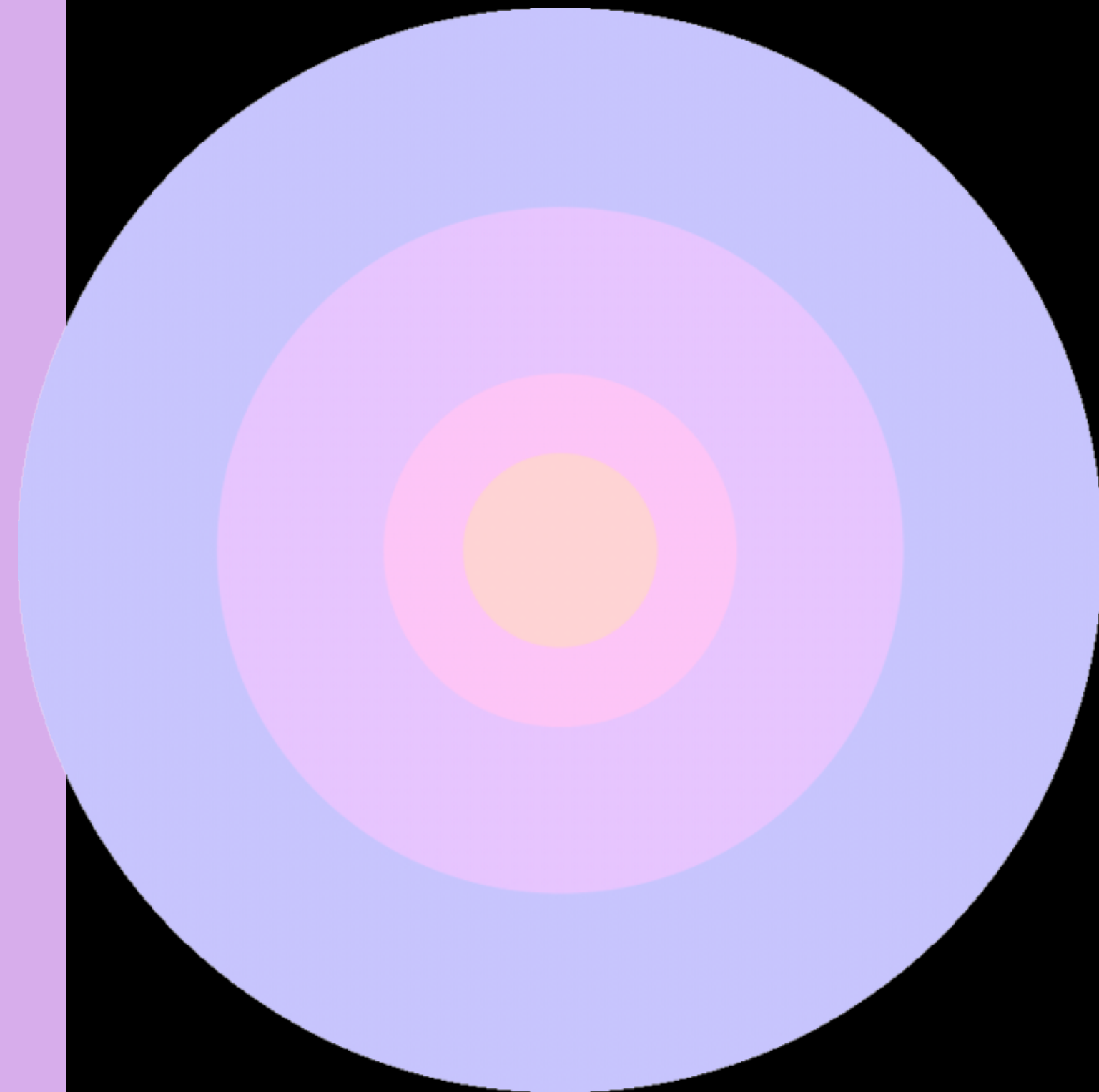
https://youtu.be/SNqYG95j_UQ



Diaphragmatic Breathing

According to The American Institute of Stress, 20 to 30 minutes of diaphragmatic breathing, each day can reduce stress and anxiety. Find a comfortable, quiet place to sit or lie down. For example, try sitting in a chair, sitting cross-legged, or lying on your back with a small pillow under your head and another under your knees.

<https://youtu.be/gAkjx25o4eI>



Debunking Self-Care Myths

01

SELF-CARE IS ONLY FOR PEOPLE
STRUGGLING WITH MENTAL HEALTH.

02

SELF-CARE MEANS ALONE TIME.

03

SELF-CARE IS EXPENSIVE AND ARE
"REWARDS" TO BE EARNED.

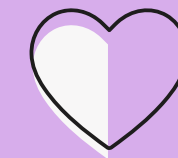
**SELF-CARE REALLY MEANS:
INCREASING SELF-AWARENESS
SETTING BOUNDARIES
PUTTING YOURSELF ON THE LIST**



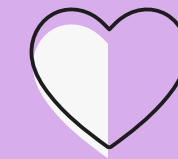
Self-Care Plan #3

Type of self-care practices

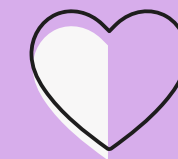
- **Physical**
- **Social**
- **Mental**
- **Spiritual**
- **Emotional**



Eat well-balanced meals (with the occasional treats).



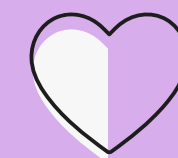
Practice meditation to avoid information overload.



Reach out to friends via text or online video chats.



Work out and find ways to stay active.



Set and follow times for work and rest. Boundaries!

Physical Self-Care

- **Eat a healthy meal**
- **Engage in exercise**
- **Go for a walk**
- **Drink water**
- **Practice good sleep hygiene**
- **Have a cup of tea**
- **Sit in the sunlight**
- **Take a shower or bath**



Social Self-Care

- **Schedule a regular phone touch-base with a loved one**
- **Host a game night with your friends**
- **Schedule on a date with partner or solo!**
- **Cuddle with a furry friend**
- **Volunteer within your community**



Mental Self-Care

- **Set Healthy Boundaries**
- **Seek Therapy**
- **Practice mindfulness**
- **Take a break**
- **Play video games**
- **Listen to music**
- **Read a book**
- **Listen to a podcast**
- **Reflect on things you are grateful for**



Spiritual Self Care

WHILE PHYSICAL SELF CARE IS DIRECTED AT TAKING CARE OF THE BODY AND MENTAL SELF CARE IS DIRECTED AT TAKING CARE OF THE MIND, SPIRITUAL SELF CARE IS FOCUSED ON TAKING CARE OF THE SOUL.

- **PMEDITATION, YOGA, TAI CHI, QI GONG**
- **SPEND TIME IN NATURE**
- **CLEANSE YOUR SPACE**
- **JOURNAL**
- **CONNECT WITH YOUR COMMUNITY**
- **PRACTICE SILENCE**
- **HONORING YOUR ANCESTORS**
- **A PRAYER OR STUDY GROUP**



Emotional Self Care

IT CAN BE REALLY HARD TO PICTURE WHAT EMOTIONAL SELF CARE MIGHT LOOK LIKE. HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES:

- TURN YOUR ATTENTION TOWARDS YOUR BODY
- CONSCIOUSLY CHOOSE HOW TO RESPOND
- LIMIT EXPOSURE TO NEWS
- DO SOMETHING THAT MAKES YOU HAPPY
- JOURNALING
- SETTING BOUNDARIES
- TALKING THINGS THROUGH WITH A SUPPORTIVE FRIEND



Creating A Self- Care Plan

01

IDENTIFY STRESSORS

02

IDENTIFY YOUR RESPONSE

03

DEVELOP STRATEGIES

04

IDENTIFY SELF-CARE PRACTICES

05

TAKE SMALL STEPS



*Let's Finish Your
Self-Care Plan!*

Resource Page

Find the magic and fun in presenting with Canva Presentations. Press the following keys while on Present mode!

B for blur

D for a drumroll

Q for quiet

C for confetti

Find The Right therapist:

<https://www.goodtherapy.org/find-therapist.html>

Any number
from **0-9** for a timer



HOWARD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL
BASED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
PROGRAM

Thank you!

If you have more questions, feel free to
notify us:

