

## **Self-care / Collective-care** by Elizabeth Nguyen

Self care is great. As an amazing organizer/healer says, anything you can do for self-care, you can do as collective-care. Invite a friend, your community, your block to do it with you! Feel free to comment your additions!

El comienzo del documento colectivo en español. Son todas bienvenidas sus colaboraciones:  
Auto-cuidado / Cuidado colectivo:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1IMnBVljgZ8Q4sMXIUb-11cBmWqweM9u8Ha4OQ4lwwYw/edit?usp=sharing>

Note: This document was crowdsourced by a zillion beautiful people. Changed to viewing only because the internet started messing with it. Love, Elizabeth

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[Self Care for the Bare Minimum](#)

[Spanish version:](#)

[I would like to collaborate in a spanish translation on this resource. Is any one interested?](#)

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## For anger

- Set boundaries to defend yourself from taxing emotional labor (captain awkward is great for tips <https://captainawkward.com/tag/boundaries/>)
- Don't apologise for setting those boundaries. Your wellbeing is more important than saying yes.
- Join other angry people doing work you believe in, and build better relationships, communities, and societies.
- Write things that piss you off on pieces of paper. Burn them (safely!) outside, in a fire place or if you can't burn them, tear them into tiny pieces and bury them (in dirt or a recycling bin).
- Identify the feeling under the anger. Name the oppression.
- Pop bubble wrap.
- Smash something. (Wear a helmet/goggles and harm no one in the process.)
- Scream
- Admit you are angry. Feel it.
- Dance & kick, punch or do kickboxing
- Write that bitter, honest, petty open letter. Send it to a friend who gets it.
- Listen to loud, angry music and jump around or pump your arms.
- Punch a pillow or other soft object.
- Find another person who is angry and yell together about what you're mad about.
- Read the [Uses of Anger by Audre Lorde](#).
- Do a social justice thing where anger is strategic - a zoning meeting, a town hall meeting, writing an angry email to your congressperson etc.
- Call a close friend, and vent with no censoring
- Practice mindfulness
  - Calm.com has some good mindfulness exercises
- Refocus your mind on a positive hobby, like learning a few chords on a guitar.
- Drink water.
- Exercise !!!
- Find a therapist or clergyperson you trust and make an appointment.
- Journal about it
- Loving self touch
- Thich Nhat Hahn: "Anger is like a howling baby, suffering and crying. The baby needs his mother to embrace him. You are the mother for your baby, your anger. The moment you begin to practice breathing mindfully in and out, you have the energy of a mother, to cradle and embrace the baby. Just embracing your anger,

just breathing in and breathing out, that is good enough. The baby will feel relief right away.”

### For sadness

- Read about the practice of lament. Write a lament.
- Write a list of people who are grieving the same thing you are grieving.
- Make a symbol of your grief - a button, a scrap of cloth, a collage. Wear it or carry it with you or leave it in a sacred place.
- Watch a super sad movie and cry your eyes out.
- Drink a cup of herbal tea, motherwort is good for some
- Cry in the shower or rain or down by a river so that you feel connected to all the water.
- Find pictures of people in your family or famous folks or other people who have lived with sadness you are living with. Put them in a place where you can look at them and they can witness your grief.
- Reach out to those who make you smile
- Try to find the power in your sadness. It shows you care about something and are connected to the world.
- Read some poetry
- Read: The Way Forward is with a Broken Heart by Alice Walker
- Go to nature if you can. Look at pictures of nature if you can't be in nature. Maybe also plant something--helping something grow will help you heal.
- Sit (eyes open or closed) and remember a time you felt loved, cared for, powerful and/or happy. What did that moment look like, what did it feel like to be in that moment? If you have a hard time getting there or your mind takes you somewhere else, be gentle with yourself, and try again, potentially with another moment.
- Sit with a friend and rub each other's backs if you're crying. For many people a caring touch is very healing.

### For power

- Hold a [power pose](#) (being as big as you can be in ways that work for your body. Might look like arms wide, feet wide, shoulders square) for a minute.
- Make a list of 10 ancestors whose legacy you are part of
- Put on a song with a good beat and drum along with it on the table or a book or on the ground
- Text a friend and ask them to tell you three ways you are powerful
- Look at this list of [types of power](#). Pick one that has a lot of fire for you - either because you have it or it would be useful to you. Think about a time you used that power well or a way you want to strengthen it.
- Sing a simple, powerful song. Wade in the water is a good one.
- Teach somebody something new.

- Research famous powerful people who had a lot of inner strength. Read their quotes and remind yourself that you too can be powerful.
- Use a whiteboard marker to write inspirational on your mirror to read while you get ready to go outside.

## For grounding

- [These are written for groups](#) can you can also do them by yourself.
- Music. Here's a [play list](#) if you need one.
- [Sacred Practices for Resilience and Resistance from Sanctuaries DC](#)
- Try [praying](#)
- [Make an altar](#) or add to yours - things that hold you down - foods, smells, images, textures.
- [Thrive: A Skillshare Zine](#) of practices created by and for people impacted by violence.
- Mijente's [Ancestral Spiritual Resistance Zine](#)
- [Coping with Community Trauma Toolkit](#) from the Muslim Wellness Foundation
- Step outside barefoot (where it's safe!) and spend 10-15 minutes walking on the grass or soft stones.
- Sit in a criss-cross applesauce position, palms up or down on your knees. Close your eyes. Breath in deeply for 4 counts. Pause for 1 count. Exhale for 4-6 counts. Repeat 10x.
- Try to understand and describe to yourself how your body feels: describe your sensations, your movement, your senses, your feelings and your thoughts,
- Lean back against a big, beautiful tree. Visualize the tree from its top down to its roots. Take deep, peaceful breaths, close your eyes (if comfortable) and visualize being connected to the roots, the trunk, and beyond. Visualize your energy and how it is attached and grounded to the tree's energy.
- Solve a puzzle, play a video game, or something similar that requires low-pressure problem-solving.
- Toe tapping helps the excess of energy in the head descends to the lower parts of the body: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-2nl6RAIggw>

## For Paralysis/executive dysfunction/apathy

- Focus on doing one thing at a time, don't think about the task after it - only the task relevant at this moment.
- Make a list of things that need to be done. Circle the ones that feel overwhelming or difficult. Pick one to focus on first and don't worry about the rest. Can this be accomplished with help? Can you break it down into smaller, more manageable steps?

Can you google for advice? Can you crowdsource solutions? Remember you are likely not the first person to do this thing and you don't need to start from scratch. Let others experiences serve as a starting point. You are not alone.

- Sit (eyes open or closed) and remember a time you felt loved, cared for, powerful and/or happy. What did that moment look like, what did it feel like to be in that moment? If you have a hard time getting there or your mind takes you somewhere else, be gentle with yourself, and try again, potentially with another moment.

## Tiny Self-Care Ideas for the Body

Hum to yourself. Feel the vibrations reverberate.

Cuddle with a significant other or friend

Put on some music and gently and reassuringly rub your arms and legs in a comforting way, and if you can, tell yourself I love you and you're brilliant.

- 1. Give your body ten minutes of mindful attention.** Use the [body scan technique](#) to check in with each part of your body.
- 2. Oxygenate by taking three deep breaths.** [Breathe into your abdomen](#), and let the air puff out your stomach and chest.
- 3. Get down and boogie.** Put on your favorite upbeat record and shake your booty.
- 4. Stretch out the kinks.** If you're at work, you can always head to the bathroom to avoid strange looks.
- 5. Run or walk for a few minutes.** Or go up and down the stairs three times.
- 7. Activate your self-soothing system.** Stroke your own arm, lightly run your fingers across your scalp without scratching, or if that feels too weird, moisturize.
- 8. Get to know yourself intimately.** Look lovingly and without judgment at yourself naked. (Use a mirror to make sure you get to know all of you!)
- 10. Give your body a treat.** Pick something from your wardrobe that feels great next to your skin.
- 11. Be still.** Sit somewhere green, and be quiet for a few minutes.
- 12. Get fifteen minutes of sun,** especially if you're in a cold climate. (Use sunscreen if appropriate.)
- 13. Inhale an upbeat smell.** Try peppermint or cinnamon.

**14. Have a good laugh.** Read a couple of comic strips that you enjoy. (For inspiration, try Calvin and Hobbes, Dilbert, or xkcd.)

**15. Take a quick nap.** Ten to twenty minutes can reduce your sleep debt and leave you ready for action.

**16. Meditate.** Close your eyes and clear your mind.

### **Tiny Self-Care Ideas for the Soul**

**1. Imagine you're your best friend.** If you were, what would you tell yourself right now? Look in the mirror and say it.

**2. Use your commute for a "Beauty Scavenger Hunt."** Find five unexpected beautiful things on your way to work.

**3. Help someone.** Carry a bag, open a door, or pick up an extra carton of milk for a neighbor.

**4. Check in with your emotions.** Sit quietly and just name without judgment what you're feeling.

**5. Write out your thoughts.** Go for fifteen minutes on anything bothering you. Then let it go as you burn or bin the paper.

**6. Choose who you spend your time with today.** Hang out with "Radiators" who emit enthusiasm and positivity, and not "Drains" whose pessimism and negativity robs energy.

**7. Stroke a pet.** If you don't have one, go to the park and find one. (Ask first!)

**8. Get positive feedback.** Ask three good friends to tell you what they love about you.

**9. Make a small connection.** Have a few sentences of conversation with someone in customer service such as a sales assistant or barista.

**10. Splurge a little.** Buy a small luxury as a way of valuing yourself.

**11. Have a self-date.** Spend an hour alone doing something that nourishes you (reading, your hobby, visiting a museum or gallery, etc.)

**12. Exercise a signature strength.** Think about what you're good at, and find an opportunity for it today.

**13. Take a home spa.** Have a long bath or shower, sit around in your bathrobe, and read magazines. Maybe cut your nails or moisturise.

**14. Ask for help**—big or small, but reach out.

**15. Plan a two-day holiday.** Turn off your phone, tell people you'll be away, and then do something new in your own town.

### **Tiny Self-Care Ideas for the Mind**

**1. Start a compliments file.** Document the great things people say about you to read later.

**2. Scratch off a *lurker* on your to-do list,** something that's been there for ages and you'll never do.

**3. Change up the way you make decisions.** Decide something with your heart if you usually use your head. Or if you tend to go with your heart, decide with your head.

**4. Go cloud-watching.** Lie on your back, relax, and watch the sky.

**5. Take another route to work.** Mixing up your routine in small ways creates new neural pathways in the brain to keep it healthy.

**6. Pay complete attention to something you usually do on autopilot,** perhaps brushing your teeth, driving, eating, or performing your morning routine.

**7. Goof around for a bit.** Schedule in [five minutes of "play"](#) (non-directed activity) several times throughout your day.

**8. Create a deliberate habit,** and routinize something small in your life by doing it in the same way each day—what you wear on Tuesdays, or picking up the dental floss before you brush.

**9. Fix a small annoyance at home that's been nagging you**—a button lost, a drawer that's stuck, a lightbulb that's gone.

**10. Punctuate your day with a mini-meditation** with one minute of awareness of your thoughts, feelings, and sensations; one minute of focused attention on breathing; and one minute of awareness of the body as a whole.

**11. Be selfish.** Do one thing today just because it makes you happy. - (Know that this is fine and doing things just because they make you happy isn't actually selfish!)

**12. Do a mini-declutter.** Recycle three things from your wardrobe that you don't love or regularly wear.

**13. Unplug for an hour.** Switch everything to airplane mode and free yourself from the constant *tings* of social media and email.

**14. Get out of your comfort zone,** even if it's just talking to a stranger at the bus stop.

**15. Make someone else you know is struggling a care package of little things, or send a few messages of love and encouragement to people you care about.**

- take a walk
- read a book
- take a hot bath or shower
- write a letter to a friend
- write a love letter to yourself
- doodle
- bake cookies (& share with friends if you want!)
- sit outside & enjoy the sunlight
- invite a friend to do something with you
- work on a zine or other creative project you enjoy
- try a new recipe
- drink a glass of cold water
- give yourself a massage with your favorite lotion or body butter
- experiment with makeup, just for fun
- play dress up & take pictures!
- Do something that gives you pleasure
- send a sweet text to someone you care about
- light some candles to create a relaxing atmosphere
- make a list of things you love about yourself
- plan your a dream trip. where would you go? what would you do? who would you take? dream big!
- work on learning a new language
- learn about something new that interests you online! wikipedia is great.
- write a bucket list
- collage or make a dream board
- make a time capsule
- write a letter to your future self
- make a self-care box of things that make you feel good when yr not feeling so hot (examples: letters from friends, a love letter to yourself, chocolate bar, nail polish, something that smells good, a piece of soft fabric to touch for grounding, this list!)
- go for a photo walk



- go outside & put your bare feet in the grass
- make playlists for yourself & your friends (perhaps even one for yrself when yr feeling down to listen to)
- go to a dog park & watch the dogs (or pet some)!
- paint your nails
- stand up & stretch your muscles
- collect some flowers & make a flower crown
- participate in a support group
- watch or do something that makes you laugh
- blast your favorite song & dance like nobody's watching
- have a pajama party
- let yourself cry
- read poetry or inspirational quotes
- watch the sunset or sunrise
- look at the clouds & see what shapes you can find
- birdwatch
- turn off yr electronics & enjoy some "me" time
- go to a park & sit on the swings

### **Make a coping tool box**

<http://ptsdconfessions.tumblr.com/post/103982656464/creativesocialworker-coping-tool-kitcalm>

Sources:

<http://selfcarezine.tumblr.com/post/112489173578/fifty-free-self-care-ideas>

<http://tinybuddha.com/blog/45-simple-self-care-practices-for-a-healthy-mind-body-and-soul/>

Bill of Rights for Grieving Teens:

[http://www.philly.com/philly/blogs/healthy\\_kids/Helping-a-teen-who-is-grieving-.html](http://www.philly.com/philly/blogs/healthy_kids/Helping-a-teen-who-is-grieving-.html)

### **Self Care for the Bare Minimum**

→ Can't get out of bed?

- ◆ If you can afford to and do not have any pre-existing obligations, lie there awake and take a couple deep breaths.
- ◆ Take a personal day off work, or call in sick. Take a break.
- Can't brush your teeth?
  - ◆ The next time you're outside, make a note to buy mouthwash.
  - ◆ Next time you struggle to motivate, at least try a gurgle.
- Can't get yourself to shower?
  - ◆ If you have makeup wipes / baby wipes, do what you can.
- Feed yourself, or have a friend feed you.
- Drink some water. Keep a bottle next to the bed so you can hydrate, swish with it, and splash a little on your face to freshen up.
- If you're feeling really up to it, try going outside. It might take a minute, but just going outside for fresh air can do wonders. You don't need to go anywhere either, because you're already outside, and that in itself is doing something!
- If you have a pet, play with them. They're there for you.
- Ask for help. Really, it's ok.