SELF CARE:
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With today's busy schedules and over-loaded lifestyles people can find themselves feeling run-down, burnt-out and exhausted. If someone could wave a wand and make our problems disappear that would be great but unfortunately if there is such a wand, I have yet to find it. Unfortunately most people are so busy caring for others and attending to everyday needs they forget that they need to care for themselves. Self-care is an extremely important and often neglected part of ensuring our own physical and psychological health. Taking time to attend to your own personal needs will help you to not only feel better but ultimately help you function better in your everyday activities.

Here are some self-care tips and tricks:

Take care of your physical needs… this means getting enough sleep, eating a balanced diet and getting proper exercise. Our physical and mental health is intertwined, so we need to ensure that we are taking care of our basic physical health and not putting additional strains on ourselves by neglecting this area.

Relax. Taking a 5 to 10 minute break to just sit and breathe can do wonders for your wellness, especially given our busy lifestyles. Taking a short break can help you to regroup and revitalize so that you can move on and conquer the rest of your day.

Spend time with the ones you love… Spending time with your loved ones (friends, family, and even pets) can help you to feel recharged and reconnected. All too often our busy schedules prevent us from spending quality time with our loved ones, so take time to reconnect and enjoy having these special people in your life.

Take time to do something you enjoy. Everyone is unique, so pick something that you truly enjoy doing and put it at the top of your "to do list". Whether this is reading a book, watching a favorite T.V program or spending time with friends, you'll enjoy adding and crossing this one of the list.

Express yourself. If you tend to keep your feelings inside and bottle things up, you are not alone… sometimes this seems like the quickest and easiest solution. However, these thoughts and feelings don't usually stay where we put them and they often escape in explosive proportions. Sharing these thoughts with someone you trust can leave you feeling like a weight has been lifted off your shoulders. If you're not comfortable sharing your feelings, you can express yourself in other ways such as drawing or journaling.

Know your limits and boundaries… and enforce them. You know yourself best. So if you recognize that things are getting overwhelming, don't be afraid to say no to additional requests and commitments. It's better to do well at fewer commitments than to try to take on everything, burn-out and have it all fall apart.

Get support. An important part of caring for yourself means knowing when you need help or support. If life stressors are wearing you down, reach out… talk to your family doctor about what

you can do or who you can talk to.