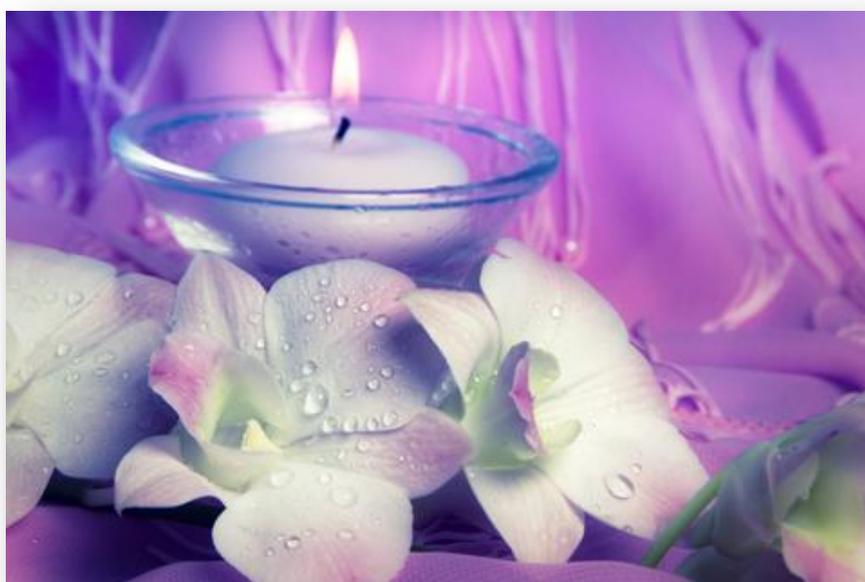


Creating Your Holistic Self-Care Plan



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Many of us have so many responsibilities in life that we forget to take care of ourselves. Self-care is an important aspect of stress management. Having a well-cared-for body can make you feel good about yourself and your life, and conveys to others that you value yourself. This can contribute to long-term feelings of wellbeing. Self-care is not an indulgence – it is the core of our wellbeing. By self-care, I mean purposely and actively taking time for yourself to do something that rejuvenates and energises you. A holistic self-care plan looks at how we treat our body, mind and our spirit. We can take small steps to reduce stress and improve the quality of our lives. It is my intention that this eBook will provide you with the tools to take the first steps towards a more purposeful and meaningful life.

So it's time for a Self-Care Reform! Self awareness is the first step in creating what you want. Having clarity about who you are and what you want (and why you want it), empowers you to consciously and actively make those wants a reality. As we get to know ourselves we become aware of our strengths and weaknesses. This knowledge empowers us to bring about the changes that can transform our lives. Self-awareness helps us to uncover the wealth of creativity within and live fully with focus and purpose. Realising what is important to us is a major step towards achieving success. Where you focus your attention, your emotions, reactions, personality and behaviour determine where you go in life. Pay attention to your lifestyle choices. Are you choosing to live a healthy, empowered life? Or is it time to make some changes?

"We are here to change. We are here to grow, develop and unfold.

We are progressive beings that have infinite capacity."

~ Michael Bernard Beckwith



Some of the Benefits of Self-Care

- Renewed energy
- Reducing stress
- A fresh new perspective towards life, feeling positive
- Creating feelings of happiness, calm and peace within
- Feeling healthy and good about your body
- Increased confidence & self-esteem
- Increased passion for life & motivation to succeed

How do we know when we are lacking in self-care?

Our body, mind and emotions keep us informed as to whether they are being taken care of in the way they need to be. Here are some signs to help you know that some self-care is in order

- Low in energy
- Feeling stressed, irritated or frustrated
- Lacking motivation, procrastinating
- Lacking zest or passion for life
- Emotional (crying easily, short tempered, etc)

A Holistic Vision

Your holistic self-care plan needs to address all elements of your life. You can break these down into four categories – physical, mental/emotional, social & spiritual. Imagine what your self-care plan might look like. Think about the things you would like to change or the things you would like to enhance.

Physical Self-Care

Mental & Emotional Self-Care

Social Self-Care

Spiritual/Energy Self-Care



Holistic Health Plan



Physical Self Care

Most commonly associated with healthy living, this component includes such activities and practices as exercise and healthy eating. Do you exercise your body? Have you thought about what foods you are eating? Diet and exercise are not only important for our physical wellbeing but also have a huge effect on our mental and emotional wellbeing. When you exercise, your body releases chemicals called endorphins. They boost your mood, reduce stress and generally make you feel oh so good! Take note of what types of food you are eating? Are they supporting your physical wellness or are you giving in to cravings? The food we eat affects our energy, our mood and even our sleep patterns. Your mind and body will feel better if you sleep well. We need about 6 – 8 hours sleep a night. Are you getting enough rest? Your body needs time every day to rest and heal.



Physical self-care also means the physical environment which you are in. Does your home or office need a de-clutter? Developing a calm, serene environment is a key element in your self-care plan. Sometimes the smallest changes can make the biggest difference. Your outer environment is a reflection of what's going on inside you. When your environment is cluttered, messy, or stressful you have a corresponding level of overwhelm and stress inside as well. This keeps you from living and being your best. Clearing out the old makes way for the new – in energetic terms you are creating a clearer space for more positive energy to flow. In fact, clearing out your environment is one of the easiest, fastest ways of completely transforming your life.

De-cluttering prepares the space for your new life!



Mental & Emotional Self Care

Mental and emotional needs include the way you feel about yourself and your ability to manage your feelings and deal with difficulties. Being mentally or emotionally healthy is much more than being free of depression, anxiety, or other psychological issues. Rather than the absence of mental illness, mental and emotional health refers to the presence of positive characteristics. People who are emotionally and mentally healthy have the tools for coping with difficult situations and maintaining a positive outlook. They remain focused, flexible, and creative in bad times as well as good.



Emotional wellbeing is your ability to connect with your body and utilize your emotions, feelings, senses, and intuition to guide you into empowered alignment with purpose.

Being mentally & emotionally healthy includes having a sense of contentment; good self-esteem; confidence; zest for living and the ability to laugh and have fun; the ability to deal with stress and adapt to change. Make leisure time a priority. Do things for no other reason than that it feels good to do them. Go for a walk on the beach, listen to music or read a good book. Remember fun is an emotional and mental health necessity.

Ask yourself what's the best case scenario for my day? Picture it in your mind & feel it in your heart. Remember - thoughts become things!



Social Self Care

Social needs include needs for belonging, love, and affection. Social interaction is vital for maintaining our mental health, but also our physical health. Human beings are social animals--our brain is shaped by our social interactions from the time we are born. Staying socially active and maintaining interpersonal relationships can help you maintain good physical and emotional health. People who continue to maintain close friendships and find other ways to interact socially live longer than those who become isolated. Relationships and social interactions even help protect against illness by boosting your immune system.

Being around family and friends you enjoy can help reduce stress. Get out and laugh with your friends. Laughing alone acts as a stress reducer. So add that laughter with an enjoyable environment with your friends and you've got a powerful stress reducer.



Life passes by too quickly to ignore opportunities to connect with those we love. Work comes and goes, but your family and friends are forever. Be inspired and become an inspiration to others. Take the time, unfailingly, to engage in relaxing activities with family and friends, or join a club or society where you can connect and engage with people.

When you are surrounded by positive people anything is possible! Align yourself with people who make you feel good about you.

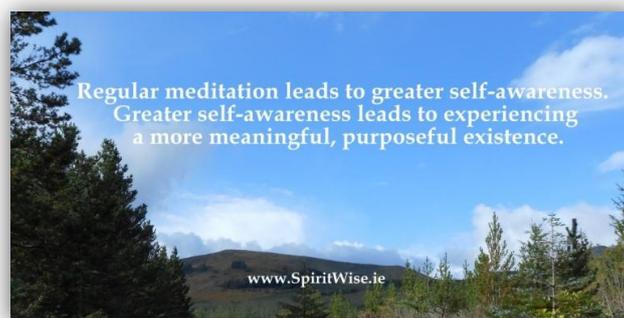


Spiritual Self Care

Spiritual self-care helps us to find and develop a sense of connection to a Higher Power and meaning for our lives. Just as it is essential to nurture your body with food, it is necessary to nurture your soul with quiet time. As we connect to our inner spirit we awaken to our full potential. It's about living your truth and being your real, true self. You are more than just a body; you are a wonderful spirit here to spread your light. In acknowledging that we are more than just a body with a mind we enter into a higher realm of consciousness, an awakening of the spirit within.

An awakening, sometimes referred to as 'a spiritual awakening', is a moment of clarity in which a new insight or understanding is gained. With this new awareness the experience of life is seen differently and new possibilities are opened. Spiritual self-care is about peeling back the layers and really getting to know your true essence, your soul. When we connect in with our spirit, miracles can happen. When we awaken we are reminded of what's really important in our lives. Spiritual self-care helps you to connect with that still point within you and deal with all the ups and downs of life with much greater ease.

Quieten the mind & be guided by your spirit. Healing begins when you awaken to your true self. Clarity comes from connection to the soul.



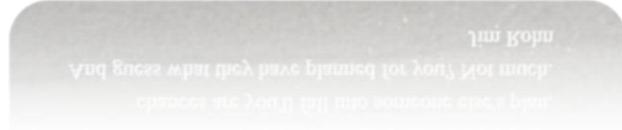
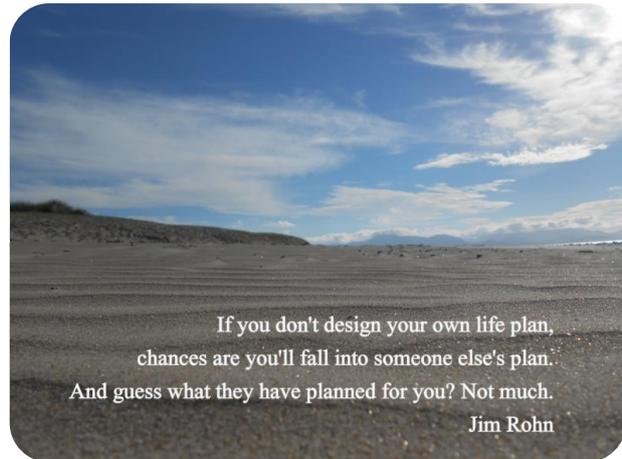
The other three aspects of this holistic plan affect the spiritual aspect of your life and vice versa. While I have broken down the plan into four categories, remember each aspect is connected. Your physical wellbeing affects your emotional & spiritual wellbeing. Your spiritual wellbeing affects your mental wellbeing. They are all intertwined.



Preparation

Preparing your plan is important; it identifies your goals and the strategies to achieve them. However, your success in implementing your plan is ultimately based on the level of genuine commitment you make to your own self-care. This kind of commitment is only possible when you recognise that your own health and wellbeing are essential

and you acknowledge the importance of honouring yourself and your needs. If you find this to be a challenge, then take some time to explore your reservations. One reservation might be the tendency to put the needs of others first. The truth is that your self-care is not only essential to your wellbeing (and that is a good enough reason in and of itself), but it is also a necessary precondition for you to be effective and successful in honouring your professional and personal commitments. When you feel good, everyone else around you benefits. When you are feeling energetic you can achieve more in work, you have more energy for your children and you are more enjoyable to be around! Let your dedication to health and wellbeing be an inspiration to others. So, take a moment, think it over, and then make a personal commitment to your own self-care. It's time to put you first.



“A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step.” Lao Tzu



Tips for creating your self-care plan

- Take baby steps – don't overwhelm yourself with grandiose ideas, pick simple things to start off with. For example, decide to start with 5 minutes meditation each day rather than 30 minutes.
- Make it practical – again, stick to what you know you could achieve if you put your mind to it. Start with a 15 minute walk; you can then increase the time if you like.
- Go easy on yourself – remember when starting something new we all need time to adjust and learn. If you fall off the wagon don't berate yourself, that's not what this is about, get back up and keep going.
- Listen to your inner coach, not your inner critic. Your inner critic will attempt to dissuade you from trying anything new. It's the part of you which is motivated by fear. Quieten that critic and begin to listen to the supportive voice of your inner coach. Your inner coach will always encourage you. It's that part of you that wants to succeed and wants to get up and do it. So turn down the volume on the critic and crank up the volume for your coach.



I have included some ideas of what can go into your plan but ultimately your plan is personal to you. Spend some time thinking about what you value. What is important to you? What do you love to do? Is there a hobby or interest you used to do that you have neglected? Or is there something you would love to try that you have never done before? Your plan might involve stopping smoking or changing eating habits. It might also include reducing the time you spend on the computer or watching television.

Begin today – take action! Make that commitment to you. Plans can look great on paper but the important part is implementing them. So pick one thing on your self-care list and go for it.



What steps can I take today to take care of myself? e.g.

Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Go for a walk 3/4 times a week• Swimming once a week• Drink one extra glass of water a day• Eat one extra piece of fruit a day• Make my lunch instead of eat fast food• De-clutter (one room/wardrobe at a time!)
Mental & Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn to say no when I need to say no• Separating work and home life• Journal my feelings• Talk with a trusted friend or counsellor• Take an art or writing class• Join a club• Visit a museum or gallery• Keep a gratitude journal
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meet up with friends once a week• Join a class/women's/men's group• Date night with partner• Family outings
Spiritual & Energetic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meditation• Journal• Reading books on spirituality/healing etc• Spending time in nature• Energy Healing & Clearing



My Personal Self-Care Plan:

Physical	
Mental & Emotional	
Social	
Spiritual & Energetic	



*"Go confidently in the direction of your dreams.
Live the life you have imagined."
- Henry David Thoreau*

You can achieve anything if you put your mind to it and really believe in yourself. Time and time again I have seen my clients surprise themselves with some of the actions they have taken! From small humble beginnings I have seen people completely transform their lives for the better. Know that you can do that too. Now that you've created a plan it is time to put it into action and to keep the momentum going. Keep your plan or your goals in sight. Post them in a planner, schedule reminders on your phone or computer, or create a vision board. Every day acknowledge these plans with affirmations and begin to integrate them into your daily life. As you make progress remember to take the time to celebrate and acknowledge the steps you have taken. Challenges help us to grow and learn. Don't give up when you get knocked back. Get back up, dust yourself off and keep going. You can do it.

Remember the most important thing is to be kind to you!

Please let me know how you get on with your new Holistic Self-Care Plan. It is my vision to help people to enhance their lives & to take charge of their own health & wellbeing. If you need help transforming your life, or if you would like to know more about my soul mentoring & coaching then please feel free to email me at sinead@spiritwise.ie or visit www.SpiritWise.ie.

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