

31 DAYS OF SELF CARE

Sandra Howlett, Ed.D. showlet312@aol.com

Grieving is hard work and it takes a toll on one's health in every respect - physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. One way to respond is to consciously practice good self care - even when you may not feel like it.

How do you take care of yourself? What are some of the ways you get your needs met while being responsible for your own health and well being? The following is an easy to follow challenge - 31 small and simple ways to take care of yourself, one for each day of the month. Consider keeping a log of what you do each day to remind you of the ways you are taking care of yourself.

1. Rest—skip the news and go to bed early tonight. Get 8 hours sleep.
2. Gratitude—write down three things you grateful for today (think small).
3. Eat healthy—today, eat 4 servings of fruit or vegetables. Go for color.
4. Drink 6–8 glasses of water today. Yes, coffee and tea count; wine does not.
5. Listen to music that makes you smile.
6. Take a walk in the fresh air.
7. Pet a furry animal. For some, this has been shown to lower blood pressure and create a sense of peacefulness.
8. Visit the library or bookstore near you and read for free.
9. Schedule health appointments with your physician and dentist.
10. Eat a healthy breakfast—drive through drinking or dining does not count!
11. Cut down on the clutter around you. Get rid of 5 things today—toss, donate or give to someone else.
12. Try your hand at writing a poem or outline the 10 key steppingstones of your life story.
13. Finish a loose end or half done project around your home.
14. Listen to how you talk to/about yourself. Are you compassionate or harsh?
15. Try something new.
16. Read something inspiring.
17. Sing out loud.
18. Schedule a massage.
19. Tell a funny story about your loved one.
20. Balance your check book. Okay, not so fun but necessary.
21. Spend 15 minutes in silence, doing nothing.
22. Tell someone you love them.



1510 E. Flower St. Phoenix, AZ 85014 (480) 951-8985 FAX (480) 951-8794 newsongcenter.org

A program of Hospice of the Valley

23. Put on some music and dance like no one is watching.
24. Begin to journal. The first line could be “This time in my life is like....”
25. Ask for help where you need it.
26. Invite a friend to share a meal with you. Make it easy, go out.
27. Visit a park, garden or take a hike and enjoy the natural beauty around you.
28. Call someone you haven’t talked to for a long time and have a phone visit.
29. Buy yourself a bouquet of fresh flowers.
30. Do an act of kindness for someone else, anonymously. Have fun and be creative.
31. Wild Card—do something that you know adds to your own well being.

At the end of the month, review the past 31 days of self care and decide what actions will continue to support you as you move forward. Self care is a value and can be a habit as a way of honoring yourself and your life.