

## THE BIG LIST OF SELF-CARE ACTIVITIES

Check the ones you are willing to do, and then add any activities that you can think of:

- Talk to a friend on the telephone
- Cook your favorite dish or meal
- Go out and visit a friend
- Cook a recipe that you've never tried before
- Invite a friend to come to your home
- Take a cooking class
- Text message your friends
- Go out for something to eat
- Organize a party
- Go outside and play with your pet
- Exercise
- Go borrow a friend's dog and take it to the park
- Lift weights
- Give your pet a bath
- Do yoga, tai chi, or Pilates, or take classes to learn
- Go outside and watch the birds and other animals
- Stretch your muscles
- Find something funny to do, like reading the Sunday comics
- Eat your favorite ice cream
- Go for a walk in a park or someplace else that's peaceful
- Visit fun web sites and keep a list of them
- Watch a funny movie (start collecting funny movies to watch when you're feeling overwhelmed)
- Sleep or take a nap
- Go outside and watch the clouds
- Go to the movies
- Go jog
- Watch television
- Ride your bike
- Listen to the radio
- Go for a swim
- Go to a sporting event, like a baseball game
- Go hiking
- Play a game with a friend
- Do something exciting like surfing, rock climbing, skiing, skydiving, motorcycle riding, kayaking or learn how to do these things
- Play solitaire
- Visit your favorite Web sites
- Go to your local playground and join a game being played or watch a game
- Do a puzzle with a lot of pieces
- Go shopping
- Buy something on the internet
- Sell something you don't want on the internet
- Go play something you can do by yourself if no one else is around, like basketball, bowling, handball, miniature golf, billiards, hitting a tennis ball against a wall
- Create your own Web site
- Join an internet dating site
- Get a massage
- Get out of your house, even if you just sit outside
- Go for a drive in your car or go for a ride on public transportation
- Plan a trip to somewhere you've never been before

- \_\_\_ Eat chocolate (it's good for you!) or eat something else you really like
- \_\_\_ Go to a spa
- \_\_\_ Sign up for a class that excites you at a local college, adult school or online
- \_\_\_ Go to a library
- \_\_\_ Go to a bookstore
- \_\_\_ Read your favorite book, magazine or newspaper
- \_\_\_ Go to your favorite café for coffee or tea
- \_\_\_ Read a trashy celebrity magazine
- \_\_\_ Visit a museum or local art gallery
- \_\_\_ Write a letter to a friend or family member
- \_\_\_ Go to the mall or the park and watch other people; try to imagine what they are thinking
- \_\_\_ Write down things you like about yourself
- \_\_\_ Pray or meditate
- \_\_\_ Write a poem, story, movie or play
- \_\_\_ Go to your church, synagogue, temple, or other place of worship
- \_\_\_ Write in your journal
- \_\_\_ Write a loving letter to yourself when you're feeling good and keep it with you to read when you're feeling upset
- \_\_\_ Join a group
- \_\_\_ Write a letter to your higher power
- \_\_\_ Call a family member you haven't spoken to in a long time
- \_\_\_ Make a list of ten things you're good at or like about yourself and keep it with you when you are feeling upset
- \_\_\_ Learn a new language
- \_\_\_ Sing or learn how to sing
- \_\_\_ Draw a picture
- \_\_\_ Play a musical instrument or learn to play one
- \_\_\_ Paint a picture with a brush or your fingers
- \_\_\_ Make a list of the people you admire and describe what it is you like about them
- \_\_\_ Write a song (start making a collection to play when you're feeling upset)
- \_\_\_ Listen to some upbeat, happy music
- \_\_\_ Write a story about the craziest or funniest thing that has ever happened to you
- \_\_\_ Make a list of ten things you would like to do before you die
- \_\_\_ Turn on some loud music and dance
- \_\_\_ Memorize lines from your favorite movie, play or song
- \_\_\_ Write a letter to someone who has made your life better and tell them why (you don't have to send the letter if you don't want to)
- \_\_\_ Make a movie or video
- \_\_\_ Take photographs
- \_\_\_ Create your own list of self-care activities
- \_\_\_ Join a public-speaking group and write a speech
- \_\_\_ Participate in a local theatre group
- \_\_\_ Sing in a local choir
- \_\_\_ Plant a garden
- \_\_\_ Work outside
- \_\_\_ Knit, crochet, or sew—learn how to
- \_\_\_ Make a scrapbook with pictures
- \_\_\_ Paint your nails
- \_\_\_ Trim your nails
- \_\_\_ Change your hair color
- \_\_\_ Take a bubble bath or shower
- \_\_\_ Work on your car, truck, motorcycle or bicycle
- \_\_\_ Do a zentangle (go online to learn how to)

## Self-Care Assessment Worksheet

This assessment tool provides an overview of effective strategies to maintain self-care. After completing the full assessment, choose one item from each area that you will actively work to improve.

Using the scale below, rate the following areas in terms of frequency:

- 5 = Frequently
- 4 = Occasionally
- 3 = Rarely
- 2 = Never
- 1 = It never occurred to me

### Physical Self-Care

- Eat regularly (e.g. breakfast, lunch and dinner)
- Eat healthy
- Exercise
- Get regular medical care for prevention
- Get medical care when needed
- Take time off when needed
- Get massages
- Dance, swim, walk, run, play sports, sing, or do some other physical activity that is fun
- Take time to be sexual—with yourself, with a partner
- Get enough sleep
- Wear clothes you like
- Take vacations
- Take day trips or mini-vacations
- Make time away from telephones
- Other:

### Psychological Self-Care

- Make time for self-reflection
- Have your own personal psychotherapy
- Write in a journal
- Read literature that is unrelated to work
- Do something at which you are not expert or in charge
- Decrease stress in your life
- Let others know different aspects of you
  
- Notice your inner experience—listen to your thoughts, judgments, beliefs, attitudes, and feelings
- Engage your intelligence in a new area, e.g. go to an art museum, history exhibit, sports event, auction, theater performance
- Practice receiving from others
- Be curious
- Say “no” to extra responsibilities sometimes
- Other:

### Emotional Self-Care

- Spend time with others whose company you enjoy
- Stay in contact with important people in your life
- Give yourself affirmations, praise yourself
- Love yourself
- Re-read favorite books, re-view favorite movies
- Identify comforting activities, objects, people, relationships, places and seek them out

- Allow yourself to cry
- Find things that make you laugh
- Express your outrage in social action, letters and donations, marches, protests
- Play with children
- Other:

**Spiritual Self-Care**

- Make time for reflection
- Spend time with nature
- Find a spiritual connection or community
- Be open to inspiration
- Cherish your optimism and hope
- Be aware of nonmaterial aspects of life
- Try at times not to be in charge or the expert
- Be open to not knowing
- Identify what is meaningful to you and notice its place in your life
- Meditate
- Pray
- Sing
- Spend time with children
- Have experiences of awe
- Contribute to causes in which you believe
- Read inspirational literature (talks, music, etc.)
- Other:

**Workplace or Professional Self-Care**

- Take a break during the workday (e.g. lunch)
- Take time to chat with co-workers
- Make quiet time to complete tasks
- Identify projects or tasks that are exciting and rewarding
- Set limits with your clients and colleagues
- Balance your caseload so that no one day or part of a day is “too much”
- Arrange your work space so it is comfortable and comforting
- Get regular supervision or consultation
- Negotiate for your needs (benefits, pay raise)
- Have a peer support group
- Develop a non-trauma area of professional interest
- Other:

**Balance**

- Strive for balance within your work-life and workday
- Strive for balance among work, family, relationships, play and

Source: Transforming the Pain: A Workbook on Vicarious Traumatization. Saakvitne, Pearlman & Staff of TSI/CAAP (Norton, 1996)