

healthfocus

clinical psychology services

Hi Everyone,

Wow! School holidays have come and gone again and we're now back into the thick of things again.

This year the seasonal public holidays were all close together and inside the school holidays, so many of us took the opportunity for an autumn getaway.

I am reminded that autumn is a mosaic of beautiful colouring in display.

"Everyone must take time to sit and watch the leaves turn."- Elizabeth Lawrence.

In this newsletter we have a few announcements, updates and an information piece on self-care.

We look forward to hearing from you and continuing to be of service.

-- Yong and the Healthfocus team.

Online Payments Available on our Website

We have been issuing e-Invoices for insurer and ICWA accounts through our accounting system for some time.

Now we are happy to extend online payments facilities to all clients on our Website.

Invoice payments can be made by entering the invoice number and amount.

Other payments, like pre-payments, deposits or "on-the-day" payments can also be made.



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Healthfocus on Facebook!

Information piece on Self Care

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Farewell to Dr Yeow Tan

We bid farewell to Yeow, who is relocating overseas. Dr Tan has been working with Healthfocus's clients since 2016, initially in Armadale, and subsequently also at our Riverton clinic.

She has been a valuable member of the team, drawing from her experience in Government and Community settings and we will miss her greatly.

Please join us in wishing Yeow all the best for her future.

Congratulations to Yaw Yung

One of our previous interns, Yaw Yung, recently commenced a Masters course in Professional Psychology with Curtin University.

This degree provides advanced training in the practice of professional psychology and integrates coursework, research and placement components, with an emphasis on providing relevant experiences that form a grounding for scientist-practitioner careers.

The course is the 5th year of the Psychology Board of Australia "5+1" pathway to registration as a psychologist with AHPRA.

Well done Yaw Yung!

You may still see Yaw Yung from time to time when he helps out in our Front Office team.

Healthfocus is now on Facebook...

Please visit, like and share our new Facebook page, which you can find at:

facebook.com/healthfocuspsychology

We'll be posting news updates and links to other interesting articles.

See you on Facebook!



Quick Links

Our Website

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Self Care

Self-care is often an important part of what is missing in the life of someone who is stressed, anxious or depressed. So, what is it? Self-care is the deliberate action of paying attention to one's self, not in a narcissistic way, but in a way that ensures that you as an individual are being tended to "for you, by you".

Often, when we get busy or stressed, we put our own needs last and "me-time" is diminished or lost. Worse, we can sometimes feel guilty about taking the time required to take care of ourselves. We are also increasingly consumed with technology, social media and being "switched on", 24/7.

In the reality of day-to-day life, it is usually not easy to simply take "time-out" for more than a short time (say hours), compared to the weeks or months off that someone with an injured knee or spine may require for physical rehabilitation, yet mental well-being is just as important as physical health.

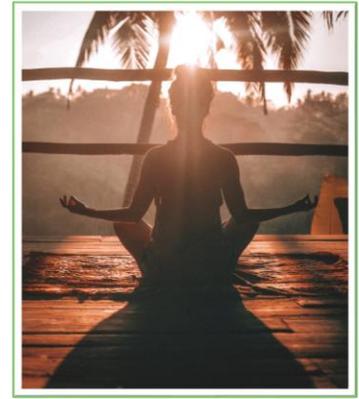
I often recall the announcement made in aeroplane safety briefings that "if the oxygen masks deploy, place your own mask on first before assisting others". This reminds me that we cannot help others and fulfil our responsibilities if we have not seen to our own basic needs first.

So, practical regular self-care strategies can improve psychological resilience and assist in coping with stress, and getting the best out of life. Each individual will have unique needs and self-care will look very different for different people.

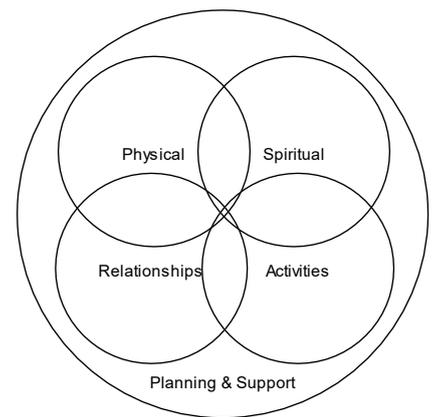
When thinking about self-care, it is useful to pick one or more activities, actions or ideas from across different areas:

Physical

These are from the physiological layer in Maslow's hierarchy of human needs – the fundamentals of physical well-being: Eating well, regular rest and sleep, bodily fitness and health- things that if we don't have, mean that the biological machine that is our body cannot function at its best. A good, healthy diet and exercise programme is sometimes just the right "kick-start" for a new self-care plan.



Areas to consider



Spiritual

Many of the best “me-time” activities focus on boosting the spiritual side of emotional health, including yoga, meditation, aromatherapy, prayer, wellness spa therapy, listening or playing music, or things as simple as a bubble-bath, hair cut, manicure, or facial. Sometimes, just the discipline of making and keeping the appointment for these activities is useful in itself.

In this day and age of “smart devices” and social media, 24/7 attention to real-time updates can inadvertently deprive us of “time and space” to do other things, including self-care. This makes it difficult for us to “groom” our spiritual side when interruptions from technology intrude. “Switching off” from technology at night or at specific, scheduled times can be useful when focussing on self-care.

Relationships

The best relationships work with synergy! This means that “1+1” is more than just “2”. While we “invest” in relationships, if nurtured, they yield more than the investment in win-win return for its members. Humans are innately social creatures, within families, social circles of friends and extended family, work, religious worship, hobbies, and volunteering. We have relationships of many kinds with many people and even pets.

There is effort and responsibility for each individual in every relationship and certainly close relationships are a strong source of emotional support.

However, sometimes there is a limit, and we have to recognise our own individual limits and “say no”, set boundaries and stick to them. This is especially so in what are termed “unhealthy” relationships, in which there is not a win-win result.

Most of the time, when we talk about our feelings and set boundaries, the relationship improves once other stakeholders become aware of an individual's needs.

Activities

In psychology, the concept of behavioural activation is to “do meaningful things”, whether they are pleasurable in themselves (a relaxing massage), or give satisfaction once mastered (think of a hobby or DIY project). By engaging in these activities that have value to us, we gain positive reinforcement that encourages us to keep doing them.

Just getting outside alone for a breath of fresh air and change of scenery during the work day can be refreshing, but self-care activities need not be “alone” activities and can be merely a “break” from other things, involving different places and people. For example, a weekly coffee with an old friend can be an opportunity to share and get away from work and family, just for a short escape,

The saying “a change is as good as a holiday” is true, and every now and then a “mini” getaway, can be a welcome escape from the “daily bump and grind”. A short drive in the country and/or overnight stay in a quiet, scenic location can be a recharger.

Sometimes, a professional development conference or course is an opportunity for a change and can help us to be better equipped for work or changes in our industry. Being prepared for new things at work improves resilience and confidence – this is also a form of self-care.

Planning and Support

A key aspect of self-care is being able to plan for, schedule and engage in activities that are helpful for our own emotional well-being. Time management and organisation is important for all aspects of life, including self-care.

It is helpful to think about which activities we can engage with on a daily, weekly, monthly or even yearly basis.

Having an end-of-year getaway can be a great thing to look forward to during the year. But more than the “big events”, we can self-care with a “daily dose” of stretching, walking the dog, curling up with a book, coming up with a self-affirmatory thought, or simply talking with a pet – whatever works best and can be fit into the daily routine.

Weekly hobbies and other activities from the areas introduced above strengthen the “maintenance cycle”, in between the monthly and yearly events and getaways.

Sometimes, planning and keeping to a time schedule for self-care can be a challenge. This is where insight, knowing one’s self and constraints is key, and drawing on sources of support becomes important when putting the plan into action. Support can come from family members, peer groups and friends, a mentor, coach or therapist.

A self-care plan is often included in psychological treatment approaches when individuals are suffering high levels of stress, anxiety and depression.

Talk to us about it when we are discussing your treatment plan.

References

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