

Why self care can be difficult

Sometimes self care is presented as so easy. You begin to meditate, and exercise, and have time for yourself, maybe a massage or two, and just control what you can control. It's great when you can do it, yet the reality is that as good as these things might be, it's not so easy in practice. It's not that you lack will power or that there's something wrong with you. There are some good reasons why self care isn't as easy as it's presented to be. Knowing these reasons helps you put in place self care that works.

1. Stress and tiredness limit your capacity

Stress and tiredness narrows your focus and limits your ability to look outside of your current perspective. So the tide moves you towards keeping on doing what you're doing rather than a different type of behavior. And if you have awareness, your capacity and range of responses are much more limited. What might be easy if your wellbeing is high, is not available to you when your wellbeing is low and you are being challenged.

To help, we need self care that is achievable from where we are at.

2. Self care needs can creep up on us

Things can be going ok, but over time we don't realize that our resilience is dropping or our wellbeing isn't as it used to be. It doesn't happen at once and it's like it becomes normal and what we are used to. Have you ever been on holiday and realized you had forgotten what it feels like to be that relaxed?

To help, we can find simple ways to check in on our self care

3. Self care is seen as something we need to do

It sounds good in theory, and if it works that's great, but for a lot of people they are flat out already. And the list of things that we are told we 'should' do is enormous.

To help, we need self care that comes to meet us where we are at, and is not reliant on things we need to do, but is based on kindness, caring, and acceptance towards our self, as we are.

4. We are in a default pattern

Ways of being, especially when we are tired and stressed, but also our everyday way of living, can become a default pattern. This means that there is a tendency to revert back to the way things have been.

To help, we can become more aware of patterns and become more skilled at changing them.

5. We haven't been taught

Who teaches us about self care and gives us a framework, tools and ways to build skills? There's not a lot of knowledge about how self care works and how you can go about building it. And often it's not on our radar to learn.

To help, we don't need to learn everything, but building our knowledge and skills helps us to be well in our self and opens up ways of being that previously haven't been available to us.

Self care doesn't make you bullet proof, the reality is that nothing will. It doesn't mean you won't go through difficult times. But you will be so much better equipped to meet what life brings.

The benefits of self care are great.

When we have fuel in the tank, we are much better off. When we have capacity, strength and positive energy to draw on, it means we can bring our best to what we do. With resilience, we do much better when things get pressured. With greater fullness, freedom, and joy we live a more expanded life.