

2022

SELF-CARE PACKET

FOR ADULTS & TEENS



About the International

Weekend of Self-Care

The International Weekend of Self-Care was created by The Lily-Jo Project in response to the global pandemic and the heightened focus on health and wellbeing. For 2022, the weekend takes place on the 20-21 of August, and The Lily-Jo Project plans to host the campaign on the third weekend of August each year.

The aim of the International Weekend of Self-Care is to:

- Raise awareness about what self-care is and why it's important.
- Help individuals understand what good self-care practices look like in the real world.
- Inspire the public to try new self-care tips and techniques.

To learn more, check out the [official campaign website here](#).

About the Lily-Jo Project

The Lily-Jo Project is a Manchester-based mental health platform devoted to eliminating the stigma surrounding mental health through **music, digital resources, and community engagement**.

Our [free self-help resource](#) is available 24/7, and is designed to help people manage and overcome the most common mental health challenges - including low mood, anxiety & stress, self-harm eating disorders, low self-esteem, childhood trauma, and grief

We also host live workshops, assemblies, and gigs in primary and secondary schools across the U.K. Our online curriculum is also available for primary and secondary schools worldwide.

Table of Contents

- 1 All About Self-Care / Page 4**
- 2 Sleep Hygiene / Page 6**
- 3 Exercise / Page 8**
- 4 Listening to Your Body / Page 10**
- 5 Learning to Forgive / Page 12**
- 6 Finding Your Creative Side / Page 14**
- 7 The Value of Affirmations / Page 16**
- 8 Relaxation / Page 18**
- 9 Eating Healthily / Page 20**
- 10 The Power of Opening Up / Page 22**
- ★ Self-Care Challenge / Page 25**

1

All About Self-Care

Self-care is defined as, “the practice of taking an active role in protecting one’s own wellbeing and happiness, in particular during periods of stress.”

In simple terms, self-care is caring for yourself in order to protect your overall health, wellbeing, and sense of happiness. In doing so, we can help to prevent certain mental health challenges from reaching a crisis point.

So what does it look like in the real world?

A good self-care routine will incorporate elements from the following three areas of health:

Physical Health



Maintaining good hygiene, eating healthily, exercising regularly, and getting 7-12 hours of sleep each night.

Mental Health



Setting aside time to relax, being creative, and staying aware of your thoughts and emotions.

Spiritual Health



Forgiving others, taking time to reflect on your life and feelings, meditation/prayer, and practising gratitude.

Keeping these elements of our health in perfect balance can be a struggle, especially when we are juggling things like work, school, and family obligations. We hope that the tips, tricks, and resources provided on the following pages can empower you to start implementing good self-care practices into your daily life.

Recommended Self-Care Resources

[Self-Care Webinar and Questionnaire](#)

[Headspace App](#)

[The Science of Happiness Course](#)

[NPR's Life Kit Podcast](#)

Self-Care Poster

Never forget the building blocks of self-care with the help of this poster! Print it out or save it to your computer to refer back to when you need it.

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LEEP HYGIENE 🙄

E

XERCISE 🚴

L

ISTENING TO YOUR BODY 👂

F

ORGIVENESS 👧👦

C

REATIVITY 🎨

A

FFIRMATIONS 🌟

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ELAXATION 🧘

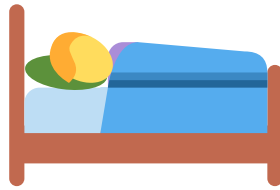
E

EATING HEALTHILY 🥗

2

Sleep Hygiene

Sleep is one of the most important elements of our physical and mental health. Without it, we are at a greater risk of obesity, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke. Not only that, but if we have several sleepless nights, our mental health can begin to suffer. Ironically, it's a bit of a catch-22 situation because we need sleep to feel emotionally stable, but when we feel emotionally unstable it can be difficult to sleep.



How much sleep do I need?

Adults need around 7-12 hours of sleep each night.

What if I can't sleep?

If you find yourself unable to sleep, try making meditation, guided relaxation, or prayer a regular part of your bedtime routine. You should also make sure that your bedroom is a relaxing environment, and try to avoid caffeinated beverages too close to bedtime.

If you are still struggling to sleep even after implementing a good sleep routine, it is a good idea to speak with your doctor and they can provide you with further help and advice.



Recommended Sleep Resources

[Advice from The Sleep Charity](#)

[Healthy Sleep Tips from The Sleep Foundation](#)

[Slow Radio from the BBC](#)

[The Calm App](#)

Sleep Quiz

How much do you know about sleep? Take the quiz and find out!

Source: [The Sleep Foundation's Sleep Statistics](#)

1. Adults between the ages of 18-64 need between ____ and ____ hours of sleep each night.
2. Adults over the age of 65 need between ____ to ____ hours of sleep each night.
3. Between ____ and ____% of adults struggle with chronic insomnia.
4. Women have a lifetime risk of insomnia that is as much as ____% higher than that of men.
5. Up to ____% of people talk in their sleep at some point in their lives
6. Jet lag is worse when you fly North/South/East/West because our circadian cycle is slightly longer than 24 hours.
7. Around ____% of young children have sleeping problems or experience excessive daytime sleepiness.
8. Around ____% of adults with depression suffer from insomnia.
9. Drinking more than two servings of alcohol per day for men and more than one serving per day for women has been found to decrease sleep quality by ____%.
10. ____ minutes of high-intensity exercise or ____ minutes of moderate-intensity exercise per week has been associated with reduced levels of daytime sleepiness and better concentration even when tired.

Answers: (1.) 7 and 9 (2.) 7 to 8 (3.) 10 and 30% (4.) 40% (5.) 66% (6.) eastwards (7.) 25% (8.) 75% (9.) 39.2% (10.) 75, 150

3

Exercise

Exercise is not only good for your physical health, it is clinically proven to enhance your overall wellbeing.



How much exercise do I need?

Adults need around 30 minutes of light to moderate exercise each day.

How can I make exercise a priority?

If you are struggling to find time to exercise, try to schedule it into your calendar in small increments. For example, 5 minutes of walking each morning can easily turn into 10 minutes each morning, then eventually 30 minutes each morning once the habit has been built.

Another tip for being consistent with exercise is to find an activity that you actually enjoy. If you haven't found one yet, why not try one of the suggestions below?

Walking. Swimming. Hiking. Jogging. Water aerobics. Yoga. Basketball. Pilates. Weight lifting. Cycling.

Recommended Exercise Resources

[Getting Mental Health Movement Moments Into Your Day](#)

[Make exercise a daily habit – 10 tips from Harvard](#)

[Yoga with Cassandra](#)

[Nike Training Club](#)

Exercise Plan

Use the space below to map out your monthly exercise goals. This can help you to plan ahead and hold yourself accountable.

Monthly Exercise Goals!	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
WK 1							
WK 2							
WK 3							
WK 4							

4

Listening to Your Body

It can be easy to go through the motions of each day without really paying attention to how we are feeling. Regular check-ins with yourself are helpful for tracking your emotions and getting in touch with how you are feeling in the moment.



How often do I need to "check-in" with myself?

At a minimum, checking in with yourself once a day should be enough to keep you in tune with your emotions and stress levels. However, if you are going through a particularly difficult phase, you may need to check in with yourself more frequently. Pro tip: set a timer on your phone for a certain time each day so that you don't forget to check in with yourself.

What should I be asking myself?

To gauge your emotions, ask yourself the following questions: How am I right now? What do I need right now?

In doing this and listening to your body, you are able to take stock and figure out what you best need in that moment.



Recommended Listening/Reflection Resources

[Ted Talk: The Importance of Listening to Your Body](#)

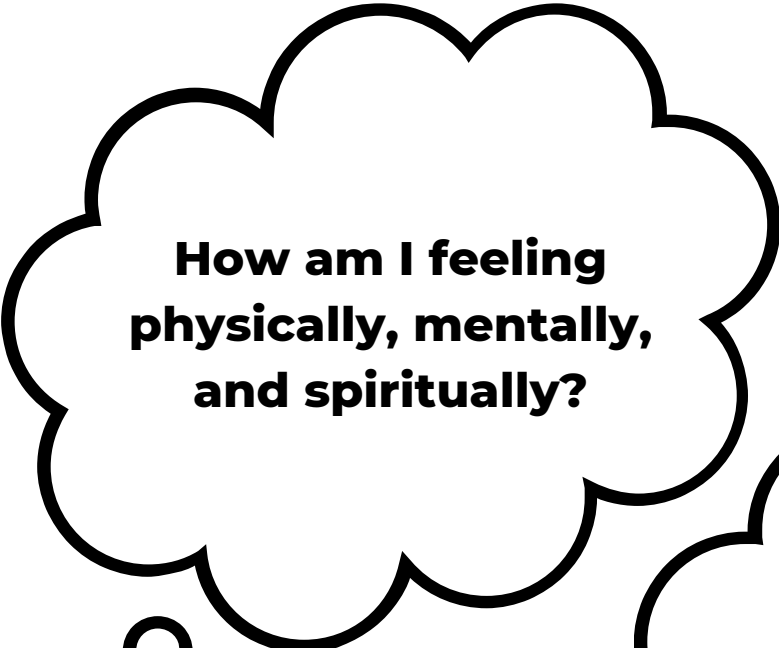
[10-minute body scan](#)

[The Lily-Jo Project's Mindfulness Exercise](#)

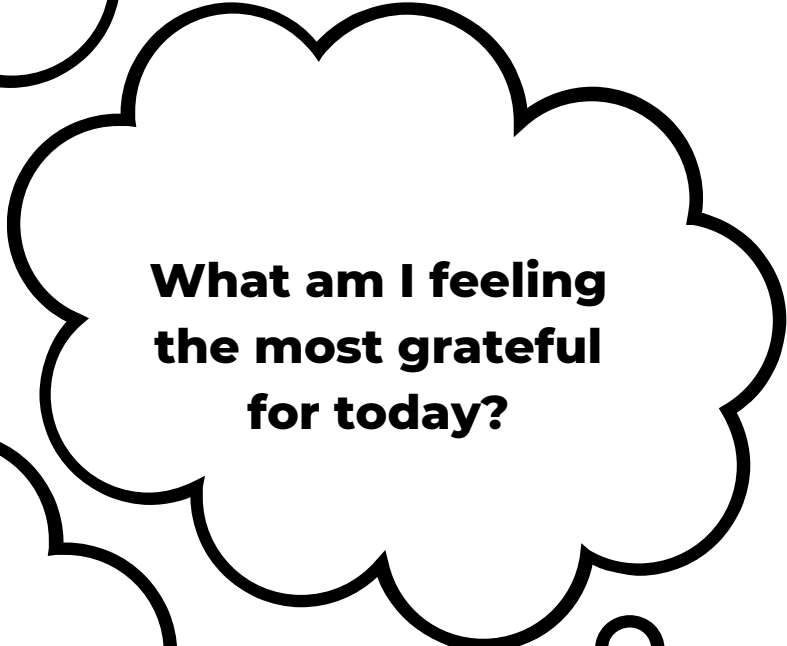
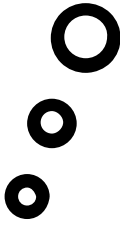
[Day One Journaling App](#)

3 Question Check-In

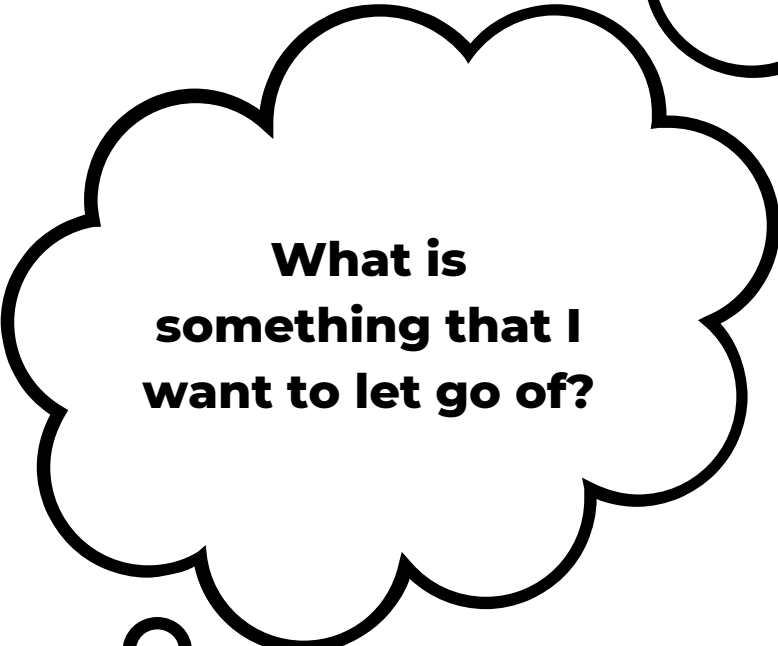
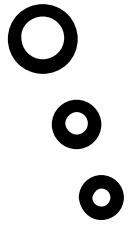
Take a moment to check in with yourself each day by answering the following three questions. Track your answers over time by writing regularly in a journal.



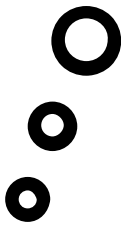
How am I feeling physically, mentally, and spiritually?



What am I feeling the most grateful for today?



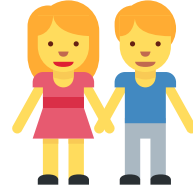
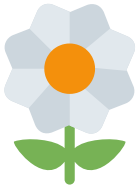
What is something that I want to let go of?



5

Learning to Forgive

The art of forgiveness is critical to our emotional wellbeing and self-care routine. Unforgiveness can hold so much power over us. It can weigh us down and hold us back from moving forward.



What are the benefits of forgiveness?

By choosing to forgive, you will feel much “lighter” and more in control of your emotions. You'll also benefit from healthier relationships, reduced stress levels, lower blood pressure, and fewer symptoms of depression.

How can I learn to forgive?

Forgiveness is not always easy, and it may take some time to fully forgive someone that we feel angry towards. Here are some practical exercises you can try that may help.

Write an anger letter.

Talk through your feelings with someone you trust.

Try to understand the background and perspectives of others.

Stay focused on the positive outcomes of forgiveness.



Recommended Forgiveness Resources

[Interview w/ Lisa Ince on practicing gratitude](#)

[Forgiveness Defined](#)

[Forgiveness and Health](#)

[How To Forgive](#)

Write an Anger Letter

In this anger letter, express why you are choosing to forgive someone in your life.
By choosing to forgive, you can let go of negative feelings and move forward..

Dear _____,

I am frustrated with you because_____

I wish you could_____

I choose to forgive you for_____

I will not let _____

_____bother me anymore.

Going forward, I will _____

Other thoughts_____

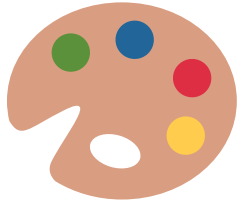
Sincerely,

(Throw away when finished)

6

Finding Your Creative Side

Being creative gives you a sense of purpose and achievement. It can also help to distract your mind from worries or stressors.



How can I get in touch with my creative side?

If it's been a while since you have been creative, take a moment to think about activities that you enjoy doing. Maybe it's making a photo album, writing poetry, or creating a music playlist. Or perhaps it's baking a cake or working in your garden. Whatever the activity is, try to find a time to do it regularly as an act of self-care.

It's been a while since I've been creative and I feel a bit silly... how can I get over this?

If it's been a while since you've done something creative, you might be feeling a bit out of your comfort zone - and that's okay! Try to remember that we are all creative in our own ways and we all deserve to have hobbies and activities that we enjoy doing. If your mind is still holding you back from being creative, try to avoid being too self-critical, make sure your hobby brings you more joy than stress, and avoid comparing yourself or your progress with others.



Recommended Creative Resources

[The Sketchbook App](#)

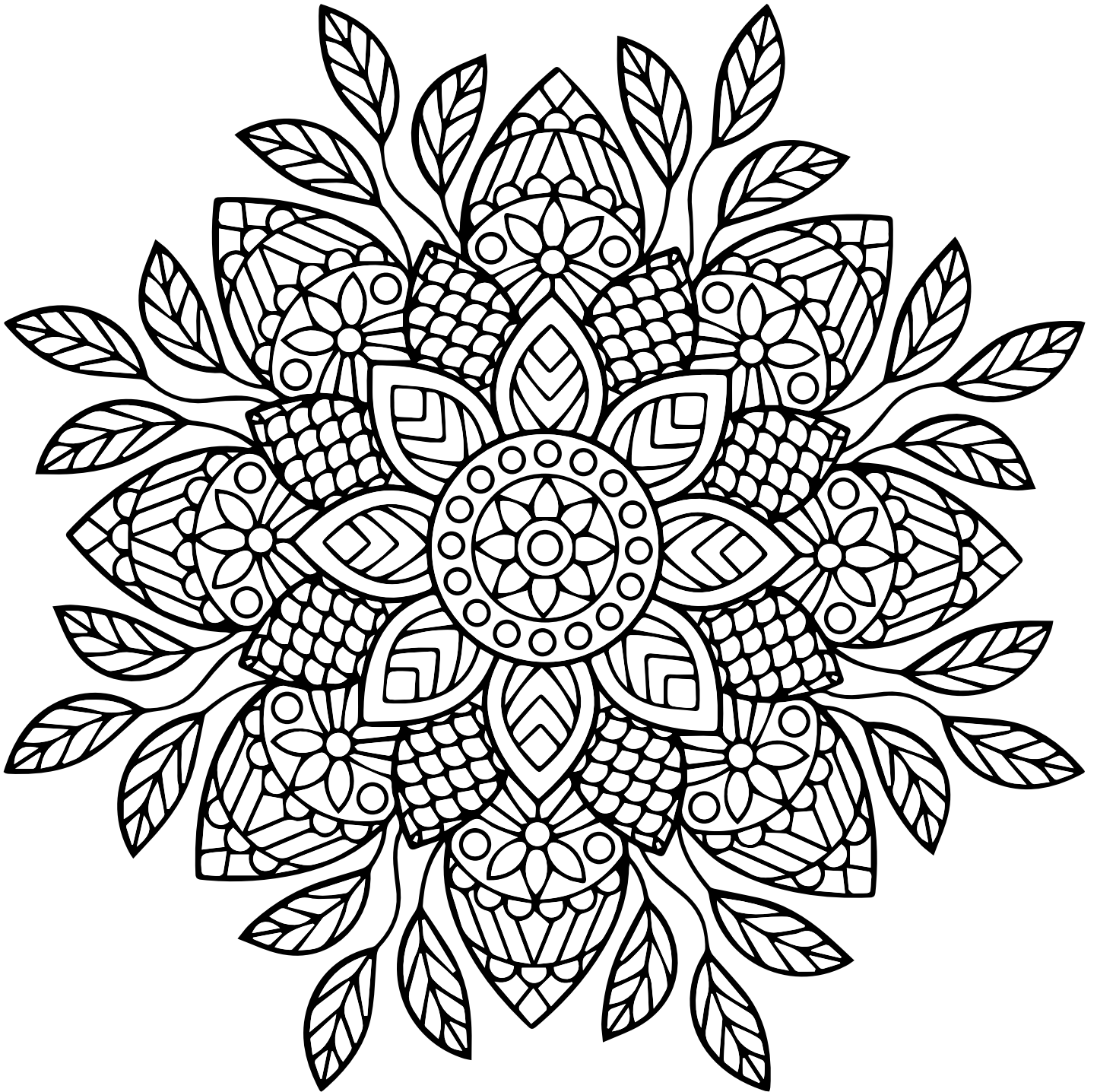
[Printable adult colouring sheets from Crayola](#)

[The Redecor App](#)

[Writing Exercises](#)

Adult Colouring

Adults can colour too! Take some time out of your day today to get creative and enjoy the therapeutic benefits of colouring.



7

The Value of Affirmations

Keeping a list of affirmations can be really useful for reminding yourself of who you are and what you are pushing for. They can also help you feel focused, reassured, and in tune with your purpose.



When should I say an affirmation?

Affirmations can be said to yourself anytime you feel like it! Many people like to say a few each morning to start the day on a positive note, while others like to say them in the evenings as they reflect on their day.

I have never used affirmations before...what should I say?

When it comes to affirmations, you can say anything to yourself - as long as it's positive! You can even make a list of affirmations to say when you want to feel reassured, motivated, or inspired. Here are some examples.

Today will be a good day.
I choose to see the positive side of things today.
I am grateful for my home, my job, and my family.



Recommended Affirmation Resources

[40 Positive Affirmations from Oprah Daily](#)

[Using Affirmations from Mind Tools](#)

[10 Minute Morning Affirmations](#)

[The ThinkUp App](#)

Affirmation Cards

Print this page to cut and create your own affirmation cards. Flip through them when you're feeling low or stressed for some confidence and encouragement!

I see challenges as opportunities.

I am grateful for my family and friends.

Today will be a good day.

I choose to see the positive side of things today.

8

Relaxation

Relaxation is an integral part of any self-care routine. It not only helps you to recharge after a long day or a long week, but it also helps you to find a sense of calm - which is absolutely essential during periods of stress.



What are the physical benefits of relaxation.

Relaxation has a number of physical benefits including lowering your heart rate, reducing blood pressure and muscle tension, and limiting the activity of stress hormones.

It's hard for me to relax when I'm so busy... how can I wind down if I have so much going on?

Finding time to relax when you have a lot going on can be a challenge. You know that you need to relax, but your racing mind won't let you. To overcome this, the following tips may help.

- Try a guided breathing exercise.**
- Limit your caffeine intake.**
- Go for a quiet, technology-free walk in nature.**



Recommended Relaxation Resources

[Box breathing relaxation technique](#)

[The ASMR Podcast](#)

[6 Relaxation Techniques from Harvard Health](#)

[The Insight Timer App](#)

Relaxation Plan

Use the space below to map out your monthly relaxation goals. This can help you to plan ahead and hold yourself accountable.

Monthly Relaxation Goals!	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
WK 1							
WK 2							
WK 3							
WK 4							

9

Eating Healthily

When you're feeling stressed or under a lot of pressure, it's easy to just eat things that feel comforting rather than the things that your body actually needs. In turn, this can negatively impact your physical health and mood.



How does food impact our mood?

When we eat processed foods that are high in sugar, it's normal to feel a burst of energy at first. However, this is oftentimes followed by a "sugar crash" or a period of low mood. By filling our bodies with the right nutrients, our brains are much better at regulating emotions and staying focused and energised.

What types of food should I be focusing on?

A balanced diet rich in whole grains, fruits, vegetables, healthy fats, and lean proteins is essential. The following are also clinically proven to alleviate symptoms of anxiety or depression.

**Eggs. Fish. Brazil Nuts. Chamomile tea. Apricots. Carrots.
Sweet potato. Broccoli. Seeds**



Recommended Healthy Eating Resources

[Eat Well from the NHS](#)

[Food and Mood from Mind](#)

[Diet guidelines from
the WHO](#)

[Deliciously Ella YouTube
Channel](#)

Weekly Meal Planning

Planning meals ahead of time is an excellent way to ensure that your body gets all of the nutrients it needs on a regular basis. It can also help to prevent the urge to snack or order a takeaway!

Weekly Meal Planning	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Breakfast							
Lunch							
Dinner							
Snacks							

10

The Power of Opening Up

A crucial aspect of self-care is keeping an open and honest dialogue with both ourselves and the people around us.



How does that work?

Keeping an open dialogue means checking in with yourself by asking questions like, “how am I really feeling today” and “what do I need”. It also means communicating those needs to those around us - for example by setting boundaries, saying “no”, and asking for help when we need it.

Opening up feels awkward... how can I overcome that?

Opening up to someone can make you feel uncomfortable and vulnerable. Here are a few strategies that can help to facilitate process of opening up.

Speak with someone you trust - like a friend, family member, counsellor, or trusted helpline.

Remind yourself that emotions are a completely normal part of the human experience.

Clarify your thoughts by writing them down ahead of time.



Recommended Resources on Opening Up

[The Art of Listening](#)

[How to Have Constructive Conversations](#)

[The Lily-Jo Project's Eavesdrop Podcast](#)

[Seeking Help by Mind](#)

Open-Ended Conversation Starters

There's nothing wrong with using prompts to help get the conversation flowing. Check out these open-ended conversation starters that can be used with friends and loved ones throughout the year.

Daily

What was the best/worst part of your day today?

What are you grateful for today?

Weekly

Are you struggling with anything this week? What would help to make it better?

What was your biggest accomplishment this week?

Monthly

What are you looking forward to the most this month?

Are you stressed/worried/anxious about anything coming up this month, and what can we do to help?

Annually

What are your highlights and favourite memories from the previous year?

What are your goals for the upcoming year?



Just for you!

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using the following code:

IWOSC10

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Self-Care Challenge

Ready to put your new self-care tools to the test? Why not try our self-care challenge by doing one self-care activity for five days in a row.

MONDAY

Relaxation: Try a 10 minute guided meditation.

TUESDAY

Affirmation: Start your day by writing an affirmation on a sticky note.

WEDNESDAY

Exercise: Take a 10 minute walk in the middle of your day.

THURSDAY

Listen: Pause to reflect on how your mind and body feels.

FRIDAY

Healthy Eating: Try a brand new healthy snack.

You've got this!

Final Thoughts

Remember, self-care is not something we only do once or twice a month. It's something that we have to actively do for ourselves on a daily basis.

If you do not have any regular self-care habits, or maybe you're really great at one aspect of self-care but not another, why not set a goal for yourself around each of the points in this packet? Write them down in a notebook, set a start date, and keep track of your progress.

It might feel like a challenge at first, but over time you'll find it gets easier and easier!

Get Involved

If you enjoyed this resource and would like to show your support for The Lily-Jo Project, you can get involved in the following ways.

Share

Share your favourite self-care activities and tips with us on [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#)! Make sure to tag us and use the hashtag #iwosc. Logos can be downloaded [here](#).

Donate

Love what we do? Why not [make a donation](#) to support our continued work in schools and communities worldwide.

Subscribe

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