

*Do you ever forget to
take care of yourself?*

Numerous studies have shown that, above all other factors, it's the teacher in the classroom who inspires, cultivates and enthuses learning. A teacher affects eternity, and can never tell where their influence will stop. In our unflinching efforts to enrich the lives of our pupils, every day, our role as the teacher has become extraordinarily busy.

When you're busy, it can be hard to find the time to take proper care of yourself. However, self-care is not a reward for hard work, it is **part of the process**. It's the careful repetition of simple habits, which work together to soothe you and make sure you're at your optimum—emotionally, physically, and mentally. Implement simple self-care habits every day by regularly including in your life a little bit of love and attention for your own body, mind, and soul.

The following self-care activities can be slotted into a short amount of time, usually with little cost. Pick one from each category, and include them in your life each week.

Don't just function - flourish.



The **Employee Assistance Service** (EAS) provides teachers and their immediate family members with access to confidential counselling and assists in coping with the effect of personal and work-related issues. Counselling is provided on issues such as health, relationships, addictions, bereavement, stress, conflict, critical incident and trauma.

The service is free and confidential and available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to teachers in schools. It is provided by Inspire Workplace Services which was formerly known as Carecall.

📞 1800 817 433

🌐 www.inspireworkplaces.org



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Health & Wellbeing Team



Simple self-care practices
for a healthy
mind, body, and soul

Mind

1. **Start a smiles jar.** Document the great things people say, and the little successes you have during the day. Put them in a jar and read one from time to time.
2. **Unplug.** Switch everything off for an hour a day and free yourself from the constant beeps of messages and emails. Even better, take a social media vacation for a week!
3. **Go cloud-watching.** Lie on your back, relax, and watch the sky.
4. **Scratch off a lurker on your to-do list,** something that's been there for ages: delete, delegate or do it!
5. **Take a breath before you make a decision.** Sometimes, the most important thing in the day is the pause we take between two deep breaths.
6. **Take another route to work.** Mixing up your routine in small ways creates new neural pathways in the brain to keep it healthy.
7. **Simplify your schedule.** Are you over committed? Is there something you could let go of this week to make space for something else that is being squeezed out?
8. **Edit your social media feeds, and take out any negative people.** You can mute them; unfollow them or delete them.
9. **Lose yourself in a book** ...Or whatever else helps you relax at the end of the day. It is important to ensure that you take out some time to relax and just *be*.
10. **Meditate.** Find a quiet space and use our [guided loving kindness meditation](#).

Body

1. **Drink lots of water.** Carry a reusable bottle everywhere, and fill up as often as you can. Aim for eight glasses a day.
2. **Eat well.** Make one small change to your diet for the week. Have an extra portion of veggies each meal, or swap a sugary snack for a healthy alternative.
3. **Cut back on caffeine.** When you start to feel run down, cut back on coffee and substitute it with herbal teas, green tea, or hot water with a slice of lemon. Delicious.
4. **Practise yoga.** Stretch out the kinks. Even just 10 minutes a day will make a difference. Take time for spontaneous and scheduled stretch breaks in your classroom. Try to make a weekly class part of your self-care routine, or roll out your mat at home and enjoy a free yoga class online.
5. **Sleep well and enough.** Sleep is an investment in the energy you need to be effective tomorrow.
6. **Listen to your body.** At the end of the day, your body is the best indicator of how you are feeling, so make sure that you listen to it.
7. **Never miss a chance to dance.** When your favourite song comes on the radio, bust a move regardless of who is in the car beside you.
8. **Move: as often, and in as many different ways, as you can.** Look for little opportunities for movement in your day and embrace them with a smile. Walk more, sit less.
9. **Breathe.** Every breath you take gives you life. Take five deep breaths and let it go.
10. **Give your body ten minutes of mindful attention.** Try our [guided body scan meditation](#).

Soul

1. **Spend time with friends and family.** Surround yourself with people with whom you can just be yourself. Sometimes all you need is an energy or mood boost from people in your life that you like and love.
2. **Be still.** Find a tranquil place in your environment, and sit in stillness for a few minutes. Outdoors if possible!
3. **Meet or connect with a counsellor.** This could be a psychologist, therapist, spiritual mentor or friend.
4. **Be a friend to yourself.** If you were your own best friend, what would you tell yourself right now? Look in the mirror and say it. Be kind, be generous, be patient, be accepting. Be all of those things to yourself.
5. **Notice something new.** Find five unexpected beautiful things on your way to work.
6. **Help someone.** Carry a bag, open a door, or reach out to an elderly neighbour. Smile!
7. **Write down your thoughts.** For ten minutes, write about anything that is bothering you.
8. **Choose who you spend your time with today.** Increase the time you spend with people who inspire enthusiasm and positivity, and reduce the time you spend with those whose pessimism and negativity depletes your energy.
9. **Stroke a pet.** If you don't have one, go to the park and find one. (Ask first!)
10. **Make a gratitude list.** Simply write down one thing you are grateful for, each day. Here's a [guided gratitude meditation](#) to help you.