

Post 1

In my life, there are numerous sources of stress, but with a little bit of self-care, I always return to what I can term as my normal self. In life, stress affects us all, but we can decrease its negative outcomes through a personal support strategy such as self-care (David & Naturale, 2012). I must admit that practicing self-care has not always come to me easy, and naturally, I have had to teach myself how to prioritize myself. Life is not always smooth, and there are times when I experience physical and emotional breakdowns. My first emotional crash began in 2014 when I lost my best friend to a road accident, and it seemed to me like a flash of a second. I made a decision to start prioritizing myself and my needs. To me, it was an intentional decision to start practicing self-care.

One act I considered to be a perfect self-care is taking time to speak to my friend about the stressful situation. As David and Naturale (2012) puts it, self-care is all about stopping the stress cycle through a self-assessment process. I realized that talking to a close friend is an effective way of self-care because it allows me to speak out and get other people's opinions, and this really sets my mind free. Often in life, I am unable to comprehend what is happening around me, so getting a second opinion proves to be an effective way of practicing self-care. By talking with my friends, I feel that I am well supported, and this gives me the strength to face all life challenges and even boosts my self-esteem (David & Naturale, 2012). By sharing a meal and talking with my friends, I feel that I am getting support from people who value me, and this really makes me confident in dealing with the stressful situation. By maintaining a buddy system, I am able to share stress indicators with my close buddies and that is how self-care works for me.

Post 2

Self-care is any activity that we do in order to enhance the mental, emotional, and physical health of ourselves. Although not recognized as being very important, it plays a vital role in our lives. Until and unless we care for ourselves, we will not be able to take care of people around us at our utmost efforts.

Talking about myself, in order to improve my mental health, I get some time alone in order to think over my thoughts so that I can boil them down to one problem and then find a solution to it. Like the saying goes "Problems come with solutions", I firmly believe in it and when I tackle a problem in life, I look for the key to solve my problem.

I have always been the kind of person who likes to sit alone in my room and not interact a lot with people or even family members. However, recently I have started sitting together with my family members more often as I realized that I do not give them enough time. To my surprise, just having little talks with them makes me feel better and helps my emotional and mental health in a positive manner. I did not think so previously but, sitting together over a cup of tea/coffee has enhanced me to share my thoughts and problems more often, and even find better as well as

faster solutions. Sometimes, what we think doesn't help us, actually does. It is just a matter of trying it out, you never know where solutions to your problems lie.

Post 3

If you don't take care of yourself, the rest won't either. Before I arrived in the United States, my reading rate was average, but since I came here for a purpose, my priorities and interests have been changed a little, which is a normal thing from what I can tell. However now I like reading books in my free time, and I really like to keep a diary all the time, which made me relaxed.

In the way of taking care of self, meditation assisted me in visualizing things for which I am grateful and allowing me to minimize distractions. It also improved my self-awareness and helped me to put into perspective what really matters. As they say, meditation is a way of opening a door to the spiritual world. I was living with a beautiful old lady, and the meditation was one of the highest priorities in her life. Also, I like reading self-help books sporadically such as *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* and *The Power of Your Subconscious*. When I read the last book in 2011, I wasn't persuaded it would be helpful. Indeed, this book helped me somehow to be understood and change my way to be better in thinking. Also, things that help me a lot in taking care of myself are getting to know people and traveling. I went to several countries before I came here to study. Traveling is a good way to get to know people and to change your lifestyle a little bit. I deeply believe that traveling is a gift you give yourself.

