

# Practicing *Self-Care*



*In our interview with Captain Liz Blusiewicz, she shared on the topic of self-care and the importance of resting and spending time with Jesus. This section will lay out various ways you can practice and implement forms of self-care in your day to day life.*

## **Self-care is not something that happens by accident**

Self-care needs to be included in what you *should* be doing. It is a necessity and should be prioritized as such! However, many of us neglect to take care of ourselves because we feel guilty that it takes us away from other things. But even Jesus said 'no' to people! He frequently leaves crowds to go up on a hill by himself. Prays by himself. Jesus had a self-care routine. And so should we.

*“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”  
Matthew 11:26-30 (MSG)*



*Be in tune with  
Jesus, listen to the  
Holy Spirit &  
be present.*

CAPTAIN LIZ BLUSIEWICZ

## Self-care isn't selfish

Self-care isn't saying 'no' to everything, it's saying 'yes' to the *right* things. It's choosing to be intentional with our time and honest with ourselves and those around us about our giftings, skill sets and priorities. It's letting go of what leaves us emotionally, physically, mentally and spiritually drained.

In the Bible, Paul says to 'honor God with our bodies.' But if your body and soul are so overwhelmed and tired that you can't live out your calling, then that's not really honoring Him. You're neglecting what He's given you in the name of busyness. Self-care will restore these things and will help enable us to be good stewards of the talents and giftings that God has given us.

In the midst of a pandemic and protests, self-care is even more vitally important. This is a unique and uncertain time in history and it's okay to need or want time to take care of yourself, to process everything that's happening and how you feel. Guilt may come as you focus on yourself instead of those in your community. But as the saying goes, 'we cannot pour from an empty cup,' so then too, we cannot sufficiently serve others when we neglect ourselves.

## Self-care should not elicit guilt

If you struggle with feelings of guilt, try these steps:


- **Give yourself permission to take time for you.** Remember what we said about not being able to pour from an empty cup?
- **Share your need for self-care with someone.** Friends or your spouse can help you identify the best times in your schedule for self-care and also hold you accountable.
- **Make the time and then be intentional about protecting and honoring it,** even if it means telling someone 'no'.
- **Do it.** Begin investing in yourself and practicing self-care.
- **Keep doing it.** Keep practicing until it becomes a lifestyle. The people in your life, when they look at you, will soon see the light of someone who is stewarding their gifts and talents joyfully!

## Self-care will look different for everyone

A few years ago, Lt. Liz felt God urging her to practice Sabbath. She refers to it as the start of her 'personal revival', and ever since has set aside a full 24 hours each week to rest.

"Sometimes I've gotten a little flack for it because some things need to be let go. And to me - that's okay, because I know I need that 24 hours to just be with Jesus and to just rest."

Not everyone's experience will be the same as Lt. Liz's, but here are additional practices to consider:



*Taking time to  
replenish your spirit  
allows you to serve  
other from the  
overflow*

- **Sleep.** Be intentional about ensuring you're getting enough rest.
- **Be still.** Spend time with God. Leave your phone and devices behind, find a quiet space and simply *be*. Listen for His voice, process, pray.
- **Exercise.** Eek, we know! But take time during the lunch hour or early mornings - *whenever* - to do yoga, go for a walk or take a Zumba class.
- **Eat.** Healthy food is fuel for your body - so be kind and don't overload it with things that will slow you down.
- **Go to the doctor.** Be intentional about making and making it *to* all the appointments that you like to avoid. Refill prescriptions, take your vitamins and be honest with your doc about what's going on with your body.
- **Leisure.** Go do what's fun for you! Lay in a hammock, go for a bike ride, sit by a lake, call a friend to catch up, start a new puzzle. Do things that simply bring you peace and joy.
- **Journal.** Take notes during church, write down prayers and random thoughts. This will force you to slow down and write out what you're feeling, as well as help you process those feelings.



- **See a counselor.** It may not be for everyone, but therapists can help you be gracious with yourself, remind you of important truths and help you get to know yourself better. They'll also challenge you to take time for yourself, because they know when you're at your best, you can serve others in your life *well*.

## Self-care can be really easy... or really hard

It may not look like what you expected. It could be about treating yourself to something good, or even letting go of something bad.

- **Close the door on toxic relationships.** Step out of friendships that drain you and negatively impact your life and mental health.
- **Change your thinking habits.** Don't beat yourself up or tear yourself down. Remind yourself that you have a Father who loves you and you have worth.
- **Commit to an early bedtime** at least three to four nights a week.
- **Take control of your finances** - save more, spend less.
- **Plan something** to look forward to.
- **Meal plan.** Sit down every weekend and plan out next week's meals. This will cut out stress, impulsivity and poor decision making later on.
- **Take a break** from dating.
- **Create and enforce boundaries,** personally and professionally.
- **Celebrate the wins,** no matter how small.
- **Leave your phone** in the kitchen when you go to bed.
- **Complete** daily/weekly gratitude lists.
- **Limit your exposure to the news.** Stay informed but know when to turn it off.
- **Unfollow people** on social media who spark negativity, make you feel bad about yourself, or who you follow for the wrong reasons.
- **Take care of yourself by taking care of others.** Volunteer at the corps, hand out baked goods, pay for random parking meters, etc.
- **Honor your inner child.** Revisit the games and activities you used to love as a kid.
- **Turn your phone off** and treat yourself to a meal, a nice bath or go see a movie.
- **Sit at Jesus' feet.** Take a lesson from Mary and Martha: get out of the kitchen and kneel before Jesus. Get in the Word and make it a daily habit to spend time with Him.
- **Before even getting out of bed,** start every day in prayer.
- **Learn to say 'no'** to things that threaten your mental or emotional health.
- **Declutter your space** and deep clean!
- **Drink water** and limit your caffeine intake.
- **Get in the habit of repeating positive affirmations,** such as 'I am strong and resilient,' 'I am grateful for what I have and what I can accomplish.'
- **Make sure you're meeting your basic, daily needs.** Set reminders throughout the day to stretch, get up and walk, enjoy a cup of coffee or even to go to bed early.
- **Let yourself feel your feelings.** Consider taking a personal or sick day (or even a few hours) and using that time to recharge, reset, or just sit with your grief.
- **Release tension from your body.** Practice inhaling deeply and exhaling slowly. Let go of that tension - stretch your limbs, roll your shoulders. Intentionally release the stress and weight that is weighing you down.



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*CHOSEN TO BE A SOLDIER*

It is a serious mistake to be so preoccupied with living **for** God as not to have time for living **with** God, adoring Him, listening to Him, worshipping Him, and consciously resting in His love.

DATE \_\_\_\_\_



**a.m.**

DID I GET ENOUGH SLEEP?

YES  NO

RIGHT NOW, I FEEL

TODAY'S SELF-CARE ACTIVITIES

**p.m.**

I PRACTICED SELF-CARE TODAY

YES  NO

AS A RESULT, I FEEL

WHEN IT COMES TO SELF TALK, I WAS

KIND TO MYSELF  TEARING MYSELF DOWN

TODAY TAUGHT ME THAT I AM

3 THINGS I'M GRATEFUL FOR TODAY

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- 
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PRAYER  
FOR TODAY

\_\_\_\_\_

OVERALL  
THOUGHTS  
ON TODAY

\_\_\_\_\_

PRAYER FOR  
TOMORROW

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