

# 13 Strategies for Self-Care



1. Be still. Find time to just be still for a few minutes This is hard because we become addicted to busyness. It's hard when little ones are running around and house needs tending, or life is coming at us in 100 different directions. When we try to be still, our brains are going 100 mph. Stop. Breathe deep and be thankful. Submit every thought going through your brain to the Lord. Just be still and know He is God.
2. Stop over thinking things. How many times do we get caught up in obsessing over things out of our control or decisions we have made or need to make. Just surrender. We do not need all the answers and we certainly don't need to figure everything out. We aren't in the driver's seat anyway. We know the one who knows all and sees all. Simply begin to trust Him and surrender control.
3. Accept what is. Frustration is born in the gap between our expectations and our reality. Stop trying to control things you cannot change. Practice setting realistic expectations that line up with your reality. Choose to be content.
4. Stop comparing yourself with other people. You do you boo! Envy will always rob your joy. Choose to embrace your uniqueness and allow gratitude to flow from your heart. You are made in the image of God. You are fearfully and wonderfully made!
5. Create joyful habits. Figure out something that brings you joy and peace and start making it a part of your routine. Try going for a walk and talking to God or getting that favorite cup of coffee and listening to worship.
6. Motivate yourself with kindness. Ditch the negative talk about yourself. Choose to speak to yourself with kindness and compassion. Instead of saying to yourself, "I'm so stupid, I can't believe I did that!" Say, "That was a mistake, I will do better next time."
7. Choose your words. Make a decision to put Ephesians 4:29 into practice. Speak only those things that bring life to yourself and others. Things that build up. Choose words that are true, kind and necessary. The power of life and death is in the tongue. We will never produce a positive life built on negative words.
8. Choose your thoughts. As Joyce Meyer says, "think about what your thinking about!" Philippians tells us what to think about. Fix your mind on things that are honorable, excellent, worthy of praise, things that are true, right, lovely and admirable. Cast down vain imaginations. Renew your mind. Renewing the mind is like tending to a flower garden. We can't plant flowers and walk away, then expect to have this flourishing maintenance free garden. We have to water and pull weeds. If we don't tend to the garden, the weeds will choke out the flowers. Sometimes we have to do interventions and treat the soil or treat pest infestations to ensure the health of the flowers. Renewing the mind requires daily care. Transformation is not an instantaneous event. A caterpillar doesn't say a prayer and wake up a butterfly. It's a process.
9. Know your strengths and give yourself grace for your weaknesses. Your weaknesses are always shouting loud at you like a squeaky wheel. Choose to be intentional with your strengths, focus on them. Don't beat yourself up for your weaknesses. You are a work in progress and God's grace empowers us.
10. Learn boundaries. Do not let people walk all over you. Being nice and being a doormat are two very different things. Learn to say no. Stop people pleasing, you'll wear yourself out in 2 seconds flat if you say yes to everything.
11. Forgiveness. Learn to forgive yourself for mistakes you make. Forgive others, this is powerful. Unforgiveness hurts us the most. Self-hatred is the fruit born out of unforgiveness against ourselves.
12. Allow yourself to feel the feelings. Go through the process of grief and disappointment. Let it be and let it go. Don't camp out there in the land of misery and don't ignore it. Allow God to restore your soul.
13. Exercise. Clear your mind with a walk, run or whatever your personal choice is for exercise. Exercise releases positive chemicals in our bodies that help with mood and sense of well-being.