

## Health & Wellness (Pre-Teen/Teen) Week #4: Mental Wellness/Self-Care

This is so important. Even adults struggle with giving themselves some self-care for their mental wellness. What are the things that really stress you out?

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What do you do to help reduce those stressors?

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Here are some suggestions that you may or may have not tried yet.

1. Taking a bath. Use some bath salts or bubbles for an even deeper relaxation. Maybe even dim the lights and light a candle if you can.
2. Meditation. There are several ways to meditate. One way is Breath Meditation. Sit up tall and close your eyes. Begin breathing deep enough that you can hear your breath. Feel how the breath moves your body, and notice the flow of the breath through your nostrils, in and out of your body. Try to feel the contact of the air with the inside your nose, or how the air touches your upper lip. Now gradually make the breath much gentler and let it flow naturally but keep listening to its sound. Try not to listen to your thoughts; listen only to your breath. Whenever you find yourself thinking of other things, come back to your breath. You can practice the same meditation listening to your heartbeat by bringing your full attention to it in a similar manner.
3. Go for a hike.
4. Listen to some music.
5. Exercise or stretch. Yoga.

This week write down at least 5 activities you did for self-care.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Even the Native Americans did things to help their mental health. One of their activities was a sacred act of purification called "smudging." This is when they would burn incense, usually a bundle of dried white sage. This was used to clear the atmosphere of negative vibrations and energies caused by feelings of anger, sadness, illness, or malevolent spirits, and to fill the environment with positive, uplifting energies. Can you find other cultures that use a type of self-care to improve their mental wellness?

Now this is all on how to care for ourselves, but how can we help others mental health? Take a look at the communication behaviors handout. How do you like to be talked to? How do you react to others talking to you in the various behaviors? Just something to think about. Just like the old saying goes, "Do to others as you would have them do to you." (Matthew 7:12)