

# Prioritising self-care activities during a busy week

Meagan Atcheson shares seven tips to make self-care activities a regular part of every busy week.

Self-care is an essential aspect of a healthy and balanced lifestyle, but with a demanding schedule, it can be difficult to make time for it. Whether it's work or family, life can quickly become overwhelming, leaving little time for self-care activities. However, taking care of yourself is crucial for both physical and mental well-being, and there are many simple ways to incorporate self-care into your full schedule.



## Tips to prioritise self-care activities

### Be intentional

✓ This simply means give precedence to your self-care, knowing that you deserve this love and care. It all starts with your mind; you have to make the decision to always prioritise wellness activities that will improve your quality of life.

So, while taking mental notes of your priorities, place self-care on top of that list. This way no matter how eventful your life gets, you'll always have time for beneficial self-care. Remember, you can't pour from an empty cup.

### Schedule your self-care

✓ An activity that is planned and scheduled is more likely to be done than one unplanned for. Self-care should be a main concern, just like work or any other commitment so schedule self-care activities like you would any other appointment.

### Be an early riser

✓ Waking up early can give you an extra hour or two to practise self-care activities before the day becomes busy. Use this time for meditation, yoga, or any other exercise that helps you start the day on a positive note.

### Incorporate self-care into your daily routine

✓ Simple self-care activities like stretching, deep breathing, and taking breaks throughout the day can be integrated into your daily routine. This makes it easier to fit self-care into your schedule, as these activities can be done while at work or running errands.

**Get up and take a walk:** This is great if you sit all day at a desk. Make it a habit to get up and take a short walk. If you have more time, go out and breathe in fresh air while stretching your legs.

**Journal:** Take a few minutes daily to journal; writing helps clear the mind.

**Unplug for 30 minutes to 1 hour:** Switch off devices and shut off the internet.

### Find a self-care activity that is enjoyable

✓ When self-care activities are enjoyable, it's easier to fit them into your schedule. Whether it's reading a book, listening to music, or taking a bath, finding an activity that you enjoy makes it easier to prioritise self-care.

### Make use of technology

✓ There are many apps and websites that offer guided meditations, yoga classes, and other self-care activities that can be done in a short amount of time. You can set reminders to focus on self-care for a few minutes each day. NB! Don't mindlessly scroll social media.

### Schedule a self-care day

✓ Dedicating a day to self-care can help you recharge and refocus for the rest of the week. This can be done on the weekends or on a day off from work and can involve activities like a spa day, a relaxing hike, or simply spending time with loved ones.

### Practise mindfulness

✓ Mindfulness is a simple yet powerful way to prioritise self-care. This entails being present in the moment and aware of your emotions and feelings. This can be done through meditation, deep breathing, or simply taking a few moments to focus on your thoughts and emotions.

### Treat three workouts

#### a week like work meetings

✓ Regular exercise improves mood by increasing the production of endorphins and decreases feelings of anxiety, depression and stress. Other benefits are weight loss and maintenance, strengthening muscles and bones, increased energy levels, reduced risk of chronic disease, improved skin- and brain health as well as memory, sleep quality and relaxation, and reduced pain.

### Cook healthy meals in advance

✓ Prepare a week's worth of healthy food at the onset of your week that you can easily reheat for lunch or dinner. You can store majority of this food in your freezer, so it won't spoil. While this may take a few hours upfront, you'll eliminate the time barrier for the rest of your week, making eating healthy easy.

### Sunshine and a morning playlist

✓ Sunshine helps boost a chemical in your brain called serotonin, which gives you more energy and helps you to feel more positive when waking. A good morning playlist is essential too and can help start the day off right.



### Meet the expert

Meagan Atcheson is a registered dietitian who focusses specifically in oncology. She is a plant-centric foodie who promotes a nourishing approach to health and wellness using evidence-based research and guidelines only.