

Ten top tips for effective self-care for people with ADHD

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1. Look after your physical health

Eat a good, balanced diet and eat regularly throughout the day. Visit a doctor for regular check-ups. Decide upon a favourite form of exercise and do it every day. Get to bed on time to have seven hours or more sleep per night.

2. Focus upon relationships

Spend your free time with people who “get you,” people who respect and appreciate you and who won’t judge or criticise you because you have ADHD. Work on staying in touch, a quick text is enough sometimes, even when life gets very busy and set clear boundaries so that you can manage these relationships and get on with all of the other components of your life.

3. Plan your time

Have a schedule each day that includes how much time you think each activity will take. Set a timer on your watch or use an app on your phone to support this. This will help you to avoid trying to do too much and becoming stressed or even overwhelmed. But don’t feel bad if things change, just reset the schedule and carry on.

4. Follow the money!

Work out a budget, prioritise paying the bills on time. Use visual reminders on your phone or around your home to help with this. Debt can seriously affect your mental health.

5. Treat yourself

You're worth it. Plan to do something that is just for you once a week, it doesn't have to be a major event. Setting time to go to get your hair cut or practicing a hobby can be a vital distraction from the pressures of daily life and can energise you to face them the next day. Do a little bit of what makes you happy often.

6. Remember to be grateful

Have a pen and notebook by your bed. Each night before you get into bed, write down three things that you are grateful for that day. When you've had a particularly difficult or challenging day, go to the notebook and read it through.

7. Clear communication

Practice articulating what you want clearly, then put this into practice. It is okay to say no sometimes, especially when you are already very busy and feeling stressed and think about delegating. There is nothing to feel guilty about here. We all know the feeling of trying to do too much and we end up not doing anything very well at all!

8. Listen

Go online, read or listen to examples of how people with ADHD look after themselves. Don't compare yourself to them, take the ideas that are useful to you and focus upon the positives only.

9. Talk

We all need to sometimes. It's okay to ask a trusted friend just to listen to you for a while, they don't have to comment or "fix" you, they just need to be there. It's important to be heard and known by those you respect.

10. Ask for help

If you are feeling overwhelmed, think about professional help. There is a power to working with someone who doesn't know you, is professionally trained and is there only for you. They won't change the subject or talk about themselves. An ADHD coach is a good starting point as you won't have to explain the condition, they will get it and you can focus right in on what's on your mind.

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About ADHD Foundation

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