

# Are you doing self-care right?

**MOMOTAZ RAHMAN MEGHA**

Although the term self-care is familiar to most people, we usually end up defining it according to many misconceptions. Self-care is essentially the active effort to engage oneself into practices that contribute to one's happiness and wellbeing. This includes the expulsion of behaviour and thought processes that are detrimental to your self-development.

Self-care in its essence exists in a broad spectrum. People usually think self-care is mostly quenching your materialistic thirst by buying things that are tangible. But it is always more than that -- it's about finding inner peace and asking yourself what are the intentions of your actions, who you are undertaking them for, and what they reflect. It's imperative to feel connected to your actions and extract meaning out of them, mostly what they mean to you and not to the stakeholders surrounding you.

One can practice physical self-care by eating intermittent small meals, working out to be fit, having a consistent sleep cycle, or indulging oneself in actions that make one feel better like playing sports. Psychological self-care can be practiced by sitting down for 10 minutes after a long day at work just to appreciate yourself for your hard work and achievements. It includes practicing mindfulness which helps unleash your inner creativity. Take that



watercolour class that you always wanted to because learning new things can be the best way to keep yourself motivated.

Emotional self-care is often difficult for most people to understand. Our basic instincts provoke us to avoid our emotional needs and never accept them. Navigating through emotions by having internal conversations with yourself can help you discover where you want to reach. Being compassionate to yourself is what we al-

ways overlook so don't take that extra file of work home when the fight with your best friend is making you feel overwhelmed.

Social self-care involves maintaining healthy relationships with trusted friends and family members. You may take a break from social media when the 15 unread Messenger texts make you feel dizzy. Shopping sprees sound lucrative when it comes to self-care, but financial self-care also involves taking responsible financial

decisions so that you don't have a panic attack when your landlord calls you for yet another month of delayed rent. One can practise spiritual self-care by performing acts of faith, giving to charity or being helpful to people around them.

Being organised and having a well-maintained life structure is a form of environmental self-care. Dressing well, being clean, monitoring your schedule and sticking to it and not deviating for others is also a form of self-care. It is also important to practise professional self-care, which includes having a clear distinction in professional boundaries, acknowledging your professional skills and gifts, and having a healthy work lifestyle.

What stands between your self-care and you practising them are the myths surrounding it. The most common one is that it is selfish but what is forgotten is that your wellbeing translates to well-being for others around you too. Self-care isn't a one time experience as others would like you to believe. Cramming all types of self-care practices won't contribute to your well-being either. What you need to do is consistently make a small effort every day and you will see yourself change for the better.

*Megha has run out of ways to take care of herself while in quarantine. You can reach her at [megharahman26@gmail.com](mailto:megharahman26@gmail.com)*

## WHY WRITERS WRITE

**SYEDA ERUM NOOR**

Everyone has an origin story, a euphoric moment where one realizes their dream. While not all of these moments may be fantastical, it can be a defining moment in one's life.

I found myself wondering what this moment would look like for writers. So I delved into the depths of finding the answer to a question that pestered me; why do writers write?

The answer however, wasn't as simple as I thought it would be.

Some writers are roped into this from birth in ways that they aren't fully aware of until much later. The way they were raised and certain exposure they got at a young age had them chasing their dreams before they even recognised it.

"My mom raised a bookworm," SHOUT's own Mrityika Anan Rahman explains. "I started reading at a very young age. I started maintaining a diary and it became my way of holding onto my memories."

At times, we recognise this desire to write early on. Aaqib Hasib, another one of SHOUT's writers, was inspired by a role model within his family -- his grandfather. "I watched him sit and read and write stories with a fountain pen on a manuscript," he recalls. "When he passed away, I wrote

more and more, in hopes of living up to his name. In the process, I fell in love with writing myself."

All it takes is a step in the right direction. An act as simple as watching someone read a book or hearing someone talk about a character in a way that touches one's heart. This was the case for American author David Foster Wallace. His euphoric moment was when he heard his college girlfriend say she would rather be a character in a book than a real person. Voila! The spark had been ignited.

To some, writing comes in the form of a friend who is there in times of need, when it feels as though no one is listening. It is a release, as Anne Frank wrote in her diary, "I can shake off everything as I write; my sorrows disappear, my courage is reborn."

Sometimes, it is a way to express what one can't using their voice. The flitting of a hand across a page, brings out of them what they otherwise thought they were not capable of. Novelist Flannery O'Connor mentioned, "I write to discover what I know." She used writing as a window into her own soul, letting her see into a part of herself she may not otherwise have known.

Other times, writers find themselves clinging to the world of words by reading something that has them hooked. A beautiful story, a poem or an article that speaks



to them in a way nothing else does. It ignites something in them that's then difficult to diminish.

A want. A need. To write. To create. "You should write because you love the shape of stories and sentences and the creation of different words on a page. Writing comes from reading and reading is the finest teacher of how to write," said novelist Annie Proulx.

And essentially, that is why writers write. Because somewhere, at some point

in their lives, they fell in undeniable love with the process of writing. They became obsessed with the perfect order of words, with the way that they sound.

And that is why writers write.

*Want to write for SHOUT? Send us your write-up to [shoutds@gmail.com](mailto:shoutds@gmail.com)*

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