

# Practicing self-care during a time of uncertainty

We all have been caught in the whirlpool of uncertainty that is the COVID-19 crisis, and some of us are suffering from grave inertia. Apart from taking a heavy toll on our lives, this pandemic or lockdown has compelled us to change our daily routines and most of us are clueless about how to handle this 'new normal.'

It is justified to be fearful, but let's not forget that we need to take care of ourselves for the sake of our loved ones as well as ourselves. The term 'self-care' can be exceedingly helpful in coping up with this current 'limbo' and enhance our capability to take care of ourselves and others.

The phrase 'self-care' gets thrown around a lot, especially on social media, and this term has been often associated with something 'luxurious.' In short, there are a lot of misconceptions about this term



like having a spa day, getting your hair done, or going to a very fanciful restaurant to eat. However, self-care is a lot more than that and it can be described as *'the act of intentionally engaging in habits and behaviours that support your well-being.'* I feel that self-care is knowing your own needs and taking care of yourself at the most fundamental level.

The following tips or pointers can be very easily applied in our daily lives and these are conducive for practicing the art of self-care.

## Making small and purposeful efforts

Self-care does not mean bringing big changes into your life or doing things alone. It is about making small efforts to feel livelier such as making your bed as soon as you get up in the morning and tidying up your space before going to bed at night. Planning your routine properly so that you can get enough sleep at night and spending time with the people that make your life joyful.

In short, doing purposeful acts that do not make life monotonous.

## Eating healthy and getting enough exercise

As we have been spending a lot of time at home, we need to be conscious of our eating rituals. It is wise to start planning healthy meals that contain a lot of vitamin C instead of reaching for sugary snacks. We need to focus on adding leafy greens to our meal plans and consuming seasonal fruits. It is crucial at this moment to do regular exercise. Going out for a quick walk or freehand exercise at home can be much helpful. Small efforts such as taking the stairs instead of the elevator and taking a few minutes to stretch can do wonders for our physical health.

## Taking a 'breather'

If we look at the positive side, this lockdown has given us the chance to take a pause. When we become fearful or tensed, our nervous system reacts as if we are encountering some kind of threat. Therefore, instead of getting lost under the pressure, we can take a breather by practicing meditation. It can be a five-minute breathing exercise or a guided meditation practice. Most of us are working

from home, so setting a boundary around working hours can be helpful to keep personal and professional life separate. Moreover, we need to be mindful of the news that we are receiving from social media, as well as other sources.

## Appreciating the simple pleasures

I have found this amazing quote by Beau Taplin, and this saying could not have been any more relevant about being appreciative.

"I'm beginning to recognise that real happiness isn't something large and looming on the horizon ahead but something small, numerous and already here. The smile of someone you love, a decent breakfast, the warm sunset, your little everyday joys all lined up in a row."

We are often so busy that we do not stop or take a pause to appreciate the basic pleasures of our life, such as planting a tree or a flower, sipping our morning tea or coffee slowly, or enjoy the sunset or sunrise. It is the appropriate time for us to be mindful and appreciative of life. We can start by reading the books that have been left on our nightstand or do the tasks that we have planned to complete. Moreover, we can extend our generosity to the underprivileged people who have been the worst sufferers.

This crisis can encourage us to adopt a healthier lifestyle. Focusing on how to be the best version of ourselves and be happier will motivate us to be kinder to ourselves and others. Thus, in order to be physically and mentally strong and improve our quality of life, we should embrace practicing self-care in our day to day life.

By Ayman Anika

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## ◆ HOROSCOPE ◆



### ARIES (MAR. 21-APR. 20)

Fulfil your personal obligations promptly. Don't get mixed up in unfavourable situations. Help those less fortunate. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



### TAURUS (APR. 21-MAY 21)

Time to redecorate your home. Expect changes at work. Risky financial ventures will result in unrecoverable losses. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



### GEMINI (MAY 22-JUN. 21)

Don't exaggerate your emotional situation. Help wherever possible. Hold your temper. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



### CANCER (JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

Get involved with children. Ask for assistance in financial ventures. Stick to your own business. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



### LEO (JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

Keep track of your finances. Get involved in environmental organisations. Get together with friends and loved ones. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



### VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

Help elders in your family. Be smart to get ahead of others. Make new friendships. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



### LIBRA (SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

Tackle emotional problems head-on. Reconsider decisions concerning your work. Be considerate with your partner. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



### SCORPIO (OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Opportunities for romance will be present. Expect opposition from family. Financial problems can arise with unnecessary spending. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



### SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Work can be emotionally upsetting. Explain your intentions to loved ones. Concentrate on learning about your trade. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



### CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Avoid confrontations. Rely on your instincts. Investments may be misrepresented this week. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



### AQUARIUS (JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Put extra effort at work. Ask for help on complicated matters. Spend time with friends you enjoy. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



### PISCES (FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Hanging out can bring about new romance. You may be confused emotionally. Visit loved ones who are unwell. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.