

“In life just as in airplanes, you have to put on your own oxygen mask before you can help others.”

SELF CARE

for Department Chairs and Faculty Members



J E F F R E Y L . B U L L E R

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W O R K B O O K

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What and Why?

Self-Care is the practice of taking an active role in protecting one's own well-being and happiness at all times but most of all during periods of increased stress.

Interest in Self-Care results from the recognition that, as academic professionals, we can't give others what we don't have ourselves. If you have ever been on a commercial flight, then you have heard the safety instructions. One of the most important things they note is to make sure you put your own mask on before you help others. This principle is the key to self-care as well. If you aren't taking care of yourself, how can you expect to provide help to others?

Why should we as academic leaders be interested in this topic?

- Faculty members are increasing experiencing burnout because of added pressures from rising workloads, activist legislatures and governing boards, and turmoil on college campuses.
- Administrators (us!) are increasing experiencing burnout because of the same issues and because of the

expectation that we solve problems even when we don't have the resources to do so.

Are there any good models for Self-Care programs at colleges and universities?

Academic leadership requires self-care!

There certainly are!

- The University of Kentucky with its "Self-Care Lab" has long been a leader in this field. See: <https://socialwork.uky.edu/centers-labs/self-care-lab/>
- The Truitt Center for Religious & Spiritual Life at Elon University is actually a student center, but its programs in Self-Care provide good models for what can be done for the faculty and staff. See: <https://www.elon.edu/u/truitt-center/self-care/>
- The Counseling Center at North Carolina State University also provides a good model for Self-Care, dividing its program into three aspects: the physical, the mental/emotional, and the spiritual. See: <https://counseling.dasa.ncsu.edu/resources/self-help-resources/self-care/>

In this presentation, we'll build on some of the ideas pioneered at these and other centers and help you develop a Self-Care program that you can use either for yourself or as a service to others in your professional development series.

The “Selfishness” of Self-Care

Perhaps the biggest thing to get in the way of self-care though, is the nagging feeling we’re not supposed to be spending so much time on ourselves. After all, isn’t it pretty self-centered to be worrying about yourself?

Not so. Parker Palmer, the author of *The Courage to Teach*, perhaps put it best:

Self-care is never a selfish act—it is simply good stewardship of the only gift I have, the gift I was put on earth to offer others. Anytime we can listen to true self and give the care it requires, we do it not only for ourselves, but for the many others whose lives we touch.

In short, only when we’re truly at our best, do we have the ability to contribute something positive to those around us. Our best work is made possible by a good health and a keen intellect. There isn’t a responsibility in the world that can be met if we don’t have the health and the ability to do the work.

Still struggling with the idea of self-care and how it relates to academic leadership? Then consider this last very important point. Self-care is what keeps you around to make sure you get stuff done. Without self-care, your work will

suffer. If you care about your students and faculty members, you *have* to take care of yourself.

Self-Care is not self-indulgence. It is self-preservation.

—Audre Lorde

What’s your current stage of self-care?

So, let’s see where you are right now in your current state of health care. On the next page, you’ll find a self-care assessment form. This exercise has been constructed like several others in this presentation: You’ll conduct it now to find out more about yourself, but the form has also been designed in such a way that you can use it as a handout if you ever want to lead a self-care program for your colleagues. Simply copy the form, and use it as a handout.

With that in mind, turn the page and spend a moment filling out the form before continuing with this program.



Self-Care for Department Chairs and Faculty Members

Self-Care Assessment Form

DIRECTIONS: Read each statement and then circle the number in the column indicating how often that statement is true for you. When you're finished, total all the numbers you circled.

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
I find it more difficult to concentrate than I used to.	1	2	3	4	5
I don't feel well physically.	1	2	3	4	5
I don't perform my work at the quality I'd like it to be.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel overwhelmed.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel anxious.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel depressed or "down."	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that I am letting other people down.	1	2	3	4	5
I am tired even though I've had a full night's sleep.	1	2	3	4	5
I forget what I'm about to say.	1	2	3	4	5
I forget what I began to do.	1	2	3	4	5
I miss deadlines.	1	2	3	4	5
I avoid social situations.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel "off."	1	2	3	4	5
I feel cranky or snap at people.	1	2	3	4	5
Simple tasks seem to take a lot of effort.	1	2	3	4	5
I can't sit still.	1	2	3	4	5
I ignore activities I used to enjoy.	1	2	3	4	5
I agonize over minor decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
I eat too much or too little.	1	2	3	4	5
I don't follow through on commitments or promises.	1	2	3	4	5

TOTAL OF ALL NUMBERS CIRCLED: _____

Interpreting Your Score

The important thing to realize about this self-care assessment form is that each statement is unimportant in isolation. For example, introverts much respond “always” to the statement “I avoid social situations” but be taking very good care of themselves. They just find social situations exhausting, and so they tend to avoid them.

In the same way, feeling depressed or “down” might be a completely logical sentiment for someone who’s just experienced the loss of someone dear to them. So, no one question is a “red flag” in this inventory. It’s only your responses in the aggregate that indicate whether you might have a challenge with self-care.

With that in mind, here’s how to interpret your scores on the assessment:

- **If you scored 86 or above, congratulations!** You seem to really be on top of matters when it comes to self-care. Whether you’re doing it consciously or not, you’re probably doing most of the things that will be covered in this presentation. Just keep doing what works for you.
- **If you scored 70-85, you’re where most people score.** You do well in a lot of areas of self-care, but you still have something to learn. This program could really help you.

- **If you scored 69 or below, you have challenges in the area of self-care.** You may want to discuss some of these matters with your primary care provider. At the very least, you’ll want to pay close attention throughout this presentation. We’ll discuss some ideas that could really benefit you and others who depend on you.

How This Program Works

The self-care program that is described in this presentation is divided into four parts of three sections each. The parts are called:

- The Green Phase
- The Blue Phase
- The Yellow Phase
- The Red Phase

We’ve adopted this terminology rather than numbering the phases because there’s no particular order in which the phases have to be conducted (or introduced to others if you’re doing a workshop on this topic). You can even skip certain phases entirely if they don’t suit your purposes. In general, however, you should always know what’s in *each* phase so that you can decide whether to complete it and, if so, when that should be done.

GREEN PHASE

The Green Phase

The Green Phase is the basic phase of the program.

It provides a solid foundation for other levels, but it may strike some participants as “too basic” if you’re doing it as part of a training program.

If you’re engaging in self-care for your own development ...

Start with this phase. It’ll get you headed in the right direction.

If you’re designing a self-care program for others ...

End with this phase. Those who regard it as “too basic” may stop attending the sessions before you get to the more complex topics.

If you have to reduce the size of the program ...

Eliminate this phase. Simply provide these resources as additional information at the end of your program.

The Green Phase has three sessions ...



Self-Care for Department Chairs and Faculty Members

Do You Have a Sleep Disorder?

DIRECTIONS: Read each statement and then circle the number in the column indicating how often that statement is true for you. When you're finished, total all the numbers you circled.

	Often	More Than Five Times	More Than Once	Once	Never
I am tired even after a full night's sleep.	5	4	3	2	1
I am told that I snore.	5	4	3	2	1
I am told that I gasp for breath when I'm asleep.	5	4	3	2	1
I am told that I stop breathing when I'm asleep.	5	4	3	2	1
I fall asleep at the wrong times or when it is inconvenient.	5	4	3	2	1
I feel sleepy when I'm driving.	5	4	3	2	1
I have trouble falling asleep.	5	4	3	2	1
I have trouble staying asleep.	5	4	3	2	1
I am told that I grind my teeth while I'm sleeping.	5	4	3	2	1
I sleepwalk.	5	4	3	2	1
I talk in my sleep.	5	4	3	2	1
I have nightmares.	5	4	3	2	1
My legs feel restless when I try to sleep or relax	5	4	3	2	1

TOTAL OF ALL NUMBERS CIRCLED: _____

Interpreting Your Sleep Disorder Score

- If you scored **50 or above**, you very likely have a sleep disorder. You should discuss this situation with your primary care physician, a pulmonologist, or a sleep specialist.
- If you scored **between 16 and 49**, you may or may not have a sleep disorder. While you are still well advised to discuss this possibility with your primary care physician, a pulmonologist, or a sleep specialist (particularly if your score is in the 40s), the advice we provide in this program may also be useful to you.
- If you scored **15 or below**, you probably don't have a sleep disorder. Nevertheless, the ideas presented in this program may help you sleep even better.



Common Sleep Disorders

- Sleep Apnea: snoring, gasping, stop breathing, tired even after sleep
 - Narcolepsy: falling asleep at wrong or inconvenient times
 - Insomnia: inability to fall or stay asleep
-

Improving Sleep

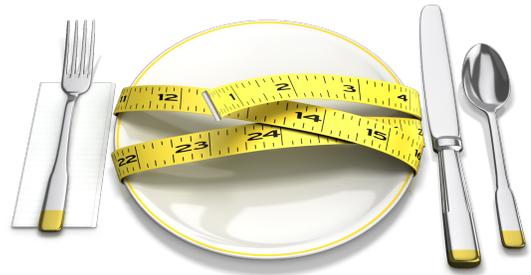
- Retire as close as possible at the same time each day
 - Use bedroom only for sleep and sex
 - Eliminate caffeine from noon onward
 - Eliminate blue lights from bedroom
 - Don't eat after 8:00 p.m.
 - Keep bedroom cool
 - Consider a weighted blanket
 - Exercise early in the day, not late
 - Turn electronic devices off
-

Sleep Restriction Therapy

- Track number of hours slept in a “typical” night: Call this N hours
 - Decide on your optimal wake-up time: Set alarm
 - Don't go to bed until N hours before your wake-up time
-

Nutrition

- Hydrate
- Unprocessed foods
- Limit refined sugars
- Eat at regular times
- Don't skip meals
- Put snack foods in inconvenient places
- Avoid fad/suddenly popular diets
- Combine balance and portion control
- Use smaller plates



Exercise

- Get an assessment
- Set an easy initial goal
- Increment the goal
- Follow the 20-8-2 Rule: Sit for 20 minutes, stand for 8 minutes, and walk for 2 minutes
- Mix it up: Try the ideas on the next page
- Take the stairs
- Reward yourself
- Increment the goal



Self-Care for Department Chairs and Faculty Members

CATEGORY	TIP	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Just Move	Fidget							
	Find an excuse to move							
Parking	Park far away							
	Take the long way back							
Use a standing desk	Adjust current desk							
	Keep moving							
	Follow 20/8/2 rule							
Change your commute	Bike to work							
	Walk to work							
	Stand on public transportation							
	Sing while you drive							
Take the stairs	Take scenic route to your chair							
	Plan strategy for stairs							
Phone	Find a stairs buddy							
	Stand/Move for phone calls							
Adjust meetings	Have a walking meeting							
	Have an outdoor meeting							
Move during lunch break	Get up							
	Run errands							
	Go outside							
	Work out							
Exercise while watching TV	Exercise during commercials							
	Make an active game							
	Keep snacks far away							
	Use exercise equipment							
	Compete							
	Do simple chores							
Exercise while you shop	Make obstacle course							
	Use basket instead of cart							
	Shop in the real world							
	Go around perimeter of store							
	Mallercise - Powerwalking							
Fitness tracker	Carry your bags							
	Track your progress							
Work in the yard	Increase your goals							
	Grow a garden							
	Pull up weeds							
	Use a push mower							
Dance	Rake leaves							
	Go out or dance at home							

BLUE PHASE

Setting and Enforcing Boundaries

Being able to tell people “no” is one of the best ways to protect ourselves and our time, but how good are you at doing it? If you’re like most people, boundaries might be a little bit foggy, especially when it comes to judging whether or not something might be an opportunity, or a waste of time.

As far as self-care goes, boundaries don’t get enough attention. We tend not to realize just how much they do matter. Without good boundaries, our stress levels rise, which in turn can adversely affect our health. Boundaries can protect us in other ways. They’re what keep toxic people from our lives, and keep us from wasting energy on what’s not important. How can we spend the next few weeks in the pursuit of boundaries? Try these steps:

Create a List

Knowing where you’d like better boundaries is the key. Start off the month with a list of areas where you feel like you don’t have good boundaries, such as work or relationships. Next, list out some specific areas where boundaries are really causing you trouble, such as not being able to say no when your sister constantly needs someone to bail her out when she’s short on cash. The form on page 19 of this workbook is a good place to start.

Do a Check Up

Not sure where boundaries might be an issue? Ask where you’re feeling resentful, which is a sure sign your boundaries are out of whack. Add these points onto your list. In addition, what are you feeling right now? When you pay attention to your feelings, it’s easier to notice when you feel like your boundaries are being trampled.

Create a Better Response

With your list in hand, look for better ways to answer these boundary violations. Practicing to say ‘no’ can take time, so start small. Creating a script can help, especially when boundaries involve people you’re close to. Going back to our example, what could you say instead to your sister when she calls asking for money? Knowing in advance will help you to say it when the time comes.

Be Assertive, Not Abrasive or Aggressive

Being assertive means expecting that other people will respect your *rights*. Being abrasive or aggressive means expecting other people to respect your demands. You have to speak up for yourself when setting a boundary. Hinting doesn’t often work. You’re going to have to say what you feel. To make this easier, get in the habit of being direct about your needs. Look for opportunities to speak up when you need something.

Do Some Candid Self-Analysis

Why are some of your boundaries hot points, which are hard to enforce? Understanding you’re apt to say yes to a coworker’s demands because you’re worried about how it would look to your boss allows you to step back and honestly assess whether your boss would even notice, much less care. It might be you’ve been agreeing to some things which would have served you better by saying no, all along.

Drop the Guilt

If your emotions start getting the best of you, it’s time to step back. Again, check yourself. Re-affirm this is a boundary you need to set. Remind yourself you’re doing the right thing.

Enlist Help

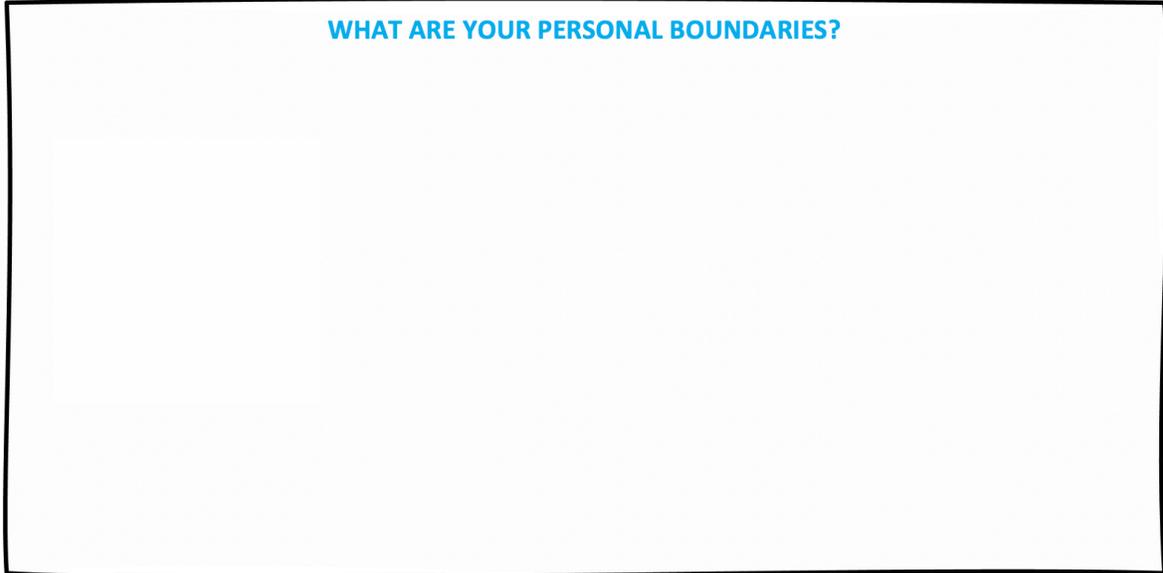
Who is your team? If you don't have one, this month would be a great time to form a network of supporters who have your back. Talk to them about the boundaries you're creating and ask for their help in maintaining them.

Remember, boundaries take time. You're going to have to keep re-setting some of these on a daily basis until you and those around you get used to the idea. Once you do, though, you'll find this goes much easier.



SETTING HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

WHAT ARE YOUR PERSONAL BOUNDARIES?



IS THERE ANYONE YOU NEED TO SET BOUNDARIES WITH?



WHO SHOULD I SAY NO TO MORE OFTEN?



Is It Hard for You to Say “No”?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I feel guilty when I say <i>no</i> .	1	2	3	4	5
2. I don't like being perceived as rude, impolite, or uncooperative.	1	2	3	4	5
3. When I'm put on the spot, I can't think of a good reason for saying <i>no</i> .	1	2	3	4	5
4. I hate being perceived as the bad guy (or a bad person).	1	2	3	4	5
5. I like to make everyone happy.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I don't like being thought of as someone who doesn't work hard.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I like being regarded as a "lifesaver" or "hero."	1	2	3	4	5
8. I don't like doing things that risk my job because any job is better than no job at all.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I'm afraid of disappointing other people.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I like being the "go to person." I pride myself on being dependable.	1	2	3	4	5

TOTAL OF ALL NUMBERS CIRCLED _____

Interpreting Your Score

- If you have a **score of less than 25**, you probably have a real difficulty saying no.
- But the real issue is *why*.
- Look at your lowest-scoring items.
- Do they tend to deal with **guilt**? (internal pressure) *Items 1, 5, 10*
- Do they deal with what other people will think of you (**shame** = external pressure)?
Items 2, 4, 6, 9
- This will tell you where the challenge is coming from: *outside* of you or *inside* of you?



Indulge Yourself

People sometimes are reluctant to engage in self-care either because they think that other people should *always* be their priority or because they think that self-care is only about eliminating their favorite foods and going to the gym. To eliminate these concerns, dedicate at least one session to the concept of *positive self-indulgence*. During this session, it will be time for people to discover that they can *both* pamper themselves *and* emerge better able to help others.

Get Out!

We can get too caught up in our own heads when we stay tied to our desks for too long. You know that old maxim about “All work and no play makes John a dull boy”? Well, it’s true. If you really want to be better at your job, take a walk in the neighborhood, go on a weekend road trip, or plan a real vacation. The point here is to get a change of scenery. Don’t have the means to get away? Take a *virtual* vacation. There are plenty of tours you can take on line which will give you a peek into someplace different.

Perk Up Your Surroundings

Change the scenery by perking up your home or office. And no: You don’t need to spend a fortune to do so. Do something small to make a room more personalized by adding a little flair. Visit thrift stores and estate sales, pick up a few pillows or plants the next time you’re out shopping to give a room an entirely new look. Want to really make a change? It doesn’t cost very much to put on a new coat of paint. A fresh color can make a room entirely new.

Make a Difference

We all have causes we believe in, but we don't always do much to support them as we never feel like we have the time. If that's the case for you, now's the time to do something different. Volunteer. Get involved in a community project. Make someone else's life a little better in some way and you'll discover the joy which comes of serving others. Imagine if everyone felt being active in the community was a treat instead of a chore!

Be Artistic

Give vent to your creative side. Sing a song. Write a song. Paint a picture. Start a journal. Pen a poem. If you're really ambitious, start the novel you always intended to write. None of these creative works have to be earth-shattering. Remember: You're not trying to change careers; you're just trying to give yourself a little more "creative flow."

Take Yourself on a Date

What's the date you always wished you could go on? Treat yourself to it! Pick out the perfect evening and spend the night indulging in all your favorite things. Watch a favorite movie. Eat at the restaurant you love but never seem to get to. Do this with those you love or do it alone. But, in any case, do it!.

Go Somewhere New

Do you feel like you're stuck in a rut? Try shopping somewhere you've never been before. Try a new restaurant. Go do that silly touristy thing in your community which you somehow never had time for.

Read Something Just for Fun

As academics, it seems like we're always reading. But usually we're reading for some purpose: to prepare for a class, to keep up with our field, to grade a paper. Take some time to read something just because you like it. Books are doorways into new ideas and ways of thinking. Take some time to read something you wouldn't normally pick up. Who cares if you won't remember it a week from now? You're trying to refresh yourself, and that comes from the *process* of reading for fun, not necessarily from anything you might *learn* from the book.

Get a Massage

Few things can be more relaxing than a good massage. Unfortunately, we sometimes feel guilty about indulging ourselves in treats like a spa day, a manicure/pedicure, or massage when there are so many other "important" things to do. But the sense of refreshment you can get from these activities can make you even more effective at your work when you return to it. Think of it as something like going to a conference or a retreat. Self-care is a *different* sort of work, but that doesn't make it any less important.

Make a List; Check It Twice

What constitutes pampering for me may not constitute pampering for you and vice versa. So, prepare your own list of activities for positive self-indulgence. To get started, there's a checklist you can use on the next page. But the checklist is only the beginning. Use it to start generating your own ideas about what would be enjoyable for *you*. Then set aside time to engage in those activities as well as others on the list that you find appealing.

Positive Self-Indulgence Checklist

Check off any of the following activities that you would find appealing or refreshing. Then add other ideas of your own that appeal to you. Commit to engaging in one or more of these activities in the near future.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take a long, luxurious bath | <input type="checkbox"/> Buy a lottery ticket |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Order a dozen custom-made cupcakes | <input type="checkbox"/> Stroll barefoot through the grass |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buy yourself flowers “just because” | <input type="checkbox"/> Hug someone (but ask first) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hire a cleaning service for a “spring cleaning” | <input type="checkbox"/> Spend an hour looking at old photos of family members and friends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take a walk in the park | <input type="checkbox"/> Eat dessert first |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visit an art gallery | <input type="checkbox"/> Fly a kite |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sip on champagne | <input type="checkbox"/> Buy a weighted blanket |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to some cool jazz | <input type="checkbox"/> Dress up (just because) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Throw yourself a party | <input type="checkbox"/> Dress down (just because) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take a “mental health day” off from work | <input type="checkbox"/> Write yourself the love letter you wish you’d received |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take a nap in a hammock | <input type="checkbox"/> Luxuriate in a piece of chocolate |

Developing the Attitude of Gratitude

It's important to people's mental well-being for them to be grateful for what they already have. What we often don't realize is just how much of gratitude really is self-care.

Without gratitude in our lives, we start to fall into a cycle of negativity. We see the world as bleak and without hope. We might even start thinking there isn't much to celebrate about mankind. After all, the news is full of people behaving their worst.

With gratitude, these thought processes start to shift around. When we're able to be thankful for the things we have, we also gain satisfaction in these items. We start yearning less for what's out of reach. Dissatisfaction falls. Better yet, when we're thankful for the people in our lives, we start seeing humanity itself in a better life. The world isn't so dark. We realize people are better than we give them credit for.

Start a Gratitude Journal

What are you thankful for? Sometimes it can be hard to come up with these items. We don't always notice what we're grateful for. By writing them down as they occur to us, we have a record we can refer back to when we need it. Pro-tip? Write in your Gratitude Journal every night before bed. You can record the things which happened during the day for which you are thankful. This puts you in a good headspace as you prepare to sleep, and will make for a better night.

Say "Thank You" Often

Have you ever had a moment where you just felt grateful? Whenever this emotion comes up say out loud what you're thankful for. Doing this on a regular basis changes the conversation both in your head, and with those around you.

In Fact, Say It Just One More Time Each Day

We all have our own natural patterns for thanking people. Some of us seem to thank everyone for everything. Others tend to save expressions of gratitude for truly major favors. But, no matter what our regular pattern is, we become more conscious of gratitude if we consciously say *“thank you” just one more time a day than we usually would*. Doing so also has a surprisingly profound effect on our work environments as well.

Couple Gratitude With the Mundane

Doing chores? Think thankful thoughts as you fold laundry, empty the dishwasher, or sort those papers on your desk. Looking for the positive while doing something which normally doesn't stir those emotions will make the whole day feel brighter.

Research How Others Have Expressed Thanks

Having trouble with thinking grateful thoughts? Look up some stories on the Internet about how others have expressed thanks. You'll not only get some good ideas, but you'll also probably feel a boost from hearing an inspiring story or two.

Make it a Group Activity

At Thanksgiving it's not uncommon for people to go around the table and say what they're grateful for before they eat. Try this practice at other times of the year as well. Ask your friends what they're grateful for the next time you're out. Want to take it to the next level? Create a gratitude luncheon with your friends where the goal is for everyone to talk about something they're grateful for.

Try the “Two Jars” Approach

Label one jar “Good News” and the other jar “Make the World Better.” Whenever something good happens in the world or when you yourself have an achievement, write a brief note about it and put it in the “Good News” jar. Then when you’re feeling stressed, pull out a note and read it. The “Make the World Better” jar is for spare change. •Whenever you have loose change, store it in this jar. When the jar is full, convert the coins to bills. Give the cash to someone in need or to a cause you support.



YELLOW PHASE

Do the Opposite

Indoors vs Outdoors

Some of us love enjoying the four seasons. Others of us would prefer a room at the Fours Seasons while listening to a song by the Four Seasons. Take a day when you force yourself to act contrary to type. See if you can enjoy, at least for a little while, “how the other half lives.”

Introvert vs Extravert

You may love or hate going to parties. But for one day try something different. If you’re an introvert, immerse yourself in people. Get to know them and let them get to know you. If you’re an extravert, spend a day by yourself. Get back in touch with who you really are.

Calm vs Exciting

Do you love sky diving? Do you find horror movies exhilarating? If so, then spend a day “cocooning” somewhere you feel completely safe and protected. Do you prefer security? Does the idea of taking a risk unnerve you? Then spend a day taking a few small “calculated” risks, just to find out what it’s like.

Planned vs Spontaneous

Some people like to plan every aspect of their vacations. Others prefer just to head out for the open road. Which are you? Try doing the opposite for just one day. While doing so make make you uncomfortable, it can also help you to learn and grow,

Fast vs Slow

Some people seem to live their lives in the fast lane. They walk fast, eat their meals fast, and are always ready to conclude one activity so as to be off to the next one. Others prefer to stop and smell the roses. They savor their food, linger over the newspapers, and never seem to be in a hurry. Which are you? For one day, try the opposite approach and see what it tells you about possibilities you may not otherwise be seeing.

After spending just one day doing the opposite of what you usually do, you're unlikely to say, "Wow! I've really been missing out. I'm going to change!" In fact, this exercise is likely to make you at least a bit uncomfortable. But doing so is an easy way to get out of your comfort zone and help you understand the preferences that *other* people have. In short, this self-care activity is focused on person growth, not ease and comfort.

If you're not sure where to begin this activity, start by taking the Excitement Tolerance Inventory on the next page. It will help guide you in terms of where you may fall on the scales of calm vs exciting and planned vs spontaneous.

The Excitement Tolerance Inventory

Read each statement and then circle the number in the column that best reflects how well that statement describes you. When you are finished, total all the numbers you have circled.

	Exactly Like Me	Like Me Most of the Time	Like Me Occasionally	Not at All Like Me
I do my best work when an imminent deadline is looming.	4	3	2	1
Skydiving and rollercoasters fascinate me.	4	3	2	1
I enjoy reading suspense novels or going to horror films.	4	3	2	1
I'd prefer taking a trip with no plan in mind at all to one that is carefully planned to the last detail.	4	3	2	1
I love surprises: Make me the guest of honor at a surprise party any time	4	3	2	1
Given the choice, I'd rather have excitement in my life than serenity.	4	3	2	1
My favorite social events are those when I'm never quite sure what will happen.	4	3	2	1
The sports or hobbies I like best always seem to have some element of danger in them.	4	3	2	1
I'm at my best in a crisis.	4	3	2	1
I like to think of myself as something of a gambler or risk-taker.	4	3	2	1

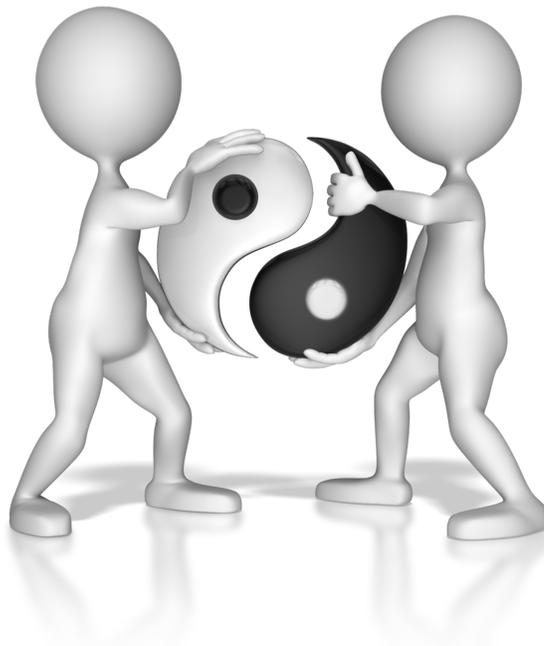
TOTAL OF ALL NUMBERS CIRCLED _____

Interpreting Your Score

If your score falls in the range of **10-20**, you have a very low tolerance for excitement and spontaneity. For your “Do the Opposite” activities, try to engage in some options that are safe but still thrilling and unplanned. Go to a scary movie. Ride a roller coaster. Go out on a drive without a destination. Choose a restaurant at random.

If your score falls in the range of **21-30**, you are rather balanced in terms of your preferences for excitement versus calming activities and for planned versus spontaneous activities. Your task will, therefore, be a bit more challenging. So, create a list with two columns: On one side, list exciting, spontaneous options; on the other, list safe, well-planned options. Cross out any that cause you to think, “You know, I might actually enjoy that.” Then, of the remaining options, select a few that you feel might actually make you uneasy.

If your score is **31 or higher**, you have a relatively high threshold for excitement and spontaneity. Your challenge, therefore, will be to plan out a day in which you know exactly what will occur almost minute by minute and where you will be absolutely safe at all times. You are likely to find your “Opposite Day” boring, but it can also open your eyes to the type of experience that other people prefer when they find your suggestions about what to do perhaps a bit too “stimulating.”



Try a New Path

As academic professionals, we're constantly learning. Every time we pick up a book or read an article our brain is making some kind of neural connection. Which is good, right?

It certainly is. But is it good *enough*? As we grow older, these kinds of connections break down. We're more at risk for problems such as dementia. It becomes harder to think, and to put our thoughts into words when we do.

We can change all this though, by the simple act of making learning *intentional*. This means doing more than accidentally picking up the stray fact. Intentional learning has a clear goal in mind. It also does wonders for your mental health, making this a crucial component of self-care. When you're constantly learning, you think better. You protect your brain against dementia. You even feel more positive and upbeat. The act of learning can even improve your heart health and affect your self-esteem in very positive ways. *Learning new things and trying out new paths is an important part of self-care.*

The best part is that it's fairly easy to do. Choose something that interests you already and dive right in. Here are a few quick tips for keeping the learning going.

Watch a TED Talk

Just listening to what people have to say in these inspiring talks can open your mind to new possibilities. There are thousands of TED Talks to choose from, so there's definitely something for every interest.

Learn a Life Skill

Don't know how to cook? Always wanted to learn how to change the oil in your car? Now is the time to learn. Ask someone who already is an expert to help you out by having them teach you something you always wanted to know but never learned until now.

Play a New Game

The very act of playing a complicated game will teach your brain new things every time you play. Many people find chess or backgammon particularly rewarding since these games are not difficult to learn but quite challenging to master.

Expand Your Vocabulary

Learning a new language or playing word games can open an entirely new world. Some people also find “Word a Day” calendars to be a quick, enjoyable way to expand their vocabularies.

Enjoy A New Culture

Always enjoyed Thai food but never knew the first thing about the country? Start digging into faraway places. Go online to find videos and images of unfamiliar cultures. Talk to natives. Explore history, language, and other aspects of someplace you’ve never been.

Have a Conversation With Someone Utterly Unlike You

We learn a lot when we talk to people who think differently from us. Join a conversational group or look for people to talk to from other backgrounds, belief systems, political thought, or cultures. Ask a lot of questions, and be open-minded enough to listen to their answers, even when you don’t always agree.

Take a Class

Look: You work at a college or university, right? There are classes going on all around you and, at most institutions, you can take one or two for free each term on a space-available basis. So, sign up for a course in something new. If you don't want to take a class at your own school, look into a local adult learning program or explore online options such as Coursera or Udemy.

No matter what you set out to learn, so long as you're putting new information in your head, you're not doing it wrong, even if you don't become a master at what you're doing. There's a lot to be said for a smattering of new knowledge and the benefits are the same whether you earn an entirely new degree or just read are reading interesting books on diverse topics at home. The important thing? Just keep at it and have fun as you go.



Brainstorming a New Path

DO YOU HAVE ANY OLD HOBBIES OR INTERESTS THAT YOU GAVE UP?

WHAT OTHER INTERESTS DO YOU HAVE?

WHAT IS THE FIRST THING YOU WANT TO LEARN ABOUT?

WHAT IS THE SECOND THING YOU WANT TO LEARN ABOUT?

WHAT IS THE THIRD THING YOU WANT TO LEARN ABOUT?

Increase or Decrease Stress

Most of us have too much stress in our lives. But what if you discovered from this program that you have a high tolerance for excitement and spontaneity? Then maybe *embracing stress* is a better option for you than eliminating it. Self-care isn't just about stress education (although it can *include* stress reduction). It's about finding the right balance *for you*.

IF YOU WANT TO REDUCE STRESS:

Simply Breathe

Touted as the simplest form of self-care there is, the simple act of taking several deep breaths lowers blood pressure and heart rate and helps you to relax tense muscles.

1. Get as comfortable as you can
 - You can perform this technique anywhere
 - But when you can, get into a comfortable position, a position that means “relaxed” to you
2. Set an intention
 - Simply say to yourself, “Okay, I’m going to relax now.”
 - “This breathing exercise will help me relax.”

3. Close your mouth and breathe in through your nose

- Try to fill your “belly” first, then your upper lungs
- Count to four

4. Hold your breath

- Don’t hold it “tightly”
- Simply don’t exhale
- Count to seven
- This step stimulates your vagus nerve and calms you down

5. Open your mouth and breathe out

- If alone, go ahead and make a “whoosh” sound
- Breathe out longer than you breathed in
- Count to eight

6. Start out in short sessions

- 3-5 minutes is fine
- Getting the timing 4-7-8 right can take some practice
- You have to breathe out very slowly
- But that timing will cause you to relax

7. Or simply try “Five Finger Breathing”

- Trace each finger with the index finger of your opposite hand
- When you trace upwards, breathe in
- When you trace downwards, breathe out
- Do this slowly and with full mental engagement

Step Back Completely

This technique is sometimes called *grounding* and for good reason. By removing yourself from the situation, you become more grounded, and can start looking logically at what’s going on instead of emotionally. By taking a step back, you can engage in more careful analysis and look at your situation from the outside in. What exactly is the cause of the stress? How is this stressor affecting you? With this understanding, it’s possible to work to remove the stressful situation, or barring that, your response to it.

Check Your Position

Your posture tells you a lot about what you’re feeling. If you’re stiff you’re probably too tense and you might want to try a few deep breaths and some gentle movements to loosen up. Oddly enough, this will serve to relax muscles, and by extension, you. If you’re slouched in, hunched over and depressed, straightening up to a more powerful stance, keeping relaxed and open in how you hold your limbs, and you’ll feel more confident and ready to face challenges.

Try Meditation

There's been a lot of research about the effectiveness of meditation to deal with stress. Making a regular practice of mindfulness or mediation will help you to calm yourself and get back in the moment. Meditation is especially helpful if worry and anxiety are causing the stress. There are many different types of meditation, some involving awareness of the breath, some involving the use of a mantra, and still others that work in different ways. If you do a little bit of investigation, you'll find one that works for you.

Schedule Personal Time

You schedule courses, don't you? And meetings? And other obligations? Well, don't forget relaxation! If you need a personal day, and it's possible to take one, do so. Sometimes we all need a break. There's nothing wrong with taking one when you can. But you're less likely to do so if you don't build time for self-care into your schedule.

Do Something You Love

Nothing drops the stress and helps you relax like getting involved in an activity that re-energizes you. So, this form of self-care isn't time "away" from your responsibilities. It's time invested in preparing for your responsibilities. Plan a trip, work on a favorite hobby, or just do whatever makes you feel the most "you."

Exercise

Physical exercise has an obvious effect on your physical health. But it also has an effect on your *mental* health. The type of energy that eliminates stress doesn't have to be exhausting (although it *can* be, if you find vigorous movement to be beneficial). Many people find a great deal of relaxation in gentle exercise such as yoga or Tai Chi. Why not try a workout online or take a class to help you relax?

Turn Off Everything with a Screen

Seriously, with so much bad news in the world, the number of trolls on the Internet, and the constant barrage of messages, we all need a break from our electronic devices every now and then. Grab a timer and give yourself a full hour free of electronics every day. Go read a book or take a walk outside instead. Sit and think refreshing thoughts. You may find that staying a bit too connected is feeding your stress and anxiety.

Enjoy Being with the “Right” People

We all need to spend time with different kinds of people. In fact, we’ve already seen that interacting with people who are very different from you can be a growth experience. But that doesn’t mean that you have to spend all your time with people who make you anxious or unhappy. There are people in our lives who, in their own way, are just as toxic as physical pollutants in our environment. If you were aware that there was a toxic substance in your office, you wouldn’t willingly spend more time there, would you? Well, the same principle applies to toxic people. Sometimes you just need to reduce your exposure to them ... at least temporarily. But spending time with the “wrong” kind of people suggests that it’s also possible to spend time with the “right” kind of people. If you’re an introvert, the “right” people might just be you. If you’re an extravert, the “right” people may be nurturing, supportive friends and family members. Find out who the “right” people are for you personally and, when you need some stress reduction, spend time with them.



IF YOU WANT TO INCREASE STRESS:

The idea that you may want to *increase* your level of stress may seem strange at first. Why would anyone want to do *that*? But just as some people need to focus their self-care on reducing the amount of pressure they're under, others need to focus their self-care on reducing the amount of *boredom* they're facing in their lives.

Dr. Jordan Etkin, professor of marketing at Duke University, says, "A lot of our emotional experiences are subject to the lens that we put on them. [Stress] actually has a lot in common with emotions like excitement."¹ So, if you're feeling bored or you scored very high on our Excitement Tolerance Inventory (pages 32 and 33), you may actually need to *increase* the level of stress you're under.

But how do you do that?

Set One (But Only One) Stretch Goal

New Years Resolutions and Bucket Lists frequently contain "stretch goals," exciting objectives that seem to be out of reach but that, with just a little bit of added effort, might prove to be attainable. The problem is that New Years Resolutions and Bucket Lists typically contain *lots* of stretch goals with the result that few, if any, are ever actually achieved. People become overwhelmed by the sheer enormity of trying to do so many difficult things. Or they diffuse their energy by attempting to accomplish five or ten goals at once. Stretch goals bring excitement to our lives when we pursue them *serially*, not *simultaneously*. So, challenge yourself with one significant goal that seems to be just beyond the realm of possibility right now. Then devote your energy to attaining that goal. It doesn't matter what you choose to do, but find something that excites you enough that you'll want to stick with it. Push your limits. Not only will you be adding excitement to your life, you'll also end up accomplishing more than you ever thought you could.

¹ *New York Times* (March 8, 2015), Sunday Review, p. 9.

Ignore Your Comfort Zone

We're often told to get out of our comfort zones, but you may need to ignore yours entirely. Do something that terrifies you but that doesn't include a serious threat to your well-being or that of others. Take a leave of absence without pay to explore new career possibilities. Take on a leadership role that you're afraid may be just a little more than you can handle. Commit to saying "yes" to whatever opportunity is presented to you even if it seems completely contrary to what you'd ordinarily do. When you completely ignore your comfort zone, you open up a door to a whole new world of exciting experiences.

Make Adventure a Priority

For people who had too much stress in their lives, we recommended scheduling in more personal time. (See page 41.) For you, however, making a conscious effort to schedule in more adventure may actually be a better option. When considering various possibilities about what to do, ask yourself which choice will get your adrenaline running and heart pounding. If necessary, plan some excitement into your daily schedule. As long as you don't make others uncomfortable or create a negative impact on their lives, stir things up for yourself.

Expand Your Circle

Meeting new people can bring you a new variety of adventure and excitement. When you make a new friend, particularly if it's someone who's very different from you, they may introduce you to new interests, hobbies, music, food, and more. It's difficult to stay bored when you're letting new people into your life. Every outing can become an adventure.

Be the Host

Instead of waiting for people to bring opportunities to you, offer opportunities to them. Host a "murder mystery party," a wine tasting, or game night. Mix work friends, family members, and new acquaintances. The very fact that you don't know what will happen (or even if the event will be successful) is part of what will make it exciting.

Rent a Car

Many of us will never be able to afford a Lamborghini or a Bugatti ... but we might be able to *rent* one for a few days. Just as you might rent a hotel room to *go* somewhere exciting, think about renting a car (or something else from that Bucket List we mentioned before) that enables you to *do* something exciting.

Be an Anthropologist

Go somewhere unusual and just study people. What do you learn about their customs and mores? What do you imagine their “back stories” to be. Don’t eavesdrop but do note any fragments of conversations you just happen to overhear. Sometimes the “real life” stories going on all around us are more exciting than the fictional stories we find in novels and movies.

Celebrate “Anything Can Happen Day”

Every day of the year has been proclaimed a special holiday by some group or other. In fact, most days have multiple such designations. For example, did you know that February 9 is *both* National Bagels and Lox Day *and* Pizza Pie Day? Or that September 13 is International Chocolate Day, Let the Kids Take Over the Kitchen Day, National Peanut Day, and Snack a Pickle Time? You can easily find lists of these lesser-known holidays on the Internet. Make a commitment that, no matter what strange holiday today might be, you’ll celebrate it with gusto! If it’s one of those days with multiple holidays, decide that you’ll celebrate them *all* with gusto!

RED PHASE

The Red Phase of the self-care program summarizes and builds upon the others. It consists of three topics:

- Improve Relationships
- Develop Mindfulness
- Become More Reflective

Improve Relationships

The relationships we want to work on in this phase of our program are those you have both at work and outside of work. Healthy relationships are important to our well-being. But so too is the ability to practice self-care even when in a relationship, no matter whether that relationship is personal or professional. Too often we get neglectful of ourselves when we focus on the needs of someone else, no matter whether that other person is a colleague, a significant other, a child, or even a parent. We get so busy taking care of those around us, we forget to take care of ourselves. But remember the key principle of this program: You can't give others what you yourself don't have. So, you need to balance *your* needs and the *other person's* needs if you want to maintain a good relationship.

Personal Relationships

Schedule Time Together

No relationship can thrive if you don't put the effort in to make the relationship strong between the two of you. With lovers establishing time together might mean a regularly scheduled date night. If you're a parent, periodic game nights or other fun routines which are more about playing with and connecting to your child than teaching them life skills.

Welcome Each Other Home

Most people love it when their arrival home is celebrated. Take note of the comings and goings of people in your life. Let them know you're always happy to see them (and sad to see them go).

Do the Little Things

Surprise someone you care about with breakfast in bed. Make sure the car has gas. Clean the sink. Bring home a little treat. Offer to prepare the next meal. Small gestures tells the other person you were thinking about them today.

Remember Who You Are

Who were you before you were in a relationship? We hope you're the same person now, only better. If not, you might want to question why you're not. Are you trying too hard to fit a certain mold? Are you holding back to keep from scaring the other person off or to keep from hurting the relationship? If so, it's time to stop. You need to be you, regardless of who you're with. Anytime you're re-creating yourself entirely just to be with someone else, it's a bad idea.

Have Outside Interests

You can't wrap up all your interests up in one person. Parents are notoriously bad at this, spending so much time in the parental role they don't leave any time at all for the things which they used to love. Outside interests are necessary in any relationship. It's healthy to do things just for yourself.

Spend Time with Friends

Much like having outside interests, having other friends is also very healthy. When you shut yourself off as half of a couple or as a caregiver, socialization outside of those roles can disappear entirely. Here's where you might need to put in a little extra effort to stay in touch with your old friends, just to keep you connected to the outside world.

Pursue Your Own Goals

We all have things we want to do in our lives. When we're caught up with someone else, it's easy to forget these. Whether in a romantic relationship, acting as a caregiver, or just caught up in being a parent, goals seem to fall by the wayside. Remembering those goals, and making a little time to work toward them every day does wonders for your mental health, and helps to remind you your dreams have just as much value as anyone else's.

Professional Relationships

Learn How to Disagree Without Being Disagreeable

When disagreements happen (and they will) learn how to handle these situations properly for the sake of less frustration and stress. By sticking to "I" statements (how you feel) rather than "you" statements (what the other person has done) and taking turns when talking, you'll get much further than you ever will in a shouting match. Good communication skills need to be practiced, which is why the next point is also important.

Have Awkward (but Productive) Conversations

Not everything is easy to talk about. At work such things as emotions, professional goals, and interpersonal conflict can be difficult to talk about. But burying things can cause problems to fester. Getting difficult issues out in the open can help you deal with problems before they become crises. Listen a lot. Ask good questions. When it's your turn to talk, don't hold back. Say what's on your mind in the most respectful way you know how.

Celebrate the Small Wins

Those major victories are important, but they're rare. We all love when birthdays, anniversaries, and other important dates are remembered. In our professional lives, the little things (sending in the grant proposal, not just getting it funded; being nominated for an award, not just receiving it) are important, too. In any kind of relationship, paying attention to details like these tells the other person they matter to you.

Stop Keeping Score

No relationship can survive when you hold onto grudges or bring up the past. Make a conscious effort today to forgive and forget the wrongs you feel you may have been done at work. It's time to move on.

Stand Up for Your Rights

At the same time, you have rights. As we said before (page 17), being assertive means expecting that other people will respect your *rights*. Being abrasive or aggressive means expecting other people to respect your *demands*. You can be diplomatic in telling others what you need and expect from them while also making it clear that you'll afford them the same rights. Being a good colleague doesn't require you to be a doormat.

Pick Your Battles

Not every conflict is worth going to the mat for. You don't have to "win" every disagreement in order to be a success. Know your priorities and stick up for them. Be more willing to compromise (or even concede) if the matter isn't really that important.

Rebuild Bridges

If you did something wrong, apologize and then correct it. A genuine apology isn't something like "I'm sorry you feel that way" or "If I did anything wrong, then I regret it." It's more like "I recognize that what I did was wrong. I'm sorry, and it won't happen again."

Rebuilding bridges that have been severed can be difficult. But, if you don't know what to say. Here are a few possibilities to consider. If you can't change what has been done, apologize and commit to not doing it again – and don't. You will notice in the following examples that none of the statements say 'you' – they are 'I' statements.

When you need to stop a discussion from escalating, try saying one of the following:

- This is not going well. I need a break.
- I would like to start over. Can we do that?
- I think we are losing focus. Can we try this again later?
- I need to get some perspective.
- I don't want to do this right now. I need a time out.
- I would like to revisit this issue later.
- The way this conversation is going isn't productive. I want to talk about it again tomorrow.

When you need to reach a compromise, try the following:

- Help me understand where you are coming from here.
- I think I understand your point/perspective. Is what you're saying ... ?
- This is making sense to me now. I think your point is ...
- I agree with part of what you are saying. Here's what I can accept: ...
- I never thought about it like that. Let me mull that over.
- What are our common goals?

When you need to calm down, try saying:

- I need to take a time out.
- Can we call a truce for now?
- I am not in a good place right now. I need to stop for a bit.
- I want to calm down. Can we finish this later?
- I need to get centered. Please: Let's take a break.
- I need things to be calmer before we continue discussing this.

When you want to say you are sorry, try this:

- I overreacted . I am so sorry.
- I'm sorry. Please forgive me.
- I really blew that. Can I try again?
- Forgive me – I didn't mean that.
- How can I make this better?

Develop Mindfulness

There's a common misconception that mindfulness and meditation are the same thing. That's because meditation is a common *tool* for developing mindfulness. But that's like confusing *fitness* with a *bicycle*. A bicycle is one tool we can use to become fit but there are other tools, too.

So, what is mindfulness?

Perhaps we can understand this concept better by first reminding ourselves of its opposite. Have you ever:

- Been you ever been reading and suddenly realize that you can't recall a thing you've read for several pages?
- Been in a conversation with someone, been asked a question, and suddenly realize that you have no idea of what's been said for several minutes?
- Tried to turn on a light switch (repeatedly) even though you know the power is out?
- Been wished "Happy Birthday" and replied "You, too!" ... even though it wasn't anyone else's birthday?

These are examples of mindlessness. When we're in a state of mindlessness, we're running on autopilot. Autopilot is the state or condition in which activity or behavior is regulated automatically in a predetermined or instinctive manner.

But here's the thing. There are times when running on autopilot is okay, even a *good* thing. What do we mean by that?

- Do you remember when you were just learning how to drive?
- Do you recall how you had to think about every individual action you took?
- How it all seemed so complicated?
- Whereas now, it often seems almost automatic.

- Isn't that easier?

Sure it is! These subconscious, automatic routines are sometimes called *heuristics*. And heuristics are great time savers. Think of:

- how we automatically size up “sketchy” social situations
- how we recall things when we stop actively trying to remember them
- how our best ideas come to us in the shower or at the gym

But now think of this: driving while paying so little attention that you don't see that you're about to collide with a school bus. What if there were a way to:

- avoid that sort of blind and mindless autopilot,
- engage in heuristics when it is beneficial, and
- be consciously aware of our experience when we want to?

That's what mindfulness is. It's the switch we can use to move back and forth between conscious awareness and heuristics when we wish to do so. Meditation is one way to develop that “switch.” But there are other ways, too. Here are some examples.

The Timer

Set a timer to alert you throughout the day at an interval that works for you: fifteen minutes, half hour, full hour, or whatever timeframe works for you. Then every time it goes off direct your attention to what you're experiencing.

- What are you doing?
- What do you feel?
- What is the environment like?
- Do you feel tense or relaxed?
- Do you see the current situation as an opportunity or a challenge?

The Sticky Note

Place a sticky note on your computer screen or office door. The note can either be blank or contain a message that you find appropriate, such as THINK! or BE MINDFUL. Whenever you see the note, touch it and pay full attention to the experience of the moment.

Mindful Examination

Choose some particular object. (Something of reasonable complexity is best.) Simply study that object for five minutes a day. Try to observe something each day you hadn't noticed before.

Mindful Eating

Give your full attention to just a single bite of food. Savor every aspect of it. Paying close attention to what you taste can be a key to mindfulness. Observe the food's scent, texture, temperature, and how it feels in your mouth. Discover something you've never noticed about that food before.

Mindful Listening

Each day choose a song you've never heard before. Listen to it but don't "judge" it. Experience its structure, texture, and feeling.

Mindful Housework

Immerse yourself completely in a mundane activity like washing the dishes or vacuuming. Guide your attention back to the activity whenever it wanders.

The Coffee Ceremony

The Japanese Tea Ceremony was developed with the intention of creating a slow, formal, and largely scripted ritual. The goal is to focus on the experience of the moment, not worry about the next thing to do or say. What about creating your own coffee ceremony. Pay full attention to what you're doing at each stage of the process:

- Grinding the beans
- Smelling the aroma of the freshly ground beans
- Brewing the coffee
- Slowly adding the sugar and steamed milk, if desired
- Tasting the first sip of coffee
- Discussing the coffee with others

The STOP Mnemonic Device

From time to time, pay attention to what you're doing by engaging in the following four steps, suggested by the word STOP:

- Stop
- Take a breath
- Observe
- Proceed



Become More Reflective

The final step in the red phase of our self-care program is to encourage the practice of self-reflection. An important aspect of self-care is the gentle act of assessment, questioning where you are in life right now and where you want to go next. This is the stage in the process where you check in to see if you're still on your life's path in the way you wish to be or whether it might be time to change course entirely.

How then do you begin to become more reflective? It's a lot easier than you might think. Start with these steps.

Set Aside Quiet Time

In order to reflect, you need to be able to gather your thoughts. You can't do this in chaos. Find a space where you can be free from distractions, where you can work through your thoughts.

Ask Lots of Questions

You need to be honestly able to assess where you are emotionally, physically, spiritually, and personally. On every level ask yourself the hard questions:

- Are you happy with your life?
- What are some areas which you feel proud of?
- What can you possibly improve?
- What feels like it's holding you back?
- What negativity are you striving to overcome?

Make a Plan

Then turn your answers to those questions into an action plan by burrowing down into them with these follow-up questions:

- What can I learn from my past that can be applied to my future?
- In what ways does my life feel as though it's out of balance?
- What are my goals for the next week? next month? next year?
- What good habits do I need to develop in order to support these goals?
- What bad habits are impeding my success?
- What obstacles am I likely to face as I pursue my goals?
- What resources do I require in order to overcome these obstacles? How can I obtain them?
- How can I measure my progress toward my goals?

Write it Down

Reflection is good for the soul, but not if you don't remember what breakthroughs you've had. Make a practice of journaling your thoughts. To make it easier for you to get started, we've turned the eight questions above into a worksheet that you can reproduce. (See pages 60 and 61.)

Repeat Daily

The just continue your habit of reflection by pausing at least a few minutes each day for a quick "self check." To avoid getting bored or bogged down, consider the following:

Self-Care for Department Chairs and Faculty Members

- Use different days to assess different areas of your life. For example, Mondays could be for health, Tuesdays for finances, Wednesdays for relationships, and so on.
- Journaling doesn't have to involve a traditional diary. You might sketch how you're feeling at a particular moment, create an audio recording of reflections, chart your progress along your personal journey, or develop some other form of reflection that works best for you.
- Reflection doesn't have to involve simply looking backward. Based on where you've come from and where you are now, where do you want to go next?

Finally, do the most important thing of all: Celebrate your progress in this program so far. Look at all you've done! Then use that feeling of accomplishment to achieve even more.

5. What bad habits are impeding my success?

6. What obstacles am I likely to face as I pursue my goals?

7. What resources do I require in order to overcome these obstacles? How can I obtain them?

8. How can I measure my progress toward my goals?

Conclusion

This self-care program is extensive, and it can be hard work. But while you complete it, remember to have fun. Sure, your work is demanding, and self-care can involve some life-changing decisions, but if you're enjoying yourself, you're more likely to maintain the process. Besides, self-discovery should be enjoyable. Try never to lose sight of that.

The good news? Once you're aware of self-care, the habits you develop during this program will get much easier. You'll notice some changes within yourself too. You'll be healthier and happier. Life will seem better and less exhausting. In fact, the next time you're asked how you are, you won't just be answering, "fine." You'll be saying that life couldn't be better. And you'll mean every word.

About ATLAS

ATLAS: Academic Training, Leadership, & Assessment Services offers training programs, books, and materials dealing with collegiality and positive academic leadership. Its more than fifty highly interactive programs, which can be conducted either in person or as webinars, include the following:

- Introduction to Academic Leadership
- Promoting Faculty and Staff Engagement
- Stress Management for Academic Leaders
- Conflict Management for Academic Leaders
- The Introvert's Guide to Academic Leadership
- Best Practices in Faculty Recruitment and Hiring
- Best Practices in Retaining Outstanding Faculty Members
- Developing Resilience as an Academic Leader: How to Bounce Back When Times Are Tough
- Why Academic Leaders Must Lead Differently: Understanding the Organizational Culture of Higher Education
- Getting Organized: Taking Control of Your Schedule, Workspace, and Habits to Get More Done in Less Time with Lower Stress
- Positive Academic Leadership: How to Stop Putting Out Fires and Start Making a Difference
- Authentic Academic Leadership: A Values-Based Approach to Academic Leadership
- Mindful Academic Leadership: A Mindfulness-Based Approach to Academic Leadership
- Fostering a Collegial University: An In-Depth Exploration of Collegiality in Higher Education



ATLAS offers these programs in half-day, full-day, and multi-day formats. These programs may be provided either in person or via webinar, as you prefer. ATLAS also offers reduced prices on leadership books and issues an e-newsletter that addresses a variety of issues related to academic leadership. The e-newsletter is sent free to subscribers.

For more information, contact:

ATLAS Leadership Training
9154 Wooden Road
Raleigh, NC 27617

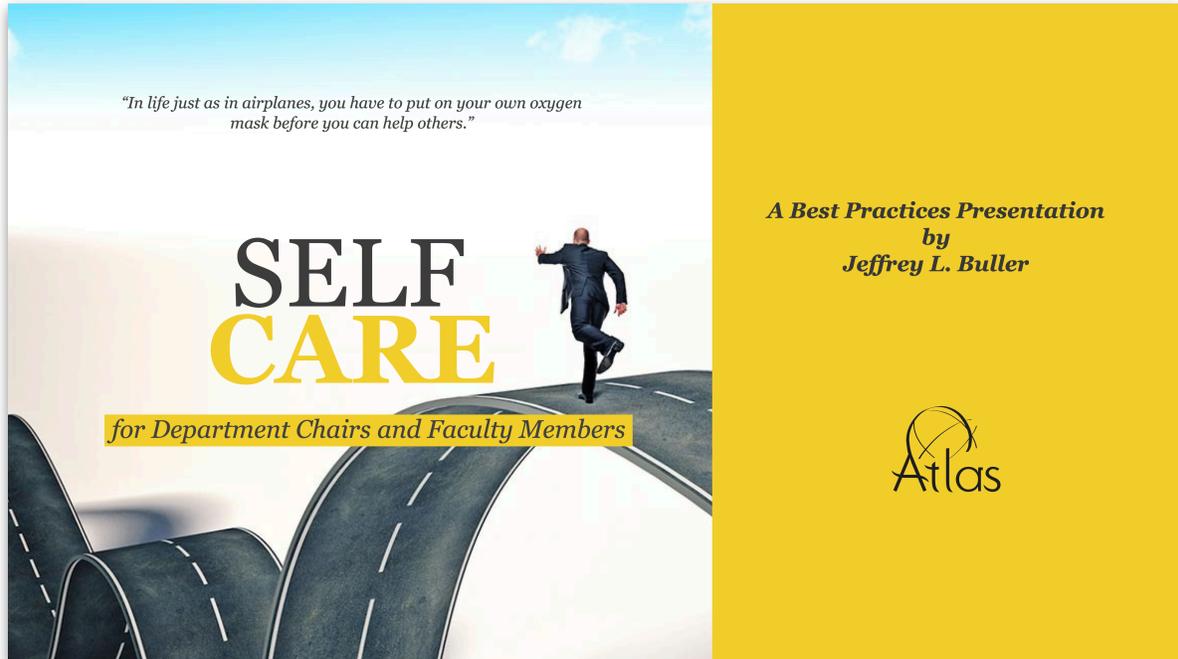
800-355-6742

www.atlasleadership.com
email: questions@atlasleadership.com

Self-Care for Department Chairs and Faculty Members

To order the full set of PowerPoint slides used in this workshop (plus even more: over 125 professionally designed slides in PPTX format), visit shop.atlasleadership.com.

This program regularly sells for \$45.00. But for participants in this workshop, the slides and workbook will be available for only \$19.95 until April 15, 2022.

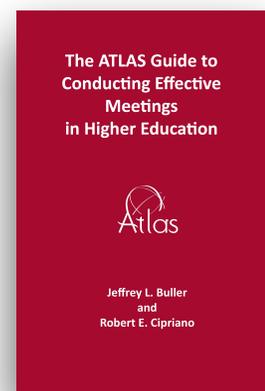
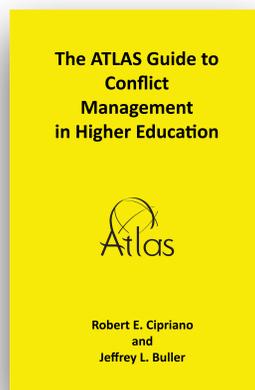
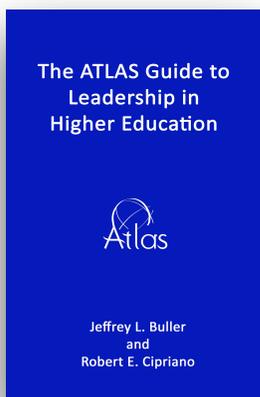


ATLAS Guides

ATLAS Guides are concise resources (usually 100 or fewer pages in length) that can be used for personal leadership development, as the basis for conducting a workshop for faculty members or academic leaders, or as a workbook/handout to be used for professional training programs. The guides include material from ATLAS's popular workshops, plus exercises, inventories, case studies, and resources for further study. Each guide costs only \$2.99 as an ebook or \$5.99 as a paperback and is available from Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

The following ATLAS Guides are currently available.

- *The ATLAS Guide to Leadership in Higher Education*
- *The ATLAS Guide to Promoting Collegiality in Higher Education*
- *The ATLAS Guide to Effective Meetings in Higher Education*
- *The ATLAS Guide to Effective Communication in Higher Education*
- *The ATLAS Guide to Emotional Intelligence in Higher Education*
- *The ATLAS Guide to Managing Conflict in Higher Education*
- *The ATLAS Guide to Career Development in Higher Education*
- *The ATLAS Guide to Coaching and Mentoring in Higher Education*
- *The ATLAS Guide to Shared Governance in Higher Education*
- *The ATLAS Guide to Leadership for Introverts in Higher Education*
- *The ATLAS Guide to Work/Life Balance in Higher Education*
- *The ATLAS Guide to Team Building in Higher Education*



Books by Jeffrey L. Buller

Academic Leadership

- *Academic Leadership in the New Normal* (ATLAS Leadership Publishing, 2021)
- *Retaining Your Best College Professors: You Worked Hard to Recruit Them; Now How Do You Keep Them?* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2021)
- *Free Speech and Campus Civility: Promoting Challenging But Constructive Dialogue in Higher Education* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2021; co-authored with Robert E. Cipriano)
- *Evaluating Boards and Administrators: Promoting Greater Accountability in Higher Education* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2020)
- *Confronting Today's Issues: Opportunities and Challenges for School Administrators* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2020; co-authored with Chad Prosser and Denise Spirou)
- *A Handbook for College and University Advisory Boards* (CASE, 2019; co-authored with Dianne M. Reeves)
- *Mindful Leadership: An Insight-Based Approach to College Administration* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2019)
- *Managing Time and Stress: A Guide for Academic Leaders to Accomplish What Matters* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2018)
- *The Five Cultures of Academic Development: Crossing Boundaries in Higher Education Fundraising* (CASE, 2018; co-authored with Dianne M. Reeves)
- *Authentic Academic Leadership: A Values-Based Approach to College Administration* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2018)
- *Hire the Right Faculty Member Every Time* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2017)
- *Best Practices for Faculty Search Committees: How to Review Applications and Interview Candidates* (Jossey-Bass, 2017)
- *World-Class Fundraising Isn't a Solo Sport: The Team Approach to Academic Fundraising* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2017; co-authored with Dianne M. Reeves)
- *Going for the Gold: How to Become a World-Class Fundraiser* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2017; co-authored with Dianne M. Reeves)
- *A Toolkit for College Professors* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2015; co-authored with Robert E. Cipriano)
- *The Essential Academic Dean or Provost: A Comprehensive Desk Reference* (second edition, Jossey-Bass, 2015; first edition, Jossey-Bass, 2007)
- *A Toolkit for Department Chairs* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2015; co-authored with Robert E. Cipriano)
- *Building Leadership Capacity: A Guide to Best Practices* (Jossey-Bass, 2015; co-authored with Walter H. Gmelch)
- *Change Leadership in Higher Education: A Practical Guide to Academic Transformation* (Jossey-Bass, 2015)

- *Positive Academic Leadership: How to Stop Putting Out Fires and Start Making a Difference* (Jossey-Bass, 2013)
- *Best Practices in Faculty Evaluation: A Practical Guide for Academic Leaders* (Jossey-Bass, 2012)
- *The Essential Department Chair: A Comprehensive Desk Reference* (second edition, Jossey-Bass, 2012; first edition: Anker Publications, 2006)
- *Academic Leadership Day by Day: Small Steps That Lead to Great Success* (Jossey-Bass, 2011)
- *The Essential College Professor: A Practical Guide to an Academic Career* (Jossey-Bass, 2010)

Academic Research

- *Eternal Dreamer: The Imagery of Richard Wagner* (ATLAS Leadership Publishing, 2021)
- *Sophocles and the Sacred Hero: A Study in Imagery* (ATLAS Leadership Publishing, 2021)
- *Classically Romantic: Classical Form and Meaning in Wagner's Ring* (2nd ed. ATLAS Leadership Publishing, 2021; 1st ed. Xlibris Press, 2001)

Novels

- *Die, Meistersinger!* (ATLAS Leadership Publishing, 2021)
- *Moebius Strip: A Retro-Futurist Memoir* (ATLAS Leadership Publishing, 2021)
- *Payvand Reed's Academy of Secrets* (ATLAS Leadership Publishing, 2021)
- *Payvand Reed's Cabinet of Mysteries* (ATLAS Leadership Publishing, 2020)
- *Payvand Reed's Curiosity Shoppe* (ATLAS Leadership Publishing, 2020)
- *Yesterday's Tomorrow: A Retro-Futurist Memoir* (ATLAS Leadership Publishing, 2020)

All works by Jeffrey L. Buller are available from Amazon, Barnes & Noble, ATLAS Leadership Training, and your favorite local bookstore.