

Teacher Self-Care Triage: Move from Crisis to Calm

SEVEN STEP SELF-CARE SOLUTION to do N.O.W.

Are you experiencing increasing difficulty getting out of bed each morning? Are you struggling with falling asleep or waking up in the middle of the night with your heart racing about all the things that need your attention both at home and at school? Do you feel like you are falling apart and need something N.O.W. (Not Only Weekends)?

If you answered YES to any of those questions, you may be in a teacher self-care crisis.

To move from crisis to calm and bring yourself back from the brink of burnout, you need to take some actions NOW. This SEVEN STEP SELF-CARE SOLUTION will help move you from CRISIS to CALM.

The Teacher Self-Care: Move from Crisis to Calm plan will act as a form of triage when you need to jumpstart your teacher self-care journey N.O.W.

Once you are out of crisis mode, you can make a self-care plan with the information you gather through the activities this week via the "Tracking Sheet" in this document.

1. SLEEP

- Prioritize **SLEEP** first for this week.
- Things may not get done, but this is a week of extreme change so that you can jump start feeling better.
- Go to sleep at least 30 minutes earlier than you've gone to sleep the past few days.

1. ASK

- **ASK** for help and make some requests from those who may be able to help you out right now.
 - "I'm having a hard time right now and I'm not sure what to do, but I need to make some changes immediately. Could you help me figure this out?"
- Have some specific requests ready:
 - Could you put the kids to sleep so that I can go to bed early?
 - Could you pack my lunch for tomorrow?
 - Could you be in charge of _____ so that I can _____ ?
- If you can't think of what people can help you with, say this:
 - What do you think you could do to help me? I'm so tired I'm not really sure what I need right now.

3. MOVE

- **MOVE** at least 20 minutes (walking can be great!).
- Try to do this preferably outside in the sun.
- A good time to do this is after school before going home (if possible).

4. TRACK

- **TRACK** your exhaustion for the week.
- Don't feel pressure to change everything this week, simply gather some information.
- Morning, noon, evening keep track of how you're feeling on a scale of 1-10.
- At the end of the week, consider what you discovered and what you can do with the information.
 - Usually some of the changes that could be made will revolve around sleep, nutrition, and movement.

5. BREATHE

- Each hour, set a timer or a reminder to **BREATHE**.
- Take **THREE** deep breaths. Inhale for 4 seconds- **HOLD** for 7 seconds-Exhale for 8 seconds.
- Continue this throughout your days.

6. BEFRIEND

- Throughout your day, when you are making choices **BEFRIEND** yourself and consider what advice you would give a friend.
- Heed the advice.
- Places this might be useful will be when deciding what work to take home, what time to leave work, what emails to pay attention to, what papers to grade, how involved to create your lessons, etc.

7. EXTEND

- Each day do **ONE** thing to **EXTEND** your self-care reach into the coming weeks.
- Make a list of all the "things" that you need to do right now or have been putting off in the past few weeks or months in regard to your own self-care (make a doctor appointment, buy nutrient dense food, schedule an exercise class on your calendar, listen to a healthy living podcast, call a friend to go for a walk or get coffee.)
- If you're having trouble coming up with things, check out the list at the end of this document on the **REFLECTION** sheet.

After your week, spend some time reflecting on what you discovered.

Proceed with that knowledge and create a self-care plan with the information you gather through these activities this week using the **REFLECTION** sheet in this document.

If you (or someone you know) are in immediate crisis, please don't hesitate to call:

NATIONAL SUICIDE HOTLINE

1-800-273-8255 [TALK] | suicidepreventionlifeline.org

How Can We Find Five Minutes a Day?

Teacher Self-Care: Move from Crisis to Calm. SEVEN STEP SELF-CARE SOLUTION to do N.O.W.

	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
SLEEP							
TRACK							
BREATHE							
BEFRIEND							
EXTEND							

Reflection Sheet

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Look at your Crisis to Calm Tracking Sheet for the past week. What self-care steps were you able to implement?

Which ones were more difficult?

Reflect back on how you felt at the beginning of the week. After implementing this seven step self-care triage, how do you feel now?

In a perfect world, what would you continue doing?

What are the challenges that you may face?

What can you do to set yourself up for success?

Given the information you collected over the past week, create a reasonable TINY habit or goal you want to move toward in the next 30 days. Write the goal here:

If you're stuck OR know that you often create goals that are TOO big or habits that are not specific enough, try choosing one of these.

RELAX

- 15 minutes of me-time every day
- Weekly screen-free Sabbath
- Keep a gratitude journal
- A daily practice of stillness

MOVE

- 10,000 steps/day
- Twice a week, do a form of strength training
- Twice a week, do a form of HIIT
- Daily movement snacks...give a specific
- Daily glute exercises

EAT

- Eat one meal per day around a table (without and e-device)
- Eat five different vegetables every day
- Eat your food within a 12 hour window
- Drink eight glasses of water per day
- Unprocess your diet by avoiding food products with more than five ingredients

SLEEP

- Spend at least 20 minutes outside every morning
- Create a bedtime routine
- Enjoy your caffeine before noon

Who else are you going to tell about your goal? What do you need from this support person?

If you would like to allow me to support you and your goal PLEASE email me at danielle@teachingwell.life.

Still stuck for some simple ways to add self-care N.O.W.? Try some of these activities!

Sixty Ways to Care for Yourself Teacher Self-Care N.O.W. (Not Only Weekends)

1. Lie on the floor on your back and close your eyes.
2. Take 10 deep, slow breaths. Breathe in for a count of five, hold for two, and exhale for a count of seven.
3. Find a new recipe and make it.
4. Give your feet and Epsom salts bath.
5. Wake up at dawn to see the sunrise.
6. Pause and watch the sunset.
7. Get acupuncture or a massage.
8. Run really fast for five minutes.
9. Walk slowly for 20 minutes
10. Watch a funny movie or comedy special.
11. Listen to a piece of music you loved when you were in high school.
12. Get a coloring book and color.
13. Clean out a closet or a messy drawer.
14. Make a cup of tea.
15. Connect with an old friend you haven't spoken to in awhile.
16. Find an audiobook that relates to self-care (fiction or nonfiction) and listen to it.
17. Start a text chain with family, coworkers, or friends and share riddles, jokes, or other fitting humor.
18. Schedule a family/friend dinner date via video conferencing.
19. Give yourself (or someone in your home) a TWO MINUTE hug.
20. Take a bath.
21. Take a hot shower.
22. Walk around your neighborhood to notice colors and smell the flowers.
23. Find a photo of yourself at a time when you felt really content. Print it (if necessary) and put it some where you will see it every day.
24. Eat a piece of fruit slowly and mindfully.
25. Drink lots of water.
26. Discover new music that you love. Play it loud.
27. Lie on the floor and stretch.
28. Sit in the sun for 10 minutes.
29. Hug a tree. Or sit next to one.
30. Draw a tree. Or paint one.

31. Collect leaves from a tree and make them into a sculpture.
32. Watch a movie you've been wanting to see.
33. Stand or sit without shoes, with your feet and body in contact with the earth.
34. Try a new food you've never eaten before.
35. Eat oatmeal, with blueberries or almonds.
36. Find an exercise class to take. Try a new one.
37. Get a tennis ball, put it under your neck and shoulders, and roll around on it.
38. Get a manicure or pedicure.
39. Spend time with your pet.
40. Get a dry brush and brush your skin with it.
41. Make a big pot of soup.
42. Float in a calm body of water.
43. Take a nap.
44. Go to sleep early.
45. Wake up and lie in your bed for five minutes doing nothing but feeling your body stretch and move.
46. When you go to the grocery store, buy healthy food, and make yourself lunches for the week. Or buy ready-made salads for lunch for the week. Or buy bags of prewashed lettuce and some kind of healthy protein that you can eat for lunch.
47. Turn off notifications on your phone.
48. Spend a whole day without looking at your phone.
49. Reduce your intake of news.
50. Reduce your time spent on social media.
51. Take a tech sabbatical (either for a few hours, an afternoon, or a whole day)
52. Try a yoga or pilates class
53. If you play an instrument, play. If you've always wanted to learn to play an instrument, get one and watch a YouTube video or find a teacher to help you play.
54. Listen to a new podcast.
55. Take all electronics out of your bedroom. Keep them out.
56. Get rid of things you don't need. Donate clothes. Declutter.
57. Wash your car or go to a car wash.
58. Visit somewhere that's outside and involves physical movement: go kayaking, rock climbing, roller skating, ice skating, dancing, or jogging.
59. Walk in a new neighborhood.
60. Get takeout from a favorite restaurant.

***Adapted from Onward:** *Cultivating Emotional Resilience in Educators* by Elena Aguilar