

10 Self-Care Practices

That Actually Fit a Caregiver's Schedule



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Introduction:

Caregiving can be all-consuming. Finding time for yourself may feel impossible, but small, intentional acts of self-care can dramatically improve your energy, mood, and overall well-being. These 10 practices are designed to fit seamlessly into your day – even if you only have a few minutes at a time.

1. Morning Micro-Meditation

Start your day with 1–3 minutes of deep breathing, quiet reflection, or guided meditation. Even a short pause helps center your mind and reduce stress.

2. Hydration Habit

Keep a water bottle nearby and sip throughout the day. Staying hydrated boosts energy and mental clarity, even during busy caregiving hours.

3. Mindful Moments

Notice the small things around you – a warm cup of coffee, sunlight through a window, or a loved one's smile. Taking 30 seconds to pause and notice can restore calm.

4. Mini Movement Breaks

Stand up, stretch, or walk for 2–5 minutes whenever possible. Short bursts of movement improve circulation and reduce tension.

5. Quick Journaling or Reflection

Write down one thing you're grateful for, a small victory, or a thought that's on your mind. Even a single line can help process emotions and increase positivity.

6. Delegate One Task

Identify a small task someone else can do — laundry, grocery pickup, or a household chore. Asking for help frees your time and reduces stress.

7. Snack for Self-Care

Keep healthy snacks available for yourself. Nourishing your body fuels your caregiving and supports mood regulation.

8. Short Breathing or Grounding Exercise

When feeling overwhelmed, pause and take 5 slow breaths, or try grounding techniques: press your feet into the floor, notice your senses, or recite a calming phrase.

9. Connect with a Friend

Send a text, make a short call, or schedule a brief video chat with a supportive friend or family member. Even 5 minutes of connection helps combat isolation.

10. Evening Wind-Down Ritual

End the day with a small routine to relax: light a candle, sip herbal tea, or read a few pages of a book. This signals your body and mind that it's time to rest.

Tips for Making These Practices Work:

- **Start Small:** You don't have to do all 10 at once. Pick 1–2 that feel doable today.
- **Pair With Existing Routines:** Meditate while coffee brews or stretch after brushing teeth.
- **Use Reminders:** Phone alarms or sticky notes can cue self-care moments.
- **Celebrate Small Wins:** Each intentional moment counts — acknowledge your effort!