

TIP OF THE MONTH

Crafting Your Self-Care Essentials for the Holidays

Dominique McLaughlin, LPC, FEAP Consultant



Crafting your self-care essentials for the holidays requires intentionality and self-compassion.

Self-care is when you deliberately act for your physical, emotional and mental well-being. Self-care is a way to look out for yourself so you feel better and have a chance to recharge.

As this holiday season approaches, here are a list of eight crafty essentials to be mindful of:

1. Plan. The busy-ness of the Holidays can feel draining. The good news is that we know it will be busy. **Make every effort to plan each day by writing down tasks and prioritizing those tasks that are most important.** For those tasks that aren't completed, move them to next days list and ask yourself, "What's the worst that can happen?"
2. Maintain healthy emotional and physical hygiene habits. To help you sustain, **prioritize eating small meals, getting enough sleep and be intentional about movement each day.**

3. Take moments for yourself every day. Stress management requires intentional down time. **Set aside 15 minutes each day to relax, take a walk, do nothing, enjoy a cup of coffee or tea, pray, or reflect.** Be intentional about setting aside time each morning and each evening

4. Courageously set limits and give yourself permission to say no. **Check in with yourself and learn to gauge when you feel overwhelmed and respond accordingly.** Your needs matter, so take time to exercise your NO muscle when needed so that you give can give the best version of you.

5. Savor the season. We are living in unprecedented times and there have been many losses for all of us, especially the loss of social connectedness. **Be intentional about making meaningful connections with those you care about this Holiday.** Enjoy all the great Holidays sounds, sights, tastes and smells.

6. Moderate Expectations. This holiday season will be different for all of us. The traditions and connections we usually practice will be different. **Do not strive for perfection and give yourself permission to lower the bar.**

7. Make room for grief if you are missing loved ones. **Create a new tradition in memory of**

your loved one such as a candle lighting or donate to a charity that was important to your loved one. Acknowledge that everyone grieves differently.

8. Keep an Attitude of Gratitude. Be intentional about focusing on things you DO have and less on things you do not have. **Write down things and people you are grateful for each day.**

Self-care looks different for all of us. So, even beyond the holidays, consider crafting a self-care routine that aligns with your values, morals, and interests. Identify interests that are specific to YOU! And remember, as you go into the holiday season, focus on those things that are within your control which can help you manage stress more effectively. Be kind to yourself and utilize additional supports, if needed.

Enjoy these self-care resources:

- [21 Way in 21 Days to Rest & Restore](#)
- [Guided Meditation for Holiday Stress](#)
- [Holiday Meditation](#)
- [Calming Christmas Sounds Bath](#)



The Faculty and Employee Assistance Program is available to support you through [appointments](#) and other [counseling services](#).

UVA FACULTY EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

1300 Jefferson Park Avenue, Charlottesville, VA 22908

434.243.2643

uvafeap.com