



# **Actionable Self Care: Create Your Own Self Care Kit**

*Part One of Two: What to Consider When Creating Your Kit*

## **INTRODUCTION**

---

Self care is a popular concept right now. It has [a radical history](#), and recently has been in the spotlight more and more since the start of the COVID-19 Pandemic. We know that intentional, actionable self care is more nuanced and more important than ever now. We also know that self care alone cannot make up for the community care and healthy social systems we all need. It can be tricky to figure out which self care practices might work for you, and how to organize them.

In 2021, The Youth Mental Health Project [named a list of factors](#) that can improve mental health. Included in this list are social and familial support, feelings of safety in a person's daily environment, and self-selected activities in each of the eight domains of wellness (emotional, physical, occupational, social, spiritual, intellectual, environmental, and financial.) Mental wellness may also be helped by medication and group or individual therapy, although this is not the case for everyone.

You can be proactive about improving your mental health by making a plan to address each of these aspects of your life. It's best to set up your self care plan when you are feeling well enough to do so. This intentional plan is just one part of what is commonly referred to as a Self-Care Kit!

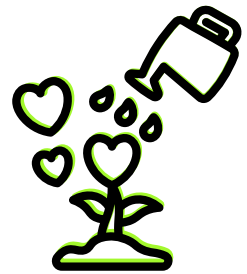
Self-care kits can support you in paying attention to your values and needs on a day-to-day basis and in moments of self-identified crisis. Self-care kits often contain written plans for self-care that address the eight domains of wellness, contact information for people who you trust, medical and insurance information, and items you can use when needed. Self-care kits are often made when you are feeling well.

*The Youth MOVE National TA Center is a program of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) under grant 1H79SM082658-01 and, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Interviews, policies, and opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of SAMHSA or HHS.*

Self-care kits can take many forms and should be completely personalized. Some people place notecards on a binder ring, use small booklets or coupon folders, or they even create decorated boxes to hold everything together. You might be interested in a more traditional binder type of kit, like the [WRAP](#) from The Copeland Center for Health and Wellness. These [blog entries](#) from the YMN Blog may also be useful for visualizing what your plan looks like. Finally, you can even find resources from groups like The Fireweed Collective that address [self care and systems of oppression](#).

### **Regardless of the form, these kits include ideas, tools, and strategies for:**

- Coping with everyday stress
- Taking care of yourself daily, and the 8 Dimensions of Wellness
- People and places that help you feel most like your self
- Plans for extra support in times of crisis or increased emotional stress
- Sensory items for grounding
- Connecting with your natural and/or professional supports



Click through to [Part 2](#) of this Issue Brief Series for practical ways to build up your self care kit, as well as suggestions and resources from Youth MOVE National's Leadership Team!

**If you have any questions, or would like to request technical assistance and consultation from Youth MOVE National, you can submit your request [HERE](#)!**