



Overcoming Roadblocks to Self-care



Without even being aware of it, many of us engage in habits that drain our energy, make us feel off-balance and get in the way of achieving better physical, mental, emotional, and social health. Here are common roadblocks as well as good habits to develop to help you achieve more balance and improved well-being.

Spending too much time sitting. Try: Aiming for least 150 minutes of moderate activity each week. Put a timer on your computer to get up and move periodically; dance during TV commercials or while talking on the phone; or line up a buddy to walk at lunch or after work.

Staying glued to your smartphone. Try: Turning it off and keeping it out of sight while attending or participating in activities—and especially when eating with family and friends. Be mindful of the moment.

Eating haphazardly, skimping on balanced nutrients. Try: Keeping to regular meal times rather than when you're overly hungry and likely to grab high-calorie foods; make $\frac{1}{2}$ your plate fruits and veggies, $\frac{1}{4}$ protein and $\frac{1}{4}$ carbohydrate; keep fruit and cut-up veggies handy for snacks; hydrate with plain or fruit-flavored water vs. alcoholic, caffeinated or sugary beverages.

Engaging in negative, critical self-talk. Try: Talking to yourself in a supportive way, as you would a friend or loved one. Express gratitude—be thankful for all that you have and the people in your life.

Shortchanging your sleep. Try: Aiming for 7-9 hours of sleep nightly. Go to bed and rise at the same time to regulate your sleep cycle (and your moods and energy); have a wind-down routine prior to bedtime; keep a worry journal to write down troubling thoughts instead of having them keep you awake!

Blurring boundaries. Try: leaving work at work and home at home. Keep separate calendars for family and work engagement—you'll feel less overwhelmed and overworked.

Failing to take vacation time. Try: Remembering that no matter how short the duration of your break or how near or far you go, changing your scenery and routine can leave you refreshed in mind, body and spirit.

Not reaching out for support when you're feeling overwhelmed. Try: Talking to your doctor or a licensed counselor for guidance to cope with sadness, anxiety, anger, grief or other emotional distress.

Neglecting routine check-ups and preventive care. Try: Scheduling your yearly calendar with appointments with your doctor, dentist, and/or specialists for routine care, screenings, a flu shot, checking for early warning signs of a problem, getting medication refills, etc.



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