

# 8 Self-Care Habits That Will Change Your Life

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If you're like most people, you probably do a pretty good job of caring for the most important people in your life. However, you probably forget the most important person: You.

**The better care you take of yourself, the better you'll be able to care for others.**

Taking care of yourself is a habit, perhaps the most important habit you can have. We neglect ourselves in many ways. This is a critical error.

**It's important to take care of yourself daily. Adopt these habits:**

**1. Take a nightly walk.** You're killing two birds with one stone when you go for a walk alone. It's a great time to think. Part of your mind is occupied with moving your legs and maintaining your balance. The rest of your brain is free to think creatively.

- You're also getting some good exercise. Most of us spend far too much time sitting each day. Getting up and accumulating a lot of steps is good for the mind and body.

**2. Use positive affirmations.** Negative self-talk is the norm. You can undo this and give yourself a better perspective on life by using positive affirmations. Come up with just a few and repeat them to yourself throughout the day. Over time, you'll be pleased with the results.

**3. Eat healthier.** It's believed that most people could stop taking their medications

if they would only eat better. Our natural instincts are to eat high-calorie foods that aren't particularly good for us. Unfortunately, this instinct greatly reduces longevity.

- Eating healthy can be a real challenge, because it goes against our nature. However, **you'll be amazed at how much better you feel mentally and physically when you clean up your diet.**

4. **Read each day.** Reading is great for brain health. **Those that read daily have better cognitive abilities than those that don't.** This advantage extends into old age, too.

- Reading is also a great opportunity to learn something new. Imagine how much you could learn over 20 or more years by reading 30 minutes each day. That's roughly 3600 hours, or 90 40-hour workweeks.

5. **Unplug.** Your brain needs a rest from the constant stimulation of the internet, your smart phone, TV, tablets, and so on. Give yourself at least a few hours each day of complete rest from these items.

6. **Sleep at least 7 hours each night.** Everyone seems to claim they only need 5 hours of sleep. Every one of them is incorrect. The science is clear on this matter. **To maximize your health and cognitive abilities, you need at least seven hours of sleep.** Some people need more.

7. **Keep a gratitude journal.** Sure, it sometimes seems like there's nothing good in your life, but that's almost certainly not true. There are plenty of good things in your life. You're just failing to recognize them. Remind yourself about all of these positive things by keeping a gratitude journal and writing in it each day.

**8. Give your body some gentle exercise each day.** A little extra movement can do a lot of good things for your body and your brain.

- You don't have to pound away on the treadmill like you're training to race up the side of Everest, but a little sweat and heavy breathing can bring about some great changes.

Self-care is an important habit to develop. Being at your best is good for everyone around you. When you fail to take care of yourself, people have less respect for you.

**It's hard to receive more respect from others than you're willing to give yourself.**

You deserve the best. Treat yourself that way.