



# Take Care of Yourself



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Content on this side is intended for the educator's reference. The information on the back can be photocopied and shared with clients.

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**Objective:** Clients will become more aware of healthy activities they do and/or can do to make themselves feel better.

**Audience:** Use this tool with clients who tend to display unhealthy self-care and stress coping behaviors and who struggle taking time for themselves.

**Estimated Time:** 10-20 minutes

**Educator Instructions:** Explain that when individuals are too stressed to do the things they enjoy, it affects the way they act. It is important for us to find ways to keep doing the things that make us feel good because that can help ease stress. Introduce the worksheet using the Discussion Starter below, or you can come up with one of your own that might relate better to a particular client.

**Discussion Starter:** Before a flight takes off, flight attendants say:

*"In the event of an emergency, oxygen masks will drop from the ceiling. If you are seated next to someone who might need assistance, put on your own oxygen mask first, and then help with their mask."*

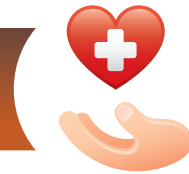
Why would they say this? If your child is with you, this might sound very unusual. But it makes a lot of sense. If you run out of oxygen and cannot breathe, you cannot help your child. This would put you both in greater danger. That is why it is so important to put on your own oxygen mask first – so that you are able to help your child. In many ways, this applies to how we live our lives. To be there for and meet the needs of our loved ones, we have to first take care of ourselves.

**Follow-up:** If you have another visit with the client and it seems he or she is still struggling to participate in healthy self-care activities, ask, "Remember our talk about being sure you have your own oxygen mask on first? What are you doing to make sure you're healthy so that you can help your children or loved ones?" Re-visit the plan developed, discuss challenges in making the plan work, and explore alternate strategies and resources needed to engage in healthy behaviors.





# Take Care of Yourself



We tend to think of a couple as one unit, but individuals within couples remain just that – individuals. How good or how bad partners feel and how well they care for themselves will affect their relationship. For example, if one partner is under a lot of stress, he or she might not be as patient. Or if one partner had a really good day at work, he or she might be more upbeat. When we handle stress well, it makes us healthier and happier. It also helps us be better able to take good care of others.

What are some things you do to take care of your own needs – to make you feel good?

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What are some hobbies you have that you enjoy doing alone?

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What activities do you do with others that make you feel good?

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What is it about the activities you enjoy (alone or with others) that makes you feel good?

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**Take time to think about something you want to continue doing or new things you would like to try that would make you feel good.**

Activity you want to do:	When can you do it? Are there better or easier times of the day and week to do this?	Is this something you prefer to do alone? Or is it something you can do with others? Who?
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

***Stress makes it difficult to pay attention to our needs and the needs of others.  
Take time to care for yourself so you can care for others.  
Put on your own oxygen mask first!***