

## A Self-Care Box

A self-care box, also known as a self-care kit or a mental health toolbox, is a physical collection of items and resources to help individuals practice self-care and promote well-being. Creating a self-care box can be a personalised and meaningful way to cultivate self-care practices, especially for counsellors and therapists exposed to challenging and distressing material. Here are some instructions to make your self-care box:

1. **Select a container:** Choose one that resonates with you and is large enough to hold your self-care items. It can be a shoebox, a decorative storage box, or any container that suits your style and preferences.
2. **Reflect on your self-care needs.** Take time to think about the activities, items, and resources that bring you comfort, relaxation, and joy. Consider the different dimensions of self-care, such as physical, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being. Reflect on what specific tools or reminders might help you in those areas.
3. **Gather self-care items:** Here are some ideas for things you can include in your self-care box:
  - **Comfort objects:** A soft blanket, a stuffed animal, or a favourite scented candle
  - **Inspirational materials:** Include uplifting quotes, affirmations, or poems that resonate with you. You can write them on small cards or print them out.
  - **Sensory items:** Add soothing items like stress balls, essential oils, a small fidget toy, or a calming sound machine.
  - **Creative outlets:** Include colouring books, coloured pencils, a journal, or any artistic tools you enjoy using.
  - **Relaxation aids:** Consider including a small mindfulness or meditation guide, a mini massager, or a stress-relief exercise.
  - **Self-care reminders:** Write self-care activities or ideas on paper and put them in your box. When you need inspiration, you can randomly pick one and engage in that activity.
  - **Personal mementoes:** Include items with special meaning, such as photographs, letters, or small tokens that remind you of positive experiences or people in your life.
1. **Customise and personalise:** Feel free to add other items that resonate with you and contribute to your well-being. The goal is to create a self-care box that reflects your unique needs and preferences.
2. **Include resources:** Along with physical items, you can include resources like books, articles, or links to websites or apps that offer guidance on self-care, stress management, or mental health. These resources can provide additional support and information when needed.
3. **Keep it accessible and visible.** Put your self-care box somewhere you can readily access; this will serve as a visual reminder to prioritise self-care and encourage you to engage regularly with its contents.
4. **Regularly engage with your self-care box.** Make it a habit to spend time with it. Whenever you feel stressed, overwhelmed, or need self-care, open the box, and choose an

item or activity that resonates with you at that moment. Engaging with the contents of your self-care box can help you relax, regain focus, and nurture your well-being.

Remember, self-care is a personal journey, and your self-care box should reflect your unique needs and preferences. Regularly assess and update the contents based on what supports your

well-being at different times. The self-care box serves as a tangible reminder to prioritise your self-care. It can be a valuable resource for managing the challenges and demands of being a counsellor or therapist.