



Reclaim
Foundation

The Benefits of Mindful Self-Care After Trauma

When an individual has been through a traumatic incident, they may experience trauma reactions as a response. One set of tools that can provide relief of stressful reactions following a traumatic event are self-care practices. These practices can provide both short and long-term benefits to help one feel healthy and comfortable again. It is important to allow oneself to experience these trauma reactions, find support by reaching out to others, and take care of themselves using such self-care practices. A technique that has shown to enhance both the physical and psychological well being of an individual is mindfulness. Mindfulness can be defined as a calm state moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, senses, and surrounding environment. Trying self-care practices that incorporate the theme of mindfulness like the ones listed below, have shown to help improve overall quality of life.



Reclaim Foundation

Meditation

The act of meditation helps to strengthen the ability to be present and attentive to both mind and body in the current moment. When one focuses their energy to the present, it prevents thoughts of both past incidents and future concerns from being at the forefront of their thinking. This change in one's thought processes can be beneficial for not only their emotional well-being temporarily, but encourage the brain to cope in stressful situations using these techniques. There are many different types of this practice such as guided and mantra meditation, that all have the same goal of achieving inner peace.

Useful links:

- [Beginners Guide to Meditation](#)
- [10-Minute Beginners Meditation](#)

Exercise

Exercise can be described as meditation in motion. Engaging in physical exercise reduces stress and prevents stress-induced suppression of the immune system. It also encourages the individual to focus on the task at hand, again centering their energy into something that promotes a healthier well-being instead of any negative thoughts or feelings. There are many avenues to participate in physical exercise, all to varying degrees of intensity. This can look like walking, yoga, sports, or whatever method of getting your body moving is comfortable.

Useful links:

- [Getting Started with Mindful Movement - Mindful](#)
- [Mindfulness Exercises - Mayo Clinic](#)



Reclaim
Foundation

Resources

Charles, J. P. (2010). Journaling: Creating space for “i.” *Creative Nursing*, 16(4), 180–184. <https://doi.org/10.1891/1078-4535.16.4.180>

Christopher, J. C., & Maris, J. A. (2010). Integrating mindfulness as self-care into counselling and psychotherapy training. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, 10(2), 114–125. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14733141003750285>

Dorian, M., & Killebrew, J. E. (2014). A study of mindfulness and self-care: A path to self-compassion for female therapists in training. *Women & Therapy*, 37(1-2), 155–163. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02703149.2014.850345>

Marketing Communications: Web // University of Notre Dame. (n.d.). Taking care of yourself after a traumatic EVENT // University Counseling Center // University of Notre Dame. University Counseling Center. <https://ucc.nd.edu/self-help/disaster-trauma/taking-care-of-yourself/>.

Myers, S. B., Sweeney, A. C., Popick, V., Wesley, K., Bordfeld, A., & Fingerhut, R. (2012). Self-care practices and perceived stress levels among psychology graduate students. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology*, 6(1), 55–66. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0026534>