SELF-CARE IS NOT ABOUT SELF-INDULGENCE, IT’S ABOUT SELF-PRESERVATION.—AUDREY Lorde

Self care is an act of loving yourself. Maybe the act is to nourish your mind, body or spirit. Whatever it is, you do something nurturing. You don’t put off taking a needed break or having some me-time. You create a better relationship with self. Here are some ideas for ways you can make time for yourself:

1. Learn to say no: So you have been feeling overwhelmed because you are in the habit of saying yes to all kinds of requests? Learn to say no if you need some time and attention for yourself.

2. Go offline: Reduce mental clutter by going off the internet for a day or even a week.

3. Turn off your cellphone: Just for a day or two, take a break from answering calls or responding to text messages. It’s okay! The world won’t collapse without you.

4. Pick up a new hobby: It’s not about work all the time. Pick up a new hobby to nurture your soul. A crafty hobby, for instance, is about aligning yourself with “creative” energies.

5. Sing or listen to music: Singing is a vocal expression of your heart. It allows you to connect with your feelings. Putting on some music can also help you to get in touch with your soul.

6. Paint: Painting is therapeutic self-care that you wouldn’t want to miss out on. The last time you painted may have been years ago, when you were little. You awaken the creative streak in you that has long been forgotten.

7. Play some music: Play the piano, violin or any musical instrument that allows you to lose yourself in the moment.

For the complete list of “70 Ways For Self-Care” please refer to http://www.abundancetapestry.com/70-ways-for-self-care/
**The Hidden Danger of Social Networks**

Do you suffer from profile envy?

A recent study has found that Facebook use is associated with lower levels of well-being over time. This is not the first study to show that Facebook use can have a negative impact on one’s mood and sense of self, though.

Perhaps the primary reason we feel sad, jealous, or dissatisfied after using Facebook is that we are constantly making social comparisons based on incomplete—or inaccurate—information.

“I want to look like a loser on Facebook!” said no one ever.

I use the term “presentations” to describe Facebook content because they are just that. “Profile” sounds too official, too real, too FBI. What active Facebook users really do on the site is make conscious decisions about what they will post and share in order to achieve certain social goals.

Researchers call this selective self-presentation. For many, those goals are to make themselves look as good as possible—attractive, popular, successful, enviable. Thus, the content of Facebook profiles is more a compilation of our greatest hits than an honest track listing.

The problem is that humans have a natural tendency to compare ourselves to others to make judgments about ourselves. We make upward social comparisons, in which we compare ourselves to others who appear worse off, and downward social comparisons, in which we compare ourselves to those who appear worse off.

For more information regarding this article, please refer to [http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/better-living-technology/201309/the-hidden-danger-social-networks](http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/better-living-technology/201309/the-hidden-danger-social-networks)

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**Fighting and Conflict are not the same!**

One way to undercut a friendship is by not managing conflict effectively. This occurs in one of two ways: Either you are afraid of conflict, and avoid it, or your methods of managing conflict render you more like a bull in a china shop than like a caring friend. Both methods may be due to a fear of conflict.

Here is how you change that: Redefine fear of conflict as fear of fighting. Here is how to do that. First, define conflict as a difference, and view the difference as a neutral entity. Second, think about what exactly it is you fear—it probably has to do with fighting, and all the bad behavior that has been part of how conflict may have been managed in your family, which you now may manifest in your friendships.

Next, define the problem as fear of fighting. Now you have the opportunity to manage conflict without fighting. This is the first step in the process of working away from fearing conflict.

For example, say your friend calls you a name, or says something you interpret as a putdown. In the past you didn’t want to make a fuss because they might get really angry. In order to avoid that anger, you said nothing. Now, however, you’re unwilling to continue to avoid it, so you say something like: “I felt bad when you made that comment because it felt condescending. Please tell me what it is you meant so I can try to understand.”

We also have a terrible habit of believing that we apply the right filters to our Facebook use when we really don’t. If you ask a Facebook user directly, “Do you believe that everything you see on someone’s page is accurate?” he or she will inevitably say no. Most users are aware that people’s presentations on Facebook are selectively censored and even inflated. When users actually view and process that content, though, they forget that part of the equation, and tend to react more viscerally and emotionally to content. In that way, we are almost always making upward social comparisons that make us feel badly about ourselves. How can you combat this tendency to self-compare?

First, it never hurts to spend less time on Facebook in general. Second, if you know that specific people tend to make you feel down, hide their updates from your newsfeed or avoid visiting their pages. If you don’t have a reason to stay connected, consider the liberating experience of unfriending them entirely.

Third, don’t go on Facebook when you’re in a bad mood. In those moments, reach out to friends through other channels rather than setting yourself up for social-network comparison time. Among all of your varied online connections, you are guaranteed to find something that will make you feel worse, whether it’s a picture of your ex with a hot date, or updates on your sibling’s perfect relationship, or your high-school friend’s inability to ever take a picture that isn’t flawless.

Finally, give yourself a reality check whenever you feel yourself getting jealous looking at a friend’s page. Don’t forget that you have plenty of good things in your life as well. And if you can’t think of one, get offline and go find one.

For more information regarding this article please refer to [http://www.counselorlink.com/fighting-and-conflict-are-not-the-same/](http://www.counselorlink.com/fighting-and-conflict-are-not-the-same/)
Yes, Men Struggle With Body Image Issues, Too: 
Here’s My Story: by Chris Tognotti

Struggling with weight, and the perceptions that go along with it, is not a foreign experience for me. Growing up, I couldn't weather my chubby adolescence without coming out at least a little insecure, and sad. Sinewy, fit male bodies are held up as an ideal, and it's easy to conclude that falling short makes you undesired, unwanted, and unlikely to become otherwise.

The social pulse of high school life made my loneliness, alienation, and self-doubt all the stronger. Knowing that what I saw in the mirror was my own fault provided fertile ground for hating my own body.

I'll never know how it feels to be a woman struggling with body image. After all, female bodies are displayed much more aggressively in our society as some sort of consumer good. I've known women who have, however, confided in me that they are struggling. I tend to advocate for openness, offering my support, but also suggesting they seek out a wider support system.

Which has made me, at times, feel like a hypocrite. I've found myself hesitant even to consider, in my own mind, that dislikes my body was worth even sharing with anyone.

I've never especially thought of myself as a product of masculinity's culture, but in certain respects, common cultural impressions about maleness have still managed to color what I believe I'm allowed to feel and express to friends.

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I bought into the inherent social value of holding myself together; presenting myself as the sort of charmingly aloof young man -- even-keeled, dry-humored, emotionally bulletproof -- who I thought would be more attractive to other people. I didn't have a clear goal in mind when I wanted to start losing weight. Getting down to about 190 (from 240) sounded nice, I worked our for a year and I'd been cut down to a trim 172 pounds.

It wasn't until then, however, that I realized the truly pernicious nature of poor body image. I felt better and had lost weight, but the doubt was still there. It was no easier to think of myself as an attractive person, because the rot of those unspoken self-criticisms had sunk to my core. I realized that the things that bothered me -- like my inability to feel confidence in my own worth -- weren't just about my body. They were about a state of mind that living in that body had fostered.

The road to lasting, positive change is paved with the amount of love and care you’re willing to show to yourself, for your own sake. If there’s one thing I wish I’d understood a little sooner, it’s that.

For Chris’s complete story, please refer to http://www.huffingtonpost.com/bustle/positive-body-image-_b_5193674.html

For more information regarding this article please refer to http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-obstacle-is-the-way/201405/the-importance-negative-thinking?tr=HomeEssentials

The Importance of Negative Thinking

*Why you should consider the Worst Case Scenario*

A CEO calls her staff into the conference room on the eve of the launch of a major new initiative. She calls the meeting to attention and begins: “I have bad news. The project has failed spectacularly. What went wrong?”

The technique that the CEO above was using was designed by psychologist Gary Klein called apremortem. With apremortem, a project manager must envision what could go wrong, what will go wrong, in advance, before starting. Why? Far too many ambitious undertakings fail for preventable reasons. Far too many people don’t have a backup plan because they refuse to consider that something might not go exactly as they wish.

It’s an important practice to manage our expectations. We often learn the hard way that our world is ruled by external factors. We don’t always get what is rightfully ours, even if we’ve earned it. Not everything is as clean and straightforward as how things may be in high school. Psychologically, we must prepare ourselves for this to happen.

If it comes as a constant surprise each and every time something unexpected occurs, you’re not only going to be miserable whenever you attempt something big, you’re going to have a much harder time accepting it and moving on to attempts number two, three, and four. The only guarantee, ever, is that things could go wrong. The only thing we can use to mitigate this is anticipation. Because the only variable we control completely is ourselves. The world might call you a pessimist. Who cares? It’s far better to seem like a downer than to be blindsided or caught off guard.

If we prepare ourselves for the obstacles that are inevitably on their way—we can be rest assured it’s other people who are not. Anticipation doesn’t magically make things easier, of course. But we are prepared for them to be as hard as they need to be, as hard as they actually are. You know what’s better than building things up in your imagination? Building things up in real life. Of course, it’s a lot more fun to build things up in your imagination than it is to tear them down. But what purpose does that serve? It only sets you up for disappointment.

With anticipation, we have time to raise defenses, or even avoid them entirely. We’re ready to be driven off course because we’ve plotted a way back. We can resist going to pieces if things didn’t go as planned. With anticipation, we can endure. We are prepared for failure and ready for success.
Fine Arts for free
As part of "Free Community Days," the Museum of Fine Arts offers days of free admission. See the museum's web site for a complete listing of which days are free at www.mfa.org

Movies, food, shopping
We are fortunate to be located near a movie theatre, restaurants, a supermarket, and local shops. Try to make a matinee movie and you will save yourself a few dollars, or shopping at Marshalls which has sales daily can both be something to do and not break the bank.

Roberto Clemente Field
Not only does Emmanuel have this field reserved for it's sports teams, its also there for you to use as well. Check out more information online for existing sports leagues. This is just another way to meet new people and have fun.

Fenway Park
If you are a baseball fan, this is a no-brainer. Ticket prices can vary but if you do your research you can buy a ticket for a reasonable price and enjoy a game at the ballpark. And even if you aren't into baseball, its still something to see and experience, and at the very minimum you can go and enjoy a Fenway Frank, a Boston staple in itself.

Free is always good, especially if you are a college student: Check out these free things to do around the Boston area.

Walk along the Freedom Trail
Get a real sense of Boston’s history by taking a self-guided tour along all or part of the 2.5 mile trail. Just follow the red-brick or red-painted line from the Visitor Information Center on the Boston Common and enjoy the 16 historic stops along the way, including Faneuil Hall, Paul Revere's house, and the Old North Church.

Walk through the North End
Explore the rich Italian culture that thrives in the North End. Don’t miss authentic Italian bakeries and restaurants, with foods like these assorted desserts from Mike’s Pastry.

The New England Aquarium
During the winter months, the Boston Public Library's free ticket program gives out free passes that will admit up to four people into the New England Aquarium. Passes must be reserved by an adult or teen with a Metro-Boston library card.

Coit Observatory, Boston University
Pick out your favorite constellation at the Coit Observatory at Boston University, which offers free stargazing Wednesdays after 7:30 p.m. throughout the fall and winter, pending clear skies.

How To Think Like a Wise Person
If I asked you to judge how smart someone is, you’d know where to start. But if you were going to assess how wise that person is, what qualities would you consider? What does it take to cultivate wisdom? Here are some insights into what differentiates wise people from the rest of us.

1. Don’t wait until you’re older and smarter - It turns out that the number of life experiences has little to do with the quality of those experiences. Between the ages 25 to 75, the correlation between age and wisdom is zero. Wisdom emerges not from experience itself, but rather from reflecting thoughtfully on the lessons gained from experience.

2. See the world in shades of grey, not black and white - Wise people specialize in what strategy expert Roger Martin calls integrative thinking—"the capacity to hold two diametrically opposing ideas in their heads"—and reconcile them for the situation at hand.

3. Balance self-interest and the common good - A second defining quality of wisdom is the ability to look beyond our personal desires. As psychologist Robert Sternberg puts it: “wisdom and egocentricity are incompatible...People who have gotten where they are by not taking other people's interests into account or even by actively thwarting the interests of others...would not be viewed as wise.”

4. Challenge the status quo - Wise people are willing to question rules. Instead of accepting things as they have always been, wisdom involves asking whether there’s a better path.

5. Aim to understand, rather than judge - By default, many of us operate like jurors, passing judgment on the actions of others so that we can sort them into categories of good and bad. Wise people resist this impulse, operating more like detectives whose goal is to explain other people’s behaviors.

For more information regarding this article please refer to http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/give-and-take/201308/how-think-wise-person