

20 SELF-CARE HABITS

DEVELOP YOUR
STRENGTHS
USE YOUR RESOURCES
— *improve your* —
LIFE AND RELATIONSHIPS



*A practical
guide to setting
clear boundaries
and meeting
your needs*

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Praise for 20 Self-Care Habits



20 Habits of Self Care is exactly what it says on the cover – a book about self-care habits and I absolutely loved it. Once I started reading it I couldn't put it down, not just because it was so interesting but also because of how easy it was to read.

After introducing us to the subject of self-care and why it is so important, the author begins each chapter with a quote related to the topic being discussed which immediately got me thinking about the subject and how it relates to my own life. The friendly, natural writing style enabled me to really reflect on how each self-care tip already does, or could, improve my life and the personal experiences she shares throughout the book also helped with this.

Each chapter relates to a different self-care practice, all of which could be easily incorporated into even the busiest of people's lives because of their simplicity. What I really enjoyed is that the author doesn't just introduce us to the concepts of self-care practices but also makes suggestions about how, by using these practices every day, we can experience improvements in both our lives and our relationships. She allows us to think about the importance of putting our own needs in front of those of others and reminds us that saying no isn't a bad thing.

The reflective exercises at the end of each chapter provided me a fantastic opportunity to really sit and think about how when I haven't put my own needs first it has negatively impacted on my self esteem or feelings of self worth and how differently things could have been if I had. Including these exercises meant that I didn't just rush onto the next chapter and by slowing the reading process down in this way it felt like the author was already encouraging me to slow down the pace I normally live my life.

As mentioned previously the author's personal reflections really helped me really reflect on the importance of self care, but not only that they also made the whole idea of self care more relatable to everyday life.

Whether you are new to the idea of self care or an old hand, this book is a light, easy read which flows seamlessly from chapter to chapter. Having already noticed the changes it has made to my life since reading it I highly recommend it.

M. C.



In the opening chapters, '20 Habits of Self Care' makes a bold claim that by implementing some of the activities from the book into our lives, we can expect to lead an improved life. I

was sceptical of this claim at first but by the time I had reached the end of the book I could see how by implementing some of the activities and ideas that most resonated with me, I could expect to see an increase in my mental wellbeing.

Often when we think of self-care, we think of treating ourselves; whether that be to something nice to eat or time doing an activity we enjoy. Whilst this can fulfil part of our individual self-care needs, the self-care habits in this book go deeper than this and are about shaping our overall wellbeing rather than a quick pick-me-up. The 'habits' are ideas that can be implemented into one's life and therefore become the everyday rather than a special treat.

One idea that resonated with me personally was the concept of personal space in relation to technology.

Technology and personal space are not something I have put together before and this has encouraged me to have some downtime from my mobile phone. Perhaps I will have my time away from technology whilst spending time in nature, really focusing on my surroundings rather than hiking through a park with my headphones on thinking that I have 'done' nature for the day.

There is a running theme throughout of improving self-esteem and I would say that this book is ideal for someone who is looking to boost their mental wellbeing and/ or self-esteem. If you are someone that is suffering from depression, implementing some of the activities in this book may well be very useful for you but self-care may begin with fulfilling basic needs such as looking after health and hygiene. In that case, this book may be the next step.

This book appears to be written from Karin's own journey of self-care. A lot of examples are written from her own personal experience which gives credibility and integrity to the ideas that are discussed. I particularly liked the practical nature to this book. It's concise but has many ideas for personal reflection (making it personal to each reader) and practical ideas on how to implement some of habits into your life. Rather than being a theoretical book that is read and then stays on the shelf, I can see how the activities and ideas could become part of the everyday for both myself and my clients.

C. B.



Karin Brauner's recently published book on Self Care is the first and only book you will need to buy on self care. Whether this is the first time you have dipped your toe in the world of wellness and self care or you are well versed on the subject, this is the only book you'll even need. Well written, with easy to follow instructions on how to reframe your life, this is a self care book with a difference.

The author is honest with the reader right from the beginning , she doesn't sugar coat the reality, that living your true life, will require hard work, and dedication to understanding yourself. That is just one of the reasons why this book is different from the rest, she is not offering a quick fix, there are of course little exercises that can be done in times of needs, but she is offering much more than that, she is offering a mindset reset, one that will change your whole life and you'll finish the book knowing yourself better than you ever thought possible .

The book starts out by concentrating on the importance of boundaries in your life and highlights the tools needed to start structuring your own life with boundaries, dealing with 'your mind, body, spirit and relationships'. You will learn how to structure your life in a way that is dictated by your needs and not societal demands.

As you realise that you too are worthy of happiness, the author guides you through the difficult relationships you may have to navigate, by not shying away from conflict, but meets them head on bringing about a new respect for both you and your relationships.

Each chapter has a different theme that you can dip into at any time you are struggling with that particular issue in your life. You are given tips for improving the situation, but more importantly how to reduce the likelihood of coming across these situations again, you will have learned the tools to deal with the next step when needed. Each theme is fully explored, then you will be lead through a series of visualisation exercises and given options for alternative outcomes, it's the ultimate learning tool.

As you continue your journey into self awareness, it will become easier to identify old patterns, and make new behaviours. The author gives you the power to say No, and in a world where saying yes is the only answer, you are helped to take back your power and own your own destiny and regain that control of your life.

Through a series of visualisation exercises, meditations, reframing and life hacks , you will learn how to take responsibility for your decisions. You will end up confident in your identity and living a life that is true to who you are at the core.

You learn how to trust yourself, after all who knows you better than you do, it's time to start listening to yourself and this book gives you the tools to do so.

A.L.



20 habits of self-care is a practical and insightful tool for anyone who wants to make self-care a priority.

The overall message is much the same as other self care books however it is original in the reflection aspect. The think, feel and act sections are good prompts for anyone new to reflection in this sense.

I would say the book is aimed at beginners in self-care, and it is a great place to start. It could be all that a 'newbie' to self-care requires. As someone who has been reading other self-care books and undertaking reflections for over 3 years. A lot of the features were what I have already been introduced to. That being said, the think, feel and act sections did draw my attention to specific areas of reflection that I had not thought of in detail before.

These sections at the end of each chapter have echoes of what a therapist would prompt you to think about, which is understandable as the author is a counsellor. I do believe that the book being written by a counsellor who has experience on both sides of self-care, witnessing others struggles with the subject, has given Karin more insight into the needs of other people regarding self-care.

Many other books are written with the author's experiences and could potentially not have the same wide area of reflection to prompt. The fact that Karin clearly labels each part of the reflection into 'think' 'feel' and 'act' means that a reader can choose which parts of the reflection works best for them and skip to those bits.

The whole book is written with careful words and is laid out in such a way it would not scare off those who class themselves as not being readers. Other books can take a while to get to the point of the chapter whereas this book is precise.

My overall feelings on the book are that firstly I would recommend it to anyone who is new to self-care as a starting platform. In addition, with the reflection aspect it is original and for a new person to the self-care ideology could replace the need for a therapist.

This could be hugely beneficial to someone who could not afford counselling.

On this note, It would be a good book for mental health teams, and NHS counsellors (who only offer 6 sessions) to recommend to people so they can learn to take care of themselves. The impact of this book, if recommended like this could be substantial.

J.T.



This book is exactly what it says it is, different ways to integrate self-care into your daily life. It starts off with an overview of why the author is writing about self-care, giving us an insight into her life.

Some introductions can be patronising but this was not at all, there was no judgment, and Karin suggests that you know yourself best. The book covers 20 different self-care activities ranging from the usual spending time in nature and putting yourself first, to ones we might not find obvious, such as personal space.

I liked that each topic starts with a quote that ties nicely into the chapter and the author uses her own personal experiences to explain each habit, this makes the book feel like your speaking with a friend. The examples are easily relatable, for instance, in putting your

needs first chapter, the example of lending a friend money, makes it easier to see how important your needs are when put in to a perceptible example of money.

The lay out of each chapter follows the same format, and this is something I particularly like a lot! The bullet points of how your life can improve with each habit are clear and concise, making it easy to digest.

I especially liked the reflection time section at the end of each chapter, it's almost like they've reached out a hand and brought you in to the book. It gives you questions to help you reflect on your own personal circumstances and how each habit impacts your own life, as well as prompting you to make changes to improve your own self-care.

Whilst I would not normally read an eBook, the layout of this book was so easy to navigate and read on my phone.

I like the idea of the printable reminders and planners, which are a brilliant addition to this book!

Self-care is over looked so much and isn't something I ever thought about until I started my training as a counsellor. This book makes it so easy to see the little ways in which you can look after yourself without too much effort. I would recommend this book to fellow counsellors, students, clients and family members.

Overall, if you're looking for a proactive book to help work on your self care then this is the book for you!

C.L.



Preface to the 2nd Edition



Three years ago, I started writing a blog to inform, motivate and encourage people online. It really changed how I worked, and led me to develop an online presence and an online network of like-minded professionals and friends that remains to this day.

The first blog series I wrote was about self-care. As soon as I had finished it, I knew there was a book in there somehow.

I sat and planned. Lots of planning was involved in getting to the writing stages. Once the chapter titles were ready, I set out to find the right stories, quotes and things to be gained from practising each habit.

I self-published that first edition, which is now replaced with a new and improved version, with the help of my publisher and the team, I've managed to make it even more than I ever expected.

As someone once told me, they understood why the first edition was written how it was: I am a very practical person, and the book reflects that. I was pleased with that. Getting awareness of who we are from others might not be the most important, but it does confirm that we're on the right track and being true to ourselves.

In this case, it confirmed that I was being genuine, congruent, and completely myself, in my pursuit of helping others gain the insights about setting boundaries and meeting their needs.

I wanted people to gain those insights by learning from my mistakes, from my stories, from my journey. Some of it painful, but all of it helpful.

I don't fear self-disclosure. It makes me human, and I hope you can see that in this book. I chose the stories carefully, to give you an idea of what you can achieve. We are human. We share similar trends. We might not have the same exact experiences, but we can relate. And that is what makes this book relatable and workable.

Setting clear boundaries sounds simple, but it can take time. It's not a one-stop shop. It's a journey.

Learning to meet our needs in a world that tells us this is selfish, is a hard one to crack – easier for some, harder for others. Once cracked, it opens a whole new realm of relating to ourselves and to others. A realm where there's less resentment, more satisfaction, closer relationships, and so much more.

I hope to connect with you in one way or another – social media, my blog, coaching or counselling sessions, or by attending my online courses and workshops. Some are in development, some you'll see at the back of the book.

Introduction



Why this book?

The idea for this book came about from my journey of self-care. I took time getting to know what works for me and makes me happy, as well as what doesn't work for me and contributed to making me unhappy. I hope this book will help you find the same within your life and relationships.

It has been a steep learning curve.

My first attempt at setting boundaries was when I chose to move away from my home country. In this introduction, I won't go into the various reasons for my life-changing decision. I will say that I needed to do it to find myself and to start realising that some of the things I was doing were benefiting others but sometimes – most of the time – hindering my own life.

I wasn't putting my needs first, and neither were others. The benefits of this were temporary. A "thank you" was no longer enough.

But how does one start saying "no" or "not today" or "I'm busy taking care of myself," when one has become accustomed to being available for everyone at any time? How does one counteract the anger, disappointment and even loss of relationships, when one is trying to do the best for oneself?

Initially, dealing with the backlash of beginning self-care is a hard pill to swallow. It might be difficult to express your newfound boundaries and assertiveness and keep strong as people challenge them – and they will!

I promise you that the more you do it, the easier it gets.

The people that decide to stay while you strive to better look after yourself will benefit from this new you. You will become a person who sets boundaries, knows how to respect yourself and your feelings, therefore

making you more available to nurture those relationships in your life. Those who may have been angry or disappointed who left you during that season of transition might come back. It is possible that no one will distance themselves at all! You could be setting an example for them, and they might be influenced by seeing how making self-care a priority has been beneficial to you.

What is self-care and why is it relevant

Based on what I have shared so far, I hope that you have a basic idea of what self-care means. It is something that some may shy away from, as society often equates self-care to being “selfish” or not altruistic or compassionate to others' needs. Something that needs to be understood is that we are worthy of getting what we are giving to others!

Self-care is a way to maintain our well-being, our health, and our happiness. There isn't just one way to achieve it. There are many ways and several areas of our lives which require maintenance. It starts with the mind, body, spirit and relationships.

The more we become aware of what we need and what makes us happy, the more we will pursue it. This is easier said than done. Upbringing and other life circumstances may not have led us to be able to execute self-care naturally.

We may have been neglected, abandoned or abused. We may have suffered a trauma that stunted our development or set us back in what we had already achieved within ourselves and our relationships.

Working through these issues is imperative to implement proper self-care. We must find ourselves worthy of being listened to, worthy of others respecting our boundaries and feelings, and worthy of equal, loving and understanding relationships. If I must break it down to just a few words: worthy of happiness.

Self-care is relevant in our lives today. It is especially relevant in a world

where instant gratification is king. A world where we can't wait for anything for fear of missing out or feeling entitled to something. A place where we put ourselves above others without considering how this affects them. We are constantly bombarded with communications and information.

We cannot undo the things that led up to this point in our lives. We can't remove things like technology. It is here to stay and is an essential part of our lives and businesses. We can't tell others how to think or feel or act, but we can start within ourselves. Small steps can make a massive difference!

Self-care can be incorporated in many different ways. Things such as going for a walk, finding a quiet spot to read or enjoying your favourite drink are simple ways of exercising self-care. We must learn to spend time reflecting on what is important to us. Learning to honour our feelings and gaining respect through being assertive are other ways of exercising self-care.

Increasing your level of self-care leads to an improved life and better relationships. I believe that when you start to implement some – or all - of the activities that have been suggested, you will begin to reap the

benefits of an improved life.

Structure of this book

In this book, I want to provide the tools you will need to develop a habit in the areas of setting boundaries, honouring your feelings, learning to be on your own, and improving your relationships. In every topic, there will be a reflection relating to what is being discussed. I will explain what each item means and how your life and relationships can improve from practising these things. I also would like for you to spend some time in reflection. Spend time thinking, acknowledge how you are feeling, and performing actions that go along with what you have reflected upon.

I am not claiming to know everything or be the ultimate authority on self-care. I understand that the best person to know what will work best for

you, is indeed YOU. I have left a space within the tools included for you to create your activity, thought, feeling and reflection. I have also added a pretty printable version of each topic so you can hang it in front of your desk, on your fridge, or wherever you will be able to see it and remember your self-care moments.

At the end of the book, there is a weekly and monthly planner for you to add the self-care activities that you have found useful. I hope that through the suggested activities in this book you will be able to develop your inner strengths, find your resources and use them to improve your life and relationships.

How to use this book

There is no right or wrong way to use or read this book. I would suggest having a read through the entire book to build a foundation for your self-care journey. Then you can choose the suggestions that will work best for you and start implementing them at your leisure. You can also create your self-care activities and write them in the printables for each chapter - provided at the back of the book.