



WISE INNER COUNCIL
SELF CARE TOOLKIT





MAKE TIME AND SPACE FOR YOUR SELF CARE



The Wise Inner Council self care toolkit is designed to allow you to access your inner wisdom and empower you on your path to wellness. As long as we are custodians of our bodies, minds, gifts and talents, we have a responsibility to take care of ourselves as best we can.

Self-care is so important because we don't do it enough and we have all gotten a little damage (some a lot) from our childhoods. It's important to understand that a lot of the toxic beliefs we hold were dumped on us at a very impressionable age. It was when we didn't know better, we didn't understand it was other people's stuff, we didn't know it was an ancestral burden that got passed on. We were simply too young. Now's your chance to do things differently as your own wise guardian in the present.

I've put together a few of my own personal self care practises that work for me - some of them sensible, some are whimsical and some are just plain fun. So set some time aside and get ready to show yourself some TLC.



MAKE SLEEP A LUXURIOUS RITUAL

In the Self Parenting 101 manual, the first thing you have to get right is to make sure you get adequate sleep. All kinds of great things happen when we sleep and while we sleep.

If you do nothing else on this list, and just focus on getting quality sleep whenever you can, you will be ahead of the game. Sleep is this gift from the Heavens, where it impacts your creativity, mood, patience, will-power, and physical and mental health. It's like being your Higher Self and who doesn't want some of that?

That's why I think that prioritising sleep is the ultimate self-care act - it sets the stage for you to be awesome. Now getting good quality sleep takes some effort, but it's so worth it when you transform your bedroom into a zone of self-rejuvenation and power healing.

Invest in a good mattress, get cooling sheets that are soft and feel luxurious, keep lights dim and low in the room, get blackout curtains or blinds to keep out extraneous light sources, keep the room cool, and make sure your room is tidy for a rested night of sleep.

How much you need to sleep is up to you. There's so much debate on that and I think it depends on each individual. The best gauge I have is when I wake up before my alarm, just finishing a circadian cycle.

All kinds of magical things happen to your body when you sleep - hormones get released which help you regenerate and repair. Your sympathetic nervous system gets a break and a chance to relax. Stress hormone cortisol drops. Your immune system releases inflammation fighting cytokines.

Sleep is our body's way of getting us OUT OF THE WAY, so they can go ahead and heal without any interference. So yeah, get the hell out of the way and let sleep take over.





FORM A LAUGHTER COMMITTEE

Create your own form of laughter therapy because it's so healing and is such a great way to manage life. When I was younger and had fits and periods of being melancholic, I formed a group which I called the Laughter Committee. I invited some of the funniest and most soulful individuals I knew. We would meet on Thursday nights and the rule was you could talk about your problems and share anything in the circle, but you had to do it in a funny way. By the end of the night, our stomach muscles would ache, our cheeks hurt, we had stitches in our sides and we would feel healed and rejuvenated to face life.

I knew then as I know now that laughter is powerful and healing, and I have constantly surrounded myself with my own Laughter Committee to this day. Laughter brings you to such an elevated state of mind that it can produce a much healthier expression of your physical body.

I read in the book *Breaking the Habit of Being Yourself* by Dr Joe Dispenza that diabetes patients in Japan were split into 2 groups. One group watched a comedy show and the other group watched a boring lecture, they both ate a delicious meal and then their blood glucose levels were checked.

Remember that diabetics use insulin to remove sugar out of their bloodstream. The results were - the boring lecture group had their blood sugar level rise high enough that they needed to take insulin; while the comedy group was fine, their blood sugar levels only rose about half that amount.

Further studies showed that the comedy group with their elevated state of mind, triggered their brains to send new signals to their cells to allow their bodies to naturally begin to process blood sugar, starting the healing process. So when it comes to your self care and health, it certainly seems to be a laughing matter.



HOW LAZY ARE YOU TODAY?

In Plum Village, the monastery and mindfulness centre founded by Thich Nhat Hanh, one day a week is designated as Lazy Day. That's the day everyone practices being, rather than doing. On Lazy Day, there are no scheduled tasks, no one has to do anything, and the day is allowed to unfold naturally and with ease. People greet each other by asking, "How Lazy are you today?"

Thich Nhat Hanh writes: "When we lose ourselves in activities we diminish our quality of being. We do ourselves a disservice. It's important to preserve ourselves, to maintain our freshness and good humour, our joy, and compassion."

Did someone say Lazy Day? Well you don't have to tell me twice. My version of lazy days are days you give yourself permission to do whatever you want without having to stick to a schedule. No questions asked, no justifications needed, no reasons given. My versions of lazy days can involve ice cream and a good book; just puttering around the house returning items to their place of belonging (more on that in the next tip); and cooking up a storm while dancing in the kitchen. It's a break from the grind where deadlines, schedules and routines run my life.

Even if you can't imagine having a full lazy day - give yourself a lazy afternoon, morning, 2 hour window. It's like a muscle or a habit that you just need to wrap your head around. It takes getting used to because being LAZY feels so unproductive and is considered a negative trait. But it's a good way for us over productive people to schedule in some much needed downtime.

And if you need further convincing - remember if it's good enough for global spiritual leader, peace activist, best-selling author and poet Thich Nhat Hanh, it's good enough for us.





CLEANLINESS IS A SIGN OF GODLINESS

Nature abhors a vacuum and loves a vacuum cleaner. Honestly, having a clean and tidy home really does fill you with a sense of peace and beauty. It's like the energy of cleanliness just lends a sparkle to the house and it soothes your soul to be in that space.

Our physical space often is a reflection of our mind, and clutter in our homes can reflect that mentally and emotionally we're a mess too. If you live in disarray, you can feel as if you are held back, weighed down and overwhelmed by your stuff.

In fact, an essential part of manifesting any goals or dreams, I really believe includes cleaning your home. It's part of a spiritual ritual to create metaphorical space and physical space to welcome in blessings and gifts.

So one small tip I learnt from a friend who is a professional organiser is everything has a place. Once you assign a place to that item, you need to always return it to that place. "Even little hair ties?" I asked. "Yes!" she said, "even your little hair ties can't live in 3 places, like the bathroom, the bedroom and the living room. You can only assign one place."

So once I understood the system, it was simple to follow and in time much easier to keep things constantly tidy. The trick is not allowing your home to get into a big messy state, which can leave you stressed out, see it as a constant returning of items to where they rightfully belong.

That one tip really changed the way I managed my home. As I putter around the house, I would just return things to their homes. "Ok keys go here. Returning the remote to the remote corner. Aha a stray hair tie, back you go!" I have saved so much time and frustration not needing to look for things. Being able to find a hair tie when I need it, is a special moment.



CLEANLINESS IS A SIGN OF GODLINESS

One tip I will leave with you and this is super important - once you decide on a place, DON'T change it. In the beginning I would change my system, by coming up with what I thought were more clever or ideal places where items would go, then I would forget where the new place was. So now I just know when I'm doing a big spring clean, I must resist the urge to create new places for my stuff; reminding myself that this is NOT the time to get creative.

Getting started can be difficult. Just do one small manageable area at a time. Start with 1 drawer and then another drawer and keep tackling it, step by step, scary drawer by scary drawer. Also remember there's no shame in calling in a professional to assist you if you really feel it's too herculean task.

Before a major clean, the kind I do once or twice a year, I often evoke the Divine to give me the energy and the motivation. I do it as an offering to embrace and welcome the blessings that are coming my way. I crank up the music and get down and dirty.





GET A GOD BOX



I have written an entire blog about the God Box in one of my previous Blog Pages. Here's the link: <https://www.wiseinnercouncil.com/post/the-corona-chronicles-the-god-box>

It's worth a mention again because this is probably one of my favourite and most radical acts of self care. It's the God Box! I love using it and I love how effective it has been for me, my friends and my clients.

The God Box works like this, you get a box, it can be plain or fancy and this is the box where you write down and put in all your worries, your problems, your anxiety - the kind of stuff that keeps you up all night. Once it's in the box, you trust that it's taken care of by God and the right answers and solutions will present themselves to you.

It combines the powerful act of journaling, writing out all the messy convoluted thoughts in your head onto a piece of paper, with the belief that you are supported by a Higher Power. It's a form of surrender and an offering to God.

You don't need to believe in God, you can call it your Angel Box, your Universal Box, whatever you feel most comfortable with.

An offering in the God Box can look like this - Dear God I hand over and surrender this worry to you. I am now being guided to the right solution which already exists.



GET A GOD BOX



You will be surprised how it cuts through the worry loop. Because when you start to worry, if you remember it's in the box and it's taken care of; somehow the fear and anxiety loosens its grip. It may sound simplistic, but in my experience and the experiences of others who use it, the method just works. You'll start to notice that solutions spring up and perhaps it's because your mind is freed and calmer to receive new ideas.

I use it for everything now, not just the big stuff, but even for the mundane and the practical like dealing with my bad Internet and non-responsive support lines. After a month of not getting through and having to work from home with the Internet constantly dropping out, my level of frustration was sky high. Then I thought, why don't I try and put it in the God Box. It worked, that day I steeled myself, muttered a prayer and you know what, I got through to the helpline and finally got the help I needed to resolve my connection issues.

Now don't take my word for it, simply find a box and put a lid on those worries.



GIFTING

This is a sure-fire way to feel good when you are feeling low. I consider it a great practise of self-care and care for others. It's a two in one solution! Gifting puts you in a right state of mind - it allows you to be in a state of expansiveness and generosity. You embody the energies of abundance and flow by passing on blessings to others.

The key to gifting as well is you don't have to wait till you are abundant or have enough. In fact because you are acting from a higher state of generosity. You are acting in a state of enoughness. Not because of what you have but because it's your state of being.

Take for example the biblical acts of gifting. It follows the principle that in this moment I have all that I need and I have enough to give. It acts on the trust that you will be taken care of. And it's not about how much too. The smallest amount as an offering can be multiplied in blessings.

When you give, you feel wonderful. You feel purposeful and that act has great meaning to you and the recipient. No matter how bad you feel, there's always something you can give to someone else. I have often witnessed my mother who would cook up a storm and then gift her neighbours delicious meals. That definitely generated so much good will amongst the residents and they would exchange it for car rides for my mother or in turn gift her a meal when they were preparing food. It created a wonderful sense of community as neighbours looking out for each other. The tokens of appreciation and exchange are small - a mango that's sweet, a delicious cup of coffee, a sweet treat from the bakery. But the thought and the energy behind it is priceless.





LOVE ME A FIRE RITUAL



Fire rituals are my personal favourite kind of rituals. There's something mystical when you burn and release slips of paper that you've written on, watching the flames engulf it, turning it to ash, seeing the sacred smoke rise into the air, carrying your prayers to the Heavens.

For me once my God Box is filled, I burn what's in the Box and trust that I am free now and all challenges are handled and Divine solutions are heading my way.

I do fire rituals during the full moon for release, or when I feel as if I want to let go of an old habit or belief. Sometimes they are fancy complete with candles, essential oils, flowers, and sometimes they are utilitarian, I forgo all the niceties and just scrawl on a piece of paper and burn it. So these tips really are somethings to look out for if you are looking to add a good old fire ritual as part of your toolkit.

While these might seem obvious to some, they were not obvious to me.



LOVE ME A FIRE RITUAL



1



Make sure you are not holding your fire ritual in a windy outdoor location. This happened to me when I was by the beach and I brought my little cauldron. Using a windproof lighter I did a fire ritual and one of the embers from the paper caught on my clothes. Oooops. Which reminds me of my 2nd point...



2



Don't wear your favourite clothes to a fire ritual. Unless you want to practise honing your detachment skills, I would say leave your nice stylish clothes at home to avoid any fashion mishaps.



3



Try and find a place that's near to a source of water. Just in case something gets out of hand. Because sometimes you never know when you are releasing something that really wants to get released, it can create a big whoosh of a fireball. So this happened to me and I was so startled that I dropped the burning paper on my altar. So now I tend to do it near a sink to just be near water in case I need to douse out the flames.



4



Don't leave until the burning ritual is done. I read one time that the fire elemental guardians do not like to be ignored and if you don't watch it with respect, reverence and care, it will make its presence known. So don't leave the fire ritual unattended till it's fully burnt down and you've closed it with a closing prayer.

So now you are ready to SAFELY...

"Set your life on fire. Seek those who fan your flames," Rumi



LET'S CONNECT



I would love to hear from you and do let me know if you have tried out any of the Self Care rituals. I'm here to support you on your journey to wellness and encourage you every step of the way.

Find me on Instagram @ Wise Inner Council

Or email at: AskMe@wiseinnercouncil.com



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