

## Top 10 Tips for Teacher Self-Care

We know how much teachers give of themselves each and every day. Teaching is one of those professions that doesn't have a hard stop at the end of the day. Whether it is caring for a student's academic growth or their personal wellness, often the TLC goes far into the evening or begins in the early morning hours.

Yet balance is crucial to avoid feeling demoralized or burnt out. Here are ten tips to make sure that you put YOUR well-being top of mind ... at least every once and a while.

- 1 Hydrate** – It's one of those reminders that can't be stressed enough ... drink more water. The opinions vary as to how many ounces, but a good rule of thumb is to drink  $\frac{1}{2}$  an ounce to a full ounce for each pound of your weight! Water helps your health overall, as dehydration can cause overheating, lead to constipation, and result in mood changes.



- 2 Make something** – There is an innate satisfaction in making something come to fruition. So get busy, whether that be trying a new recipe in the kitchen, drawing a picture, knitting a new cozy article, or building with LEGOs. Use visualization techniques to help make your idea a reality.

- 3 Create lists** – Make lists! These can be "to-do" lists or just notes of gratitude. But lists can help us "reattach" each day to our goals, and move forward with purpose. Lists or bullet journals are a great way to start reflecting on your day to day habits and health.



- 4 Go for a walk** – Always a good form of exercise, a walk can provide the needed stretch and steps as well as a dose of fresh air and vitamin D. Like a catnap, a short daily walk is better than no walk at all!

- 5 Embrace your inner child** – Ask yourself what you would tell a child to do in your situation, and then go follow that advice! In other words ... Go play! Get outside and run around, ride a bike, or simply soar on a swing.



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- 6 Phone a friend** – It gets quite easy to curl inwards when we are overwhelmed. Make it a point to schedule time to see or at least chat with a friend. In today's digital world, a video call can do wonders in terms of connecting with someone you love and who loves you back!
- 7 Reward yourself** – While teachers are the best sticker givers, they so often don't acknowledge their own good deeds! Figure out what token is your reward for a job well done. What is your preferred pat on the back? Maybe it is time with a good book or zoning out with a favorite TV show. Perhaps it is a special snack or a specific "me" time activity.
- 8 Get your hands dirty** – Teachers are natural nurturers, so turn some of that attention to a garden or set of potted plants. Try growing a plant from seeds or from a cutting. Or simply plant some flowers to bloom on your windowsill, rooftop, or in your yard.
- 9 Follow the good** – Social media can have its downfalls, but there is goodness to be found, whether that is in silly animal videos or feel-good moments from accounts like @GoodNewsMovement. Be picky about who or what you follow so that your Insta-moments are filled with Insta-optimism.
- 10 Just breathe** – You may not be ready to embrace meditating, but simple breathing exercises can help be mindful of what you, yourself, needs. Search online for a variety of techniques to try. Such simple yet intentional breathing exercises can help you find your center, regulate your emotions, lower your heart rate, and reset your outlook.

