



## REMEMBER

- Self-care needs to be more than a band aid. Think about choosing rhythms for living, ways of thinking and patterns of relating that provide regular breathing space.
- The things that kept you healthy at home may not be available at camp but thinking creatively can help you replicate what you already know works for you.
- Everyone is different. Your way of caring for yourself does not need to be the same as anyone else's. Self-care might look like putting time aside to get some practical tasks completed, having a shower, asking for help, spending time with friends, writing in a journal, saying something kind on purpose, or drinking lots of water.
- The practice of self-care is not selfish! It offers us the capacity to be the very best we can be for the people in our lives.
- Self-care is a spiritual responsibility since "we are not our own; we were bought with a price..." (1Cor 6:19-20). Glorifying God with our bodies means taking care of what he paid dearly to possess.



## RECOGNIZE

- Self-care isn't a solution to the problem of tiredness or burnout at camp. It's about living daily with good theology. Self-care protects our spirit, soul, mind and body - and generally doesn't happen without intentionality.
- The demands of camp can push people to the point of exhaustion. That has been seen as a badge of honour at worst and acceptable damage at best - but this is changing in the industry. Camps are recognizing that staff who are overtired and overwhelmed make bad decisions that put relationships, programs and sometimes lives at risk.
- At camp it feels like each day has a limited number of hours and unlimited number of options to fill them. Self care may require pushing back against FOMO and sometimes that feels like a loss.
- Self-care is a discipline. It requires tough mindedness, a deep and personal understanding of your priorities, and a respect for both yourself and the people you choose to spend your time with.



## RESPOND

- **Start on the right foot.** Before camp begins, ask yourself: "What do I value in relationships? How can I practice these values in my relationship with myself this summer? What will I need to ask from the systems I engage with in order to practice caring for myself well this summer?"
- **Practice prevention.** What are your particular warning signs for growing stress? What regular practices/habits are in place when you are at your best? When and why will you most likely overdo things? Write your answers in a place you will see daily this summer.
- **Take care of the small things.** Commit to a daily plan for each area of your being: your body (drinking water, eating healthy), your mind (having a deeper conversation, soaking in nature), your heart (practicing intentional kindness or gratefulness), and your spirit (stopping and surrendering, breathing a repeated prayer).
- **H.A.L.T.** When you're feeling out of sorts, check yourself in these areas: Are you Hungry? Are you Angry? Are you Lonely? Are you Tired? Make a plan to address what needs your attention.

- **Find your space.** Figure out a space or two on camp that is calming and comfortable, Make that the space you go to when you need to recharge.
- **Protect your time.** Guard your self-care time like you would an important appointment with a friend. Often self-care can get pushed to the wayside because we are at camp to care for others but we can't do that well if we don't care for ourselves.



SELF-CARE AT CAMP



## RESOURCES

- [themighty.com/topic/mental-health/what-self-care-really-involves/](https://themighty.com/topic/mental-health/what-self-care-really-involves/) - Helpful overview of what self-care is and isn't.
- [lindsaybraman.com/deep-self-care/](https://lindsaybraman.com/deep-self-care/) - A look at building long-term self-care
- [selfcareseeker.com/motivation-for-self-care/](https://selfcareseeker.com/motivation-for-self-care/) - Tips and Tricks for building self-care into your life.
- [www.camphacker.tv/first-class-counsellors/2019/04/mental-health-for-camp-staff](https://www.camphacker.tv/first-class-counsellors/2019/04/mental-health-for-camp-staff) - A helpful podcast on camp and mental health, taking breaks and self-care.