



MY SELF-CARE PLAN

Planning our self-care is a proactive step to looking after our mental and emotional wellbeing. You may like to use this format, or you might already have something that you prefer. This activity is of course completely voluntary. As a person with a lived experience of suicide, choosing to engage in suicide prevention activities and sharing your very personal insights, perspectives and expertise, is a decision that deserves careful consideration.

We know that those of us who have lived experience also have developed incredible resilience and heightened insight into our own emotional wellbeing. Our desire to help others can however sometimes lead to us giving a lot of ourselves to others, which needs to be proactively managed and reviewed.

We also understand that a lived experience of suicide never leaves us, and that we can experience different emotions of varying intensity throughout any given time period. We may experience these reactions while preparing to be involved, while participating, or even in the days or weeks afterwards.

So, it is really important that we take time to identify anything that may be potentially emotionally confronting or that elicits a strong emotional responses, and plan to manage them. Furthermore, accepting that we live in a world of multiple stressors, not just our contribution through our lived experience, it is equally helpful to have some strategies in place to manage daily stress levels.

We don't plan for a fire when the fire breaks out, we have a plan in place and it is reviewed regularly. And so, it is for ourselves . . . the time to plan for our self-care is before we actually need to activate it!

PLEASE CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

What impact has talking about your lived experience of suicide had on you mentally, emotionally, physically in recent times?





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Are there particular times when you know you feel more vulnerable? (specific dates, times of year)

Are you aware of any particular words, conversations, components of your lived experience story, or anything else that can be emotionally confronting for you?

How will you know that you are becoming stressed or distressed? (think back to a time when you were, and consider what symptoms may have been visible in hindsight)





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Three positive coping strategies I can use if I feel stress or distress building:

- 1
- 2
- 3

Examples: Write in a journal; call a friend/family member/mental health professional; connect with the natural world/environment.

Three things I can do to relax:

- 1
- 2
- 3

Examples: Do some physical activity; watch a film; meditate; cook; read.

Three people, professionals, services, and/or friends I can talk to if I need to talk:

- 1
- 2
- 3

Examples: Lifeline. Ensure that one of the people listed is someone you feel comfortable calling at 2am in the morning, without hesitation.





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Here is a space for your thoughts/observations over the next few months that may be useful when you review your Self-Care Plan every 6 months.

A large, empty rectangular area with a light grey gradient background, intended for writing a self-care plan.

