## VivMcG

# 3 STEPS TO CREATING YOUR OWN SELF-CARE ROUTINE

"Self-care" is the art of taking care of one's self.

It's described in the English Oxford Dictionary as "The practice of taking an active role in protecting one's own well-being and happiness, in particular during periods of stress."

So now we know what self-care is, my question to you is do you practice self-care in your everyday life?

My guess is "probably not".
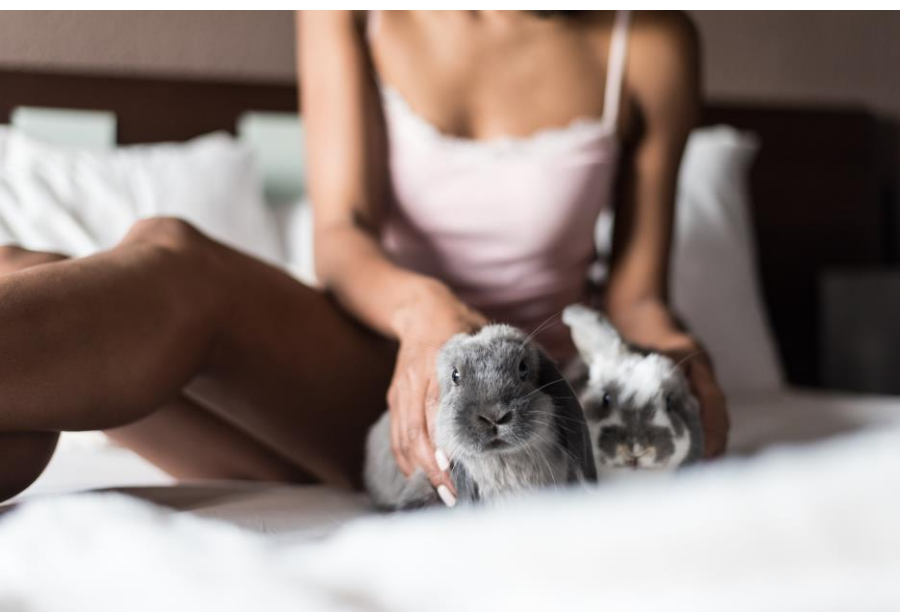
Why?

Well, we're so busy looking after everyone else around us: our family, our pets, even our friends, that we've forgotten to take care of the person who should matter the most, ourself.

And not only have we forgotten to take care of ourself, often we've even forgotten *how* to take care of ourself.

But that needs to change.
Now.

Because if you don't start to take care of yourself first, before long you'll not have the energy, motivation or ability to take care of anyone else in your life when they really need you.

Thankfully the road to creating a self-care routine is not a difficult road.

All it requires is an inquisitive mind, some self-discipline and building a few boundaries here and there…

… and before long your self will be taking priority.

You'll feel happier.
You'll be a more fun person to be around.
Your personal boundaries will be honoured.
And you'll have more energy, more motivation, and more fun.
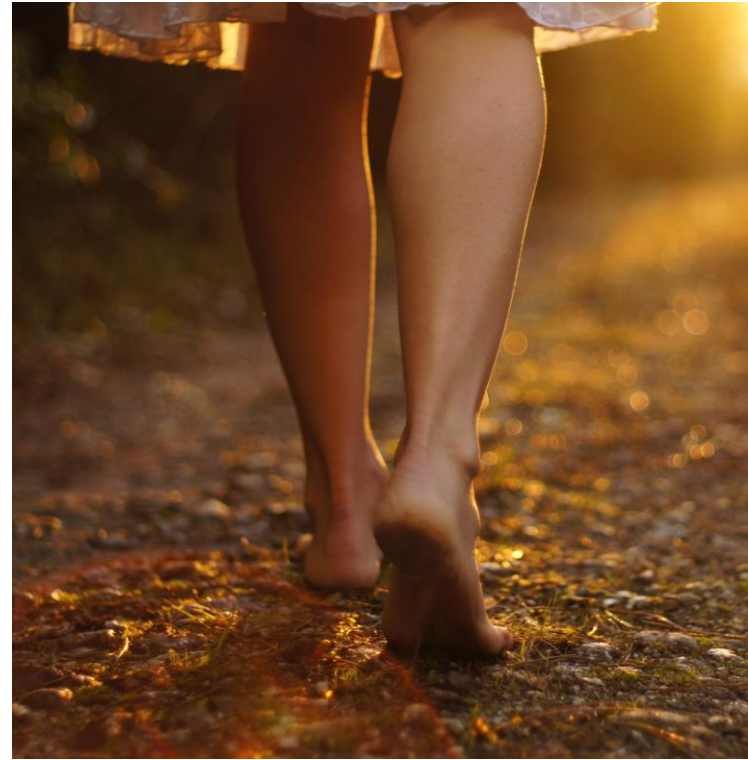
And what's best about creating a self-care routine is that it involves only 3 simple steps.

Imagine yourself like a glass full of water.

Everytime someone needs something from you, it's like they take a slurp of water from your glass.

Your friend calls and needs a shoulder to cry on, or your neighbour asks you to look after their plants while they're on holiday, or your sister wants you to babysit her kids.

Before you know it your glass is empty. Have you ever tried pouring water from an empty glass?

## You can't avoid the demands life places on you but you need to keep your glass filled so you can deal with them

And that means making yourself your priority.

Taking a day off as me-time (or even an hour to start with) means that you can replenish your glass and keep it full. And never apologise for doing so.

If you don't take time off for yourself, to replenish, and you fall ill meaning you simply can't help your friend, your neighbour or your sibling, do you think they'll cope? Do you think they'll find an alternative? Of course they will.

So never apologise for putting yourself first.

My husband has a bath every Saturday evening. No matter what our plans are for the weekend, he will make sure that on the Saturday he is back home on time for his weekly bath.

Every Thursday morning, for as long as I can remember, my Mum has gone to the hairdresser's to have her hair 'set'.

For both it's a ritual, a non-negotiable, something that's set in their agenda

## What do you enjoy doing? What makes you feel good?

Do you love being in nature? Then introduce walking into your daily routine.

Is music your passion? Then take up an instrument and attend lessons or pop down to a weekly Zumba class and let your hair down.

If your life is always buzzing how about introducing a bit of quiet-time? Perhaps begin your day with a 15-minute meditation or some yoga.

Find something that makes your heart sing, something you look forward to and make that your non-negotiable… and tell those in your life about it.

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As with any goal, in order to successfully introduce self-care into your daily/weekly routine, you have to turn it into a habit.

And this is why, in Step 2, I encourage you to do something that you truly enjoy, something that makes your heart sing.

Because if you don't absolutely love the thing that you've planned to do during the time you've set aside for yourself, turning it into a habit will be a challenge.

## Tips to Make Your New Habit Stick

To help you on your way to creating your self-care habit, here are a few of my tips:

- Commit to it every single day for 30 days

- Start simple and build up slowly - if you want to introduce meditating into your self-care routine, for example, start with 5 minutes and build up gradually

- Set yourself reminders – after about 2 weeks you can easily forget/neglect your new-found routine so set yourself daily alarms on your computer or on your phone, or block out time in your agenda every day

- Stay consistent – if you want to start walking, go out for your walk at the same time every day

- Practise forgiveness – you may not successfully create your new self-care habit first time around, but if you fall off the band wagon, forgive yourself and jump back on

# 3 Steps to Creating Your
# Self-Care Routine Summary

Step 1: Make Yourself your Priority and Never Apologise for Doing So

Step 2: Find Something You Enjoy and Make It a Non-Negotiable

Step 3: Turn It Into a Habit:

- Commit to it every day for 30 days

- Start simple and build up slowly

- Set yourself reminders

- Stay consistent

- Practise forgiveness

# And Before Long You'll Feel
# the Positive Benefits of Self-Care