



## Lesson 4: SELF CARE

**SEL Competencies:** Self Awareness (Recognizing Strength)  
Self-Management (Impulse Control)  
Resilience (Coping)

**Aim:** Students will self-assess their present capacity for self-care. Students will also name what may challenge their ability to provide that self-care.

### Preparations:

- Read over the grounding meditation and practice it yourself
- Print out enough “Self-Care Wheel” worksheets for your students, and fill one out for yourself to share as an example (see supplemental materials)
- Have writing utensils and markers available for students to mark their wheel, and color code it if they desire

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**Introduction:** *“During Miss Kendra time we do a lot of reflecting about ourselves and events that have happened to us (or our families) that have been outside of our control. We do a lot of talking and thinking about our past. This month we’ve also been focusing on the future. All this future and past talk can help us to learn and heal, but things can feel overwhelming sometimes. Today, we are going to pivot and explore the present. How are you all taking care of yourselves today, maybe even in the midst of hard times? Do you feel like you know how to take care when things get stressful? Well, today we are going to recognize that life can get in the way and share ideas about how to take care of ourselves, and support one another when it does!”*

*“Before we begin, I am going to walk you through a brief grounding meditation practice. Meditation, if practiced consistently, can allow your body and mind to settle in the present moment and bring you back to your breath, which ultimately allows you to take care by calming your nervous system. It’s a practice you can do alone or in the company of many- anywhere at any time. Does anyone already have a practice like this?”* (Wait for head nods, shakes, etc. - then begin)

### Grounding Meditation

*“First, settle into your chair. Shift your weight from side to side, and if you are able, place both feet flat on the floor. Now, let your body become still. If you are comfortable with closing your eyes, you can close them. If you have a hard time closing your eyes- that’s ok- instead try to loosely focus your gaze on an object toward the front of the room. Loose focus means that any images in front of you are kind of fuzzy- maybe your eyes are half-way shut.”*

*"Begin to pay attention to your breath, the inhales and the exhales (wait for about 15 seconds in silence).*

*If you can, inhale through your nose for a count of three, 1, 2, 3, and exhale out your mouth for a count of three, 1, 2, 3.*

*At some point you will lose focus on your breath (we all do!). If you catch yourself starting to get distracted by thoughts about what's for dinner, things you have to do, places you'd rather be, or whatever..., just notice that you got caught up in thinking, and without scolding yourself, bring yourself back to your breath."*

*Let's keep doing those 1, 2, 3 inhale-exhale breaths five times by ourselves in silence.*

*Begin to wiggle your toes inside your shoes and move your heels up and down. Shift your weight from side-to-side as we did before and gently open your eyes.*

*Come back to settle on me for a moment. Now, look around the room and try to make eye contact with three people. If and when you do, let your eyes give acknowledgement to one another.*

*We should now all be in a self-care mind-set! Let's assess."*



**TIP!** *If there are giggles or lots of movement, you can verbally acknowledge that it can feel different or weird to be still intentionally like this and that this kind of practice is not easy. Coach the students to come back to their breath.*

### **Self Care Wheel - Art Exploration**

1. Explain to students that they are going to take about 10 minutes to fill out a self-care assessment that will measure the abundance and/or absence of eight categories of self-care in their lives.
2. Before passing out the material to fill out assessments, hold your example up to the class or put on a projector.
3. Share a category that you are doing well in, and one that you want to work on. Show how the wheel is balanced or unbalanced and utilize the metaphor of a bicycle wheel to explain self-care:
  - a. If the wheel is uneven your bicycle ride might be bumpy and uncomfortable, in fact, the bike may fall over! We want to strive to have our wheels (and ourselves) in balance—or at the very least, recognize the imbalance and work towards that circle.
  - b. Explain that in life, we move through rhythms when we may be out of balance, and other times, everything seems synchronistic. This activity is not to place judgement. It is done for us to gain awareness and guide us

to make healthy choices for ourselves.

4. Pass out the writing utensils, colors and self care wheel worksheets to each student.
5. Read directions and have students take 10 minutes to assess themselves and color in their wheels.

### Discussion Questions:



- What did you notice about the balance of your wheel? How would your bicycle ride? Smooth ride? Bumpy? Would you fall right over?
- What are some categories that you are strong in?
- What is your favorite self-care strategy?
- What are some categories you might need to pay special attention to?
- What are some things that might be getting in the way of your self care?



- What are some ways that you help support others when they are struggling?
- What are ways that you can remind yourself to take care?
- What are some things that you've learned from family or friends about self-care?

### Closing - Self Care Strategy

*“Self-care is so important! I hope that you were able to learn some things about yourself today. To end, let’s all share-out one self-care strategy that we’d like to try- maybe something that we learned from one of our classmates today- or an idea that you had while taking the assessment.”*

# Self-Care Wheel

Shade in each part of the self-care wheel according to how much you're able to prioritize it.

- 5 = I make sure to do this every day.
- 4 = I make sure to do this once a week.
- 3 = I try to do this once a month.
- 2 = I try to do this but not as often as I would like.
- 1 = I never get to do this.



Doing Things Just for Fun



Exercising



Spending Time with Friends



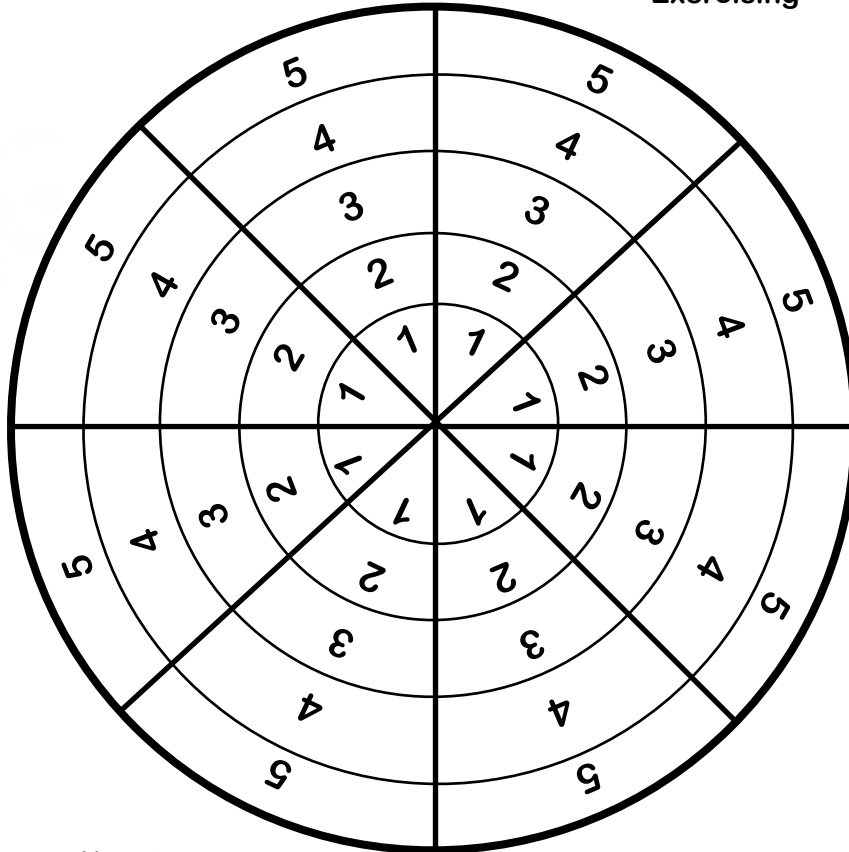
Eating Healthy



Using Music/Movies/Art to Soothe Stress



Protecting Yourself from Negativity



Keeping a Positive Mindset



Getting Enough Sleep



The final picture should show you how balanced your self-care practices are. Circle one thing you want to make sure to practice more often.