

Self-Care Paper

Liana Patrick

Alliance Graduate School of Counseling

“Self-care is the best care!” Ask any of my friends and they’ll tell you this line is one of

my top 10 phrases. What would my life be like without self-care? I can probably say I'd be miserable, but would I really understand why... Maybe miserable isn't the right word. Flustered? Weary? I worked at Dave & Busters a few years back and there was a menu item called "frazzled onions" and they were just that. Worn out, dried out onions. That is how I picture myself without self-care. Worn out and completely exhausted. And I've been there before, many times.

When I was 14 years old, I started working at my first official job, McDonalds. I haven't not worked since. At one point I had 5 jobs (including McDonalds) all at once, while being a full-time freshman college student, and a cheerleader. I was always on the go. Whether it was working a shift, being in class, running a cheer fundraiser, or even hanging out with friends, you could never catch me still for too long to find that rest and recuperation. Here comes the burn out. At age 24, I was in a heavy season of burnout and self-neglect. My version of self-care was numbness. During this time I had been working at Dave & Busters as a server, working as the Music Office Assistant at Nyack, studying my undergrad at Nyack, and leading worship at a small church in Northvale, NJ. I was also drinking a lot. Before, during, after work, during classes, in my dorm room. It had become a horrible habit. And I knew I was not okay. However, I told myself that only I could take care of myself.

As I sit here and reflect on that season, I feel I can only describe it as if I was running from God, feeling shameful, but in reality I was desperately running towards him. Which may not make sense, but I think it comes down to perspective and how you look at it. Okay, back to self-care. As the spring semester came to an end for 24 year old me, I quit my job at the restaurant, took a leave of absence from the church I was at, and applied for a position as a camp counselor in Vermilion, OH. For me, in that season, this was my first step of self-care. Tricia Hersey talks about how we, as Americans, are quick to neglect trauma and just move on to the

next thing, especially now more than ever. She says, “We jump right to getting over it immediately, leaving no space for the precious ritual of grief, rest and lament. In our minds, there is no time for stopping to process...” (Hersey, 2020). The 8 hour car ride to Ohio was my unexpected version of experiencing this “ritual”. What started out as my very own concert, quickly turned into the ugly crying, snot rolling down my face festival. In that ride I encountered God in a way that I so desperately craved and longed for for a while. I had nowhere to run. It was God and I the whole ride down. That ride began my journey of full dependency on the Father who loves me more than I ever realized while bringing into perspective the importance of rest.

From an outsider's viewpoint, my summer camp experience was an exhausting one. I partially disagree. Yes, the summer was jam packed with activities and work. However, it was also jam packed with encounter after encounter, rest after rest, peace after peace. Rest. During the week we had a scheduled rest period as counselors. We would drop off our campers at a movie, for about 45 mins, and then we were instructed to rest. At first this rest, to me, was an excuse to hang with friends. Then rest became intentional time with Jesus or a brief nap. I haven't napped so much in a long time. Rest, to me, was going to bed at night. I love Zeena Regis' article on Nap Ministry, something I never knew existed. In referring to the importance of a nap, or taking that rest or taking a sabbath, she encourages that it affirms our faith in God. “It's an acknowledgment that we're not in control” (Regis, 2019). We, us humans, tend to be non-stop, on the go, running to and fro. Essentially we remain in control when we encat in this non-stop behavior. “If i stop now, then who will keep it moving forward?” This would've been a question I ask myself. If I'm not in control, then who will be? If it hasn't become noticeable, I struggle with control. However, I'm so much better at releasing it now than I was a couple of years ago. Taking that intentional time to stop. Stop running, stop doing so much, and just being

still is a challenge from time to time. So during that season, for me to rest, was me releasing control over my life and allowing Jesus to move through me, however way he wanted. And he did.

I came home at the end of the summer rejuvenated, refreshed, and ready for whatever God had next. I had an understanding of self-care that opened me up to numerous ways of taking care of myself. Everyone is different, which is an attest to the character of God. However, we are all the same in the need to rest, recuperate, to self-care. Since we are all different our self-care routines can be different. In coming home, I sought out the friendships that we're life-giving and in my opinion, God-ordained. I say that for many reasons, however, one reason more so highlighted is the fact of having a friend with the exact same personality, in need of and indulging in rest and self-care in the way as me. Our version of self-care revolves around getting our nails done, going to eat, a drive or run, worshipping together, or being still in His presence. And of course, I partake in these moments alone with just God, but I love having a friend to join in this with as well. Self-care looks different for everyone and for many people, trying to find self-care is another task added. Although it may be uncomfortable, I think most times we just need to be still in silence. Ellen Vora says, "Trying to find ways to squeeze in meditation, journaling, luxurious baths, yoga, and a lengthy morning green tea ritual in which we recite positive affirmations can be overwhelming—and it's contributing to the original problem. Sometimes I think we're better off just doing nothing for a while. *Nothing-ing* may make us feel lazy, but my self-care recommendation for you in 2018 is to cut out many of the rituals and just rest in silence" (Vora, 2018). I'm not a mom. I'm not a wife. I don't know what daily life in these womens shoes looks like. However, I do know what it's like to always be on and in desperate need of self-care. A moment of silence may not be as achievable but I believe self-care

still is possible as long as we're intentional about it. I find time everyday for my self-care. I refuse to be back in a place where it's not a priority. In conclusion, SELF CARE IS THE BEST CARE.

References

Hersey, Tricia. "As Grind culture slows down, will you?" (2020). *Thenapministry*.

Retrieved from <https://thenapministry.wordpress.com/2020/03/20/as-grind-culture-slows->

[down-will-you/?](#)

[fbclid=IwAR2Qsd2LoPjKqIbWlozZs_qrCelq7RCq1Sd0cJKMNwy2Gr6mplT5ezlG0Ck](#)

Regis, Zeena. “‘Nap ministry’ and God’s plan for the Sabbath” (20219). *Presbyterian Mission*. Retrieved from

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/pt-0120-spiritual/?>

[fbclid=IwAR1YvdKvnllhFVyHm7zn-](#)

[eTiIFIWani6O_zwiWuTNMQSxWF0TevJ0_sk0ak](#)

Vora, Ellen. “Are Your Self-Care Rituals Making You Unhappy? This Doctor Thinks So” (2018). *MindBodyGreen*. Retrieved from

<https://www.mindbodygreen.com/articles/the-negative-effects-of-self-care-practices>