

Intuitive Self-Care

Parts with Presley

Step 1: Listen to your proactive self-care impulses

Proactive parts of us reach for self-care strategies that prevent *future* stress.

To listen to them, ask yourself these questions. Each time you get an answer, say or write an acknowledgement of that answer.

What do I think I really should be doing right now?

What do I think I should have done to avoid feeling this way?

What habit am I hoping I'll adopt, starting tomorrow?

Examples:

If I notice that I think I should be writing right now, I can say in my mind "I hear you, you think I should be writing."

If I notice that I'm hoping I'll start getting up every morning for a run starting tomorrow, I can say "I get it, you want me to become a morning runner."

Notes:

- The acknowledgements are written to the thought or feeling as if it's a separate person from you. This helps you get some space from it.
- This isn't about taking these "shoulds" as the truth, just about acknowledging them.

Step 2: Listen to your reactive self-care impulses

Reactive parts of us reach for self-care strategies that soothe *existing* stress.

To listen to them, ask yourself these questions. Each time you get an answer, say or write an acknowledgement of that answer.

What do I crave right now?

Where do I want to go (physically or mentally) to escape this?

What am I telling myself I really deserve after a day like that?

What will make me feel better right now?

Examples:

If I notice I crave chocolate, I can say in my mind “I hear you, you think I need chocolate.”

If I notice I want to lose myself in a movie, I can write “I see, you want me to get lost in a movie.”

Note:

This isn't about eating the chocolate or watching the movie; just about acknowledging the impulses.

Step 3: Listen to your physical and emotional needs

Hopefully, you're now in a balanced place where you can attend to your needs without attending to *only* the present or *only* the future.

From this balanced place, you may be free to sense the deeper needs behind the strategies you listened to.

So take a deep breath, close your eyes if that feels comfortable, and turn your attention to your body with this question on your mind: “What do you need?”

You can just see what comes, or you can check if anything on this list resonates:

- Sleep
- Rest
- Food
- Water
- A shower
- Comfort
- Support
- Laughter
- Connection
- Alone time
- Fun
- Novelty
- More stimulation
- Less stimulation
- To be heard and validated
- To stretch

- To move
- To exert energy
- To feel safe

Step 4: Act

From this balanced place, you may intuitively know how best to care for these needs.

What will you do to care for yourself right now?

What will you do to care for your future self?

It may be helpful to choose strategies in pairs, one reactive strategy and one proactive strategy.

You can create balance between instant gratification and long-term health, like “I will eat some chocolate now and I will write a grocery list to make sure I can have a balanced meal later.”

You can use a proactive form of self-care to make reactive forms less necessary in the future, like “I will rest now and I will cancel one of my plans tomorrow so I don’t end up this exhausted again.”

Questions?

I hope this has been helpful, but it’s totally normal to have trouble doing this work alone at first. So don’t hesitate to ask questions! You can contact me through the form on [this page](#).

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