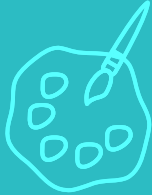


Self-Awareness & Self-Care Workbook



YOU'RE
NOT
HOPELESS

HOW
CAN I
HELP?

YOU ARE
VALUABLE

YOU
ARE
LOVED

YOU'RE
NOT
ALONE

YOU ARE
WORTHY

THERE'S
HELP

TAKE
CARE OF
YOURSELF

YOU ARE
NOT
CRAZY

IT'S OKAY
TO HAVE
A HARD
DAY

YOU ARE
VALUABLE

IT'S OKAY



For details on how to use this toolkit please refer to the instruction pages.
Created for the South Asian context.

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The authors are not responsible for any issues arising out of using this workbook.

The responsibility lies solely with those using the workbook individually or in
small groups.

Only for non-commercial use.

The use of the English language throughout the workbook is purposely kept local, colloquial and contextual to the intended
audience in South Asia.

Developed and Conceptualised© by Chitra Ramaswamy & Karuna Sharma | Design, Typesetting and Layout© by Pearl Paul

Edited© by AsiaCMS-South Asia Team | Published© by AsiaCMS

Why this tool kit?

The challenging times we live in currently have affected our lives, relationships, careers, finances, physical and mental health. It has aggravated our feelings of stress, anxiety, loss, grief and fear. We all need support and care to help us through these times. This tool kit is designed to aid our self-care, wellness and strengthen our support systems to deal with our multitude of feelings and challenges.

Who is this for?

It is primarily designed for South Asians, to work through the stress and struggles of life. It is a self-reflective tool to help meander through these times.

This workbook is designed to be used in multiple ways:

- ◆ Individually for your own reflection.
- ◆ In small groups of two or more to work through and learn together.
- ◆ With a facilitator using it with individuals or small groups.

What this tool kit hopes to achieve:

- ◆ Provide a space to reflect on our challenges and validate our experiences and feelings.
- ◆ Help us become self-aware and accept that self-care is essential, and not selfish.
- ◆ Present options of practical self-care essentials that we can practise towards improving our coping mechanisms and wellness outcomes.
- ◆ Provide referrals and contacts when we need help.

Approach of the tool kit:

Narrative style, personalised, relatable, material that can be used independently or in small groups.

Guide to use this workbook (Individuals)

Each of us are unique and so are our journeys. We value your story, your feelings, your strengths and your struggles. You are free to use this material in whatever way works for you. The guidelines here are to help you through the process.

- ◆ Take all the time you need to reflect and express yourself in any form you are comfortable with - words, images, drawings, symbols and making things.
- ◆ The worksheets are there to help you reflect.
- ◆ Do not let the worksheets restrict you.
- ◆ Use the worksheets as an aid alongside any other material you may find helpful.
- ◆ After you have gone through the workbook, if you feel the need for support or help, please reach out to professionals, friends or family.
- ◆ If you do not have access to help, contact us via Facebook, Instagram or the email address given at the end of the workbook.



Guide to use this workbook (Facilitator)

The facilitator will guide the learning process at the pace of the participants. The role of the facilitator is to provide the right environment and encourage the participants on their journey of reflection, growth and healing.



- ◆ It is important that those who facilitate should practise the self-awareness and self-care model. Facilitators should grasp both the content and methodology. The key to the success of the process is the facilitator.
- ◆ The facilitators can use their own creativity to engage with the group on this journey. The workbook provides scope for flexibility and creativity. The facilitator must be sensitive to the needs of their group members while using the material.
- ◆ The facilitators should believe in the ability of the participants to be proponents of their own healing process. Without this, it would be hard to achieve the objectives.
- ◆ Group processes begin with building trust. The facilitator has to spend adequate time with the group for trust to grow. They have to build a safe place with safe people for safe conversations. It is important to make time to hear stories, sing songs, play, laugh, cry and have fun together.
- ◆ Ground rules of listening, respect, confidentiality and care have to be emphasized, as it is crucial that group members can trust and respect each other.
- ◆ If there are more than 3 or 4 participants, it is recommended that there should be at least two facilitators. It could be one main facilitator and a co-facilitator for each session. This would help in supporting the main facilitator, in engaging with the group during small group activities and also to observe group dynamics and needs.
- ◆ The facilitators need to debrief after each session and plan the next session based on feedback from the previous session. Be aware of the dynamics and reframe the upcoming sessions accordingly.
- ◆ The facilitators should encourage the participants to be open and speak out freely. Therefore, one must allow the members of the group to proceed at their own pace.

- ◆ **The aim is NOT to finish the material as per the structure but to provide a platform for the group to explore, experience and reflect on issues that are relevant to them.**
- ◆ These are very intense sessions that may open up issues that have not been dealt with. Hence make sure the participants are prepared for this exercise and are willing to do it. It would be helpful to provide space for personal counseling or referrals, for issues coming up during the sessions.
- ◆ If there are group members disrupting the whole group, do not ignore it. Spend time with them and try to find out the reason and work with them privately. If they still cannot work with the group, it may be wise to recommend one-on-one sessions with them at a later date.
- ◆ Every participant in the group is important. Group sessions have to be interactive and group members should be encouraged to use a language that they are comfortable with.

Change is the only constant of our times



We live in the world of uncertainties-political, social, economic, psychological.

Life and situations are changing so fast and it has affected our lives, relationships, careers, finances, physical and mental health.

SELF-AWARENESS & SELF CARE

This series is created to help people navigate through the complex world we live in, by addressing key mental health issues that are emerging.

These include Self-awareness and Self-care, Dealing with Grief & Loss, and Building Resilience.

The reality of the life we live is one of job loss, grief of losing loved ones, stress of managing home and office, fear of loss, violence, economic uncertainty. It is taking a toll on us.

Here are stories of Aisha and Anand, who are going through the stress, anxiety and frustration, and how Selena helps them consider self-care.

Aisha's Story

Oh, the uncertainties of life has destroyed peace in my life! Work pressure is overwhelming, but I am thankful for a job and I worry, 'what if I lose my job?'

"I am worried and stressed about my parents' health and safety, even as I fight with them about small things that we disagree on."

Kids want my attention all the time. School wants me to be there to monitor all my child's school work...

And Hubby! He is glued to his laptop all the time...

Am exhausted, angry and scared, I am shouting at my kids... I am not able to get all the things done....Am going crazy...

I am overwhelmed and desperate! Is there any help? I cannot go on like this anymore!



Anand's Journey

"Oh! this life of uncertainties. It is so stressful. No peace at home and no peace outside".

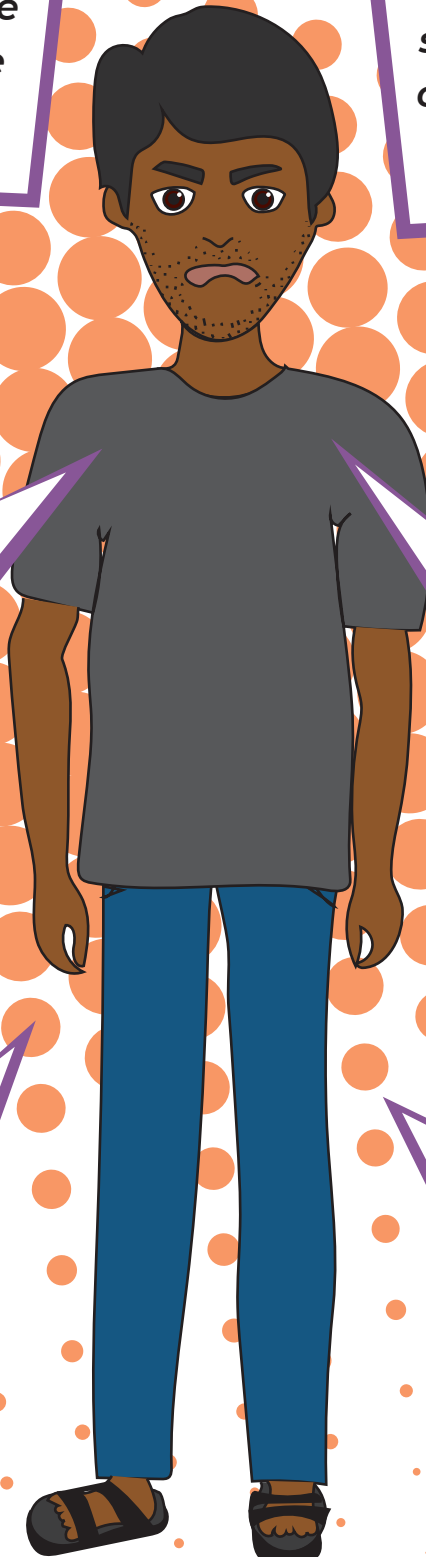
Boss is increasing work load and making pay cuts. Bills and EMI are mounting, Can't sleep! I am stressed out - If I lose my job, what will I do?

Wife is always complaining I am not helping her. We fight a lot these days! Kids are chewing my head off too!

Appa and Amma are having no help in the village. How will they manage?

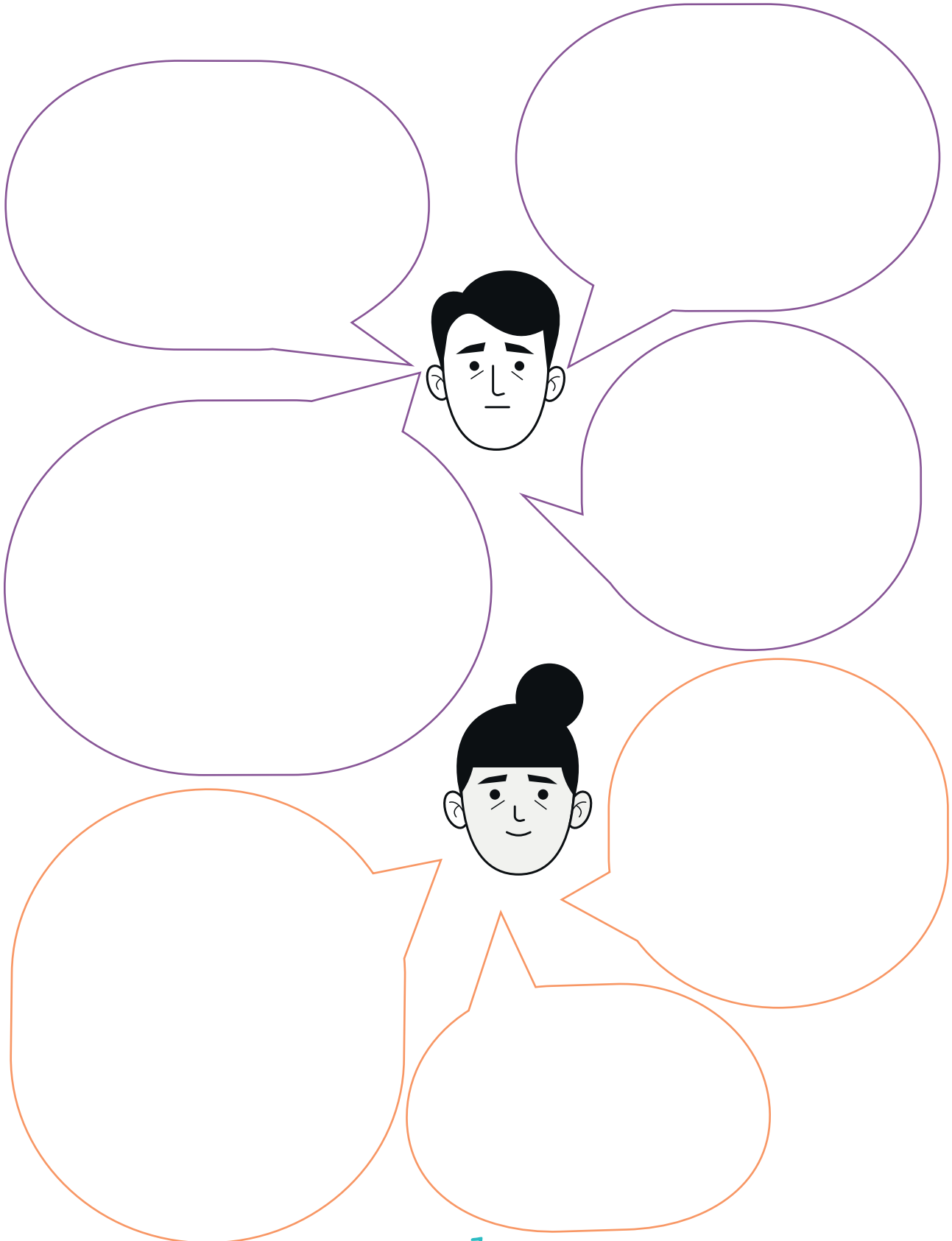
Am so angry, frustrated, worried! Can't sleep at night and am tired and irritated all day.

Feeling hopeless and fearful. What's gonna happen?



My Journey

Like Aisha and Anand, you might have also gone through various experiences. How was your experience during difficult times? If you were to share your story, what would you draw/write?



Life is constantly changing...

Aisha, Anand, what you are feeling is normal. These are uncertain times and our regular lives have been affected.

It's normal to feel fear, worry, anger, guilt, sadness and mentally stressed out... We need to acknowledge our feelings and accept them.

Coping with the stress of managing home and office, caring for those close by and worrying about those far away, can all be exhausting and draining."

We all need time to process what we are going through.

However, we don't have to suffer silently. We can help ourselves by understanding how we are doing and learning ways to cope.

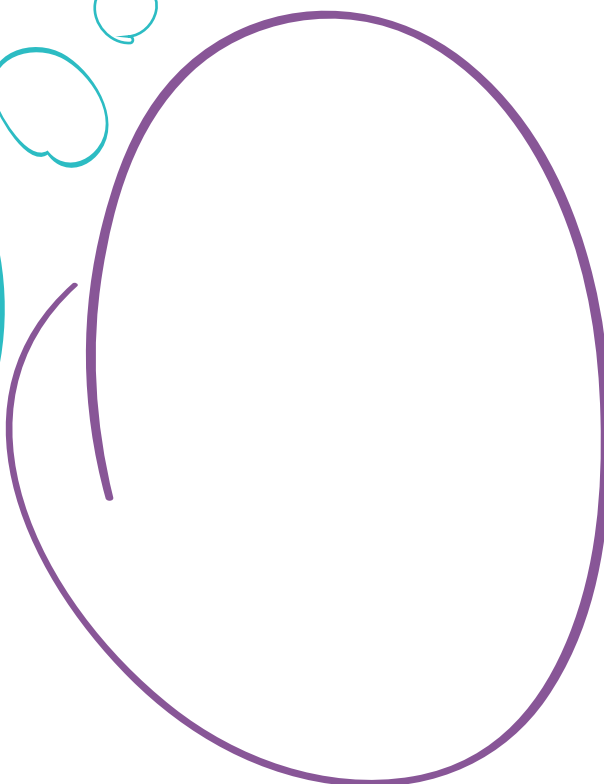
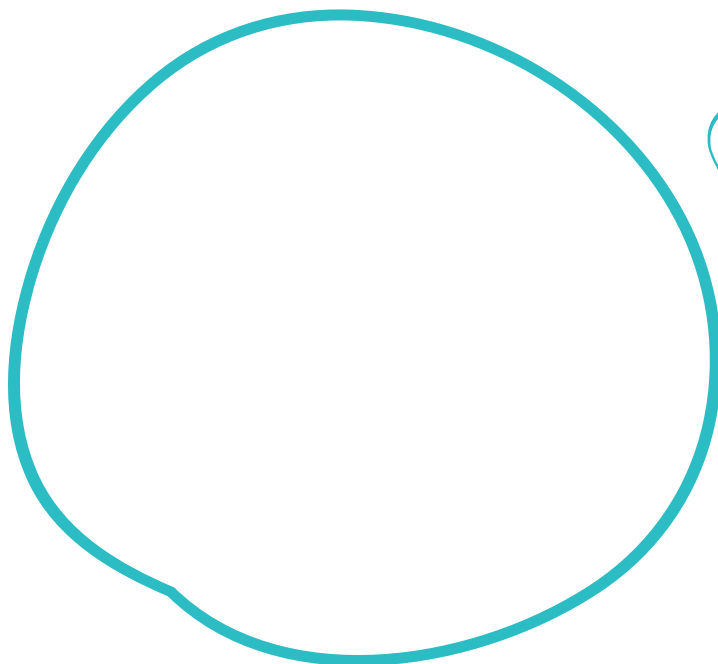
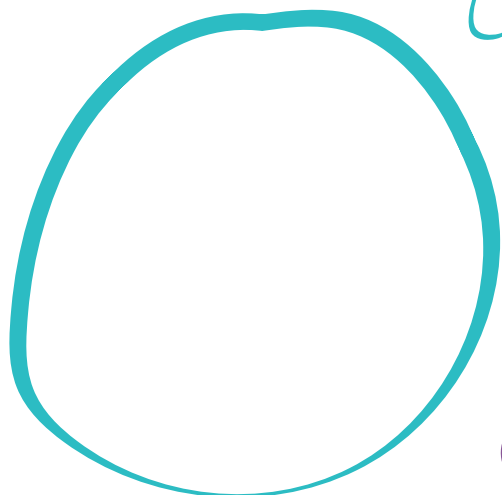
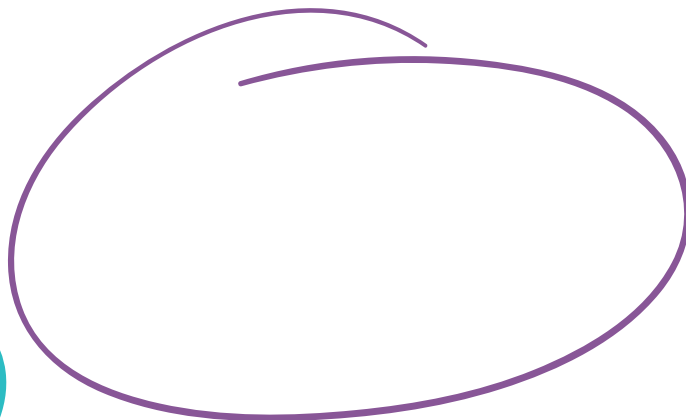
Self care is essential so that we can stay healthy and be there for others. If we are not ok, we cannot be there for others either.

Reach out and seek help. Do not struggle alone in silence.

Selena

“What are the things that add stress to your life?”

Write or Draw below



“SELF CARE is not selfish.”

Self awareness is not self-centeredness.

“Aisha, Anand - self care is not selfish and self-awareness is not self-centeredness. It is God-ordained and vital.

‘Love your neighbour as yourself’, starts with loving and caring for ourselves first. Without that we cannot love others.

When we constantly neglect our needs and feelings to care for others, it doesn't end well. We end up burnt out, tired, overwhelmed or exhausted. That makes us irritated and impatient with others. Conflicts abound; strife and stress multiply, peace of mind is lost.

As they say onboard flights, ‘wear your own oxygen mask before helping others wear theirs.’

When we learn to love and accept ourselves, we realise we are valuable and unique. We learn to listen to our needs and meet them. We learn self-awareness and self-care.

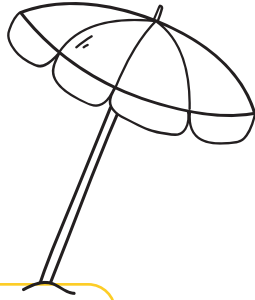
When we build ourselves up, we not only grow stronger to meet our needs but also those of others.



What is Self-Care?

Self-care is not SELFISH

Write, draw or discuss what words or images come to your mind when you think of self-care and what it means to you.



Empty rounded rectangular box for writing or drawing.

Empty rounded rectangular box for writing or drawing.



Empty rounded rectangular box for writing or drawing.

Empty rounded rectangular box for writing or drawing.



Empty rounded rectangular box for writing or drawing.

Empty rounded rectangular box for writing or drawing.

#BREAK THE STIGMA ON SELF-CARE



BREAK THE STIGMA ON SELF-CARE

How is self-care seen in your family or community? For example, is it considered as an an essential for people or an act of selfishness?

Write, draw or discuss the words or images that come to you as you think of society's idea of self care:

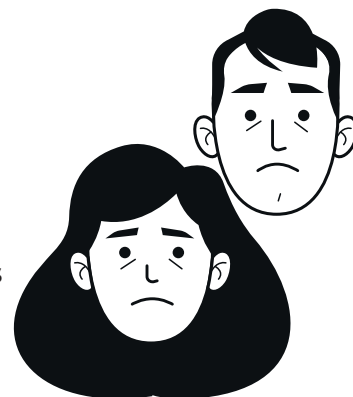
Positive Images/ words

Negative images/ words including Stigma associated with Self Care

Impact of Self-neglect

If we neglect caring for ourselves, what could be some of the effects or consequences?

Write/ draw/ discuss the words or images that come to you as you think of the impact on yourself if you neglect self care:



Self Awareness Checklist

Fill this checklist and see how you are coping with life. Self-awareness is the first step to Self-Care.

Read each statement and circle the sentence you most relate to.

Q.1. News makes me fearful and anxious.

- A. All the Time
- B. Most of the Time
- C. Sometimes
- D. Rarely
- E. Not at all

Q.3. I am having difficulty sleeping at night.

- A. All the Time
- B. Most of the Time
- C. Sometimes
- D. Rarely
- E. Not at all

Q.5. I do not have regular healthy meals.

- A. All the Time
- B. Most of the Time
- C. Sometimes
- D. Rarely
- E. Not at all

Q.2. I am worried how I will provide for myself and my family.

- A. All the Time
- B. Most of the Time
- C. Sometimes
- D. Rarely
- E. Not at all

Q.4. I am having a sedentary lifestyle (no physical exercise).

- A. All the Time
- B. Most of the Time
- C. Sometimes
- D. Rarely
- E. Not at all

Q.6. I get angry at small things.

- A. All the Time
- B. Most of the Time
- C. Sometimes
- D. Rarely
- E. Not at all

Q.7. I am not able to connect with, and have a good relationship with my close family and friends.

- A. All the Time
- B. Most of the Time
- C. Sometimes
- D. Rarely
- E. Not at all

Q.8. I am unable to balance my work and family time.

- A. All the Time
- B. Most of the Time
- C. Sometimes
- D. Rarely
- E. Not at all

Q.9. There is an increased/excessive use of addictive substances in my life.

- A. All the Time
- B. Most of the Time
- C. Sometimes
- D. Rarely
- E. Not at all

Q.10. I feel there is no hope in my life.

- A. All the Time
- B. Most of the Time
- C. Sometimes
- D. Rarely
- E. Not at all

Q.11. I feel anxious about the future.

- A. All the Time
- B. Most of the Time
- C. Sometimes
- D. Rarely
- E. Not at all

Q.12. There is an increased use of screen/digital media for non-work purposes.

- A. All the Time
- B. Most of the Time
- C. Sometimes
- D. Rarely
- E. Not at all

Q.13. I am feeling irritated and annoyed.

- A. All the Time
- B. Most of the Time
- C. Sometimes
- D. Rarely
- E. Not at all

Q.14. I have thoughts about self harm/ suicide.

- A. All the Time
- B. Most of the Time
- C. Sometimes
- D. Rarely
- E. Not at all

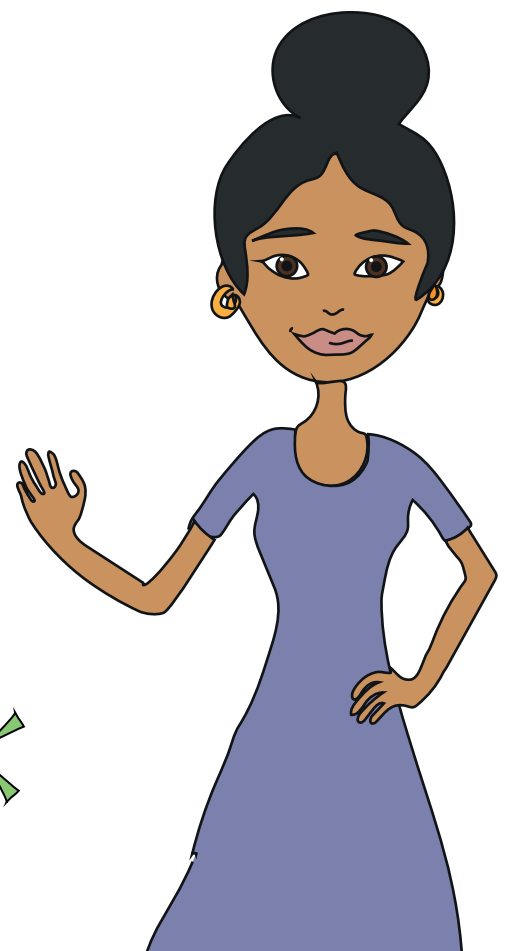
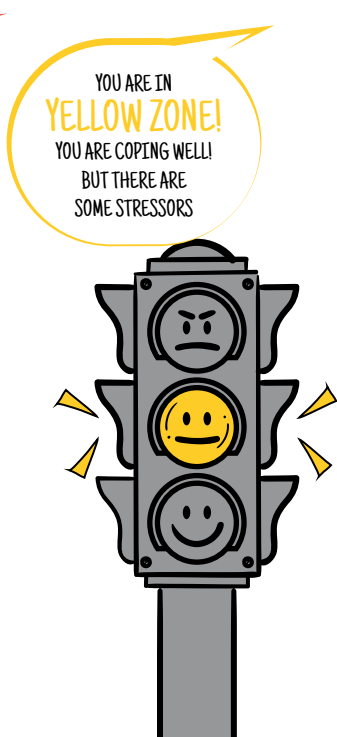
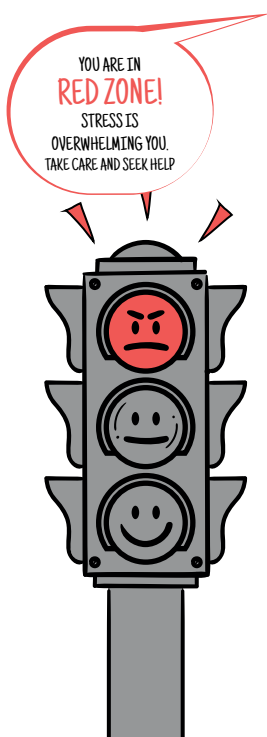
Q.15. I have difficulty in staying motivated and being positive in life.

- A. All the Time
- B. Most of the Time
- C. Sometimes
- D. Rarely
- E. Not at all

Mostly A's

Mostly B's, C's or D's

Mostly E's

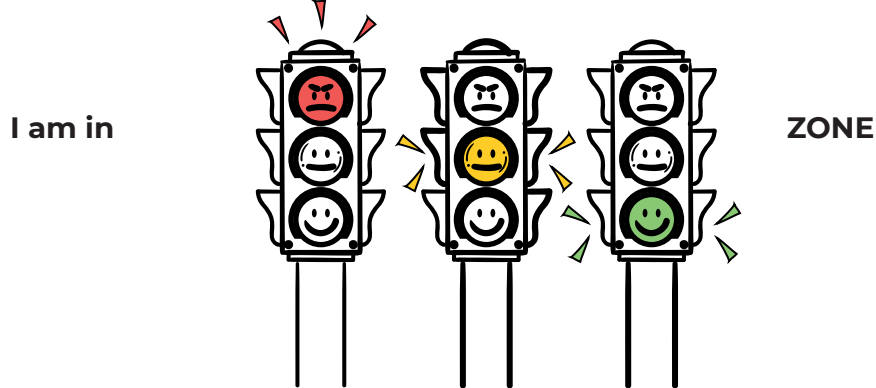


My Self-Awareness Zone

Please take time to try the Self Awareness checklist. In which zone are you in?

Discuss with someone or a small group what struck you as you did the checklist.

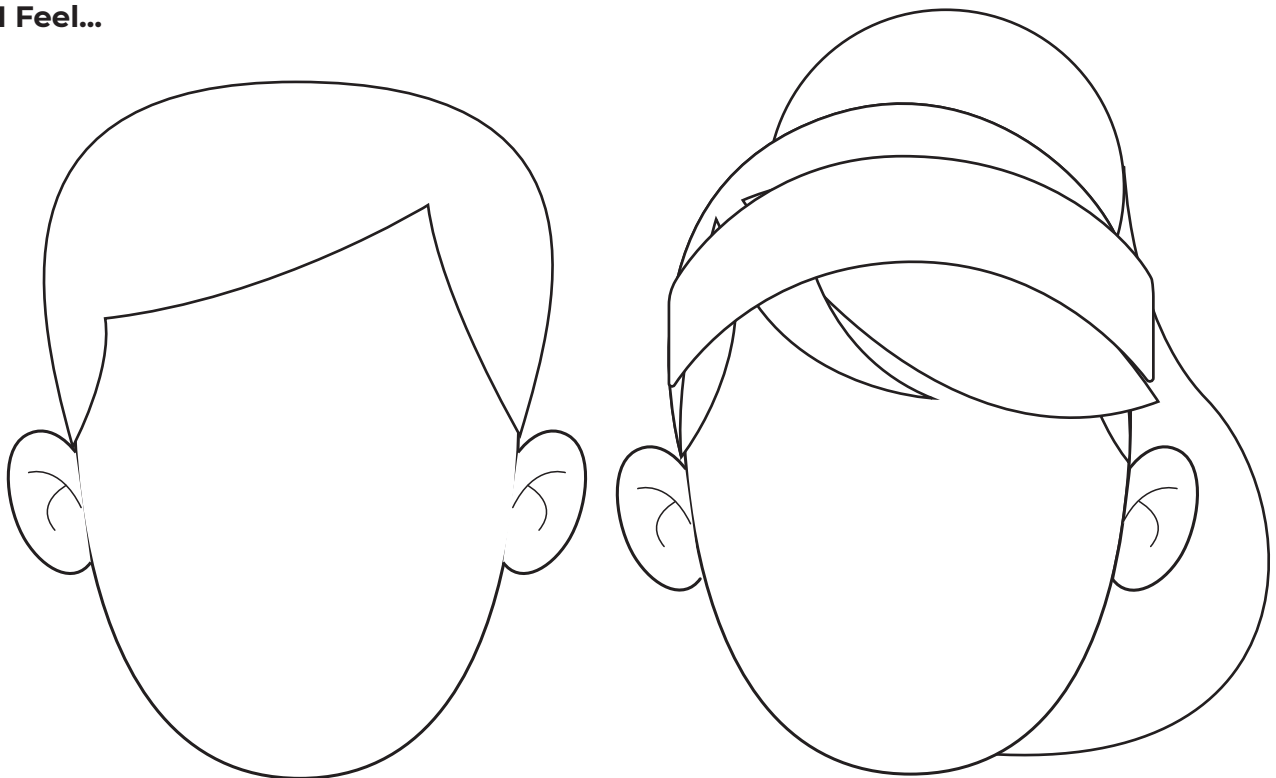
What did it bring up?



What feelings have you been experiencing in recent times:

Draw out or write down the expressions that express how you are feeling.

I Feel...



Self-Care Essentials

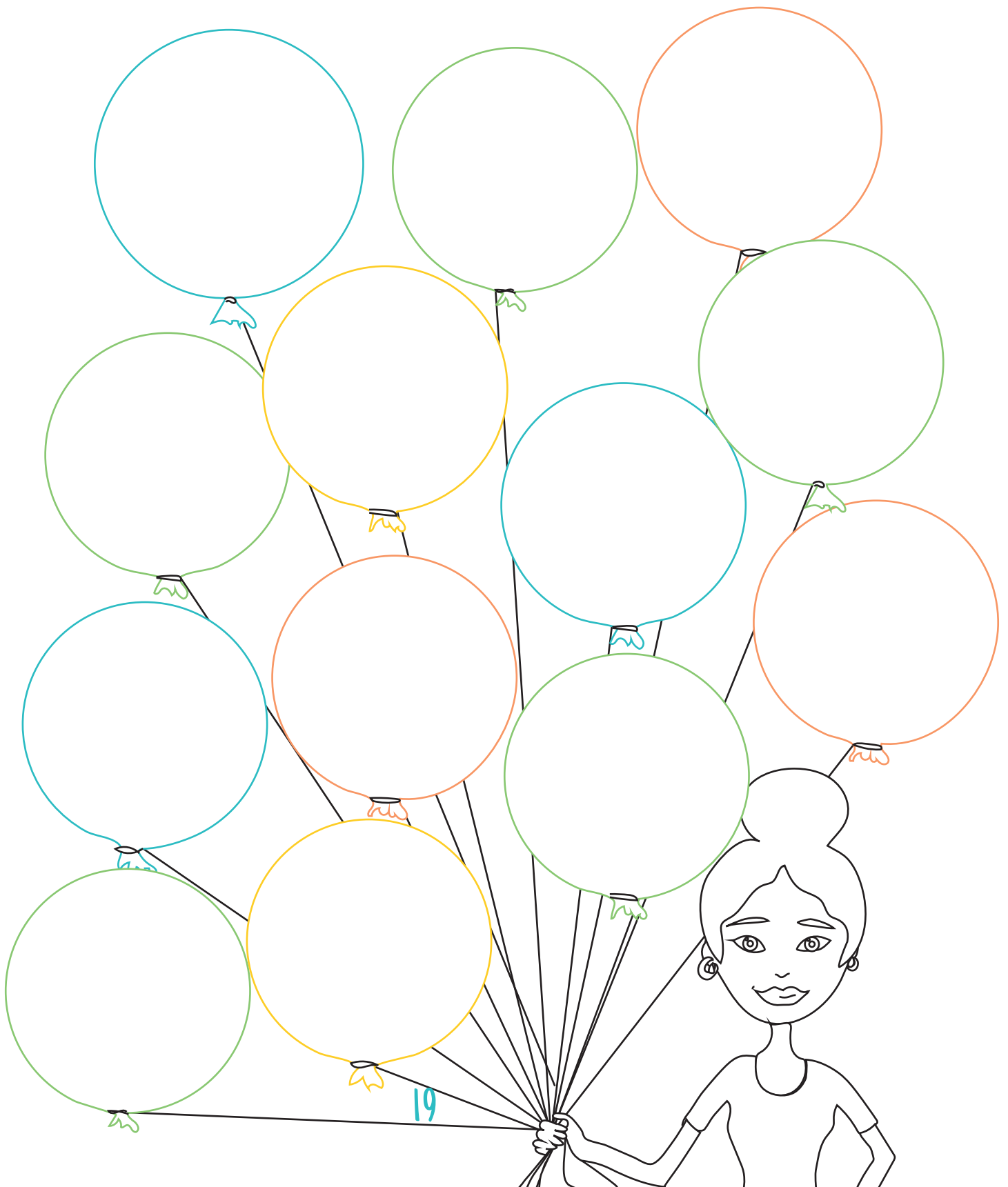
“Here are some Self-Care Steps that you can incorporate into your daily lives. You can add your own to this list. Most importantly make sure you do what you know will help you.”



Self-Care Essentials

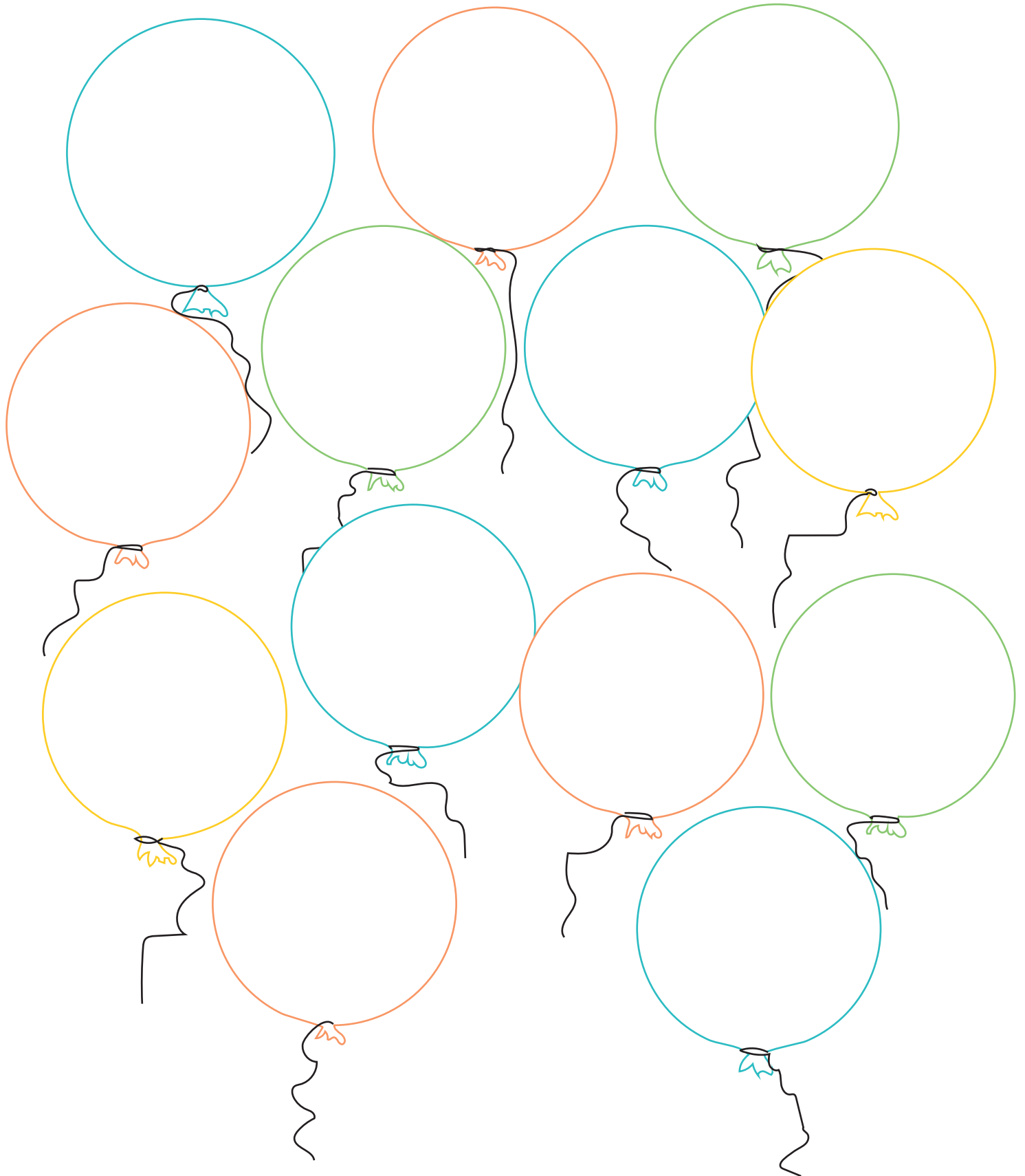
You are the best person to know what helps you stay healthy and well. Read through the Self-care essentials pages and then make your own self-care essentials balloon bunch.

These are the balloons that help me, so I want to hold on to it: (you can write or draw inside each balloon something you can do for yourself that helps you stay well).



These are the things that are non-helpful and do not help my well-being. I want to give up doing these things.

I want to let go of these balloons: (you can write or draw inside each balloon something that does not help you stay well, and you would like to do less of or stop doing)



Daily Self-Care Essentials



EAT

Eat healthy, stay hydrated and have regular meal times.



SLEEP

Sleep at a set time everyday and get sufficient rest (approx. 8 hours).



RELAX

Take an hour off everyday, away from others and activities, to relax and do something you enjoy. Practise meditation and breathing exercises to relax and calm yourself.



SEEK

Seek ways to grow spiritually to find comfort and peace. Find ways of connecting with God, seeking God's help and counsel.



MOVE

Keep physically active, do exercise or play sport daily.



BUILD RHYTHM

Have a routine or schedule for daily life that gives comfort and purpose.



CONNECT

Keep in touch with close family and friends. Share openly and regularly with each other. Don't isolate yourself.

Building a Lifestyle of Self-Care



CELEBRATE

Celebrate yourself and every small and big thing you do. You are unique and valuable. Do not let circumstances or people make you believe otherwise. Celebrate you!



ACT

Be purposefully engaged. Do things that help you and others.



ADD

Know what helps you and add more of those activities into your life. E.g. listening to music, connecting with friends, playing together as a family, laughing and joking.



RECEIVE HELP

When you feel overwhelmed or unable to cope, reach out and seek help from friends and family, and from professional counselors. Do not keep quiet and struggle alone.



SAY NO

When you are having too much to do or are feeling tired, say NO, at work or at home.







REDUCE

Know what stresses you and reduce those activities. E.g. listening to too much news or too much screen time.

My Wellness Plan

Discuss with a buddy what are the daily / weekly / monthly wellness activities you would do to stay well.

Areas to consider : Eat healthy, stay hydrated, regular sleep time, physical exercise, spiritual connection, have a daily routine, stay connected with others, celebrate, practice meditation, seek help, say 'No', reduce screen time, listen to music, laugh...

Wellness activities to do daily 	Wellness activities to do weekly 	Wellness activities to do monthly 	Wellness activities to do as needed 
physical			
emotional			
mental			
social			
spiritual			

Wellness Check-in



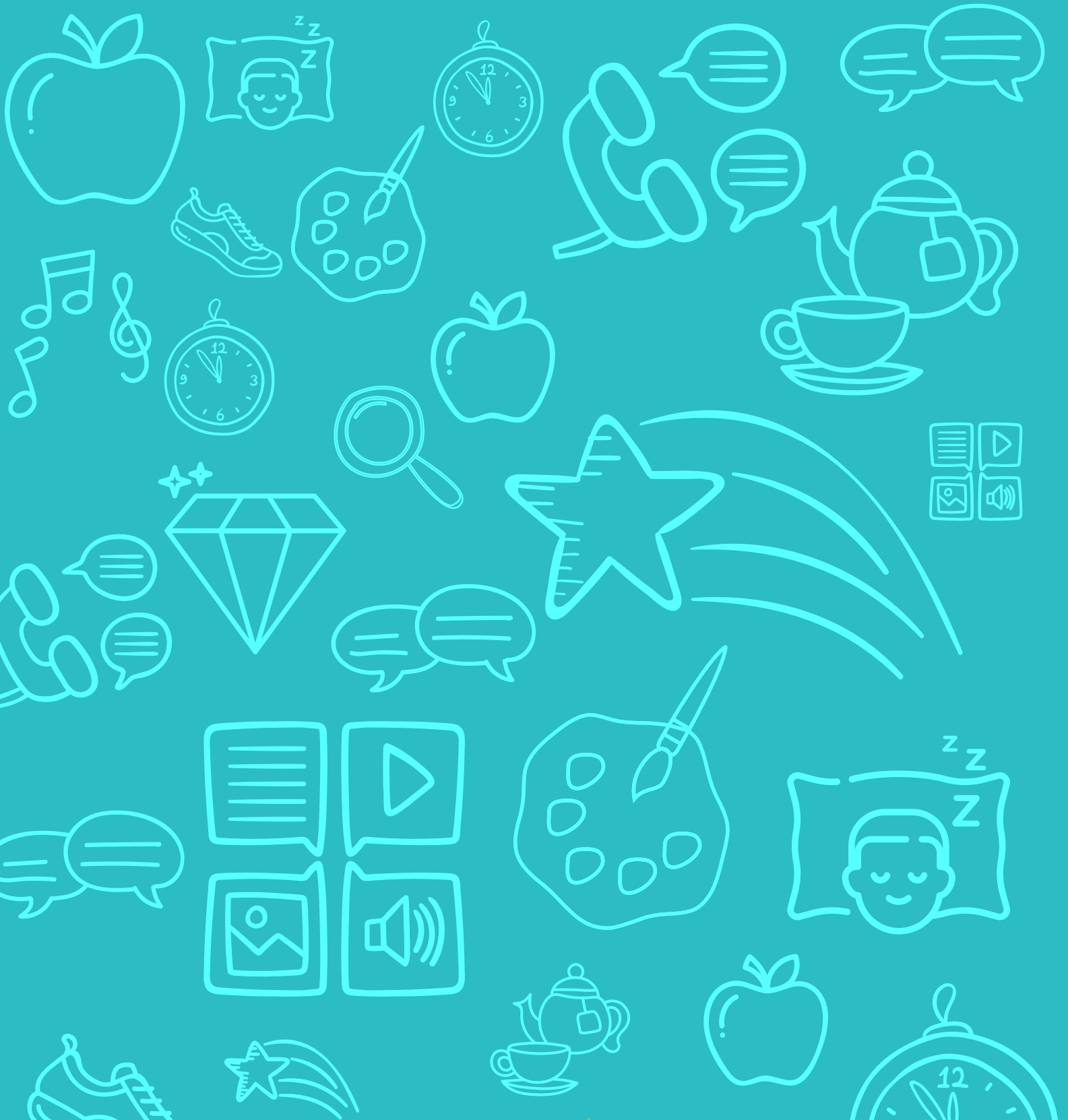
I choose to be my wellness check- in accountability partner.

I would like him/her to check-in with me in the following ways:

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____



Asia  CMS

HELP is at Hand
psychosocial.asiacms@gmail.com
www.saantvanaorg.org

