

Self-Care Checkup

It's easy to lose track of your own needs when caring for children who have experienced trauma. But not taking care of yourself not only sets a bad example for your children, it also sets you up for compassion fatigue. To get a sense of where you fall on the self-care spectrum, try this highly unscientific little self-care checkup.

- How often do you eat breakfast?
 - Most days
 - Once or twice a week
 - Every month or so
 - What's breakfast?
- When was the last time you had a really good laugh?
 - Some time in the last couple of days
 - Last week
 - Last month
 - 1972
- How often do you spend social time with a friend (or friends)?
 - Most days
 - Once or twice a week
 - Every month or so
 - When I run into someone at the store
- How frequently do you connect with other foster parent(s)?
 - Most days
 - Once or twice a week
 - Every month or so
 - Rarely
- How often do you watch a movie or a TV show that YOU want to see?
 - Most days
 - Once or twice a week
 - Every month or so
 - Can't remember
- When was the last time you said "no" to something that you really didn't want (or feel able) to do?
 - This morning
 - Last week
 - Last month
 - It's never even occurred to me!
- When did you last let someone else take care of you?
 - Yesterday
 - Last week
 - Some time this year
 - 1973
- How often do you sleep enough to feel rested during the day?
 - Most nights
 - Once or twice a week
 - Every month or so
 - Too tired to remember

9. When was the last time you read something just for fun?
- A. Today
 - B. Last week
 - C. Last month
 - D. Third grade
10. How often do you meditate/pray?
- A. Most days
 - B. Once or twice a week
 - C. Every month or so
 - D. Rarely
11. How often do you take time to be sexual?
- A. Most days
 - B. Once or twice a week
 - C. Every month or so
 - D. What's sex?
12. How frequently do you exercise or engage in a physical activity you enjoy?
- A. Most days
 - B. Once or twice a week
 - C. Every month or so
 - D. Does housecleaning count?

Scoring: Give yourself 3 points for every A answer, 2 points for every B, 1 point for every C, and zero points for every D.

36 to 24 points: Congratulations, you seem to be maintaining a pretty good balance between taking care of others and taking care of yourself. Keep it up!

23 to 12 points: You're definitely doing some things to take care of your own needs, but you could probably do more. It may be time to make a stronger commitment to yourself by developing a self-care action plan.

>12 points: Wow! It looks like you're doing a lot for other people, and not much for yourself. All that time caring for others may be setting you up for compassion fatigue. It's time to make a self-care action plan.