

SELF-CARE FOR VOLUNTEERS

It is important as an LGC volunteer that you also take care of yourself too. We can sometimes get so busy taking care of others and making time for them that we can often forget about ourselves, and before we know it, we can feel burnout or stressed. Remember, that you can only really be there for others, and provide support for them, if you learn how to take care of yourself first.

The LGC Referral Team wants you to take care of YOU. We care about you and your well/ being, so have put together some useful self-care ideas to assist you during your time as a volunteer. The list below is by no means exhaustive, but it will give you some ideas about self- care. Pick the ones that most resonate with you.

Learn to get into the practice of scheduling at least half an hour of self-care time for yourself each day. You will find that this will benefit you greatly.

SELF-CARE IDEAS:

- Speak to your LGC buddy to debrief and offload, particularly if you have had a phone call with a caller and you need to talk, it may have been particularly difficult or emotionally challenging.
- Contact your referral team buddy for any additional debrief support or advice.
- Go for a nice leisurely walk somewhere in nature, such as the park, near the river, or somewhere scenic. Nature and beauty always replenish us and helps to restore our physical, mental and emotional sense of well-being.
- If you have one sit in your garden and relax.
- Practice general meditation to relax and centre yourself.
- Practice mindfulness techniques to bring yourself back to the present moment. At the core of mindfulness is the idea of being physically, mentally, and emotionally present with your feelings.
- Do a hobby, such as baking, drawing, painting, playing a musical instrument to relax and take your mind off things.
- Watch/listen to a funny movie or a programme you enjoy.
- Listen to some relaxing music.
- Do crosswords or Sudoku to switch your mind to other things.

- Read a good book, magazine, your favourite blogs, podcasts; whatever you enjoy reading.
- Pamper yourself with a lovely bubble bath, massage, light some candles or incense. Whatever makes you feel good. When lockdown ends you can always visit a spa, beauty salon, masseur, or holistic and wellbeing therapist.
- Exercise or do some form of physical activity. This not only energises you but also releases positive endorphins into your body.
- Schedule some fun time in your day that is not work related.
- Have lunch or coffee with a friend or family member you enjoy spending time with - Drinks over Zoom are a great way to connect with your loved ones.
- Write down your thoughts and feelings to get them down on paper.
- If you have them spend time with your pets to unwind.
- When lockdown is over, allow yourself to engage in social activities, such as going to the cinema, or to an event to unwind and have fun.
- Get enough rest and sleep on a regular basis. This is called sleep hygiene and can make a big difference to how we feel.
- Maintain good nutrition to stay healthy and keep your energy levels up.
- Set healthy limits for yourself. As part of self-care, it is ok to say no. We do not always need to say yes to everything. Check in with yourself when you receive a request. How do you feel, and is it best to say yes at this time. If you cannot do it at the time, know there will always be another volunteer who can help.
- Allow yourself a day off from time to time to replenish yourself and recharge your batteries.

Enjoy practicing these self-care ideas as part of your health and well-being

The LGC Referral Team.

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