

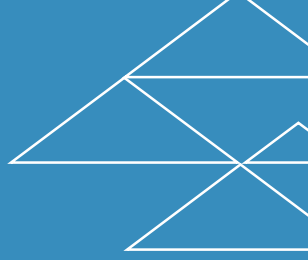
My Highest Good: Radical Self-Care as Praxis



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Dr. Treya TaShanna Allen
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Land Acknowledgment

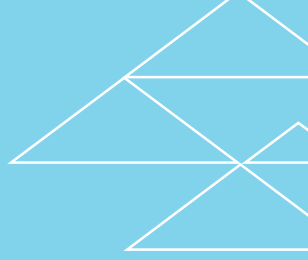


This presentation is taking place on the original homelands of the Tohono O'odham People who have stewarded this land since time immemorial.

The practice of acknowledging the land of this sovereign Nation brings to the forefront their enduring connection to this land regardless of historical and current colonization practices. We also acknowledge that this university and all of its inhabitants benefit from this land.



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How are you feeling?

How are you thinking about those feelings?

How are you handling those feelings?



We are having a **NORMAL** reaction to
an **ABNORMAL** situation.

Objectives

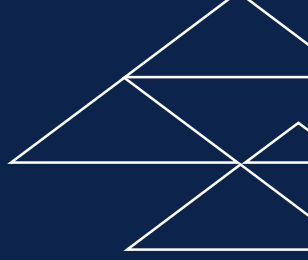
- Construct an operational definition of self care.
- Understand the radical nature of engaging in self care
- Evaluate your active self care practices



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What do you know?



What have you heard about self-care?

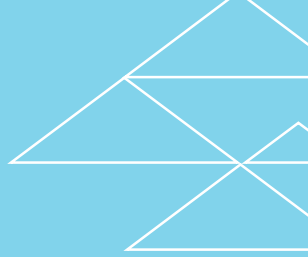
What does self-care look like/How does self-care happen?

What is the associated imagery/ phrases that comes up when you hear self-care?



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Thoughts on Self-Care



“Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.”

-Audre Lorde, Sister Outsider

“Take heed unto thyself, and the doctrine; continue in them, for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.”

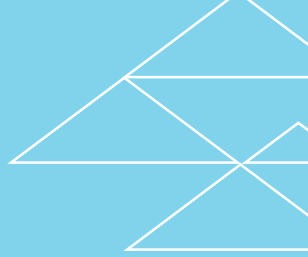
-Apostle Paul, I Tim 4:16

Homeostasis: The tendency toward a relatively stable equilibrium between interdependent elements, especially as maintained by physiological processes

-Biology



Thoughts on Self-care in Community



“Surely Allah enjoins justice, kindness and the doing of good to kith and kin, and forbids all that is shameful, evil and oppressive. He exhorts you so that you may be mindful.”

-Surak An-Nahl 16:60, The Qur’an

“She is a friend of my mind. She gather me, man. The pieces I am, she gather them and give them back to me in all the right order. It is good, you know, when you got a woman who is a friend of your mind.”

- Toni Morrison, *Beloved*



Associated Imagery and Phrases

“Treat yo’ self”

“This doesn’t bring me joy”

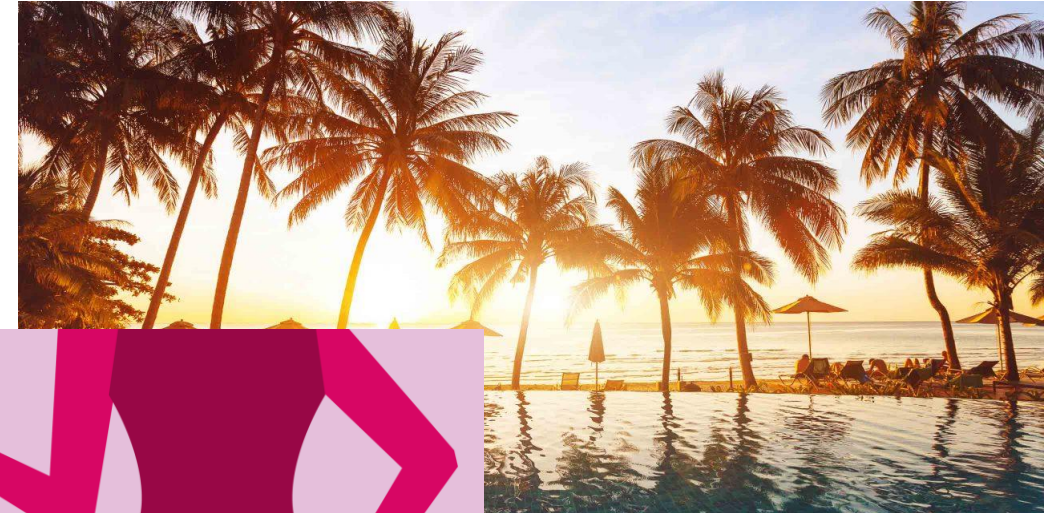
“Me time”

“I am doing this for me”

“I need some retail therapy”

“I went to get my nails done”

“I am about to get _____”



It's all about
ME



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Self-actualization

desire to become the most that one can be

Esteem

respect, self-esteem, status, recognition, strength, freedom

Love and belonging

friendship, intimacy, family, sense of connection

Safety needs

personal security, employment, resources, health, property

Physiological needs

air, water, food, shelter, sleep, clothing, reproduction



Feeling vs Thinking Brain

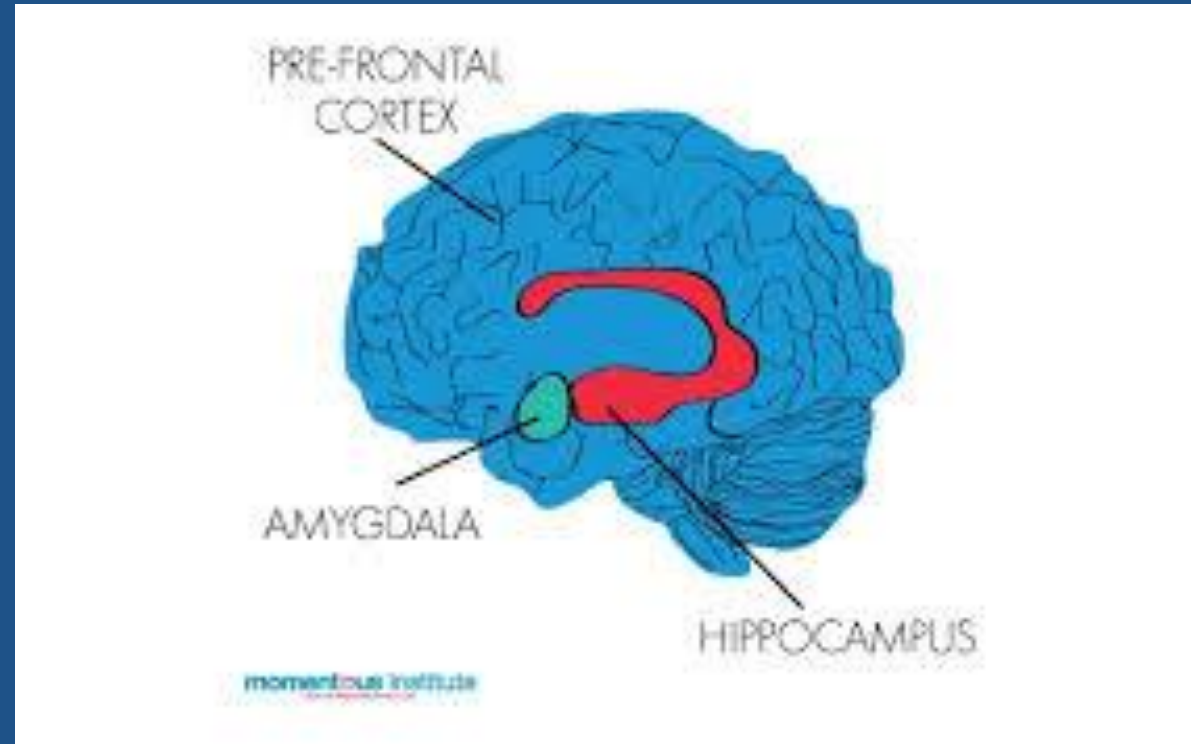
Thinking Brain

Pre-frontal Cortex- key in making well thought out and good decisions

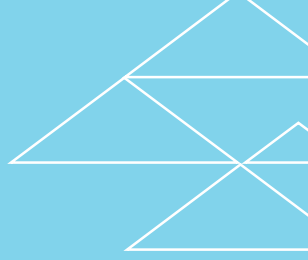
Feeling Brain (Limbic System)

Amygdala- Helps to process fear

Hippocampus- Helps with learning processes and storage of memory



Balance is Key



Thinking Brain
(Rational Brain)



Feeling Brain
(Limbic System)

When we lack information and are uncertain, our brains shift to the limbic system.





Imad, M. (2020); @Irningsanctuary



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Establishing the Not

- Selfishness
- Self-indulgence
- A reaction to overwhelming amounts of stress
- A way to avoid necessary functions [of a job, course, role]
- An escape mechanism



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Key concepts

- Self-preservation (Do I feel safe-absent from harm?)
 - To protect oneself from harm or death (basic instinct)
 - To maintain one's identity, values, beliefs
- Self-awareness (What is going on with me?)
 - To be conscious of one's feelings, motives, desires, character
- Self-reflection (What did I do, What do I believe?, Why am I doing this?)
 - Meditation about one's actions, character, desires, motives



Key Concepts (cont.)

- Need fulfillment (What do I NEED in this moment, in this situation?)
 - Ensuring that one is meeting the basic physiological, social, psychological requirements to sustain/ maintain life
- Established practices/routines (What active practices do I have in place?)
 - A sustained pattern of behavior that occurs as a part of the lived routine
- Balance (What am I doing too little of/ too much?)
 - Careful navigation of the journey between “need” and “want”



THOUGHTS



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“Each person deserves a day away in which no problems are confronted, no solutions searched for. Each of us needs to withdraw from the cares which will not withdraw from us... A day away acts as a spring tonic, it can dispel rancor, transform indecision, and renew the spirit...

If we step away for a time, we are not, as many may think and some will accuse, being irresponsible, but rather we are preparing ourselves to more ably perform our duties and discharge our obligations (p. 139)”

-Wouldn't Take Nothing For My Journey Now

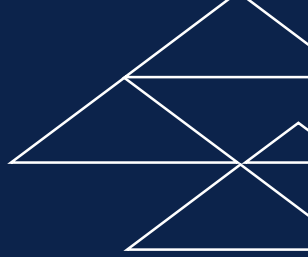


How might self-care be defined operationally?



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Eight Dimensions of Self Care



Physical

Psychological

Emotional

Social

Professional

Environmental

Spiritual

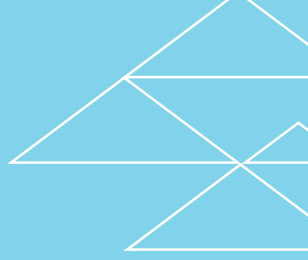
Financial



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<https://www.habitsforwellbeing.com/what-is-self-care/>

Self Awareness



What are the dimensions that you do well in maintaining?

How (practices/thoughts/plans) have you put into place for maintain?

What areas do you need to increase your practice?

What is getting in your way?



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Think It Through

Why is it necessary?

- Health
- Maintenance of identity, culture and values
- Self-definition
- Clarification of behaviors, actions, goals
- Elimination of self/social/ societal imposed pressures

Why don't we engage in it often?

- Socialization around productivity
- Assigned external narratives around what graduate study looks like
- External expectations from kin and kith
- Combating narratives about worth and power
- Historical occurrences/ generational traumas



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What makes it radical?

- The audacity to exist in your true form
- Resistance to current and historical social systems
- It prioritizes self-preservation over influencing fads/ pressures
- It teaches us to establish and maintain practices that maintain our individual being



Self-Reflection

Who are you when no one is looking?

What does it look like to be the very best version of you?

What is your vision for your life?



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Strategies

- Rest not sleep
- Social Media/ Television Breaks
- Nature
- Devotional/ Meditation
- Journaling
- Art making/ gazing
- Break in Study
- Tuning into what you need in this moment



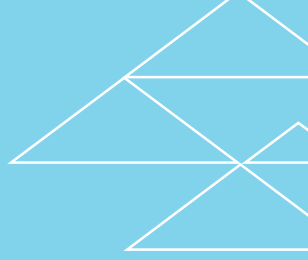
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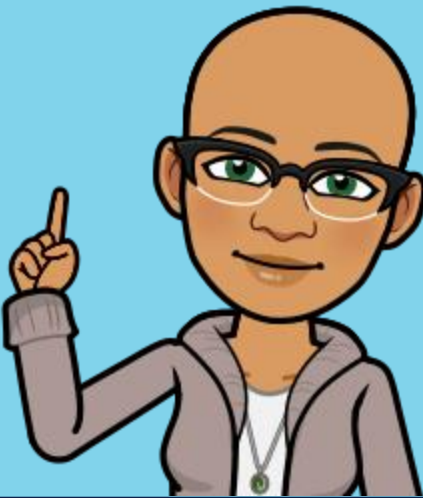
Considerations

- You cannot fulfill (sustain) your duties (work, parenting, caregiving, schooling) without ensuring that you are filled.
- You can implement a practice or your body will do it for you.
- Be aware of any trauma responses you may be experiencing.
- Self-care is a disciplined practice not a single experience.
- You cannot build community of anytime if you have nothing to give.





Questions



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Dr. Treya T. Allen

The A Center

Advise, Affirm, Attain

treya@email.Arizona.edu



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