

## Self-Care for Carers

As a carer to someone with CF it is important to ensure you are also taking time to practice self-care.

Anxiety and/or depression is common amongst those caring for someone with a chronic illness. Practicing self-care can build resilience and coping skills, avoid stress from becoming overwhelming and can prevent the development of more persistent symptoms of anxiety or depression.

### What is Self Care?

Self-care refers to activities that preserve and maintain one's physical, emotional and mental health. It is an ongoing commitment to look after yourself through helpful behaviours that protect your health during periods of stress.

Paying attention to what is happening to your body, both physically and emotionally, helps you to identify when something is affecting you. It is important to take time out when you need it to reduce feelings of stress and protect your mental health.

Here are some suggestion of ways to implement self-care:

#### Physical

- Eat a healthy, balanced diet.
- Exercise a few times a week.
- Make time for activities you enjoy and that help you to relax.
- Monitor and manage your stress in positive ways e.g. meditation, walking.



- Ensure you have enough sleep.
- Limit the use of alcohol.
- Seek respite when required.

#### Relationships

- Attend a [carers group](#) for support.
- Spend time with family and friends. Close personal relationships can be especially important during challenging times.
- Recognise when you need help from others and ask for support. E.g. friends, family, GP, psychologist or another health professional.

#### Work-life balance

- Try to achieve a balance between your professional role and your personal life and leave space outside of work for things you enjoy.
- Get involved and join a group with common interests.

## Spirituality

- If you have spiritual beliefs, take time for regular spiritual practice or spend time with others who share your beliefs.
- Practice gratitude.

## Self Help Apps

- [MoodGYM](#): a free, structured five-module course covering information, assessments, self-help skills and exercises.
- [MyCompass](#): a free resource with a focus on building resilience and good mental health providing tips and exercises to maintain good mental health.
- [Smiling Mind](#): a daily mindfulness and meditation guide

## Useful Resources

- [CFWA Parents and Carers webpage](#)
- [CFWA Counselling & Support](#)
- [Carers WA](#)
- [CF and Mental Health factsheet](#) (CF Foundation)

Last reviewed May 2023.

[www.cfwa.org.au](http://www.cfwa.org.au)

Cystic Fibrosis WA  
The Niche  
11 Aberdare Road  
Nedlands WA 6009

T: 08 6224 4100  
E: [info@cfwa.org.au](mailto:info@cfwa.org.au)

**Disclaimer: This publication is for general education and information purposes. Contact a qualified healthcare professional for any medical advice needed.**

© Cystic Fibrosis Western Australia 2023