

## EXTREME CARE

The title of Cheryl Richardson's book: The Art Of Extreme Care. This is what most people need to do, at least for awhile – in order to correct the extreme lack of care, the extreme stress, the extreme lack of self regard in the way one treats oneself. Just trying something different, treating oneself with honor and careful nurturing shifts the table around so that the mind can get the idea that *your happiness and your peace and your feeling good about life are really number one*.

You don't have to buy the book to do it, but it's only, at Amazon, \$10.85. Seems worth it, if you only get a few ideas or reminders on how to really care for yourself. While women mostly are those who take on too much and put themselves last, in my opinion men could benefit from the same general idea (and will have to come up with some of their own, though a lot of the basic suggestions apply not only apply to women but also are workable for men).

We're often not fully aware of the extreme stress we put ourselves under. Sure, we notice it and possibly say something like "well, I better do something about this sometime" (sometime when I have the time and I'm not so busy).

We're often not aware of the things we do to our body. Just a little sugar to pep me up. Just a few extra cups of coffee to keep me going. Just a sweet, just a treat, just something to relieve me and have me feel good. Oh, I'll skip lunch, or breakfast or...

We are killing ourselves, some just a little at a time, many a lot at a time. We are like gradually boiling frogs, we simply slowly boil to death in the comfortable water, floating passively as the heat is increased. Of course, the frogs are smart enough to jump out when they are put into boiling water, but the small changes from tepid water all the way up to boiling aren't noticeable. That's our lives. Until we use the masterful strategy of "taking perspective", we don't "see" it – or we can wait for the "wake-up call", where something extreme happens and we say "oh, yeah, if I keep doing this I'll die".

So, while you have perspective now, while you're looking at your boiling in the water of extreme lack of self-care, make commitments to do selected items regularly and schedule them in. Items that are important but not urgent get put aside for the urgent. Only by scheduling them in can the tyranny of the urgent be overcome.

### WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Well, you ask, "what should I do?" You actually, mostly, know what to do and are doing the opposite of what is good care for a human being – you wouldn't let a child do such harm to him/herself, so it seems you shouldn't allow that for yourself, if you choose to value yourself.

(And, as you do things that show you value yourself, you will, in fact, get a new habit and a better viewpoint of yourself: you'll actually value yourself! And you'll feel good about yourself. We simply need to ask the questions "what is nurturing for me?", "what would support me in feeling better?", "what would support me in being healthier or happier or more at peace...?")

### HOW MUCH TIME DOES IT TAKE?

The answer is anywhere from "net zero" to up to "net 20" (minutes). The term "net" refers to the amount of time spent minus the amount of time saved (or not misused). Although busy, one will often do completely wasteful activities, so the good stuff recommended here will simply replace those. Some things, like more exercise or a hot tub bath, may simply help you to sleep better and/or need less sleep. The point is that the "cost" is relatively little, especially when compared to the enormous benefits!

### TO WHAT DEGREE SHOULD YOU LOOK AT THIS AND LEARN ABOUT IT?

Well, if it is vital and it is pretty much the whole of your life, how much is it worth?! An immense amount. The principle of effectiveness says to focus your energies where they have the most impact – well, duh! So the answer is, in the highest impact areas, become an expert! This is worth at least enough to read at least a few books that will ground you thoroughly to be "knowledgeable" and more likely to act wisely. Some books are recommended at the end.

### THE STARTING LIST

These are the general categories, in which many of these "cross over" into the other categories: (just use the search engine on The Site<sup>1</sup> to go directly to the individual subjects below; put these in your Reminders Notebook<sup>2</sup> to use when planning your week.)

Do the "Practices": Meditation, Progressive Relaxation, Deep Breathing

Use the stress relieving strategies: Arrive 10 minutes early, Deep Breathing in the moment, Progressive Relaxation in the moment, Coping Statements to stop the ramping up, dropping coffee, cutting out sugar, stopping drinking alcohol) and start eating only complex foods and exercising (and at least move a lot in the moment, 20 seconds?)

Use the time productivity strategies: Plan ahead for a week and for the day, inserting what is important in the time slots – this displaces what is not important, and regret drops

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<sup>1</sup> [www.thelifemanagementalliance.com](http://www.thelifemanagementalliance.com)

<sup>2</sup> Use the search engine to find it on the site, [www.thelifemanagementalliance.com](http://www.thelifemanagementalliance.com)

dramatically, while the feeling of self-effectiveness<sup>3</sup> rises to make oneself feel better about oneself.

Use the “rejuvenation” techniques. Take complete Rejuvenation Days, reviewing your Reminders Notebook or Gratitude Notebook<sup>4</sup>, Meditation, Progressive Relaxation, Deep Breathing, Exercise

Use the pampering/nurturing/joyful techniques: Hot baths, massages, build in daily something that is joyful or which you will look forward to

### Emotional support

Don’t allow “toxic” into your life: Decide and draw boundaries/rules/lines over which you will not allow others or yourself to step. Use “time outs” when stressed, feeling angry, when upset – or any time when you feel out of control or balance.

Touch: At least massages, at best, when you’re stressed or tired, slow soft touching working up to non-effortful sex, hug others

### TO GO FURTHER: RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

The Joy of Appreciative Living, Jacqueline Kelm – 3 simple steps, proven 28 day plan to greater happiness.

The Artist’s Way, Julia Cameron – Although it addresses artists, it actually addresses us all and includes some excellent self-care practices. We used this in a Finding Your Purpose workshop over 14 weeks, where the self-care helped us free up our creative energies with regard to what we wanted in life. A great book, along with the sequel Walking In This World, which we used in the advanced version of that workshop.

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<sup>3</sup> Self-efficacy is what it is called. A “feeling” (thought) that one is not able to control one’s own future very well is one of the greatest sources of unhappiness. Eliminate that negative belief/viewpoint about oneself and your happiness will rise very substantially.

<sup>4</sup> Both of these are laid out in [www.thelifemanagementalliance.com](http://www.thelifemanagementalliance.com) and both help to relax and improve one’s outlook, which can dramatically lower one’s stress just by itself.