

# THE TEACHER SELF-CARE CHALLENGE

Build resiliency  
and create a  
culture of care  
at your school.

## Tag, you're it!

Someone who cares about you wants you to tackle the teacher self-care challenge. This four-week challenge can be completed on your own or with a friend. You can even try it with a big or small group for extra accountability.

### WEEK 1

#### REDEFINE SELF-CARE.

Think about self-care and what it means to you. Try to distinguish the difference between basic needs and actual self-care. We spoke with educator and self-care expert Kristin McKeown for advice. She says teachers are natural caregivers and they need to remember they can't take care of their students if they're not taking care of themselves first. But what that looks like varies from one person to the next. "It's doing the things that we know intuitively are in our best interest for ourselves," she says.

**CHALLENGE:** Figure out what that means for you. For resources on this topic, check out the self-care section of the [Resilient Educator Toolkit](#).

### WEEK 2

#### ADD MORE SELF-CARE TO YOUR ROUTINES.

McKeown says schools sometimes have a bias toward positivity. It's the "everything is fine" mentality, which doesn't allow you to be stressed, tired, or unhappy. "This doesn't honor the truth of how incredibly challenging this profession is," McKeown says. "Be a little kinder to yourself."

**CHALLENGE:** After becoming more in tune with what self-care is, put it into practice. Find at least one thing to do for yourself every single day. This can include simple things, like leaving school on time.

### WEEK 3

#### BRING SELF-CARE TO YOUR CLASSROOM.

As you start cutting yourself some extra slack, take the next step by bringing it into your classroom. Just like you teach your students about self-regulating, if needed, make sure to give yourself permission to do the same. Not only does this set an example of self-care for your students, it's a way to continue to honor yourself.

**CHALLENGE:** Give yourself permission to go off schedule at least twice this week for the purpose of honoring self-care for yourself and your students.

### WEEK 4

#### BE ACCOUNTABLE AND CHALLENGE SOMEONE ELSE.

How are you doing? Be honest! Did self-care go by the wayside three days in? "It's so much easier for us to extend kindness, warmth, and support to other people," McKeown says. "So take what you'd say or do for others, then offer those same words to yourself."

**CHALLENGE:** If you haven't stuck with the challenge, then start over at week one! If you're doing great, take the opportunity to challenge someone else by sharing this printout with them.



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FOR ALL THAT YOU  
DO TO MAKE OUR SCHOOL  
A SPECIAL PLACE TO BE**

**THANKS  
FOR YOUR HARD WORK.  
NOW TAKE SOME TIME FOR  
YOURSELF—YOU DESERVE IT**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Check out these resources from [Concordia University-Portland](https://www.concordia.edu/portland)



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