

# Stress Awareness and Self-Care

Back in April, to celebrate national Stress Awareness Month, we totally planned on doing a post about stress awareness and management. Fittingly, we were too stressed and busy to get around to it. Funny how that works, right?

But just because we missed the month doesn't mean we still can't talk about stress. Heck, 2020 might as well have been Stress Awareness Year, and things still aren't hunky-dory yet this year.

Here at BDG, we are certainly aware of our stress, let me tell you. Let's face it, everyone is dealing with some level of stress and anxiety these days. What's important is being aware of this stress and then taking the necessary steps to address it and deal with it. Stress, after all, isn't just annoying, it can actually be detrimental to your health.

It all comes down to self-care.

## self-care

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noun

1. The practice of taking action to preserve or improve one's own health
2. The practice of taking an active role in protecting one's own ill-being and happiness, in particular during periods of stress

Taking *action*. Taking an *active* role. See the pattern here? Self-care is useless you actually make it a priority and *do something about it!* Too many of us let the stress build and build until it reaches a breaking point. The key is to take small but deliberate steps to keep your stress in check so things never get out of hand.

With that said, we present to you our **Self-Care Tips for Small Business Owners**. (We're big fans of #1, btw. Big.) Remember, stress management is possible—you just have to take action!

## Tip #1: Catch Some ZZZ's

Sleep is important, yo. We can't underestimate the amazingness of a good nights' sleep. Remember those? It may have been awhile since you've had a full eight hours, but making it a priority will up your boss status in a jiff. Try it and report back. We are big fans of sleep at BDG.

## Tip #2: Say "NO"

Oh man, this is another big one and arguably takes the most practice (in our experience). Saying 'no' is hard because we are nothing without our community. We have to be here for each other, but we can't do that at the expense of our own sanity. If you need to, try saying 'no, but...' and be ready with a piece of advice, referral or different option for their request. Hope that helps!

## Tip #3: Prioritize

We are list people. We make lists, we organize them and then we write them again. We could prioritize in our sleep. So, make a list, set a goal and attack it — but this time we're talking about your own self care! Prioritize YOU by keeping a list of fun “me time” activities. Set time in your schedule as if you were an appointment and make it happen!

## Tip #4: Listen

This one is a fan favorite. Escape your day, your kids, your significant other, your co-workers with a little audio vacation. Try some music, an audiobook, talk radio, or a podcast. Bonus points if you mix this activity with exercise. “Reward” your self by walking while listening to an audiobook. Win-win!

## Tip #5: Reward

Self-care can take practice just like anything else (especially for women), so let's find ways to reward yourself. Practice saying 'yes' to you and 'no' to those trying to steal your attention. Build a habit with your own self-care. Once you do, reward yourself!

Last year was an emotional dumpster fire. This year, make sure to prioritize and take care of your most valuable asset — YOU! After all, you deserve it. We all do.

Feel free to save (and share!) these tips as a reminder to take it easy on yourself. And please tell us what self-care wisdom you've gained over the years!