Self-Care, what does that really mean?

The self-care topic has been all the rage in recent years. Naturally many different companies are on the wagon to sell you products or services that can be called “self-care”. They aren’t wrong, self-care IS spending time (and often money) on yourself. Getting a pedicure or tickets to an NBA basketball game can be considered self-care but often we schedule in these activities and life feels more hectic because we have to adjust our schedules, set aside the money to pay for the activity, take time off work etc. etc. etc. How can we tune into ourselves and build a little bit of self-care each and every day? We will give you a secret and it’s easy. COMMUNICATION! You must tell people what you need and when you need it. Self-care means checking in and taking care of YOURSELF FIRST! Yup, completely first. This can be as simple as asking your spouse to make breakfast or get the children ready so you can have 15 extra minutes in the shower. You can communicate with your children about packing their own lunch for school. You can tell the grocery store clerk that you need 15 minutes to sit alone in your car. You can tell your coworkers that you need help finishing a task. You can tell your best friend that you would like to skip weekly lunch and be alone. Often, we put so much pressure on ourselves to juggle three balls in the air at one time and then the burn out creeps in. TELL PEOPLE WHAT YOU NEED! If you don’t communicate, they don’t know. Be willing to listen (or ask) others around you what they need for self-care. This will improve your relationships pretty dang quick, give it a shot!
The 5 types of Self-Care:

1. **Physical Self-Care** - Taking care of your body, moving and grooving enough during the day, getting enough sleep and nourishing your body with WHOLE FOODS, not junk!

2. **Social Self-Care** - Making sure you have time for the relationships in your life. Everyone has different social needs but please make sure you are surrounding yourself with friends/family that improve your outlook on life.

3. **Mental Self-Care** - Taking care of your mind. This can include things like doing puzzles and brain games, but it also means practicing compassion and acceptance, changing your perspectives to suffer less and loving yourself more.

4. **Spiritual Self-Care** - Nurturing your spirit, this doesn’t mean you have to attend church or follow a religion, it means connecting with the universe, taking time out to understand yourself better and engaging in practices that give your life meaning.

5. **Emotional Self-Care** - Developing healthy coping skills to deal with life struggles such as anxiety, depression or anger. Setting aside time to process emotions that pop up throughout the day or week.

**Why turn to meditation?**

Meditation is known to support overall wellness by “cultivating a focused awareness on the present moment.” When our mind is calm, it seems like everything else just falls into place. One of the best things about meditation is that it is so convenient and accessible for everyone. You don’t need to go anywhere or own any fancy equipment— all you need is yourself and a little bit of time. And if you’re lucky enough to have some essential oils, that’s even better! Aromas can powerfully influence our mind, body, and spirit, which makes them a perfect addition to your meditation practices.

**So how can you use essential oils during meditation?**

1. **Diffusion:** Using a Diffuser makes it easy to fill your environment with wonderful aromas that help you relax and focus. Begin diffusing a few minutes before your practice and enjoy the way the essential oil or blend deepens your connection to your environment and helps you feel more peaceful and positive.

2. **Topical application:** Certain essential oils are known to enhance the meditation experience. When appropriately diluted in a carrier oil, essential oils can be applied to several areas of your body, including:
   - Wrist
   - Temples
   - Soles of your feet
   - Behind the knees

3. **Personal aromatherapy inhaler:** A personal inhaler can also positively influence your practices. These inhalers are especially convenient if you are traveling or in a crowded area where diffusion or topical application would be inappropriate. With an inhaler in hand, find a comfortable seat, release any tensed-up muscles, and breathe deeply. Concentrate on following the rhythm of your breath to help still those busy thoughts and enjoy the balancing and healing properties of essential oils.

When choosing Essential Oils, you can Pinterest or google what benefits different blends have. A good rule of thumb is if it smells good to you and brings you peace and serenity use it! If it does not smell good to you or cause you any uneasy feelings give it to someone else that it may benefit. We all have different likes when it comes to pleasing our senses.