

SELF-CARE

Many of us enter the doors of ISA completely drained because we have been taking care of everyone and managing everything. We are depleted emotionally and physically. Many of us have lost a connection with our Higher Power and are physically ill. If we are to come out of trauma from the discovery of infidelity, we must take charge of our lives to restore our health and well-being. At the same time, we need to learn how to relax and have fun. The more extreme our feelings of trauma are, the more extreme we must practice self-care. Often, partners who have been living in unhealthy relationships have compromised their self-care.

The PIES MODEL: Physical, Intellectual, Emotional, Spiritual – is a simple method to assess and restore our current health and well-being. Self-care is not a simple notion of pampering. Rather, it is an attitude and practice of prioritizing ourselves and meeting our own needs.

SELF-CARE CHECKLIST: See the ISA website (www.isurvivors.org) for a complete list.

Physical

- Physical exercise*
- Healthy eating*
- Adequate sleep*
- Annual doctor visits/STD testing*
- Identify and set physical boundaries
- Take a relaxing bath
- Get a massage/spa treatment

Intellectual

- Educate yourself about your situation*
- Learn to set appropriate boundaries*
- Participate in different types of therapy*
- Identify toxic thoughts

Emotional

- See a psychiatrist if trauma symptoms persist*
- Reach out to ISA members for support*
- Have fun with friends
- Listen to or play music/dance
- Buy flowers and a nice card for yourself
- Read something other than recovery material

Spiritual

- Attend 12 Step meetings/Work the Steps*
- Pray, meditate and journal*
- Enjoy nature

*These are the most important self-care practices that can help us stabilize more quickly during the times when the effects of betrayal trauma are the strongest.