

SELF CARE = SELF LOVE

By Jennifer Benson

How do we self care these days when 2020 has changed our lives? Let me count the ways....

1. When we are feeling anxious or fired up, taking a moment to stop and taking a deep breath and letting it out slowly actually helps slow your heart beat. Did you know that not only does the heartbeat and breathing to work together in a rhythm, BUT the diaphragm and the heart center are literally fused together?

2. Nature is amazing! Get out and take a walk in the woods, along the trails around the city, or just around your neighborhood. While you are out hug a tree! It may sound silly, but just leaning against it will transfer energy and will help you to naturally ground. Trees also throw off negative ions which we as humans need. And if you are able to go barefoot on a piece of ground that is grass or dirt with no chemicals--it too will help ground you.

3. When going to the lake or ocean make sure you dig your toes into the sand for a bit. Not only is it a natural exfoliate, it also helps with relaxing you with a natural foot massage and grounding. If you take a walk or run in the sand you can burn more calories too.

4. Gardening. It can take your mind off of things that are happening, help you grow your own food, your own aromatherapy, and getting your hands in the dirt is yet another way to ground you. (Contact me if you are interested in more info about growing produce or flowers year round.)

5. Food is an EXTREMELY important way to fuel your self care! Fruits, veggies, berries and omegas are all things that can help nourish your brain to your skin and everything in between. Fueling yourself properly can help with different internal health issues (mobility, heart, lungs, etc.) and it can help with depression too. (I may have a solution if you are not a huge produce person or can't get 7 -13 servings in a day.)

6. Listening to music. Now you can listen to anything that soothes you, but nowadays there are opportunities to cleanse out your chakras with specific sounds or to help you heal. Also there is actual sound therapy that uses drums, bowls, and gongs-- the vibrations help release and let go of stress.

7. Taking a bath can become an experience! I personally LOVE Epsom Salt baths since its Magnesium Sulfate (which our body needs) to help function. There are also Hymalayan salt mixtures that can be combined with flowers and essential oils too. Let's never forget to add mood lighting with candles if you are going all out!

8. Water. YES water. We need to stay hydrated. We don't feel good when we aren't drinking enough water. And NO coffee doesn't count! Try to limit the sweet drinks as well.

9. Aromatherapy can be used to lift you up or calm you down, just depends on how you want to work your space. Incense, candles or an aromatherapy diffuser can help you clear the air.

10. Laughter is important. Take time to find humor whether that is in a book, movie or watching/listening to a comedian.

11. Massage is an opportunity for you to have alone time, healing time, and sink into relaxation. Also check out the massage therapist that fits YOUR personal concerns---NOT everyone is for you. (Speaking as a Licensed Massage Therapist)

12. Books. Some find reading to be the best way for them to mentally relax. You may also explore audiobooks that you can share with your family or go solo while cooking or cleaning.

13. Getting creative can let out so many things. I know those who cook or bake, or write their own music. I personally enjoy painting and having different art classes. It's all about expression, not about perfectionism.

BIOGRAPHY

Jenni Benson is a Horticulturist, Licensed Massage Therapist (in 3 States), a Health Advocate for Juice Plus and Tower Garden, and a nature enthusiast. Contact Jenni via email at healingthymemassage@yahoo.com, website mihealingthymemassage.com, or Facebook at [@healingthymemassagetherapy](https://www.facebook.com/healingthymemassagetherapy).