

YOUR 30-DAY SELF-CARE CHALLENGE

SMALL CHANGES – BIG IMPACT!

IT'S WEEK 3 OF THE SELF-CARE CHALLENGE!

You've completed your first task card! How does it feel to be embarking on this self-care journey? Consider the actions that are easy for you and those that aren't. Think about the things you enjoy and those you don't. Use this challenge as a way to learn about yourself. By increasing self-knowledge and understanding what you need and what you enjoy doing, success is more likely. Over time, you will find a rhythm and routine that works for you and develop a realistic plan that you can commit to. At face-value, the changes that have been implemented from your first task card can seem unimpressive. Over the course of a year, however, the impact of these small changes can be huge! Remember that self-care doesn't only benefit you, it also benefits others. Let's see how!

THE BENEFITS OF SELF-CARE!



DECREASES STRESS, ANXIETY, DEPRESSION, & CHRONIC DISEASE

It is difficult to define "self-care" in relation to disease. We know, however, that individual healthy practices like nutritional support, exercise, meditation, and many other positive self-care strategies promote a healthy body, mind, and spirit. It's not selfish to make your health a priority.



INCREASES PRODUCTIVITY & ENERGY

According to Statistics Canada, 30% of people aged 35-54 report that most days are "quite a bit" or "extremely" stressful. People with high stress levels are less productive, less engaged, and have more sick days. Self-care strategies help to manage stress levels, which in turn creates more productivity in and out of the workplace. Productivity isn't about pushing yourself harder. It's about ensuring you have the energy, stamina, and headspace you need to do purposeful work each day.



IMPROVES RELATIONSHIPS & BUILDS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Not meeting your mental, physical, emotional needs could be putting you in a situation where your investment in relationships is more of a "withdrawal" than a "deposit". When you invest in yourself, you also invest in the quality of time and experiences with others. For example, a recent study out of the University of Berkley found a correlation between sleep and relationship conflict. Cultivating healthy habits makes you more available to those you love and care for. Self-care should be seen as a foundation for healthy relationships in your life.

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As the years go by, we spend more and more time on our phones. Much of that time is spent consuming online content. While some of our activities can be positive (keeping in touch with family, checking in on friends, reading self-help or motivational articles, researching a new skill), there is also a cost to all of that connection. Our brains were not meant to handle the emotional highs and lows

that come with scrolling through social media, engaging in an online debate, or trying to attain “likes”. So, what drives us to keep going back for more?

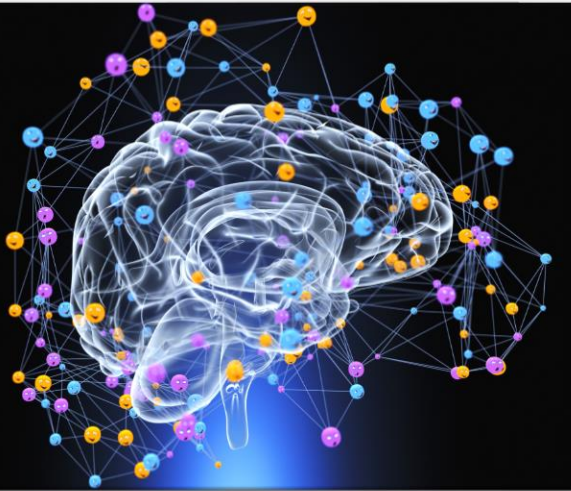
DOPAMINE

Dopamine is released every time we receive something on our phones. It could be a text we have been waiting for or a comment on our most recently posted photo. Dopamine is the neurotransmitter responsible for the feel-good high we get with pleasure-seeking activity. Every time a notification is received, your brain knows that there is the potential for social stimuli, so we check our phones and smartphone

addiction grows. We are now stuck in a destructive loop between positive and negative feedback and a dysregulated dopamine response that also affects sleep, mood, and more!

Is dopamine to blame? Certainly not. Dopamine plays an essential role in our happiness and is a biological process that helps us stay motivated toward positive goals in life. The answer is to find healthy ways to regulate the production of dopamine that don't involve a device.

The creative process is one way to tap into healthy dopamine production. The connection between art, creativity, and personal happiness is nothing new. Research supports the idea that tapping into our creative side is good for the brain. Creating visually pleasing art is a pleasure-seeking behaviour that can be relaxing, rejuvenating, but also health-enhancing. So put down the phone, and get creative!

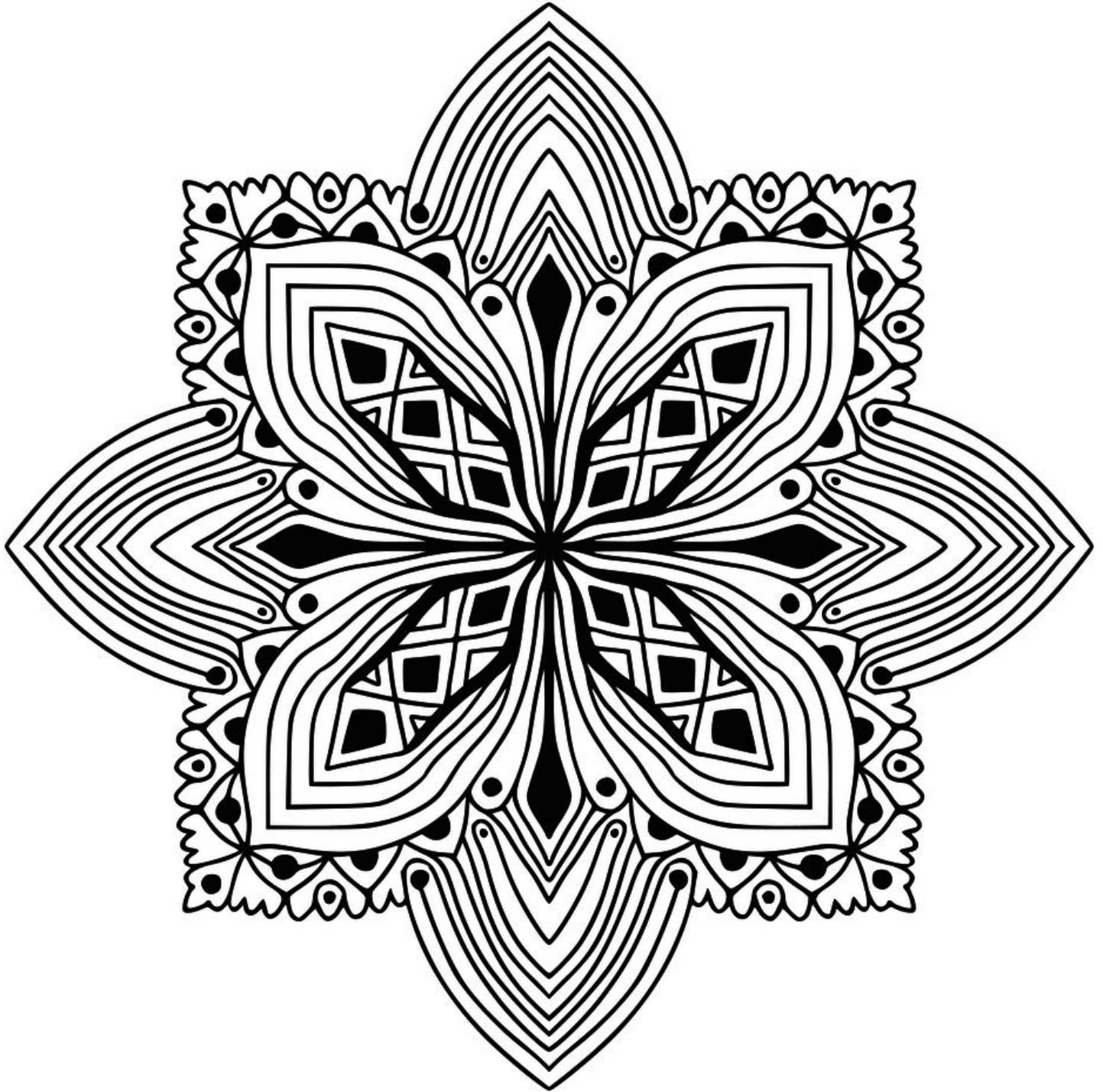


BONUS OPPORTUNITY

Complete the attached Mandala colouring sheet and earn 3 bonus points for Week 3!!

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Sources: <https://anxietypanichealth.com/2019/02/07/self-care-for-anxiety-and-panic-disorders/>
<https://globalnews.ca/news/4138006/stress-causes-today/>
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<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3827550/>