

SANE

We're people like you.

SANE

We're people like you

Peer Group Chat

Date: 08/09/2022

Title: Self Care

Description: Self-care allows us to cope with the day-to-day, and is an important part of recovery and wellbeing. Different things will be helpful for different people – in this group we'll come together to reflect on how we can best look after ourselves.

PurplePanth er (PSW)	Hi everyone. First, we'd like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the various lands we are all joining this event from. We pay deep respect to the Elders of those Countries, past and present, and we further extend that respect to any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people joining this group tonight. Welcome everyone to today's Peer Group Chat talking about self care. We really value your thoughts on how these groups go, so we will send a link to a short survey at the end of this event for you to complete. While this survey is optional, it is a chance to provide feedback for us to improve our services. In case you might need to leave part way through the event, you can find the survey here now: https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUFOsHJRKQ6wyW
Girasole (Peer Worker)	Hi @teej and @The Hams! Great to see you here, welcome :)

SANE

We're people like you.

The Hams	hey all - dunno how long i will be here. Not good atm. But wanted to talk about this theme.
teej	Hi 🙋
PurplePanther (PSW)	Tonight, Peer Support Workers @Girasole and myself will be facilitating a discussion around self-care. Whether you have lived experience of complex mental health issues, you care for someone who does, or both- everyone deserves care and can benefit from more of it. We'll be moving through a number of discussion questions tonight, and it's entirely up to you how much or how little you are comfortable with sharing. @Basil, who moderates on the SANE Forums, is also here to support our safety. If you're having any technical difficulties, please see our FAQ (https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat/chat-faq) or message @Basil.
Basil (Moderator)	Hey everyone :blush:
teej	Me too @The Hams re feeling down but wanting to see the topic.
Girasole (Peer Worker)	I hope tonight's group will be helpful for you both 😊 I'm glad you were able to join
PurplePanther (PSW)	Within this group tonight we'll be talking about: Moving through any roadblocks and finding self-care that works for us How self-care can involve things that are difficult but important How we can consider community care, without all the responsibility being on individuals
PurplePanther (PSW)	We will be starting the discussion shortly, and will just allow a bit more time for people to log on and join 😊
Girasole (Peer Worker)	@teej @The Hams I'm curious what you'd each might like/hope to get out of tonight's discussion? :)
PurplePanther (PSW)	Welcome everyone! Feel free to introduce yourselves. I'm @PurplePanther

SANE

We're people like you.

The Hams	How to implement self care, but also how to keep implementing it. I struggle to cope these days with a lot of things and i always forget about self care
PurplePanther (PSW)	Q1: How would you define self-care? What do you understand self-care to look like for you?
teej	Well the timing is pretty remarkable. As from 3 this afternoon I am trying a kind of hospital at home. I am safe but really needed space to 'recover' from a really difficult month. I guess this is how can I make myself stop and rest and self care like I would in a short stay in hospital.
The Hams	self care is being able to know what strategies and things I can do to get away from anxious thoughts
The Hams	Hope you're alright @teej
teej	Self care is bringing the emotional temperature down i think. Thanks @The Hams. I'm ok.
The Hams	(brb)
Girasole (Peer Worker)	I'm curious @The Hams (after you're back) about what kinds of strategies work for you to help with that? For distraction, I find listening to an interesting podcast can help take up brain space instead of anxious thoughts
teej	I guess self care and mindfulness are a bit the same. Doing something in the present that is soothing so you can function better
Girasole (Peer Worker)	I relate with that @teej! I'd define self-care as any action we can take that would be good for our wellbeing. This is a deliberately broad definition - it could be so many different things. It could be planning something in the future to look forward to; it could be a soothing or mindful activity for the present; it could be leaving a relationship or situation that's causing us harm; etc.
Basil (Moderator)	Self care involves me asking - what do I need right now/what would feel nourishing?
PurplePanther (PSW)	And taking them the time do nice things just for myself, like cooking a nice meal, or a hot shower and getting nice and clean, even when there is no one else around

SANE

We're people like you.

teej	@Basil (Moderator) That's how I'm trying to approach the next few days, finding things that feel nourishing but also not putting pressure on myself to do anything specifically
Basil (Moderator)	love that @teej !
PurplePanthor (PSW)	Q2: We'll be talking tonight about the ways we take care of ourselves. It might be helpful, though, to first consider the reasons why we might do this. Why do you think it might be important to care of yourself?
Girasole (Peer Worker)	Hi @the magician ! Welcome, great to see you here :)
teej	The really hard part for me though is how to tell anyone that I need this self care time alone. I don't know how to explain it to family.
Girasole (Peer Worker)	That sounds a bit tricky @teej - do you anticipate they wouldn't understand if you told them you needed time alone?
teej	We might do this so we don't dive off the cliff.....because we get to breaking point.
the magician	hi people
PurplePanthor (PSW)	@teej it was once described to me as lifting the lid to let the steam out of a boiling pot so it doesn't boil over
teej	I think that it gets hard because family then worry and feel like they need to help, BUT that then makes it harder. I needed this time to not mask or be there for others, just to let go of my emotion and the really hard stuff that has happened. For me I need that time alone.
the magician	self care is tasks around helping emotional physical or mental needs. for me that's stress management. liquids management. exercise regime. a whole list. but what I require to make life functional and pleasant.

SANE

We're people like you.

the magician	i think my family are just patient and supportive. full of practical advice in things i know nothing of.
Girasole (Peer Worker)	@teej overall its nice that they want to help, but they may benefit from understanding that you are already helping yourself- you know what you need, and are willing to do that (which is great)! It sounds like if they want to help in this instance, it would involve accepting that if anything they may need to take a step back for a bit
Girasole (Peer Worker)	Taking action to look after myself is important as otherwise stress/distress can increase out of control and overwhelm me. I want to be as well as possible, and I have a responsibility for my wellbeing, so where I have control over a way to make me feel better or improve a situation, I'd want to do that.
PurplePanthor (PSW)	Q3: Doing things to take care of yourselves well can be helped a lot by having a self-care mindset. Have a look at this diagram for reference: https://mfwconsultants.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/self-care-iceberg-watermarked-768x512.png What do you think about this?
Jacques	Hello ladies, gentlemen and gender neutral peoples
Girasole (Peer Worker)	Hello @Jacques ! Welcome :)
the magician	i was always very positive and proactive but for me self care my wellbeing changed after i quit smoking cigarettes. in that habit it immobilised everything else. when i gave it up i changed to take on more self care challenges that wouldn't have worked before.
Girasole (Peer Worker)	amazing @the magician ! I know quitting's not easy
Jacques	The diagram is a bit confusing how it is set out
Basil (Moderator)	thats awesome @the magician i also havent considered a self care challenge before, I like it
the magician	i think the diagram is a very holistic self care management guide

SANE

We're people like you.

Jacques	It is so hard to do self care when I am so depressed, the overwhelming feeling like what is the point is really hard to break
Girasole (Peer Worker)	Hi @Snowie ! Welcome :)
teej	Maybe it's not what I thought re family then @Girasole (Peer Worker) . Maybe it's just that I can't cope with them knowing. Last week I self harmed in a way that could have let to a bad outcome (I didn't care at the time). They don't know and I've hidden it from them. Maybe I don't understand this dynamic myself. 🙄
Jacques	Oh OK @the magician I will look at it again.
Snowie	Hi, sorry I am late. Had to pick up daughter from work
Jacques	Hi snowie and teej
Jacques	Hugs teej I know how hard it can be sometimes.
the magician	in that instant i would think of one thing that excites you still and start with that Jacques
teej	Hi @Jacques . I had to take two looks too at the diagram.
Snowie	teej I know the feeling of hiding self harm. I do that often myself. I think it is a way to try and protect others from what we are going through
Girasole (Peer Worker)	@Jacques it sounds like you're good at persisting and trying, reaching out for support (like being here tonight) even when its hard, which is really commendable :blue_heart:
Girasole (Peer Worker)	I definitely agree that we're more likely to look after ourselves when we truly believe that we deserve that. There's a lot of grey space, though, between not feeling that we deserve care, and having a strong belief that we do. In all of that space in between, we can learn and make progress towards the more positive end of the spectrum.
Purple Panther (PSW)	Q4: If you struggle with taking care of yourself, be assured that this is not necessarily fixed- having a growth mindset to self-care, that is, treating it as a continual learning opportunity, can be really helpful. Have you ever found that you've got better at self-care over time? If not-how might you like to get better at looking after yourself?

SANE

We're people like you.

Jacques	Yes @the magician I do try to work though tough times. If it is bad I just sleep the day away, if I can cope I just keep busy so I don't think. With really loud music.
the magician	i would like to stop eating a packet of chocolate biscuits a week i don't seem to be able to control myself when they're available.
teej	Me too @the magician
the magician	can you add singing or dancing to that, maybe?
Snowie	I think I have gotten better at self care over time. I think my self care tools have increased too. I always used to put others first and now I try to put myself first. In saying that, when really distressed I often think that I am not worthy of self care. It is something that I am working on with my psych. I think self worth and self care are intertwined with each other.
Girasole (Peer Worker)	I relate to that @Snowie - I've certainly gotten better at looking after myself with time which has been related to understanding what more of my needs are. Often I feel my self-care is just doing my best to honour my needs
PurplePanthor (PSW)	@the magician singing and dancing feels so good
Jacques	Q4, I guess new techniques and coping mechanisms do help me get through some times. Music really is my saviour. I spend all my time alone. So it is so easy to get trapped in my mind.
teej	I think that perhaps understanding for me that when I'm in desperate need of self care I need to allow that time, because I don't get the benefits of it I squeeze in something in and that it will help.
the magician	im generally very busy so pacing myself and encouraging breaks are looking after myself. in particular not overloading, being mindful and reality testing in a mindful way.
teej	Oops. Reword that part. I need to be really aware of making sure I will get the benefit rather than go through the motions and expect it will help
The Hams	self care also includes talking to those you live with - which i just did - tears were shed. So have a good chat forumites. See you around. I'm gonna go and chat about things

SANE

We're people like you.

Girasole (Peer Worker)	Take care @The Hams ! :blue_heart:
PurplePanther (PSW)	Q5: Self-care is often thought about as just pleasant things like bubble baths, face masks, and massages. But sometimes, we might need to do difficult things too in order to look after ourselves. For instance: having a tough conversation to resolve a conflict with someone; managing time well so that stressful tasks don't build up; establishing boundaries in or ending a toxic relationship; saying no to things. What do you think are some challenging but necessary forms of self-care for you?
the magician	sharing in families is important as long as the person is comfortable with it.
Jacques	Night @The Hams
teej	@Snowie I think living with a family is soooo much harder as well to work through self care. I was always hyper aware of that. I live on my own now and I think it's the first time I'm ok with it.
the magician	challenging parts: understanding my sisters uncomfortableness with talking about mental illness without being prejudiced towards me. rescuing that relationship.
Jacques	I had a lot of issues with trust from friends, so I pushed them all away, I am glad I did, I don't have the stress of managing them, I don't have the pressure of being able to afford to go out. I will and do push anyone away that hurts me. I guess that is my main self care.
Snowie	Some challenging forms of self care are for me opening up to people, especially my husband and psych. I think it is so easy to just say "i'm fine" instead of really telling them how I am going. It is also putting my foot down with certain family members and telling them that their words are not helpful. Standing up for myself is a huge step that I am still working on. For so long I have just listened and let them say what they want. Now I try and assert myself.
Snowie	teej I am glad you have comfort in living alone.
teej	It's a work in progress @Snowie 😊
Girasole (Peer Worker)	@Snowie that amazing to hear you're establishing more boundaries in support of your wellbeing :purple_heart: So important!

SANE

We're people like you.

the magician	going nine months symptom free into a type of remission is my self care goal. a lot of hard work but there's the whole future.
Jacques	So proud of you @the magician , I wish I had your strength
Girasole (Peer Worker)	@Jacques I'm sorry you had friends who hurt you- putting boundaries in there to protect yourself is good, there. I do hope you have people who nurture you, instead :yellow_heart:
the magician	inner energies and resilience in hard times. id like more meaningful friendships with same sex.
Girasole (Peer Worker)	Often things that involve organising, admin or paperwork are a drain for me. But organising things like time with friends is actually really important that I regularly do. Unfortunately it can often be difficult as we can have pretty busy or conflicting schedules... but I always need to persist and remember to regularly organise opportunities for connection
Jacques	No I'm alone @Girasole (Peer Worker) , just my mum and partner, I'm happy with them in my life. I don't need friends to socialise with.
PurplePanther (PSW)	@Jacques I get that Jacques, I'm a bit of a loner too, and I have learned how to make my own happiness
Jacques	Yes, it is amazing how we can adapt @PurplePanther (PSW) , to be quite honest I do like my own company. I never really feel alone. Mum and I live in the same house but don't speak to each other all the time. We have our own space. I love chatting to my partner, she is interstate. I do a lot of restoration work. So I keep busy
the magician	same for a long time then i started outdoors inc. meeting some gr8 people. though overcoming reciprocation in connections can be an issue.
PurplePanther (PSW)	Q6: Often we can think of self-care as an individualistic kind of thing- taking a bath by yourself, taking some time for yourself, etc. But others and community can be inherently involved! Does this resonate at all with you? Talk us through if you think it'd be good to have a more social/community-based framework for self-care
the magician	i usually just get asked out. then consider a pet cat. haha face to face regional peer groups would change things for me.

SANE

We're people like you.

Jacques	I don't have anyone in real life. But online I find forums like sane really amazing to talk things through with others. Sometimes it is good to get some outside insight. And to offer support to others too. The close knit community on sane is really amazing. No judgement and everyone on sane can relate. I guess no one really knows what anxiety and depression is like unless they have the conditions
teej	I think it depends on the reason for needing self care @PurplePanther (PSW) . Sometimes it might be important to self care with others, other times it might be essential to be on your own. I think I experience both at different times.
Snowie	I think I struggle to connect with others in a social setting. I am not one to go to a group or even catch up with friends by myself. The only time I catch up with others is when I am going out with my husband and my kids. They are mostly his friends. I have always been a loner and think I always will. In saying that I am not opposed to finding people that have a similar experience to me. I just would not know where to start.
Girasole (Peer Worker)	I firmly believe in community care. Why should we be necessarily obliged to meet all of our own needs, if others can help? Especially when we're struggling. I'm in some community groups online where people may ask for help from others with meals, cleaning, walking their dog etc... sometimes in exchange for something they need too, but sometimes for no other reason than kindness and community spirit. This can of course also happen with people close to us. Humans have existed throughout time in social groups – its quite unnatural for us to try and deal with everything ourselves. I'd love for us to embrace community more, it's a beautiful thing. Not all the time and not if we don't want to – but to have the option normalised more
Jacques	I agree @teej I do the same different situations require different support types. Sometimes being alone to work through things is just as important.
PurplePanther (PSW)	Q7: Are there things you're proud of in your self-care and recovery journey? We'd love to hear all about it!
the magician	id like to adapt to social connectedness in the work and study place. i have a strong connection among neighbours and want to extend that
Jacques	My proudest moment of self care would be opening my life and heart to my amazing partner. She suffers anxiety and depression too and we manage to support each other through it. It was a big risk trusting her and it took me a very long time to open up to her. But we are closer than ever.

SANE

We're people like you.

Snowie	I am not sure if I am proud of myself. I think I am my biggest critic. It is easy to see the flaws in ourselves and concentrate on them instead of how far we/I have come. Sometimes I think I have come far but then other times I think I have gone backwards. It probably depends on how I am going at the time.
Snowie	Jacques so glad you have an amazing partner 💕😄
Girasole (Peer Worker)	I'm proud that its something I actually think about every day – this wasn't always the case. I've also made a lot of progress in setting boundaries for my wellbeing. There's still a lot of room for me to deepen my understandings and practices of self-care, which I'm excited for- particularly community care
Jacques	Wow that is truly amazing @the magician I wish I could lose weight.
teej	That sounds theoretically pretty cool @Girasole (Peer Worker) , but petrifying in real life. I really really like that concept of community being all embracing. I'm just not good at asking for help or being there for others (not through lack of wanting but it's not my strong point in being practically helpful).
teej	Ditto @Snowie
PurplePa nther (PSW)	Q: Have you learned anything helpful from others' experiences here tonight that you might be able to apply in your own life? If yes, what did you learn?
Jacques	Yes, @teej , @Snowie and @the magician said some things about self care that resonated with me, I don't feel so alone and so alien. Others here are experiencing the same things.
Girasole (Peer Worker)	@teej it's definitely something that can slowly be learned with time and support :) It can start with just the littlest of things, with people you feel safest with – and once that goes well, that can slowly but surely build :purple_heart:
Snowie	I learnt that self care comes in so many different forms and what works for one person might not work for another. I also learnt that others can play a huge role in helping us care for ourselves. I think I need to be more open to letting others help me. I know I have people around me that care about me, but letting them in is super hard for me.
teej	Maybe realising that self care has many forms and for many needs.
the magician	resilience, perseverance, determination. making time for other people. rewarding myself. liking self and my life.

SANE

We're people like you.

PurplePanth (PSW)	Q: On topic... would some self-care be helpful for you after we finish? How about community care? What might be helpful for you? 😊
Jacques	I guess for me to try to learn more techniques of self care. And to try not to push others away when I am most in need.
the magician	that self care is an outlook.... like the diagram. it becomes a way of living.
Jacques	I have my worry beads with me. Doing my breathing exercises and maybe a little music.
Jacques	Thank you so much mods for another amazing discussion.
teej	Putting together a shelving unit, or should I say pulling apart and fixing the one I put together a while ago.
Snowie	I am going to curl up in bed with my dog and have some cuddles. Will probably watch some tv, take my meds and hopefully get a good nights sleep!
Girasole (Peer Worker)	Yes I'm going to focus on basics (shower, sleep) and limit social media use to try and wind down and relax :)
PurplePanth (PSW)	Here are some further resources we recommend having a look at: 1: Is self-care a new or challenging thing to try more of? How to develop a growth mindset: https://www.opencolleges.edu.au/informed/features/develop-a-growth-mindset/ 2: Self care – for survivors of complex trauma https://blueknot.org.au/survivors/survivor-self-care/ 3: From Self care to Communities of Care https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=beOWvqBfK3I&t=26s (content warning: discusses gun violence and mass shootings)
the magician	chat to mum my band aid and comfy new bed.
Jacques	Hood night all, thank you so much everyone. Hugs to all
PurplePanth (PSW)	We'd like to invite you to complete a survey reflecting on your experience in this Peer Group Chat. We'd love to hear any feedback you may have. It will only take a few minutes to complete. Please click this link: https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUFOsHJRKQ6wyW

SANE

We're people like you.

PurplePanth er (PSW)	Thank you for joining, and we hope you enjoyed the discussion 😊 If you'd like to be informed when our next Peer Group Chat will be taking place, you can sign up to our mailing list here https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat . You can also ask questions for us to discuss in future peer chats!
Snowie	Thanks for the talk tonight
the magician	good night all apologies for breaking guidelines refresh them for next week. have a good one.
teej	Night all 🥰
Girasole (Peer Worker)	Thank you so much everyone for being here and sharing your thoughts :heart: I genuinely wish you all the best in your self- & community-care journeys
PurplePa nther (PSW)	Goodnight everyone