7 Self-care Habits you should develop at Work

1) Be aware of your stressors: When it comes to what causes us stress, one size does not fit all. We are all different and need to know what exactly causes us stress. Is it the workload, the people we work with, meeting deadlines? Are we stressed working in a team, or working alone? Do we prefer an environment in which a lot is happening, or do we need a quiet area free of distractions? *Self-awareness, an essential first step in emotional intelligence,* is crucial to knowing what we need to do to look after our emotional needs.

2) Learn to say no: Many of us think, or have been led to believe, that saying no means we are not a good team player or we miss out on being promoted. However, it is an essential part of letting people we work with know that we are at our limit.
It is important to frame our saying no in the right context.
You may find that this will earn you respect from your colleagues and management and encourage others to do the same.

3) Set and keep boundaries: We need to set boundaries and let others clearly know where those boundaries are. Do we need a quiet time to meditate, recharge, and regenerate? Let everyone know this, and be clear that outside of emergencies, you would appreciate not being interrupted during this time. If you are working on an important project with a tight deadline, *let everyone know and thank them for helping you by allowing you to focus on this important piece of work* until completion.

4) Protect your energy: There are certain people at work who can drain your energy if you let them. Sometimes referred to as "*energy vampires*," their attitude and negativity can get in the way of your looking after yourself emotionally. Avoid them if you can, and limit any interaction that you are forced by circumstances to have with them. When socializing with colleagues at work, avoid talking about areas that you have strong feelings about.

5) Ask for help when you need it: There is no benefit to being a hero or a martyr. Asking for help when you need it is *not a sign of weakness; it is an indication of someone who knows themselves, is open and a good team player*. Consider that others may feel good about the fact that you trust them and their work enough to ask them for help. Let your colleagues know when you have some free time and are able to help them with something in return.

6) Accept all your emotions: …but choose which you will focus on: *"Feelings are much like waves. We can't stop them from coming but we can choose which one to surf."* Emotions are neither good nor bad, and we all experience many every day. Instead of wasting energy trying to suppress negative emotions, ride them out, but don't keep focusing on them. If you are experiencing positive emotions, you can extend them by focusing on them. In this way, you can extend your positive emotional energy.

7) Go easy on yourself when things don't work out as planned: When you have given your best effort and things don't go as planned, practice being gentle on yourself. Ask yourself how you can use the experience to help you improve in the future. Remind yourself that even the most highly successful people have failed, many countless times, before they reached success. Give *yourself credit for stepping up and giving it your all.* Pay it forward by supporting others in the workplace who are feeling bad about a setback.

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