



SELF-CARE

How you can care for yourself
to care for others

LUNCHTIME CONVERSATION REFLECTION

Sikunye seeks to equip and support churches to care for families in the First Thousand Days (FTD). This reflection is part of a range of Lunchtime Conversations hosted by Sikunye, aimed at equipping churches to become FTD-Friendly.

Listen to audio recording [here](#)
Watch the video recording [here](#)

Mark 1: 35

“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.”

Jesus removed himself from others and called his disciples to do the same

Mark 6:31-32

“Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, ‘come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.’ so, they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place.”

HOW ARE YOU CARING FOR YOURSELF WHILST CARING FOR OTHERS?

In the book of Mark we see that after a full day of preaching, Jesus seeks out solitude, where he could pray and speak to God, and then he continued to preach. Before taking his next steps, Jesus cared for himself by taking time out and spending it with God.

What do you seek out at the end of a very long day?

It might be getting some exercise, or getting stuck into chores around the house, or watching TV, reading a book, or catching up on all your WhatsApp's and social media. Can you see a pattern in what you rely on – and are you making sure you take time out to replenish yourself before you continue?

Why is it important to care for yourself?

If you do not care for yourself and fill your tank with things that make you happy, you cannot give to others

Being a healthy individual will ensure a long-lasting ministry

You lead yourself well and that is modelling to families how we hope they will care for themselves

TIPS TO CARE FOR YOURSELF WELL THIS FESTIVE SEASON

Physical self-care

- Drink water
- Get enough sleep
- Eat right
- Exercise
- Breathe – it is a free gift that we have to live, and it is a gift from God - it is also a free tool to calm us down by just breathing

Emotional self-care

- Counselling – work through those things that have been wearing you down
- Put up good boundaries to protect yourself – such as don't go to things you don't want to go to; don't be around people who are not helpful to you
- Be mindful of being kind to yourself for your own mental health, as well as being kind to others
- Reach out for support if you are struggling – see [here](#) for useful contacts

Spiritual self-care

- **Sabbath** (ing) – practicing regular rest/ weekly and then monthly, and then annually.
- **Reading a scripture** passage slowly and carefully
- **Meditation:** thinking deeply upon the text perhaps looking for one word or phrase that stands out
- **Prayer:** stay grounded in your faith by having a loving conversation with God
- **Contemplation:** resting in God's presence (Some practice these first four steps three times in a setting, learning that new insights are gained each time they return to meditate on a passage.)
- **Centering Prayer:** is a stance where we prepare our mind to be present to the moment; centered on the presence of God and our body to be relaxed perhaps through mindful breathing. Knowing that our mind wanders, we gently redirect it back to present awareness of our body and sensations. Some would say that Centering Prayer prepares us for Contemplative Prayer.
- **Contemplative Prayer:** focuses on a sacred word that best supports your intention to be in the Lord's presence. Perhaps a word like "Abba", "Yes, Lord", or "Thank you, Jesus". Some seek a word that feels right to them, some let the word find them. Others have called it the "gaze of faith" or "a silent love". Some would say that Contemplative prayer begins with Centering Prayer.

True self-care begins and ends with God. God created us and certainly knows our needs better than even we do and planned from the beginning to be the provider of our needs. God's love for us means that He initiates the care that we need to experience rest. Often, WE try to achieve rest, maybe by zoning out with our devices, going on a vacation, eating, or buying another thing. Eventually, we realize these attempts only provide short term rest.

True self-care is more than restoring your body. Soul care or sacred rest is also about restoring your mind, soul, and spirit. All aspects of our being are important. Each aspect affects another. Failure to meet these inherent needs can result in symptoms of anxiety, depression, anger, or physical problems.

Care for yourself to be able to care for others!

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

- [Mindfulness techniques](#) in different languages
- [Self care practices of sacred rest](#)
- [Self-care versus biblical rest](#)
- [Useful contacts](#) resource
- [Exhale](#) contemplative prayer podcast