**Module 4: How to take care of yourself**

Self-Care is a way to maintaining mental wellness. Important components of self-care include exercise, rest and nourishment.

Rest may be difficult to come by in the harvest season or if you work varying shifts such as early or late milking schedules, and it is important to prioritize sleep and get rest when you can.

You are moving all day on the farm and it is a form of exercise. It is important to ensure the heart rate is increasing so the entire body including your heart, lungs, and brain are benefiting as exercise delivers oxygen and nutrients to your tissues and helps your cardiovascular system work more efficiently. When your heart and lung health improve, in turn this improves mental health. Our mind and body can handle stressors better when they are fit. Nourishment is important as when we eat well, we feel well.

How do you respond to stress? Do you have the fight or flight response? Explore your stress response, is it healthy or are changes needed? We can rewire our brains to cope and respond differently. Everyone's stress responses are different as well as we all have different strengths. We need to recognize and be open to each other’s differences to help reduce the stigma of mental wellness

How we think is a reflection on how we feel and our behaviour. How do you react in certain situations? What are your thoughts on your reaction? How do you respond emotionally to the situation? Can you adapt your behaviour to match the emotional reaction? Are you in control of your responses? We need to be in control of our responses if we want to build community and be resilient.

Be yourself or just do you. These are things you can do to rewire or reset your brain. Do things you want to do not what people think you should do or what may be best. If there are activities that help you destress and regroup, do those things and make time for those things. Don't be afraid to try new things but know you can do you. Practice time management

Do not be afraid if someone else’s activities that reset them do not work for you.

What is our perspective on self-care? If you no longer enjoy your self-care activity evaluate it to see if it is because you aren't taking the time to enjoy or is it really not for you anymore.

Ways to maintain mental wellness can be through limiting activities such as social media which can be addicting. When we receive the likes and recognition on Facebook and such, we want more so we spend more time reading and posting to get those likes. The more time you spend the more it becomes addicting. We need to understand what social media does, and how we use it appropriately. Be mindful and use it with intent, understand the risks and make good choices to manage it appropriately.

Mindfulness is an awareness of our thoughts, feelings, and environment. It is the ability to know what is happening in your head at any given moment without getting carried away by it. We tune in to our senses in the moment. Are you practicing mindfulness? Learn to respond wisely to things that happen rather than reacting blindly. This can be done through meditation. Throughout the day, take a moment to breathe in, and relax your mind and body, go for a walk without the phone, play, or do whatever you can to clear your head. There is no set amount of time to spend but spend enough time to reset yourself. Moments of mindfulness can help clear our thoughts, reset our minds and help us destress.

It’s not hard to make decisions, once you know what your values are. Knowing your values makes it easier to make decisions, create boundaries, and understand how to space out our stimulus and response which will put us in a better place when we experience hard times.

**Self-Care Review**

It doesn’t need to be overwhelming or all consuming; can change as you grow and your life changes; can change with the seasons; and what happens when a self-care strategy no longer works. Start with one bite size thing at a time and do it until it is easy and then add something else if you like. It is ok to reevaluate and adjust if the activity no longer works for you. Use the lens perspective to see if it is serving you anymore and if it doesn't then change it.

If you would like or need further guidance there are resources available such as the [Farm Family Support Center](https://farmsafetyns.ca/farm-family-support-center/).

**Module 4: How to take care of yourself – DISCUSSION RECORD**

**Agenda:**

* How do you charge your battery?
* Share your self-care methods to recharge your battery?
* Review the We Talk. We Grow. web page.

Comments or safety concerns as a result of the discussion or observed since the last rally?

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Follow-up to concerns raised at previous rally?
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Action Items?
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Near Miss/Incidents/Unsafe Acts/Conditions to Report?

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Topics recommended for future Rallies: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank the rally members for their participation.**

**Quiz Answers:** 1. T, 2. T, 3. d, 4. T, 5. T

**TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE**

1. Self-Care is a way to maintaining mental wellness. Important components of self-care include exercise, rest and nourishment.

True or False

2. Be yourself or just do you. These are things you can do to rewire or reset your brain. Do things you want to do not what people think you should do or what may be best. True or False

3. Characteristics of self-care include:

1. Changes as you grow.
2. Can change with the seasons.
3. Start with one thing & keep it simple.
4. All of the Above

4. Mindfulness is an awareness of our thoughts, feelings, and environment. It is the ability to know what is happening in your head at any given moment without getting carried away by it. True or False

5. The [Farm Family Support Center](https://farmsafetyns.ca/farm-family-support-center/) is a member service program that offers farmers and farm families access to up to 3 hours of service at no cost.

. True or False

**Attendance RECORD**

\*This is to acknowledge that I understand and agree to actively participate in the safety meeting.

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