

## GIFTS FOR SELF CARE – HEALTH, HAPPINESS and MEANING

1. Stay positive every day (*The Daily Book of Positive Quotations* by Linda Picone, is good)
2. Eat breakfast, make it healthy with fruits and protein.
3. Drink at least one quart of water every day.
4. Add fresh fruits and vegetables to your diet.  
Your favorite fruit is \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Consider your spiritual journey: meditate, pray, walk in nature. (*Help, Thanks, Wow: The Three Essential Prayers* by Annie Lamott)
6. Exercise: Make sure you move (and sweat) for at least an hour, outside is best-walk, bike.
7. Breathe deeply, with your belly (diaphragm). It allows you to completely fill your lungs, exhaling more carbon dioxide and breathing in more oxygen.
8. Practice mindfulness (*Mindfulness in Plain English: Revised and Expanded Edition* by BH Gunaratana)
9. Make space for healing, create your own sanctuary (*Making Space* by Thich Nhat Hanh)
10. Sleep (turn off the computer, phone and TV an hour before bedtime)
11. Allow your emotions to surface: positive and negative and everything in between.
12. Laugh and help someone else laugh: share jokes, stories and cartoons.  
Check out YouTube for a clip that makes you laugh out loud)
13. Be mindful of your environment: What feels right? Rearrange your space to change the mood.
14. Volunteer or help someone everyday: when you help another person, you become more resilient.
15. Create a playlist for your life (or separate playlists for comfort, joy, support, connectedness).  
Name your favorite song now \_\_\_\_\_.
16. Read and write everyday: keep a journal and pen by your bedside (not your iPad or phone)
17. Grow plants and flowers in your home (for cut flowers use clear vases- let sunlight shine through)
18. Appreciate artistic beauty: music, art, and when you walk through woods, gardens, mountains:  
listen to the sounds of nature (water, wind, and creatures, kids and pets), watch the sunrise/sunset, feel the dirt in your hands as you plant and smell the air around you.
20. Try to feel another person's joy (or pain) and recognize how their emotions affect you.
21. Allow yourself to make mistakes and acknowledge when you are wrong (you might want to write it in that bedside journal)
22. Let someone do you a favor; ask for and accept help (support too) from others. (Without saying, "I'm okay, you don't have to...")
23. Stay connected and take time to talk with your neighbors, children, colleagues.
24. Take time to absorb and see the world around you (*On Looking: Eleven Walks with Expert Eyes* by Alexandra Horowitz)
25. And wash your hands, and then use a fragrant handcream!

### START NOW!

References: Dr. Anie Kalayjian, Fordham University, New York, NY 10023-7484,  
Adapted and edited by Donna Gaffney, DNSc, PMHCNS-BC, FAAN [donnaagaffney@gmail.com](mailto:donnaagaffney@gmail.com)