



## ONE MINUTE SERIES #8

Dear First Responder, Medical & Mental Health Professional,

It is easy to go through an entire day without doing **kindness with ourselves**. An old Talmudic adage states "If I will not **be there for myself**, who will be?" There are some things in life that **only we can do for ourselves**, such as exercise, eat healthy, walk in nature, or go to bed on time. Many people think that they simply have no time to care for themselves.

Today it is easier than ever to get distracted from **maintaining our physical and mental health needs**. The pace of life is quicker than in previous generations. Technology like cars, internet, and streetlights allow us to be busier than ever before and involve ourselves in so many different things daily. We are **constantly moving and doing**, with less time to just stop and be with ourselves. Our phones, tablets, and computers allow us to be **plugged in all the time**, never free to **notice our physical or psychological needs**.

Work is no longer limited to our office, station, or hospital, and **work-related emails and messages intrude into our personal time** with ever-**decreasing boundaries** between our employers and ourselves.

What can we do to save ourselves and start practicing self-care?

STOP! The first step in taking care of ourselves is to stop being so busy and distracted. We can begin carving out time for our self-care by **stopping to do non-essential things which hijack our time** for being with ourselves. We can start asking ourselves "Is this project, task, or video essential to what I need to do to care for myself today"? Alternatively, "Can this task be done at another time or in a manner that is better for **my responsibility to myself to self-care**"? Slowly we can learn how to **reclaim our time back** for ourselves and how to organize our time in a way that serves us best.

Second, we can stand up for ourselves and **create firm boundaries between our work** and private lives. Work can be done exclusively at work and no longer rob us of our evenings and weekends.

Finally, **self-care should be scheduled and prioritized** as something no less important than an important check-up at the Doctor or a similar event that we would undoubtedly give maximum priority to over other things and people. We can **make an appointment with ourselves** to do whatever it is we need to do to care for our personal physical and mental needs.

Self-care is something essential that **we are responsible for to provide for ourselves**, knowing that **nobody will ever be able to do this for us**. Only we can self-care.

By **reappropriating our time** and **prioritizing self-care as something supremely important**, we will begin to reclaim precious time to invest in our wellbeing and success.