

THE MANLY GUIDE TO SELF-CARE

It's Movember and men everywhere are getting on board by growing out their moustaches to draw attention to the biggest health issues faced by men, such as prostate cancer, testicular cancer and mental health. Although there is no longer a dedicated Movember campaign running in South Africa, we can still take the opportunity to focus on men's health. Sadly, for many men, taking care of their physical and emotional needs is very low on their list of priorities.

WHY DO MEN TOUGH IT OUT?



Even though society is slowly changing, most males are still taught the unfortunate 'big boys don't cry' mindset from a young age. But ignoring your own needs and putting on a brave face can cause health, physical and mental problems down the line.

Just as you prioritise the wellbeing of those around you, you should also prioritise looking after yourself. Self-care, which is taking time out to focus on healthy behaviours, is a great place to start.

REASONS FOR SELF-CARE

If self-care seems like a foreign concept to you, here are some reasons to give it a try:

- Self-care means prioritising your physical health and wellbeing with exercise and a healthy, balanced diet.
- Your stress affects those around you. Taking care of yourself means you'll have more energy for the people in your life, and therefore have good relationships.
- Taking breaks when you need them, managing stress and taking time to deal with difficult emotions, can improve your mental health and put you in a state of mind where you can cope better with whatever comes your way.
- Your work performance may be affected if you suffer from burnout, with symptoms such as depression, fatigue and trouble concentrating.
- You deserve to feel good.



FIND WHAT WORKS FOR YOU



For some men, self-care may be an indulgent massage, while for others, it may be an adrenaline-pumping bungee jump. Whatever reduces your stress levels, makes you feel more energised and more fulfilled is the right form of self-care for you.

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- **Quiet time.** Meditation has been shown to reduce stress, boost memory and improve sleep.
- **Grooming.** Getting a pedicure, having a haircut or taking time to focus on your appearance can boost your mood.
- **Get moving.** Mowing the lawn or walking the dogs can boost endorphins and general health.
- **Socialising.** Spending time with family and friends increases feelings of happiness, sharpens your brain power and may even help you live longer.
- **Practising a hobby.** Whether you enjoy listening to music, woodworking or gaming, take some time out every week to do something you enjoy.

NEED HELP?

Movember is all about **taking action**. These online resources are a good starting point:

The Movember Foundation

South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG)

Hello Doctor blog

Men's Health magazine

References

Gentleman's quarterly (GQ) South Africa Healthline

Mayo Clinic
Movember Foundation

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Let us stay mindful of caring for one another and ourselves