

# 30 IDEAS for SELF-CARE DURING WINTER & the HOLIDAYS

*Adapted from - Angela at a Serene Pursuit*

It's that wonderful time of year again! The chilly air, cheerful vibes, and dazzling lights are what festive dreams are made of. As happy as this time of year is, it can also be very stressful. Between the dark winter days, rain, holiday parties, decorating, family visits, and shopping – your stress levels can be at an all-time high.

## **1. WATCH YOUR FAVORITE MOVIE**

So what if you watched it 10 times this year already? Watching your favorite movie in December snuggled up on the couch when it's cold outside makes it 10 times better.

## **2. USE TOWELS RIGHT OUT OF THE DRYER**

Who else dreads the moment you have to get out of the shower on a cold morning? To make that moment more pleasant, stick your towel in the dryer before your shower and come out to a warm, soft towel to wrap yourself in. Such a simple and cozy self-care act.

## **3. GO CHRISTMAS LIGHT SEEING**

There's nothing like taking a stroll down your neighborhood and seeing all the festive decorations people put up during the holidays. You don't need to drag the whole family along either. It's a free and peaceful way to uplift your mood.

## **4. LET YOURSELF ENJOY ALL THE FOOD**

Eat the cookies, drink the wine and don't feel guilty about it. Don't think you have to work out extra just because you indulged. You will just be adding unnecessary stress to your mind. See food through a lens of balance – not guilt, not regret.

## **5. JOURNAL AND LET OUT ALL YOUR THOUGHTS**

Journaling is a calming outlet because it lets you pour all your thoughts and feelings out on paper instead of having them bottled up. By helping you work through your problems, journaling allows for deep thinking and allows you to focus on what's really going on your head. You can literally write about anything – you'll be surprised at how easily writing comes to you once you sit down and let it flow.

## **6. PRACTICE GENTLE YOGA AT HOME**

Take some time to slow down and move your body in a gentle way. Yoga relaxes you, improves your energy and protects you from injury. For at home practice, where you can choose from a variety of yoga styles to get you moving any way you want.

## **7. GO ICE-SKATING WITH A FRIEND**

Grab a friend, head to the rink and prepare to feel like a kid again. A classic wintertime experience – ice-skating is not only relaxing but also a good workout.

## **8. SAY NO WHEN YOU NEED TO**

With all the hustle and bustle of the holidays, don't feel like you have to commit to everything. They need you to volunteer? A dozen cookies are being requested for tomorrow? Give yourself permission to say no when you just can't find the time or when you simply need a mental break.

## **9. TREAT YOURSELF TO A GIFT FROM YOU TO YOU**

Sometimes you just need to buy yourself that thing that you've been wanting since forever. You deserve a gift from the person who knows you the best.

## **10. MAKE YOUR FAVORITE Winter DRINK**

From hot cocoa and eggnog to peppermint tea, warm winter drinks are perfect for when you need to take a moment to unwind.

## **11. CALL AN OLD FRIEND**

Remember that friend you've been meaning to call but always forget? Call them! It'll make you feel so much better to reconnect with them and get it off your chest.

## **12. TAKE A FREE ONLINE CLASS ABOUT SOMETHING YOU'VE BEEN WANTING TO LEARN**

I love learning new things but often can't find the time to do it. Online classes are the perfect solution. They're short, yet thorough and you can do them from the comfort of your own home. You can take a class on ANYTHING: photography, baking, indoor plants, crafting ... the options are limitless.

## **13. MAKE CRAFTS**

Crafting can be so relaxing. From homemade ornaments, cards, and gifts, there is an endless amount of opportunities to get creative and put your mind at ease.

## **14. CURL UP BY THE FIRE WITH YOUR FAVORITE BOOK**

A good read is so much better by a fire or your holiday scenery. Reading gives you a chance to rest, recharge and de-stress during the busy holiday season.

## **15. GET YOURSELF SOME COZY PAJAMAS, a SWEATER OR FUZZY SOCKS**

December means chilly weather (usually), so it's the perfect time to stock up on cozy attire to keep you warm when you're chilling at home during those cold, winter days.

## **16. MAKE YOUR HOUSE SMELL LIKE FESTIVE SCENTS**

Essential oils and candles during this time of year are my favorite. Peppermint, wintergreen, cinnamon...the list goes on. Having a cozy, festive scent hit you as soon as you walk in a room can be so relaxing and invigorating.

## **17. TAKE A WARM BATH (or shower) WITH ALL THE WORKS**

A bath bomb, Epsom salt, candles, music and/or a good read is what I call bath heaven! Even if you don't include any of the above or just a few, a warm bath is the ultimate act of self-care during the holidays.

## **18. MAKE IT A PAJAMA DAY**

Make it a tradition to have an annual pajama day where you don't do anything but relax. It's your day to stay in and do whatever you want to do. It'll probably become one of the things you look forward to the most every winter season.

## **19. GET A FESTIVE or winter themed MANI OR PEDI**

The holidays are a time for celebration, so why not go all out and have your nails match the festivities?

## **20. LISTEN TO MUSIC - MAKE YOUR OWN PLAYLIST**

When people say music is good for the soul, they aren't lying. Music can be healing, uplifting and just plain fun. I love listening to all kinds of music as part of my self-care daily ritual.

## **21. CHECK IN WITH YOURSELF**

Stop, take a breather and take note of how you're really feeling. Do you feel happy? Do you feel stressed? Acknowledge that feeling and ask yourself what's making you feel that way. You can then choose to act on it or simply let it go without any judgment. Being in touch with how we feel throughout the day helps us to be more present and gentler with how we project our emotions.

## **22. RE-CREATE A HOLIDAY TRADITION**

Remember that thing you used to do as a kid during the holidays that brought you so much joy? Bring it back! It will bring your inner child tears of happiness.

## **23. TAKE A WALK AND GET SOME VITAMIN D**

During the winter months, it's hard to get the Vitamin D our body needs. But spending even a small amount of time outside when the sky clears up and the sun shines through is better than nothing and helps you to clear your head. Go get your Vitamin D.

## **24. COLOR YOUR WORRIES AWAY**

If you can't stop stressing about holidays, work and other planning, try coloring to ease your mind. It's said that as you color, your brain experiences relief by entering a meditative

state. Coloring is such a good way to practice self-care during the winter because it takes minimal effort and you can do it in the comfort of your home.

## **25. MEAL PREP FOR THE WEEK**

OK, you may be thinking ...how is this self-care, Angela? Hear me out. The season is crazy busy – so what better way to save time, money and stress than making sure your meals are all set for the week? After meal prepping, you won't have to worry about cooking unless you're cooking for a gatherings.

## **26. BUY YOURSELF SOME FRESH FLOWERS**

Sometimes you just need to buy yourself some flowers to celebrate happiness. Flowers don't need to signify a special occasion, they can simply be a reminder of the beauty that surrounds us.

## **27. MAKE A TREAT JUST FOR YOU**

During the holidays, you may find that whenever you step into the kitchen you're making food for everyone BUT yourself and it quickly begins to feel like a chore. You know that holiday dessert you've been eyeing on Pinterest that you've been dying to try? Gather up the recipe and indulge in that treat – if anybody wants the leftovers they can have it but you get first dibs!

## **28. TURN YOUR ROOM INTO A COZY HAVEN WITH STRAND LIGHTS**

My best friend has these up in her room and they make it feel so dreamy. This is definitely on my to-do list! For precaution, try to buy ones without lead in them like Ikea lights.

## **29. DECLUTTER YOUR CLOSET TO GET READY FOR THE NEW YEAR**

It's time to pull down those clothes that you haven't worn in 3 years, clean out those cabinets and the garage and give it all away. You'll see how good it can feel to live with less. Like they say, cluttered spaces are chaos for the mind.

## **30. WRITE DOWN ALL THE THINGS THAT HAPPENED THIS YEAR THAT YOU ARE GRATEFUL FOR**

As the end of the year approaches, take some time to reflect on everything big and small that happened throughout the year that you're grateful for. Read it at the beginning of the New Year and rejoice in all the positive things that happened, and all the great things that are to come.

A little regular self-care during winter and the holidays will ensure you stay happy and healthy once the New Year and spring comes around.