

Self-Care Tips for Cancer Advocates

Whether you're advocating for yourself, a loved one or the cancer community at large, these tips can help you stay motivated and maintain emotional resilience.

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Cancer advocacy can be hard work. It often involves confronting difficult and emotionally charged issues—such as stigma, pain, discrimination, finances and loss—which can lead to exhaustion or burnout. The practice of self-care can help advocates maintain emotional resilience and be more effective in their efforts to bring about positive change in the cancer community. Check out these self-care tips:

Nourish your body.

Exercise regularly, eat well-balanced meals, stay hydrated and get enough rest. Taking care of your body will increase your energy, improve your mood and boost your immune function.

Unplug when needed.

Take a break from the news, social media or other sources of information if they are angering or frustrating you. Be mindful of how much time you spend online and the type of content you're consuming.

Practice relaxation.

Feeling anxious or tense? Try mindfulness meditation, deep-breathing exercises or yoga to reduce stress and calm the mind, which will help keep you centered amid challenging work.

Acknowledge your emotions.

It's OK to express whatever emotions you are feeling, including sadness, frustration or grief. Ignoring your feelings can negatively affect your mental and physical health.

Set boundaries.

You can't be an effective advocate if you're burned out. Know your limits and establish clear

boundaries to ensure you have time for yourself.

Pursue your passions.

It's important to take the time to engage in activities or hobbies that bring you joy and help you unwind, such as painting, gardening, reading or cooking.

Celebrate progress.

Acknowledge the small victories along the way to reaching your goal. Celebrating even minor successes can provide motivation and a sense of purpose.

Find support.

Seek supportive friends, colleagues or a mentor. Talking to others who understand the many challenges of cancer advocacy can provide much-needed solace.

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