



## Take Care of You First: What an Airplane Flight Can Teach Us About Self-Care

For many women, the urge to nurture and care for everyone around us is strong. If you're like most women I know, you probably put the needs of others before yourself. Not just at home with your family, but on the job, with friends, and in every other aspect of your life.

While it's wonderful to honor the giving spirit within, the danger happens when we try to be all things to all people, and leave ourselves as very last on the priority list. Or worse - we don't take care of our own needs at all! To put this into perspective, I like to use the airplane metaphor with my [life coaching](#) clients. The first thing flight attendants instruct us to do in an emergency, is place the oxygen mask over our *own* faces, then offer our help to whomever we're traveling with.

This advice makes sense on so many levels. We are better equipped to give the best of what we have to offer when our own needs are met first. But for many women, it's a tough pill to swallow. We get so caught up in pleasing everyone, attending to the little details, and taking care of each person's emotional needs, that we forget to replenish the cup of our own body, mind and spirit. When, as the above airplane scenario aptly points out, if we want to continue doing our best for the people who matter to us, we have got to practice good [self-care habits](#) on a regular basis.

When was the last time you focused on "taking good care of me?" Or is it more likely that you put yourself on the back burner while trying to be all things to all people? Think of all the dinners you skipped, hours of sleep you passed up. Even something as simple as curling up with a good book, that you "just didn't have time for" because you were too busy playing out the role of perfect mom, partner, friend, teacher, nursemaid, care giver, boss, coordinator... do you see how the list just goes on endlessly?

When we set unrelenting expectations for ourselves, rarely if ever does our daily work leave us feeling energized and fulfilled. Instead, we get the exact opposite effect of what we hoped for. We feel like we have to do more... and more... and more. The more overwhelmed we grow, the more tired we get, the grouzier we become... and, now we're beating ourselves up!

This month is Valentine's Day. I challenge you to make yourself your own Valentine. Give yourself all the love you deserve. Treat yourself to a hot bath, a night alone, a gourmet meal, a massage... If this feels foreign to you and you're arguing with me in your head that you don't have time, I urge you to schedule an [extreme self care activity](#) pronto!

Your health and well-being matter most. The degree to which you take care of yourself defines the degree to which you can take care of others. Today, honor yourself and those you love and put YOU on your high priority list.

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