

Recommended Tools for the Self-Care Kit

Below is a list of 12 practical tools that you as youth worker can include in your personal Self-Care Kits. These tools support emotional regulation, mental clarity, energy management, boundaries, and joy.

1. Emotional Regulation Tools

4–7–8 Breathing Card

Used for anxiety, stress spikes, or emotional overload.

- Inhale for 4 seconds
- Hold for 7 seconds
- Exhale for 8 seconds

“Pause Button” Technique (NLP)

A 3-step grounding method to prevent emotional reactivity.

- 1. Pause
- 2. Breathe
- 3. Choose your internal state

Emotion Wheel

A color-coded wheel to help participants identify emotions, understand emotional intensity, and recognize underlying needs.

2. Cognitive & Mental Tools

Thought Dump / Brain Clean-Up Sheet

A structured reflection page with prompts.

- What is on my mind?
- What can I control?
- What is outside my control?
- What is the next small step I can take?

Reframing Tool Card (NLP Reframe)

A tool to shift perspective during challenges.

- What is the real problem?
- What else could this situation mean?
- What strength is needed here?

Focus Timer Tool

Instruction card for energy-safe productivity cycles: 20 min work → 5 min reset → 20 min work → 5 min reset

3. Physical & Somatic Tools

Micro-Reset Routine (60-Second Ritual)

A short embodied routine.

- Deep breath
- Quick body shake
- Stretch neck and shoulders
- Return attention to the present moment

Sensory Grounding Kit

A small bag containing:

- A rubber band (touch stimulation)
- A small essential oil bottle (lavender / citrus)
- A soft grounding stone (for tactile centering)

4. Boundary & Energy Protection Tools

Boundary Scripts for Difficult Situations

Ready-to-use professional scripts, such as:

- “I hear you, but I’m not available right now. Let’s talk at ____.”
- “I want to support you, but I need a moment to reset first.”
- “This crosses my working boundary. Let’s explore another solution.”

Energy Leak Tracker

A daily mini-journal page:

- What drained my energy today?
- What restored my energy?
- One action I will take tomorrow to protect my energy.

5. Joy, Meaning & Connection Tools

The Joy List

A list of 10 small joy triggers that take less than 60 seconds — both a pre-made version and space for participants to add their own.

Daily Connection Ritual (End-of-Day Reset)

A simple 2-minute ritual:

- 3 moments of gratitude
- 1 moment of human connection
- 1 thing I release from today