



A
*Black
Girl's
guide to
Self Care*

COCKTAILS
& AMBITION
MAGAZINE



WHY SELF CARE FOR BLACK WOMEN?

I chose to write a self care workbook for black women because the concept of self care has been commodified (and lowkey colonized)


Oftentimes we are offered generic solutions like get a face mask or take a bubble bath. Little things like face masks and bubble baths can certainly be a part of a self care routine, however it is not enough.

One thing that people fail to recognize is that you cannot apply a face mask to heal the impacts of oppressive systems of racism and patriarchy, all of which impact the lives and experiences of black women. In this short workbook, I hope to provide some advice and research for black women to start changing the way we think of self care and begin to center ourselves.

This workbook is brought to you by [Ki Magazine.](#)

Ki magazine is a lifestyle, beauty and fashion magazine for black women.

The Ki is meant to be a place where black women gather, build community and focus on the good in our experiences.



CARING FOR
MYSELF IS NOT
SELF-INDULGENCE,
IT IS SELF-
PRESERVATION,
AND THAT IS AN
ACT OF POLITICAL
WARFARE

- AUDRE LORDE



SELF CARE LOOKS DIFFERENT FOR BLACK WOMEN

Black women are always expected to be strong, to fight constantly for others (and not expect anything in return), to be humble so that other groups of people don't feel intimidated, to not speak out so you are not seen as problematic or angry. As Black women we need to understand that self care is in fact political.

It is CHOOSING to prioritize yourself and your well being in a world that does not think you are deserving. It is a way to say "I am worth it", worthy of my time, worthy of care and worthy of consideration starting with myself.





DEFINE
YOURSELF

DEFINE YOURSELF

Defining yourself is an important start to self care. Many of us have let other people define us for way too long, as either angry, loud, standoffish, not black enough and the list goes on. Sometimes we start to believe these ourselves. No one can make you feel inferior without your consent and it's about time you stop consenting! and start defining. When you define yourself nobody else can tell you who you are. I once did an exercise that helped me gain a lot of perspective into how I defined myself.

The exercise requires you to write down a list of 20 things that you feel describe you. for example: student, dancer, funny, smart etc. When you're done, look at the entire list and figure out which items are "internal" and which are "external" ex. "student" would be an external definition and "kind" would be internal. The point is to ask yourself if your definition of yourself is based off external factors. If it is, what happens to you when those things are taken away?

DEFINE YOURSELF

In a lot of cases when these things (the external factors) are gone, it might result in feelings of loss, feeling unaccomplished, feeling worthless etc. It is good to have both internal and external things that define you, the ideal situation is to ground yourself in your internal definitions of you more than you depend on the external.

Defining yourself based on your own definitions and labels is not easy because at the intersection of patriarchy and racism are structures that reinforce other people's labels of us. These put roadblocks to our path of defining ourselves. But it is something we must do and sometimes it is easier to do it in a community

HOW DO YOU DEFINE YOURSELF ?

In the boxes below, Describe yourself by listing some internal and external traits that define you





AFFIRM
YOURSELF

AFFIRM YOURSELF



Now that you've defined yourself and realized that you are smart, pretty, funny, occasionally weird and in my case a little too sassy, The next part might sound a bit crazy but it involves you staring into your own eyes and talking to yourself ...A lot. There is no use defining yourself if you'll forget it once you leave your house. When you feel sad and a little down on yourself (or even when you feel great), you need to take care of you first. If it means that you have to tell yourself repeatedly over the course of the day, that you are smart, deserving of care , that you are good enough and that you can do what you set out to do! then so be it. It'll sound silly - I can almost guarantee that- but fake it till you make it is a thing for a reason.

WRITE DOWN YOUR OWN LIST OF AFFIRMATIONS

Here are some examples to help you get started

- I am enough
- I am worthy
- I deserve love and respect
- I deserve the kindness I show to others
- I deserve the consideration I give to others

Your turn! write some of your self affirmations in the box below





CREATE

BOUNDARIES

CREATE BOUNDARIES

As black women we are expected to be everything for everyone at all times and it's time to start enforcing boundaries with the people we encounter. Boundaries are a form of self care. It allows you to be true to yourself and articulate what you will and will not allow in your life. They also set expectations for the people you meet on how to treat you.

Boundaries can include not wanting to participate in certain conversations meant to agitate you, choosing a space for activism and realizing that you can't save everyone but you can make a more meaningful change sometimes by picking one or two causes and sticking to it.

Sometimes we fail to set boundaries out of fear, uncertainty or feeling undeserving of them. I will like to let you know that you are deserving of having healthy boundaries and of enforcing those boundaries.

SETTING YOUR BOUNDARIES

You can set boundaries in the following areas

- Sexuality
- Emotions and Thoughts
- Time and Energy
- Possessions
- Physical space

[Source](#)

Boundaries can be flexible and can change as you change. But it is important that they change based on how you feel, not based on how other people want you to feel.

Before you start on setting boundaries you need to be honest with yourself and how you feel. You need to examine places where you may allow people to trample on your boundaries out of fear and you also need to analyze spaces where you may try to step on other people's boundaries as well.

SETTING YOUR BOUNDARIES

What boundaries do you want to
enforce in your life



How will you communicate and
enforce your boundaries





TAKE SOME
TIME FOR
YOURSELF

TAKE TIME FOR SELF

In the midst of doing all the heavy work of defining yourself, affirming yourself and setting boundaries, you should also make time to enjoy the little things in life that bring you peace and joy (this is where the face masks can come in).

- Yoga
- Rereading
- Working out
- Meditation
- Spending Time in nature
- Practice positive affirmations
- Write yourself a love letter
- Watch a feel good movie
- Invest in a hobby
- Take a solo trip
- Make a head to toe self care routine
- Declutter your space
- Make a gratitude list
- Buy yourself flowers
- Have a zero day (a day where you do nothing but relax and indulge in anything that brings you peace)



FIND COMMUNITY

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As a black woman, finding community with other black women has really saved me and allowed me to be the person I am today. I am fortunate to have found community with people who live close to me in the form of book clubs, poetry nights, dance classes and school extracurriculars. It is also really fortunate that thanks to social media we can find community with like minded people online

Here are some online communities for black women

- [Cocktails and Ambition](#)
- [Black Thots \(book club\)](#)
- [Black girl in Om](#)
- [Well Read Black Girl](#)
- [Ethel's Club](#)
- [Hey Black Girl](#)



LET'S CONNECT

Hey! you made it to the end. I hope you were able to take away something positive from this workbook

If you enjoyed the book then you'll love [CocktailsandAmbition](#)
An online space to celebrate the good in the experiences of black women.

Hope to see you become a part of our little community

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