

LIVING SKILLS

Practical Guidance

HYGIENE AND SELF-CARE

PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK



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AN OVERVIEW OF HYGIENE AND SELF-CARE

Good hygiene and self-care are basic to healthy living. This program teaches the essential elements of good hygiene and self-care and discusses why they are important.

THIS WORKBOOK IS DIVIDED INTO FOUR SESSIONS

SESSION 1 defines hygiene and self-care and discusses the negative consequences of neglecting hygiene and self-care and the positive consequences of focusing on them.

SESSION 2 teaches the basics of good hygiene and the importance of scheduling it into one's day.

SESSION 3 teaches the basics of self-care, describes the benefits of self-care, and discusses how to implement these habits.

SESSION 4 reviews the topic of hygiene and self-care while exploring medical care, proper sleep, and stress reduction, and discusses how to create a hygiene and self-care action plan.



SESSION 1. Introduction to Hygiene and Self-Care



Hygiene is about personal cleanliness; self-care is about positive habits, such as healthy eating, exercise, and getting enough sleep, all of which help us feel good, prevent illnesses, and allow us to get close to others. It simply means keeping your body clean and taking steps to be healthy. We all practice hygiene and self-care every day.

■ What are some ways you have practiced good hygiene? Some examples might be brushing your teeth or taking a shower.

■ What are some ways you have practiced self-care? Some examples might be taking a walk or eating a healthy snack.

Good hygiene and self-care are critical to living a healthy life. Still, people sometimes neglect these important habits, especially if they live in substandard housing or difficult circumstances, have had problems with substance use, are depressed, or are experiencing other emotional difficulties. And sometimes people simply have never been taught these skills.

Still, practicing good personal hygiene and self-care is important. It helps us build up our strength and stay healthy. It also can build our self-confidence and self-esteem. It doesn't cost us much in time and effort, but ignoring good hygiene and self-care can cost us relationships, jobs, our health, and more.

Look at the following pictures. Next to each picture write:

1. How it would make you feel to have this situation
2. What hygiene or self-care practice is being neglected
3. What the negative consequences could be

DENTAL PROBLEMS



1

2

3

INFECTIONS



1

2

3

CATCHING COLDS AND FLU MORE EASILY



1

2

3

ITCHY SKIN OR RASHES



1

2

3

DIRTY CLOTHES OR HAIR



1

2

3

TIREDNESS



1

2

3

WEIGHT GAIN

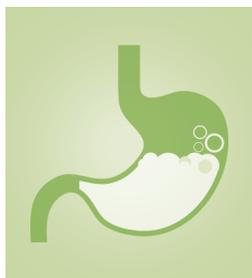


1

2

3

STOMACH PROBLEMS

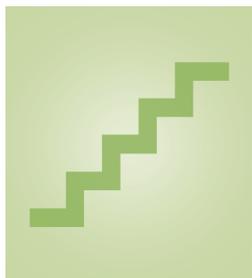


1

2

3

DIFFICULTY BREATHING WHEN WALKING UP STAIRS



1

2

3

Look at the following examples.

Lorie's drinking was out of control. She stopped caring about her health and her looks. She gained a lot of weight and didn't bother to shower. She quit brushing her teeth or washing her clothes. Not only did she look unhealthy, she started to smell bad. She noticed strangers would look at her funny on the street, and people would move away from her.



Esteban lived in a crowded apartment, and it was hard to find time and space for himself. He neglected his personal hygiene. So when he fell and scraped his knee, he didn't bother to wash it. A week later, it was red and swollen. He still ignored it, and ended up in the emergency room with a bad infection.



■ Have you had any negative consequences from neglecting your hygiene or self-care? If so, list them here.



Both Lorie and Esteban were able to improve their personal hygiene and self-care, and improve their lives. After Lorie got help to quit drinking, she started exercising and keeping herself and her clothing clean. She gained confidence as she noticed that people were no longer staring at her or avoiding her. She even began to make friends.

After Esteban’s infection cleared up, he became very careful about paying attention if he cut or scraped himself. The next time he cut himself, he washed the wound thoroughly and bandaged it. It healed quickly.

■ What are some positive consequences you have experienced from good hygiene and self-care habits? Some examples might be having more self-confidence or feeling better physically.

Many things get in the way of good hygiene and self-care. Paying attention to what these are can help you decide to do something different. In the following list, place a check mark next to those things that make it difficult for you to keep good hygiene and self-care habits.

- Feeling like there is never enough time
- Not caring
- Being depressed
- Not having a place to live
- Feeling tired all the time

- Not having transportation to go to the store to buy health supplies, like toothpaste and soap
- Not having enough money to buy food or health supplies
- Only one bathroom for too many people
- Feeling embarrassed to ask for help

To meet some of these challenges, you may need to get help from a community or government agency or a friend. Fill in the following blanks to help identify when and where you can look for help or medical attention. If you don't know, ask a friend or the person who gave you this workbook for some help.

■ I can get free or inexpensive personal-care items at: _____

■ I can get free or almost free clothing at: _____

■ I can get a free shower at: _____

■ I can see a counselor for free at: _____

Other challenges might just mean you have to make up your mind to do something different. A little effort goes a long way. It doesn't take more than twenty to thirty minutes a day to cover the basics. Doing a few simple things like showering, washing your hands, and brushing your teeth will make you look and feel better.

SUMMARY

- Hygiene is about personal cleanliness; self-care is about positive habits, such as healthy eating, exercise, and getting enough sleep.
- The negative consequences of poor hygiene and self-care include dental problems, infections, catching colds and flu more easily, itchy skin or rashes, feeling self-conscious, tiredness, weight gain, and difficulty making friends or finding a job.
- The positive consequences of good hygiene and self-care include having more self-confidence, looking better, and feeling better physically.

CHALLENGE

Identify someone you know who practices good hygiene and self-care. Ask that person what practices he or she does and how often.



SESSION 2.

Good Hygiene Practices

Hygiene simply means keeping your body clean and taking steps to prevent common infections and illnesses. Not everyone has the same hygiene habits. One person may shower every day; another may shower every other day. They can both be fine. It depends on lots of things, such as how often you exercise, what kind of work you do, and how it makes you feel. Some people don't feel clean unless they shower every day. However, there are some general tips to follow in keeping up your hygiene.

One of the most important habits is hand washing. Hands should be washed:

- Before handling food
- After using the toilet
- After playing with a pet
- Before and after taking care of someone who is sick
- After changing a diaper

Here is a simple thing to do to make sure you wash your hands thoroughly. Rub your hands together with soap and water while singing the "Happy Birthday" song to yourself. This is how long it takes to wash your hands well.

Here are other tasks that are part of good hygiene:

- Cover your mouth when you cough to avoid spreading germs.
- Shower or bathe regularly. This may vary from every day to every other day. Make sure you wash your entire body from head to toe, including shampooing your hair.
- Brush your teeth twice a day.
- Floss your teeth once a day.
- Shave every day, in the morning (if you are a man).
- Use deodorant daily, in the morning.
- Change your underwear, socks, and clothes every day.

- Clip your toenails and fingernails weekly.
- Wash your clothes, sheets, towels, and pillowcases, typically every week.
- Clean your bathroom, kitchen, and bedroom once a week.
- Have your teeth cleaned by a dentist twice a year.

Read the following scenarios. The person in each scenario skipped some important hygiene practice. Can you tell what it was? Is there something that person could do differently to make sure he or she doesn't miss an important hygiene practice? Write your answers on the lines following the scenarios. The correct answers are listed at the end of this session.

Scenario 1.



Chris got up every morning as late as he could and still get to work on time. He met his friends in the evenings to get a drink at the local bar, so he usually got to bed pretty late. He would jump into yesterday's clothes that were lying in a heap on his closet floor and start the coffee brewing. Next he'd grab an apple and head out the door.

What did he miss? What could he do differently?

Scenario 2.

Aamira had to drop her children at day care before she went to work. She put on clean underwear, but sometimes wore the same dress. She ate breakfast and then brushed her hair and put on deodorant. Finally she got the children up and helped them get ready to leave.



What did she miss? What could she do differently?

Scenario 3.



Clarissa had a long day and was very tired. She got her children into bed by 8 p.m. She watched television longer than she meant to. She knew she'd be tired the next morning. She got into her pajamas, washed her face, pulled out her toothbrush, and stared at herself in the mirror. Did I brush my teeth this morning? she wondered. Yes, she was sure she had, so she put her toothbrush away without brushing. She felt too tired for anything else, so she simply headed to bed.

What did she miss? What could she do differently?

Look at the list of tasks at the beginning of this session on pages 11 and 12. Are there tasks you need to add into your day in order to take better care of yourself? Put a circle around those tasks.

One way to make personal hygiene easier is to make it a routine. Many people find it works best for them to shower, shave, or brush their teeth at about the same time every day. Yet people have different schedules and lifestyles. The point is to find what works for you. When will you fit these tasks into your day?

Flu and cold viruses are spread through the air and by contact such as touching surfaces, coughing, sneezing, or sharing objects. Put a check mark in front of the extra precautions you need to take if you have a cold or the flu. The correct answers are listed at the end of this session.

- _____ a. Wash your hands before you shake hands with anybody else.
- _____ b. Cover your mouth with your hand when you cough, then wipe your hand off on your pants.
- _____ c. Try not to touch your mouth, nose, or face and then touch other things or people.
- _____ d. Use the same glass over and over again since it already has your germs on it.
- _____ e. Cover your mouth with a tissue or paper towel when you sneeze.

■ Complete this sentence. When I take good care of my personal hygiene regularly, I feel...

SUMMARY

- The basics of good hygiene include hand washing, covering your mouth when you cough, showering or bathing regularly, brushing and flossing your teeth.
- It's important to make good hygiene practices a regular routine.

CHALLENGE

Take one hygiene habit that has been hard for you. Do something that will help you make that a regular part of your life, such as leaving notes, setting an alarm, putting it on your calendar, and so on.

ANSWER KEY

(pages 12–14)

The person in each scenario skipped some important hygiene practice. Can you tell what it was? Is there something that person could do differently to make sure he or she doesn't miss an important hygiene practice?

Scenario 1.

What did Chris miss?

Possible Answers:

wear clean clothes each day, shave in the morning, comb hair, brush teeth, floss teeth, and put on deodorant

Scenario 2.

What did Aamira miss?

Possible Answers:

wear clean clothes each day, brush and floss teeth, and wash face

Scenario 3.

What did Clarissa miss?

Possible Answers:

brush and floss teeth before going to bed, and she might want to take a shower if she would be too tired in the morning

ANSWER KEY

(page 15)

Flu and cold viruses are spread through the air and by contact such as touching surfaces, coughing, sneezing, or sharing objects. Put a check mark in front of the extra precautions you need to take if you have a cold or the flu.

The correct answers are:

- a. Wash your hands before you shake hands with anybody else.
- b. Cover your mouth with your hand when you cough, then wipe your hand off on your pants.
- c. Try not to touch your mouth, nose, or face and then touch other things or people.
- d. Use the same glass over and over again since it already has your germs on it.
- e. Cover your mouth with a tissue or paper towel when you sneeze.



SESSION 3.

Good Self-Care Practices

Self-care is doing those things that keep us healthy and feeling good. Self-care practices include such things as exercising, eating healthy foods, getting enough sleep, or managing stress. Sometimes we may feel it's too hard to add self-care to all the other things we have to do. We may have so many people in our lives to take care of that we don't think we have time to take care of ourselves. We may even think that self-care is selfish. But the fact is that we can only take care of others if we are healthy and strong, and that starts with self-care.

Practicing a few routine self-care habits can make us feel better about ourselves and less anxious about our health. Self-care makes our immune system (the system in our body that fights off infections and illnesses) work better and helps us keep from catching viruses or getting other kinds of illnesses.

Here are the basics of self-care:



Exercise. Do 150 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic exercise per week. Aerobic means it raises your heart rate. This is exercise like walking, bicycling, running, dancing, or jumping rope.



Strengthen muscles. Do some kind of strengthening two or more times a week. Examples are doing push-ups or sit-ups or, if possible, lifting weights.



Eat right. Every day eat:

- lots of vegetables
 - lots of fruit
 - whole grains, such as whole wheat bread, oatmeal, or whole wheat pasta
 - some protein, such as beans, eggs, cheese, meat, or milk
-



Drink water, eight glasses every day.



Soak up sunshine. Get fifteen minutes of sunshine outdoors every day. It's how you get vitamin D, which is essential to good health.



See a health care professional when necessary.



Sleep well. Get about seven to nine hours of sleep every night. We'll look more at sleep in the next session.

Take a moment to stand up and stretch. See how good that feels. Now circle the kinds of aerobic exercise from the list below that you enjoy or might like to try.

- Walking** **Bicycling** **Dancing** **Running**
- Rollerblading** **Basketball** **Soccer** **Other**

Circle the kinds of vegetables you like or might like to try.

- Carrots** **Green Beans** **Lettuce** **Cabbage** **Broccoli**
- Eggplant** **Cucumbers** **Brussels Sprouts** **Beets**
- Tomatoes** **Bok Choy** **Cauliflower**

■ Think about one or two self-care practices you would like to start doing now. Write them here.

There are many things that get in the way of self-care. Here are some examples of barriers and how they can be overcome.

Janet almost never exercised because she didn't have enough money to join a health club. Then she realized that walking didn't cost anything. She also got an exercise video and an inexpensive set of hand weights at a thrift store.



Andre only drank about one or two glasses of water a day. He worked all day and helped care for his children in the evening, so he would forget to drink water. He decided that he would get a glass with a lid and straw, fill it with ice and water, and carry it with him at work and when he was with the kids. He found it easy to drink water with his new glass always at hand.



Felipe hated cooking, so he grabbed cheap fast food most of the time—French fries, greasy hamburgers, deep-fried chicken. His girlfriend showed him some really easy ways to fix healthy food. He discovered he liked the food he could make at home—he didn't even have to cook a lot of the vegetables and they tasted great with some dip—and he felt less sluggish when he ate that way.



■ Check the items below that hold you back from doing the things you want to do to take better care of yourself.

_____ Too tired

_____ Didn't realize it was so important

_____ Feeling down

_____ Hard to find time

_____ Lack of money

_____ Always working or taking care of kids

_____ No room for it

_____ Just don't feel like it

_____ Hate cooking

_____ Other _____

_____ Other _____

■ One way to make self-care easier is to make it a routine. What can you do or change in your life so you can start taking better care of yourself now?

■ Motivation is a big part of getting started with self-care habits. Is there someone you can do these things with or check in with so it helps motivate you?

■ Taking care of yourself can actually be a way of taking care of others too. This is called being a good example. Other people watch you practice self-care and see what a difference it makes in your life. It may be a friend, a sister or brother, maybe your child or spouse. Write down the names of the people in your life who might be influenced by seeing you take better care of yourself.

And remember, when you have the flu or a cold, you have to pay extra attention to self-care. It's a time to get extra sleep and rest, drink lots of liquids, and go easy on the exercise.

SUMMARY

- The basics of good self-care include exercise, eating right, drinking water, getting daily exposure to sunshine, seeing a health care professional when needed, and getting enough sleep.
- The benefits of self-care include feeling better about ourselves and less anxious about our health. Self-care makes our immune system work better and helps us keep from catching viruses or getting other kinds of illnesses.
- It's important to keep good self-care practices in your daily routine.

CHALLENGE

Identify someone you know who does the self-care practice you want to add to your routine. Interview that person about how he or she fits this practice into a daily schedule.



SESSION 4.

More about Self-Care

We talked about exercise, eating right, drinking enough water, and getting enough daily sunshine in the last lesson. In this session we will look at getting medical care when needed, proper sleep, and managing stress.

It used to be recommended that you get a physical once a year. Today medical experts say you don't need to see a doctor that often if you are in good health. Start with one full physical. Then you can decide, with the doctor, how often you need to come in for different check-ups. It will depend on your age and your specific health issues. Possible check-ups include:

- Cholesterol tests
- Blood pressure screening
- Diabetes screening
- Colon cancer screening
- Immunizations
- Breast exams
(if you are a woman)
- Pap smear and pelvic exam
(if you are a woman)
- Testicle exam *(if you are a man)*

You should also see a doctor, a nurse practitioner, or a physician's assistant if you have any concerns about your health.

When is the last time you saw a doctor? _____

Do you have any health concerns you should see a doctor about?

It's also important to see a dentist on a regular basis for an exam and teeth cleaning. It is generally recommended that you do this twice a year.

When is the last time you went to the dentist? _____

Do you have any tooth concerns you should see a dentist about?

Getting enough sleep is also an important self-care practice. People vary in the amount of sleep they need, but it's usually between seven and nine hours per night. If you have trouble going to sleep or staying asleep, here are some tips that may help:



Go to bed at the same time every night.



Avoid stimulating or upsetting things before bed, such as conversations, TV, etc.



Do something relaxing before you go to bed, such as taking a hot bath.



Stay away from large meals close to bedtime.



Don't use caffeine, nicotine, or alcohol after 6 p.m.

■ Do you have trouble falling asleep? _____ Yes _____ No

■ Do you wake up in the middle of the night and have trouble going back to sleep? _____ Yes _____ No

Look at the sleeping tips on the previous page. Circle the ones you *don't* do. Put a star in front of any that you would like to try.

Stress is a big issue for staying healthy. Stress is what happens inside of us when something on the outside—or inside—is bothering us. We call those things stressors. Too much stress can cause all kinds of problems, such as:

- making us get sick more easily
- headaches
- upset stomach
- high blood pressure
- chest pain
- trouble sleeping
- depression

■ A stressor might be working too many hours, looking for a job, breaking up with a boyfriend or girlfriend, or worrying about your children. List three of your stressors.

■ What can you do to reduce or get rid of these stressors? For instance, you might talk with a good friend or see a therapist if you are feeling overwhelmed by worries. You might change your spending habits if money is a worry. If you feel pressured to do too many things, you might want to find a way to be quiet and rest once in a while.

Healthy eating, exercising, and getting enough sleep are very important in helping you cope with stress. There are lots of other ways to reduce stress as well. One of these is meditation. It's something that is very simple. We just need to make time to do it.

One type of meditation is called mindfulness meditation. It simply means taking some time—maybe starting with five, ten, fifteen, or twenty minutes—to sit still and quiet your mind. Focus on your breath. Notice breathing in . . . out . . . in . . . out. Thoughts and worries will keep coming into your mind. Just notice them, don't judge, and then go back to focusing on your breathing.

REGULAR MEDITATION CAN

- reduce stress
- create a sense of calm and peace
- reduce depression and anxiety
- improve health

Part of meditation is paying attention to your breathing. Take two minutes now to practice this.

■ Some other stress reduction techniques are prayer, yoga, qigong, relaxation breathing, visualization, massage, or something as simple as a warm bath. You might find out more about relaxation techniques by looking on the Internet or at the library, or talking to a counselor. What are some of the things that help you relax?

■ What are the key skills you will take away from this program? List them here.

SUMMARY

- It's important to get regular medical and dental checkups, get seven to nine hours of sleep per night, and take steps to reduce stress.
- A hygiene and self-care action plan can help instill better hygiene and self-care habits.

CHALLENGE

Create an action plan for improving your hygiene and self-care using the Hygiene and Self-Care Action Plan on the next page.



HYGIENE AND SELF-CARE ACTION PLAN

Start by choosing one hygiene practice and one self-care practice you will start doing or do more often. Write these practices in the spaces provided in the far left column. Then fill out the rest of the columns for each practice.

After you have focused on these two practices for a few weeks, add two more, and so on, until you have filled in the entire action plan.

| | WHEN WILL I PRACTICE? | HOW OFTEN WILL I PRACTICE? | WHEN WILL I START? |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Hygiene example: <i>Floss teeth</i> | <i>At bedtime</i> | <i>Every day</i> | <i>Tonight</i> |
| Hygiene practice 1: | | | |
| Hygiene practice 2: | | | |
| Hygiene practice 3: | | | |

| | WHEN WILL I PRACTICE? | HOW OFTEN WILL I PRACTICE? | WHEN WILL I START? |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Self-care example: <i>Take a walk with my dog</i> | <i>After work</i> | <i>Every other day</i> | <i>Today after work</i> |
| Self-care practice 1: | | | |
| Self-care practice 2: | | | |
| Self-care practice 3: | | | |



RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Hygiene Websites

Personal Hygiene

[*www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene*](http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website on personal hygiene includes bathing, hand washing, and dental hygiene.

[*www.everydayhealth.com/healthy-living/guide-to-good-hygiene.aspx*](http://www.everydayhealth.com/healthy-living/guide-to-good-hygiene.aspx)

This website lists the regular personal hygiene habits that can help ward off illnesses and help people feel good about themselves.

Dental Health

[*www.mouthhealthy.org*](http://www.mouthhealthy.org)

This American Dental Association website provides a wide variety of information on dental health.

Clothes Washing

[*www.wikihow.com/Wash-Your-Clothes*](http://www.wikihow.com/Wash-Your-Clothes)

This site gives step-by-step instructions on how to wash clothes.

House Cleaning

[*www.wikihow.com/Clean-a-House*](http://www.wikihow.com/Clean-a-House)

This site gives step-by-step instructions on how to clean a home or apartment.

Self-Care Websites

Nutrition and Exercise

www.choosemyplate.gov

This U.S. Department of Agriculture website provides a wide variety of information on topics such as healthy eating, weight management, and physical activity.

www.cdc.gov/nutrition

Basic information on nutrition can be found on this Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website.

www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity

This CDC website discusses exercise and physical activity.

Sleep

www.sleepfoundation.org

This National Sleep Foundation website offers a variety of information on sleep health.

Stress

www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/stress/index.shtml

This website provides information from the National Institute of Mental Health on stress and stress management.

Regular Checkups with a Doctor

www.cdc.gov/family/checkup

This Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website discusses the importance of regular medical checkups, which checkups to have, and when.

**Resources Available through Hazelden Publishing
(800-328-9000, hazelden.org/bookstore)**

The Recovering Body: Physical and Spiritual Fitness for Living Clean and Sober

Jennifer Matesa (Order No. 7568, E-book Order No. EB7568)

This book explains how to make physical recovery and wellness part of recovery from a substance use disorder.

How to Make Almost Any Diet Work

Anne Katherine (E-book Order No. EB2631)

This book looks at the underlying biochemistry that triggers disordered eating and how to address this in order to develop healthy eating patterns.