

# Wellbeing for the Bush **SELF-CARE**

As health workers, we are used to caring for others, but sometimes, the last person we care for is ourselves. Self-care is often the first thing to go when we are busy and under stress, but it is essential to helping us stay healthy.<sup>1</sup>

## What is self-care?

Self-care is the practice of taking regular, deliberate actions to maintain and improve your physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing.

## Why should we do it?

- Self-care gives your body and mind time to rest, reset and rejuvenate.
- Self-care helps prevent stress and anxiety.
- Looking after yourself helps you to be more effective in all aspects of your life.
- Self-care prevents burnout and compassion fatigue.



Self-care is unique to everyone, and there is no 'one size fits all' approach. Walsh developed the 'Therapeutic Lifestyle Changes' model, which identified eight specific lifestyle changes that can be integrated into our daily lives<sup>2</sup>:

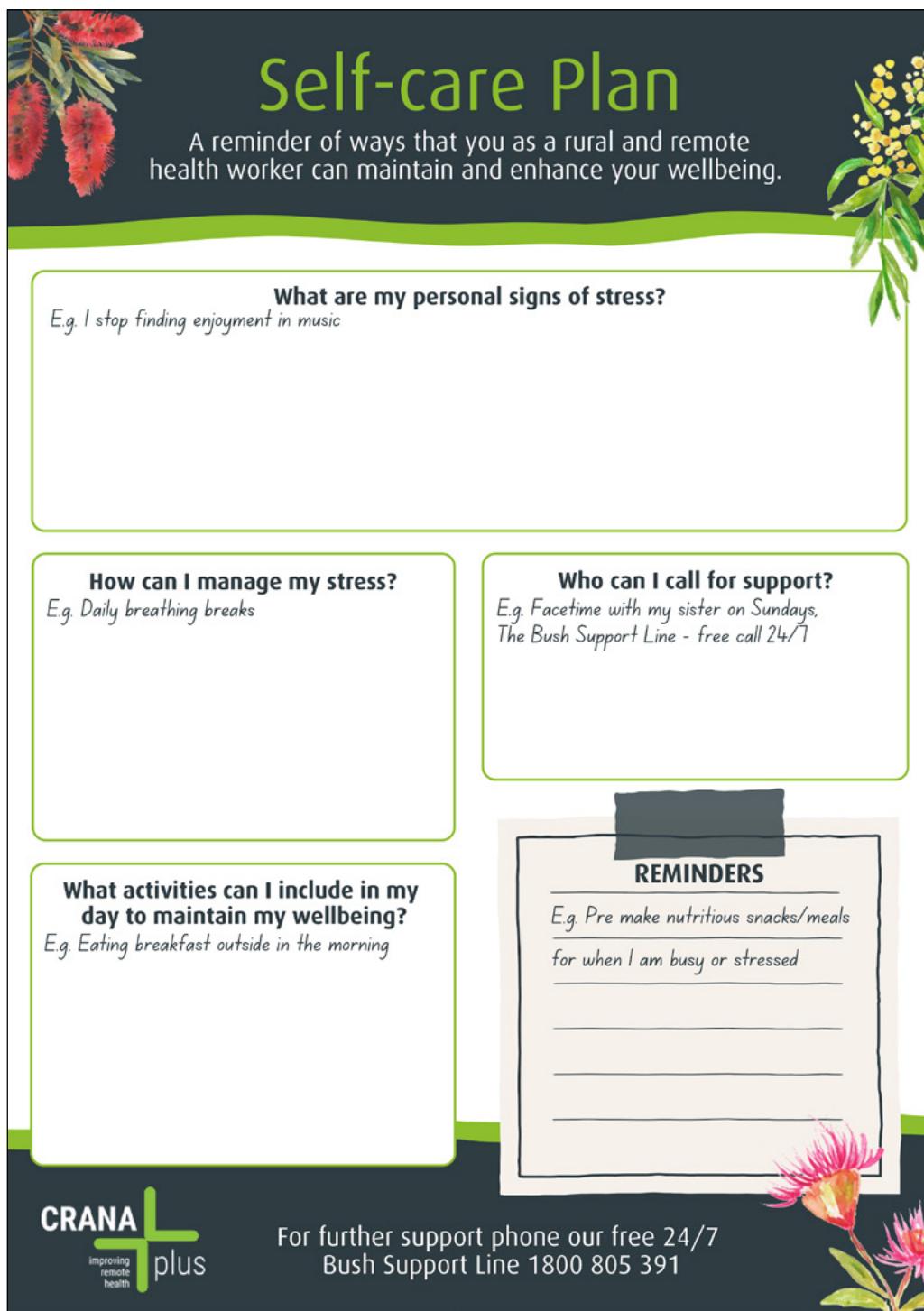


## Where to from here?

- Complete a Self-care Plan. The CRANplus Self-care Plan is available on the next page. Alternatively, you can download it in printable and digital formats at [crana.org.au/helpful-resources](http://crana.org.au/helpful-resources)
- Schedule your self-care, so it becomes part of your daily or weekly routine (not something you only do if you have time). Don't be afraid to say 'no' to people or activities that overfill your schedule, adding stress or overwhelming you. Remember, self-care is smart, not selfish. The more you look after yourself, the more capacity you have to support and care for others.

## Self-care Plan

This planner can help you to identify your personal signs of stress and plan strategies that may help you to manage your own stress and emotions.



**Self-care Plan**  
A reminder of ways that you as a rural and remote health worker can maintain and enhance your wellbeing.

**What are my personal signs of stress?**  
*E.g. I stop finding enjoyment in music*

**How can I manage my stress?**  
*E.g. Daily breathing breaks*

**Who can I call for support?**  
*E.g. Facetime with my sister on Sundays, The Bush Support Line - free call 24/7*

**What activities can I include in my day to maintain my wellbeing?**  
*E.g. Eating breakfast outside in the morning*

**REMINDERS**  
*E.g. Pre make nutritious snacks/meals for when I am busy or stressed*

For further support phone our free 24/7 Bush Support Line 1800 805 391

**CRANAplus**  
improving remote health

1. Lewis S, Willis K, Bismark M, Smallwood N. A time for self-care? Frontline health workers' strategies for managing mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. SSM Ment Health. 2022.

2. Walsh, R. Lifestyle and Mental Health; American Psychologist, Vol 66(7), Oct 2011.