Caring Counselling Worthing
Professional Counselling and Supervision

Small Moments of Rest in a Life of Caring

This handout offers possibilities for the moments that sometimes appear within a day. There is no suggested order, frequency or goal. You do not need to make a pause longer or turn it into a habit. Some ideas may appeal; others may not. Some days there may be no room for any of them. Nothing here is a measure of how well you are looking after yourself.

When there is only a passing moment

Perhaps there is time for one small thing, without stopping what you need to do. There is no need to feel different afterwards.

- Notice the warmth of a mug during a sip you were already taking.
- Let your eyes rest briefly on something you like: a colour, a photograph or the shape of a leaf.
- Feel a familiar texture beneath your fingers, such as your sleeve or the edge of a pocket.
- Offer yourself a few words that feel believable: “This is a lot,” or “My needs matter too.”

When you're waiting.

Waiting can still involve being on duty. If there is a little room within it, you might:

- Look out of the window while the kettle boils, without needing to find anything special.
- Listen to the rain or notice the changing light.
- Sit down for part of the wait, if that is possible.
- Leave a spare moment unfilled, rather than immediately finding another task.

When an everyday task offers a little space

Sometimes the opportunity is not separate from a task but somewhere within it.

- While washing your hands, notice the water or the feel of the towel, if that is pleasant. And after drying your hands, linger for a moment before moving on.
- While stirring a drink or preparing something simple, notice one part of the experience you enjoy.
- When you catch sight of yourself in a mirror, consider a kind acknowledgement rather than another instruction.

These moments do not have to become rituals. They can remain ordinary.

When there is a moment between caring tasks

A transition might offer a brief pause, even if you can't step away.

- Stay where you are for a moment before starting the next thing.
- Ask yourself, “What do I need just now?” without requiring an immediate answer or solution.
- Notice whether you would prefer company, quiet or simply fewer demands.
- Acknowledge what you have just done before turning to what comes next.

Noticing a need does not oblige you to find a way to meet it there and then.

When a minute or two happens to be yours

This might be in the morning, later in the day or at an unexpected time. It does not have to happen before anyone else needs you.

- Sit with a drink and leave your phone alone for a moment, if you do not need to monitor it.
- Wrap something familiar around your shoulders, if it is already to hand and feels comfortable.
- Read a few lines of something you enjoy.
- Listen to part of a familiar song, if listening fits with your responsibilities.
- Spend the time doing nothing in particular.

There is no need to use the whole moment or make the most of it.

When the day begins to quieten

A quieter house does not always mean a quieter mind. Allow the day to remain unfinished. You do not have to make yourself switch off: if a quieter moment comes, you might feel yourself slowing down.

- Write a few words about the day, without trying to find a positive ending.
- Notice something you would like less of, or something you missed.
- Sit somewhere comfortable without preparing for tomorrow straight away.

Questions to return to, if useful

- What gives me a brief sense of relief?
- When during my day might I have a moment to pause?
- Which of these ideas feels possible for me?
- Is there anything here that feels like another demand? What would I rather leave out?

You do not need to answer them all or answer them today.

A pause can be interrupted, ordinary or absent. None of those things means you have failed.