



TRY THIS ON FOR SIZE



BY NICOLE KATO

SELF-CARE SOLUTIONS

What a year, and it's not even half-way over. So far, 2018 has been a whirlwind of emotions for me, ranging from loss to joy to anticipation. Add to that the fact that I often feel like I'm getting pulled in a million different directions, and it's hard to stay on top of things in the various roles I have. (Though, admittedly, much of that has to do with my near-inability to say "no.")

After talking with Bora Kim, a Pacific Health Ministry chaplain serving at Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women & Children, I'm realizing that taking care of oneself is of the utmost importance and serves as a foundation for overall wellness. Kim works with women who have experienced trauma or crises, and says that self-care is one of the most crucial parts of their recovery and well-being. And, she adds, self-care is critical for everyone.

Common signs of stress and overwork, according to Kim, include feeling tired, not enjoying things you once used to, irritability, health issues and difficulty in relationships. But by the time traits like these arise, damage is already being done. Self-care, then, is more on the preventative side of health, ensuring the aforementioned symptoms don't get a chance



Bora Kim

to rear their ugly heads. She lists a number of ways to indulge in self-care:

- Nourish your body by having a healthy diet
- Exercise regularly
- Have passions outside of work
- Journal or keep a diary
- Listen to your favorite

It is helping others when you take care of yourself. The healthier you are, the more you can help others.

- music/go to a concert
- Take a nice, long walk
- Connect with others who support you and, in turn, support them
- Have a spiritual practice like prayer or meditation
- Practice gratitude and mindfulness
- Get out in nature.

Basically, it all boils down to taking the time to feed your

mind, body and soul. It's a perfect list, in theory, but putting it into practice got a little trickier for me. These self-care options were kind of thrown into the mix of my day, which left me feeling like they were taking away from my other responsibilities. I ended up with loads of guilt, which, says Kim, is a common occurrence.

"There seems to be a struggle in finding balance," Kim says. "Mostly women, I think, their priority is others. Women are wives, daughters, mothers and caregiver of families. Their job is never done.

"There is a tendency of feeling guilty," she adds. "But it is helping others when you

take care of yourself. The healthier you are, the more you can help others. It's not really being selfish."

For the past week, instead of telling myself that I'll "find time," I started solidifying self-care time on my calendar every day. In a weird trick of the mind, intentionally sectioning it off in my planner makes it more of a priority.

I'll block off an entire hour just to read, a couple of hours to take the dogs on a trek to Kapi'olani Park, or half an hour to go for a run. I even started setting aside time periods of varying lengths titled "Do Whatever You Want."

Though I still battle those feelings of guilt, it's been great knowing that I get a little "me" time on a daily basis. (And the pups are happier — and leaner — too.)

Chaplain Bora Kim provides emotional and spiritual support for women at Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women & Children, guiding them to take control of their health and well-being. She works with moms whose newborns are in the neonatal intensive care unit, as well as patients diagnosed with an illness and those going through cancer treatments.

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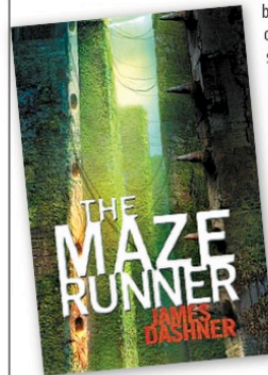
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Book Pick Of The Week

I finally finished *The Maze Runner* trilogy by James Dashner, after the third installment (*The Death Cure*) came out in theaters this year. I haven't seen any of the movies, but the books were thoroughly enjoyable. I'm a big fan of the science-fiction/fantasy storylines that bring to life horrid creatures that can (and want to) kill you, as well as narratives that leave me unsure of who



to trust. Throughout the three main books, the setting changes a number of times, which makes the stories seem longer than they really are, but it's all centered on how mankind survives after a disease destroys the planet and the humans that inhabit it. My favorite is the initial book (*The Maze Runner*), where readers are introduced to the labyrinth and the characters that become so beloved over the course of the series. I also finished off companion novels *The Kill Order*, *Thomas's First Memory of the Flare* and *The Maze Runner Files*. Now, all that's left is *The Fever Code*, which I've heard you're supposed to read last to round out the series.

Is there something you think I should try? Send suggestions to nkato@midweek.com. @nicolekato

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