

**Step 1: SELF CARE: Ask yourself, “How am I ‘Being’ while I am ‘Doing’?”**

- ‘Staff-Care’ starts with our own self-care as leaders
- Self-care includes thinking broadly about various aspects of life:
  - Spiritual
  - Mental
  - Emotional
  - Physical
  - Workplace/Professional

**Exercise:** Share the **Wellbeing Assessment for Care Providers** with your team. Invite them to take 10-15 minutes to complete the activity, noting the various ways they care for themselves. Open the discussion, asking them: What do you notice? Are there areas that might require more focus?

**Step 2: STAFF CARE: Ask yourself and your team, “How are we practicing ‘staff-care’ within our team/organization currently?”**

- As a team/organization, do we emphasize the importance of self-care? Staff-care?
- How are we addressing varying needs of employees in this ‘new normal’? Furloughed vs. not furloughed? Remote vs. on-site?
- How are we supporting a healthy work-life balance at this time?
- How are we building on trust?
- How are we ensuring all voices are heard?

**Exercise:** Set aside time as a team to talk about the idea of ‘self-care’ and ‘staff-care’. Ask for input on these topics from each team member. Examine issues listed above (e.g. self-care, communication, stress) along with any other issues that are affecting the team dynamics. Document key points from the discussion.

**Step 3: STAFF CARE: Ask yourself and your team, “How can we, as a team, better promote ‘staff-care’ moving forward?”**

- What are some new or innovative ways we might encourage members of our team to focus on self-care?
- How could we support team members who may be struggling?
- How could we celebrate successes as a team?
- How could we find opportunities in the face of challenges or obstacles?

**Exercise:** Using the findings from the above exercise, brainstorm strategies for building more focus on ‘self-care’ and ‘staff-care’ into the normal routine. Pick 1-3 of these to incorporate into individual and team routines over the next 3 months. At the end of this period, evaluate your results and determine whether you will continue with the same strategies and/or incorporate new strategies as a team.

Rate the following areas in terms of how frequently you do them:

**0 - Never      1 - Rarely      2 - Sometimes      3 - Often**

**Spiritual Self-Care**

- Find spiritual connection or community
- Practice Being vs. Doing
- Spend time in nature
- Cultivate optimism and hope
- Be open to not knowing
- Identify what is meaningful to you and notice it in your life
- Practice gratitude
- Experience inspiration (read books, listen to music, go to an uplifting event)
- Sing, pray, meditate
- Have experiences of awe
- Find meaning from difficult situations
- Align your values with your actions
- Contribute to causes in which you believe
- Practice Loving Kindness meditation (show compassion to yourself and others)



**Mental (Psychological) Self-Care**

- Practice Mindfulness – stay in the present moment (decrease worry)
- Maintain calm presence at work
- Maintain calm presence in personal life
- Maintain self-validation at work (positive self-talk, self-confidence)
- Maintain self-validation in personal life
- Make time for self-reflection: journal, therapy, talk with a friend/colleague
- Read literature that is unrelated to work
- Do something at which you are not an expert or in charge
- Share with others different aspects of yourself
- Practice receiving from others
- Say no to extra responsibilities when possible
- Take time away from phones ... take a social media/technology break
- Eliminate toxic words: should, try, can't, could have, but
- Focus on what you want, not on what you don't want
- When faced with a stressful situation: Stop, Breathe, Notice, Reframe, Choose



**Emotional Self-Care**



- Practice Responding instead of Reacting
- Notice triggers (people, situations, events) and create strategies to minimize their effect
- Monitor the energy of your emotions and cultivate emotions that fuel you
- Release anger in healthy ways (anger is like acid, it needs to be neutralized)



- \_\_\_\_\_ Express kindness to yourself (smile in the mirror, words of support, do something you love)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Spend time with others whose company you enjoy
- \_\_\_\_\_ Stay in contact with important people in your life
- \_\_\_\_\_ Allow yourself to cry
- \_\_\_\_\_ Find things that make you laugh
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identify comforting activities, objects, people, relationships, places and seek them out
- \_\_\_\_\_ Play with animals, children
- \_\_\_\_\_ Practice forgiveness

**Physical Self-Care**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Consciously breathe deeply and fully throughout the day
- \_\_\_\_\_ Notice body needs - do a 30-second Body Scan
- \_\_\_\_\_ Eat regularly (e.g. breakfast, lunch and dinner)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Eat healthy foods, 5-6 times a day (low calorie, high nutrition)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Drink 48-64 oz of water a day
- \_\_\_\_\_ Get enough sleep (6-8 hours)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Exercise regularly (30 min aerobic at least 3x per week)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Dance, swim, walk, run, play sports, sing or do other physical activity you enjoy
- \_\_\_\_\_ Get massages, practice yoga, Tai Chi or Qi Gong
- \_\_\_\_\_ Release muscle tension: Tense/Relax, Progressive Muscular Relaxation, Self-Massage
- \_\_\_\_\_ Get preventative medical care as well as when needed
- \_\_\_\_\_ Take time off when sick
- \_\_\_\_\_ Wear clothes you like
- \_\_\_\_\_ Take time off without checking in at work: Day trips, mini-vacations, vacations



**Workplace or Professional Self-Care**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Get regular supervision and consultation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have a peer support group
- \_\_\_\_\_ Take time to connect with co-workers (especially if virtual)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Set limits with clients and colleagues
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make quiet time to complete tasks
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identify projects or tasks that are exciting/rewarding
- \_\_\_\_\_ After 90-120 minutes of focused activity take a 5-minute stretch/refocus break
- \_\_\_\_\_ Balance your caseload so that no one day or part of a day is "too much"
- \_\_\_\_\_ Stop and eat lunch
- \_\_\_\_\_ Arrange your workspace so it is comfortable and comforting
- \_\_\_\_\_ Start a meeting with success stories
- \_\_\_\_\_ Remember to use the skills/tools that you teach your clients to use (e.g. CBT)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Spend 5-minutes at the end of your day writing down your successes
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have practices (rituals) to start/end your workday and transition to home and family
- \_\_\_\_\_ Develop a non-trauma area of professional interest
- \_\_\_\_\_ Frequently reconnect with your purpose about the work you do
- \_\_\_\_\_ Recognize 'intrinsic guilt' for 'not doing enough' ... and let it go!
- \_\_\_\_\_ Allow time to turn off cameras and step away from the computer
- \_\_\_\_\_ Take time off and really BE OFF! (No emails, phone calls, etc.)



(Modified Version from *Transforming the Pain*, by Karen Saakvitne and Laurie Perlman)