

Self Care Strategies

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Physical Self-Care:

- Eat regularly (breakfast, lunch and dinner)
 - Eat healthy
 - Exercise
- Get regular medical care for prevention
- Get medical care when needed
- Take time off when needed
- Get massages
- Physical activity that is fun: Dance, swim, walk, run, bike, play sports or musical instruments
- Take time to be sexual—with yourself, with a partner
- Get enough sleep
- Wear clothes you feel comfortable in
- Take vacations
- Take day trips or mini-vacations
- Make time away from phones/screens

Workplace/ Professional Self-Care:

- Take a break during the workday
- Eat lunch
- Take time to connect with co-workers
- Make quiet time to complete tasks
- Identify projects or tasks that are exciting and rewarding
- Set limits with your clients and colleagues
- Balance your caseload so that no one day or part of a day is “too much”
- Arrange your work space so it is comfortable/comforting
- Get regular supervision or consultation
- Negotiate for your needs (benefits, pay raise, professional development)
- Have a peer support group
- Develop a non-trauma area of professional interest

Adapted from American Counseling Association, *Self-Care Assessment*; Richardson, C. (1999). *Take time for your life*. New York: Broadway; Saakvitne, Pearlman & Staff of TSI/CAAP (1996) *Transforming the Pain: A Workbook on Vicarious Traumatization*, New York: Norton.

Emotional Self-Care:

- Spend time with others whose company you enjoy
- Stay in contact with important people in your life
- Give yourself affirmations, praise yourself
- Re-read favorite books, re-view favorite movies
- Identify comforting activities, objects, people, relationships, places and seek them out
- Allow yourself to cry
- Find things that make you laugh
- Express your outrage through social activism such as letters, donations, protests, campaigns
- Play with children

Spiritual Self-Care:

- Make time for reflection
- Spend time with nature
- Find a spiritual connection or community
- Be open to inspiration
- Nurture optimism and hope
- Be aware of nonmaterial aspects of life
- Try at times not to be ‘in charge’ or ‘the expert’
- Be open to not knowing
- Identify what is meaningful to you and notice its place in your life
- Spend time with children
- Cultivate experiences of awe through viewing starry skies, oceans, symphonies
- Contribute to causes in which you believe
- Read/listen to inspirational literature/lectures/music/sermons
- Be Creative –Meditate-Pray-Sing

Psychological Self-Care:

- Make time for self-reflection
- Have your own personal psychotherapy
- Write in a journal
- Read literature that is unrelated to work
- Do something at which you are not expert
- Decrease stress in your life
- Let others know different aspects of you
- Notice your inner experience—listen to thoughts, judgments, beliefs, feelings
- Engage your intelligence in a new area through attending museums, exhibits sports event, auction, theater performance
- Practice receiving from others
- Be curious
- Say “no” to extra responsibilities/ overwork
- Strive for balance among work, family, relationships, play and rest