Navigating Stress:
It's About Managing It

Iowa HS Conference

October 13, 2021

Housekeeping

- Be present
- Mute, Video on
- Join in unmuted discussions, chats, polls & breakout rooms
- Speak up if you have questions
- Take breaks together

Aspire Training & Consulting

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- Interactive
- Confidential
- Personably Professional
- Take Aways

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BE THE CHANGE!

Objectives

- Describe at least 1 **Term**: stress, trauma, secondary trauma, burnout, compassion fatigue, moral fatigue and/or comparative suffering.
- Better understand the ways **Stress/Trauma** might impact people
- Identify how they experience **Secondary Trauma, Burn-Out, Compassion Fatigue, Moral Fatigue and/or Comparative Suffering**.
- Identify at least 1 **Strategy** for self care.

Careful

Talking about stress/trauma, etc. can be stressful.

Mindfulness

Grounding

1. Take a deep breath
2. Place your hands/feet flat on the table/floor
3. Wiggle your fingers/toes
4. Notice 3 things about your hands/feet
    a. Fingers/Toes
    b. Warmth
    c. Pressure
5. Breathe in for 4 counts*
6. Breathe out for 6 counts*
7. Press your hands/feet flat on the table/floor
8. Wiggle your fingers/toes
9. Look at 3 things in the room
10. Look at me
11. Take a deep breath

*Repeat breathing 4-in, 6-out x4

Coping in the Moment:
Ground, Soothe & Contain

- Ground Yourself: Focus on hands/feet on a surface
- Breathe slowly & deeply (belly)
- Breathe out longer than in
- Use calming, positive self talk
- Press feet &/or hands
- Do chair push-ups
- Wiggle toes &/or fingers
- Look at 3 things
- Notice 3 properties about an object
- Look near & far 3x
- Get up & move for at least 3 minutes
- Hug someone for at least 10 seconds
- Hold your breath for 15 seconds & splash cold water on your face
- +

https://ths.pthsd.k12.nj.us/UserFiles/Servers/Server_29144/File/Parents_Students/Things-You-Can-Control-Big-Life-Journal.pdf

Transitions

- Tasks, Work, Home
- Physical & Cognitive

Stress

An elevation in a person's state of arousal or readiness, caused by some stimulus or demand.

- Moderate stress arousal ***improves*** health and performance.
- Manageable stress levels can ***sharpen attention & mobilize*** our physical ability to cope with threats.
- At some point, stress arousal reaches ***maximum effect*** & all that was gained by stress arousal is lost and deterioration of health and performance begins

How Does Stress Happen?

- Too much to do, not enough time
- Don’t know where to start
- Cleaning up the mistakes
- Anxiety, depression, mood disorders
- Substance use/abuse
- Family/Lack or Family
- (Un)Employment
- +

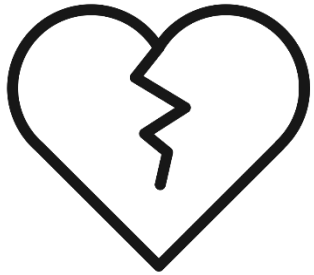
Importance

Uncertainty

Duration

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NkQ58I53mjk

Trauma



Per SAMHSA…

1. Individual trauma results from an **event**, series of events, or set of circumstances

2. That is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening

3. That has lasting **effects** on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional or spiritual well-being

How Does Trauma Happen?

- Abuse or **Neglect** (childhood, at risk adult) – physical, emotional, sexual, financial
- Accident or Illness
- Victim/witness to **Domestic Violence**
- Community or School Violence
- Exposure to Substance Abuse/Addiction
- Natural Disaster, War, Terrorism, Famine, Political Violence, Fear-Based Political/Public Service Statements
- Grief & **Loss**
- Separation & Divorce
- Historical, Cultural, Generational
- Gender & Sexual Orientation/Expression
- +

Preconditions for Trauma

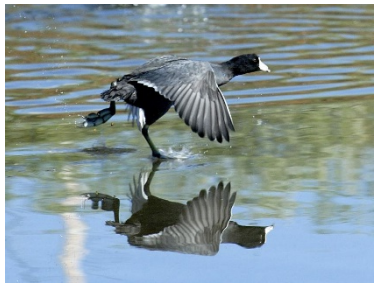
Struggle	Strategy
1. Lack of Predictability	1. Follow morning, bedtime &/or other routines/schedules as much as possible
2. Immobility (loss of physical sense of agency)	2. Move your body: exercise, dance...
3. Loss of Connection	3. See & hear people; especially those who fill us up
4. Natural Reactions of Numbing & Spacing Out	4. Practice being pleasantly present
5. Loss of Sense of Time & Sequences (no sense of future)	5. Look forward to something every day, week & weekend
6. Loss of Safety	6. Touch & cuddle people, pets & selves
7. Loss of Sense of Purpose/Identity.	7. Do what fills you up & affirms who you are; art, music, etc.
van der Kolk (2020)	

Traumatic Stress Responses (AKA Defenses)

What is your default?

Know what to expect & accept it to plan HOW to work with it.

Fight



Flight

Freeze

Submit

Stress/Trauma Interferes with…

Regulating

Processing

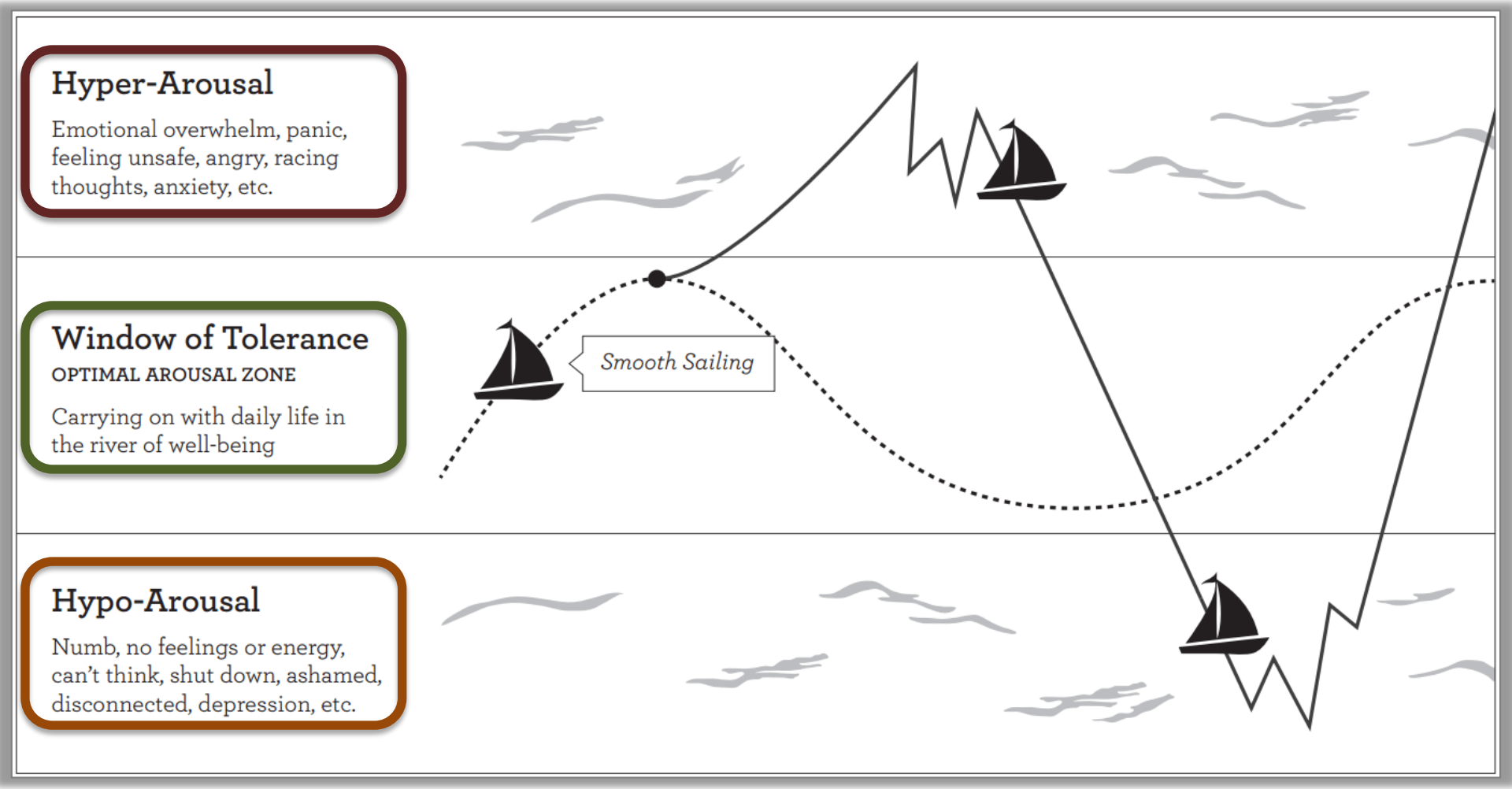
Learning/Recalling

Relating

You Can Help

Decrease stress-/trauma-response

Increase resilience



Used with permission: http://www.brassballstenderheart.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Window_Of_Tolerance.png

It’s true. No lie. For Real.

SELF CARE =

NECESSARY FOR DIRECT CARE JOBS

Emotional Labor

PHYSIOLOGICAL

Affective response

- Visceral response
- Affect sharing, including mirroring another's emotions or actions
- Containment

COGNITIVE

Self–Other Awareness:

- Ability to recognize and understand one's own emotions and thoughts, while distinguishing the self from others
- Awareness of personal values, beliefs, judgments, etc.

Perspective Taking

- Ability to understand another's experiences (take another perspective), while maintaining sense of self as distinct other
- Ability to "keep it in perspective" by balancing purpose and/or big picture with current situation; defining "help"

Emotion Regulation

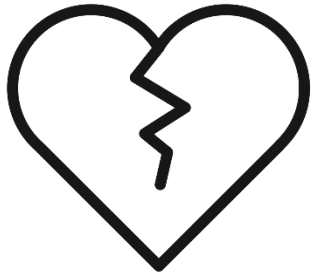
- Ability to control or regulate emotions

Wagaman, et al. (2018)

Self Care: It's About Energy & Fit!

- Bills
- Budget
- Chores
- Family
- Friends
- Groceries
- Kids
- Love
- Pets
- School
- SELF CARE
- Sleep
- Spirituality/Religion
- Work
- +

Secondary Trauma



Experiencing the cumulative effect of

- Witnessing a traumatic event
- Having knowledge about a traumatic event experienced by another
- Working with traumatized individuals

Frame of Reference

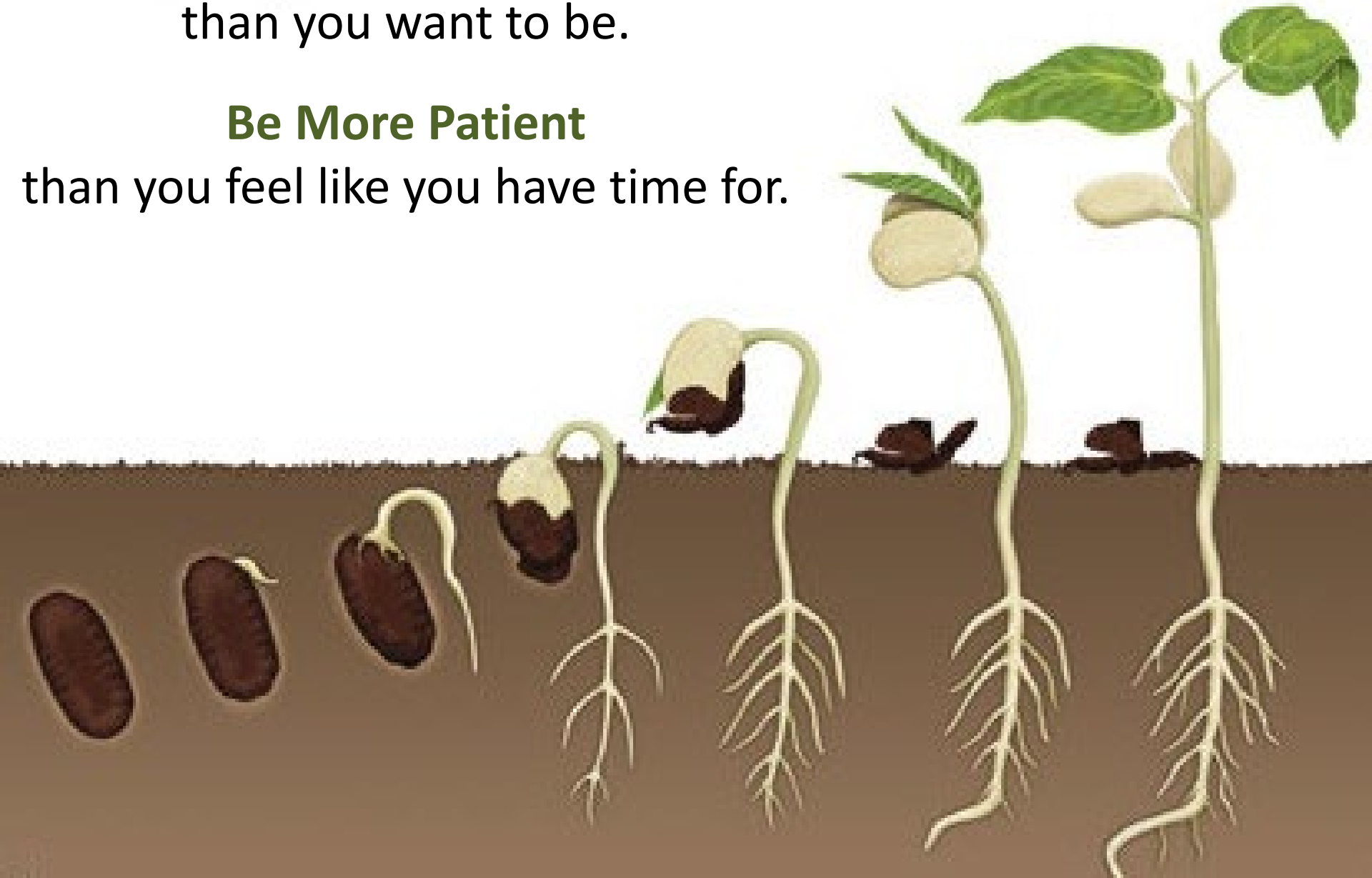
- Self
- Others
- Safety
- World
- Spirituality

Be Nicer

than you want to be.

Be More Patient

than you feel like you have time for.



Cope with Immediacy

- Provides sense of validation, hope, control & power
- Physiologically offers the body less time to "wire" the system for stress/trauma state
  - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (symptoms for 6 months) = greater risk
    - Mental health disorders
    - Suicide

How you cope is less important than

how successful the coping efforts are

in carrying on with life, regulating emotions, sustaining self-esteem, & enjoying relationships (love, life, work & play).

Compassion Fatigue

"The physical and mental exhaustion and emotional withdrawal experienced by those that care for sick or traumatized people over an extended period of time."

- "Some researchers consider *compassion fatigue* to be similar to posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), except that it applies to those emotionally affected by the trauma of another (eg, participant or family member) rather than by one's own trauma.

  Michael K. Kearney et al., *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, 18 Mar. 2009

- Clinicians should be aware of how their emotional withdrawal or lability and "*compassion fatigue*" can jeopardize the care of dying patients and their families.

  Deborah Cook and Graeme Rocker, *The New England Journal of Medicine*, 26 June 2014"

https://www.merriam-webster.com/medical/compassion%20fatigue

Power of Compassion (Empathy+)

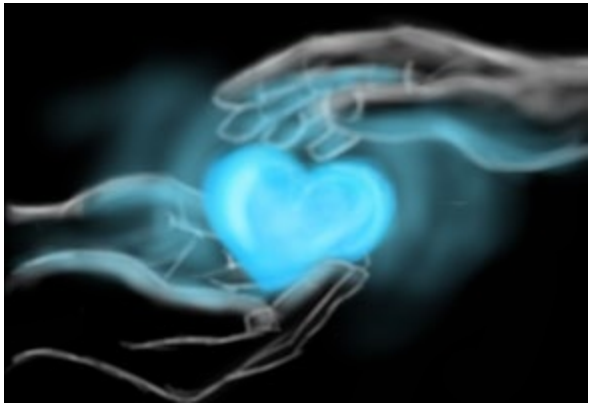
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw

Self Compassion

- May I be peaceful
- May I be well
- May I be happy
- May I be safe
- May I be free from suffering

Compassion to Others

- May you be peaceful
- May you be well
- May you be happy
- May you be safe
- May you be free from suffering



Burn-Out

When your capacity (energy, time, resources, etc.)

does not or can not meet expectations (yours & others)

- Overwhelming emotional exhaustion
- Depersonalization
- Feelings of professional insufficiency

Wagaman, et al. (2018)

Realistic Work Expectations

- *What you've always been able to do is likely what you will be able to do now.* Set your **daily expectations** based on that.

- **When** are you most productive at **what** (people-ing, writing, filing, creating, etc.)? Schedule it.

- **Strategically connect with colleagues** (AM & PM breaks, lunch…) = better than talking endlessly because you are over it.

Moral Fatigue

- Continuously weighing the cost of our actions
- Mundane activities as moral dilemmas: considering everyday actions/decisions in terms of how they could affect ourselves & others
- Exhausting: emotionally & cognitively
- Can be exacerbated when decision does not seem like ours to make

Should I …

- Wear a mask
- Send my child to school
- Order delivery
- Go to the grocery store
- Take public transit
- Visit a sick family member
- +

Providence (2020) & Yuko (2020)

Opting Out of

COMPARATIVE SUFFERING

"

Let's keep our struggles in perspective but also allow ourselves and others to *feel* and *express* them.

Layne (2020)

What's Your Capacity?

None……FULL

0……5……10

What happens for you when you are at full capacity?

0? 5?

Consider: Body, Thinking, Feeling, Relationships, etc.

Benefits of Self Care

When I Care Well for Myself, I…

3 Benefits for me are…

3 Benefits for others are…

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FYI

Time Management

- Productive Time = window of 2 hours or less each day
- 1 – 1 ½ Hour Work Periods
- Eat lunch; don't work & eat
- Meditation or Brain Breaks (5x for 5 minutes, etc.)
- Prioritize, Plan & Schedule
  - participants (45-50 min)
  - Casework
  - Non-casework
  - Do Not Disturb Time
- Group Like-Tasks
- Return calls that don't require direct communication first thing in AM or last in PM
- Email near lunch time
- Utilize teams, collaborations & resources
- Take time off!

FYI

Traditional Self Care Strategies

1. Relax
2. Energize
3. Eat
4. Sleep
5. Move (Exercise)
6. Manage Your Emotions
7. Do What Fills You Up
8. Practice Realistic Optimism
9. Set Goals & Boundaries
10. Manage Your Time

FYI

Cope

- Be around people and do things that make you happy
- Set boundaries: engage with “why” & need to insulate
- Strengthen your frame of reference (self, others, world, & spirituality)
- Engage in (be present & enjoy) rituals
- Be present: pause, presence, proceed
- Re-define “success” (life, love, work & play)
- Engage in extra self soothing
- Focus on Emotional Intelligence (before, during & after)
- Ensure on-going self care

Shield Yourself from ST, BO & CF

1. **Mindfulness**
2. **Transition**
3. **Precondition Strategies**
4. **Cope with Immediacy**
4. **Self Compassion**
5. **Compassion to Others**
6. **Realistic Work Expectations**
7. **Monitor your Capacity**

More on Self-Care

- 4 Simple Ways to Clear Your Mind and Change Your Life. https://www.purposefairy.com/89192/clear-your-mind-change-your-life/
- 10 Incredible Things That Happen to Your Body When You Relax. https://chopra.com/articles/10-incredible-things-that-happen-to-your-body-when-you-relax
- How to love yourself: 15 steps to believing in yourself again. https://hackspirit.com/how-to-love-yourself/
- Nearing Burnout? 9 Ways to Stave Off Exhaustion. https://psychcentral.com/blog/nearing-burnout-9-ways-to-stave-off-exhaustion/
- Our best bet against burnout is self-care, just not the kind you think. https://mashable.com/article/burnout-treatment/
- Self-care Starter Kit. https://docplayer.net/28481914-Self-care-starter-kit-homewoodhealth-com.html

What Did You Learn?
How Will You Use It?

Taking care of yourself *doesn't mean me first, it* ***means me too.***

-L.K. Krost

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