

# The Importance of Self-Care

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# EMOTIONS AREN'T "GOOD" OR "BAD"

5 EXAMPLES 2

**STRESS**

"I need to slow down. I need self-care."

**SAD**

"It's okay. I need love & to look for joy & gratitude."

**ANXIOUS**

"I need calm & grounding. I can remind myself I am safe & can manage this."



They are SIGNALS  
to us...

our body bringing our attention to something → maybe letting you know that something is 'off-kilter' or out of balance.

ASK YOURSELF:

"WHAT IS THIS FEELING TRYING TO TELL ME?"

# Objectives

- ▶ To explore our awareness of the importance of self-care
- ▶ To share knowledge of research
- ▶ To present a selection of self-care ideas and exercises
- ▶ To explore how we can embed self-care strategies in our daily routine, in and outside of work

# An invitation to think about -

- ▶ **What do we already do to recharge our batteries?**
- ▶ **Do we give ourselves time & permission to think, reflect and relax?**
- ▶ **Do we believe that to be able to care for others, we need to care for ourselves first?**
- ▶ **Are we able to switch off from our working day OR do feelings, thoughts and lived experiences stay with us for quite some time?**

# The importance of self care

Sanderson (2020) highlights the importance of integrating self care strategies into our daily routines to ensure we are able to execute our “caring” duties, enabling us to:

- **Be fully present** (present in the moment with ourselves & people we are interacting with)
- **Maintain a high level of self awareness & understanding of (compassion towards) self** (to be in the present moment to be able to support others)
- **Empathic & compassionate** (to be more understanding of the person in need)
- **Transform the most challenging of work into the most rewarding** (taking time out can help us feel more productive & effective)
- **Have & maintain a work life balance if we choose to**

# We are trying to avoid:

- **Burnout** (WHO 2019) **and/or compassion fatigue, a loss of caring** (Figley 1995 & 2002)
- **Depletion of energy, increased negative mindset, exhaustion** (Maslach 2015)
- **Secondary traumatic stress, trauma like reactions** (Yassen 1995)
- This can lead to - **Vicarious traumatisation, professionals who are transformed by reports of traumatic experiences leading to disruptions in own process, meaning, purpose and spirituality** (McCann & Pearlman 1990, Cortois 1993)

## Food For Thought - Have we experienced any of the below?

- Memory & concentration problems
- Disorientation
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Change in world view
- Loss of confidence & competence
- Somatic symptoms: sleep disturbance, recurring physical illness, suppressed immune system, changes in appetite & behaviour, increased reliance on self-medication (alcohol, drugs etc)

# We matter!

- **Our own mental & emotional health is important**
- **We want to care and support others effectively**
- **We want to make decisions that have a positive impact on others & our own personal lives**

# From an organisational point of view - Food For Thought:

- ▶ **No matter how robust an individual's coping mechanisms are, if an organisation is not fully aware of and committed to tackling stress related issues, their staff are more likely going to be impacted!**
- ▶ **Would it help to embed the importance of self-care into policies? - what message would this give to staff?**
- ▶ **Is there an opportunity to show young people how self-care works, modelling ways to support ourselves and one another?**

# An invitation to acknowledge that there is an impact of caring for others -

The Helping Process is an intense & deep engagement

- You give a lot of yourself everyday and I would argue that you deserve time out to recharge your batteries!
- Would it not be helpful if we could leave work behind for the day and feel refreshed for the next day?

# Self Awareness is key

Golding 2020 explores the importance of being in the moment to be helpful -

## 1. Notice

- What is happening?
- Do I need to step in now?
- What immediate steps do I need to take to ensure everyone's safety?
- Is the pupil ready for my support?

## 2. Impact on you (check own response, PAUSE)

- Am I regulated, can I stay open & engaged?
- Am I becoming irritated? Do I feel useless?
- Do I need a break or can I go back to being open & engaged
- Can I be compassionate to myself (& the pupil)?

# Responding in a trauma informed & attachment friendly way:

**We are:**

- **By being mindful and aware - aiming to de-escalate, offering effective support & opportunity for a person-centred recovery**
- **Young people are able to pick up from the helping adult: A transferring of care, calm & consistency, - being personalised & targeted in our offered support at a time where they are in turmoil & crisis**
- **Working as part of a team that is supportive of one another - creating a community where everyone matters, a community of stability**
- **Embedding time into our working day to reflect, recharge & plan ahead**
- **Embedding time to learn from one another**

# Self-care to:

- ▶ Be more mindful
- ▶ Be aware that there is a cost to caring
- ▶ Ensure we maintain a balance between “other-care” and “self-care”
- ▶ Set appropriate boundaries
- ▶ Nourish ones own creativity & spirituality (Rothschild 2006)
- ▶ Develop an understanding of our own, individual process (increased awareness in self) to tackle signs of own symptoms of burnout, compassion fatigue, secondary traumatic stress and vicarious trauma
- ▶ Make time to reflect & check in with ourselves
- ▶ Be kind to ourselves first and then others

# Let's do this! Let's connect with ourselves & others around us!

- ▶ Why not create our own support networks - to let one another know what I might need support with - what about some in-house air & share, individual or small group “supervision” / Reflection groups
- ▶ Check-in at the beginning & check-out at the end of the working day
- ▶ Time in the day & resources to apply self-care strategies
- ▶ Boundaries - working reasonable hours, taking breaks, contact times (off duty means off duty / create a rota of shared responsibilities)
- ▶ Time with family & friends
- ▶ Time in nature
- ▶ Laughter, fun & play
- ▶ Daily physical release

# An invitation to take part in some exercises

I will keep my sound on to guide you through some exercises  
Please, ensure you look after yourself and sit in a comfortable position

Thank you 😊

# Just One Breath

## BREATHING ACTIVITY



Find a relaxing place, sit comfortably, and set a timer for one minute.

Breathe deeply in and out while paying attention to any sensations you notice or sounds you hear.



Take another slow deep breath, imagine the air moving down into the lungs and back up.

Take one more deep breath and hold for a moment, then release it.



# Self-Care ideas

# TENSE AND RELEASE

## MUSCLE RELAXATION

1. Starting at the feet, gently squeeze the muscles in the feet by tightening them, then slowly releasing.
2. Next, squeeze the large muscles in the calves for 5 seconds, then gently release. Working your way up the body, squeeze the thigh muscles for 5 seconds then gently release.
3. Continue moving up the body for more relaxation.



Big Life Journal - [biglifejournal.com](http://biglifejournal.com)

# Tense & release Muscles

## GROUNDING TECHNIQUES FOR ANXIETY

- **Speak out loud.** You can use affirmations or a book. Pay attention to the sound of your own voice.
- **Call a friend.** Hearing a familiar voice and interacting will help you recognize that you are safe.
- **Move your body.** Pay attention to the physical sensations. - Eat something. Try having something spicy, sour, or cold.
- **Pet your dog or other pet.** Say their name out loud and talk to them.
- **Use your "safe place".** It will help you feel safe and secure.
- **Write in your journal.** Jot down what you are feeling and what is making you anxious.
- **Go outside.** Pay attention to how it feels. Listen and observe.

## GROUNDING WITH YOUR FIVE SENSES

*What are* 5 THINGS YOU CAN SEE *Ideas*

 **SUN**  
PICTURE ON THE WALL  
PEOPLE WALKING

4 THINGS YOU CAN FEEL

 **WIND BLOWING**  
FEET ON THE FLOOR  
PENCIL IN HAND

3 THINGS YOU CAN HEAR

 **BIRDS CHIRPING**  
CLOCK TICKING  
CAR HORNS

2 THINGS YOU CAN SMELL

 **FOOD FROM THE CAFETERIA**  
LAUNDRY DETERGENT ON CLOTHES  
FRESH CUT GRASS

1 THING YOU CAN TASTE

 **MINT**  
Breakfast  
TOOTHPASTE

# Grounding Technique ideas:

# Journaling

Sarkis (2020) reflects on the benefits of journaling in Psychology Today:

- ▶ Journaling can result in: significant improvement in peoples' mental health and wellbeing
- ▶ Journaling can lead to a reduction in symptoms related to anxiety and depression
- ▶ **Invitation - In your own time: Two thoughts & feelings about your day today & what do you wish (one wish) for tomorrow**

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For more information, please feel you can get in touch 😊

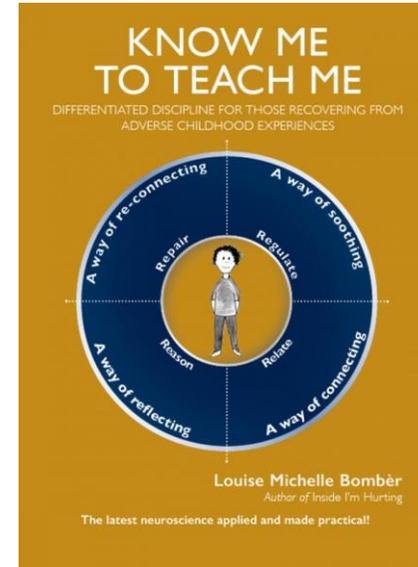
# How can I extend my knowledge about TRAUMA?

**YOUNG MINDS**



the **LOSS** foundation

**Zero Suicide Alliance** | Because **ONE** life lost is **ONE** too many



For better mental health



# How can I extend my knowledge about self-care strategies?



For better  
mental health

