



Taking Care of Yourself

You are an important person in the lives of the family and children you care for. When you take time for self care, you are better able to care for your them. Stress causes wear and tear on a person, inside and out. Keep these tips in mind next time you're feeling overwhelmed.

Terms to Remember

Compassion Satisfaction: the positive feelings derived from helping others through traumatic situations

Compassion Fatigue: the psychological distress caused by exposure to the challenges faced with children and their families

Burnout: a cumulative state of frustration with a person's work environment that develops over a long time



Signs & Symptoms of Stress

- Headaches
- Grinding teeth
- Frequent colds or infections
- Heartburn, stomach pain, or nausea
- Changes in normal appetite
- A constant sense of worry
- Trouble sleeping
- Feeling down or moody
- Feelings of loneliness or hopelessness
- Difficulty making decisions
- Fatigue
- Irritability
- Withdrawal from friends and family
- Not finding pleasure in usual activities or lack of fulfillment in work

Finding a balance between compassion satisfaction and compassion fatigue is important to being the best provider you can be.



Self Care Strategies to Try

Even though we may not be able to change the root causes of our stress, we do have some control over the impact of stress. We can help mitigate it by practicing any number of self-care strategies.

Use the strategies from today’s webinar in your own life.

Grounding in the Present Moment

- Breathe deeply
- Use your senses
- Make a gratitude list
- Remember your “why”
- Give yourself an affirmation
- Meditate or pray
- Set a calendar reminder to remind yourself daily to “just be”

Movement

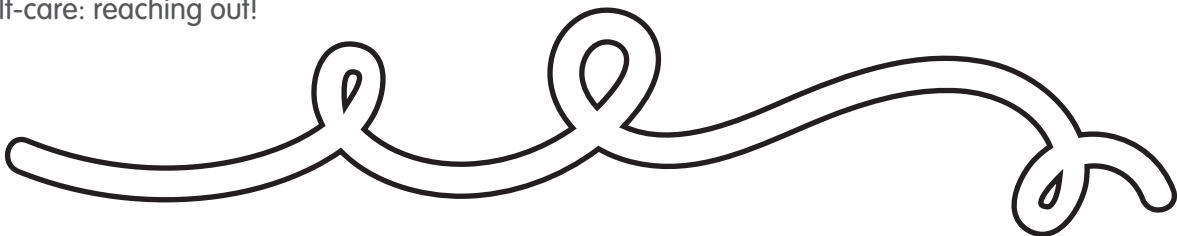
- Take a walk - set a “steps” goal each day
- Take a stretch break
- Play a game
- Draw or color
- Sway or dance to music
- Sing a song or play an instrument
- Exercise

Reaching Out

- Make plans with a friend
- Introduce yourself to someone new
- Laugh with a coworker
- Ask for help/support in specific ways
- Talk about your feelings
- Talk with a counselor or spiritual guide
- Volunteer or serve in your community

Self Care String

Take a length of string, about 12 inches long. Then choose two strategies – one each from the “Grounding in the Present Moment” and the “Movement” categories – that you want to be reminded of. As you think about each strategy and how/where you may do them, tie a knot in the string. The last step is to ask someone (a co-worker, someone you trust and whose company enjoy!) to tie it on you. Having another person tie it on you reminds you of a key strategy of self-care: reaching out!



Make it work for you.

If you don’t have a string handy, simply write some self-care strategies you’d like to try next to the first two loops. Near the last loop, write the name of a friend, family member, or colleague you plan to connect with.