

Caring for the Caregiver

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Black Mental Wellness

June 8, 2022, 1:00 PM ET



The purpose of the MHTTC Network is technology transfer - disseminating and implementing evidence-based practices for mental disorders into the field.

Funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the MHTTC Network includes 10 Regional Centers, a National American Indian and Alaska Native Center, a National Hispanic and Latino Center, and a Network Coordinating Office.

Our collaborative network supports resource development and dissemination, training and technical assistance, and workforce development for the mental health field. We work with systems, organizations, and treatment practitioners involved in the delivery of mental health services to strengthen their capacity to deliver effective evidence-based practices to individuals. Our services cover the full continuum spanning mental illness prevention, treatment, and recovery support.

MHTTC Network

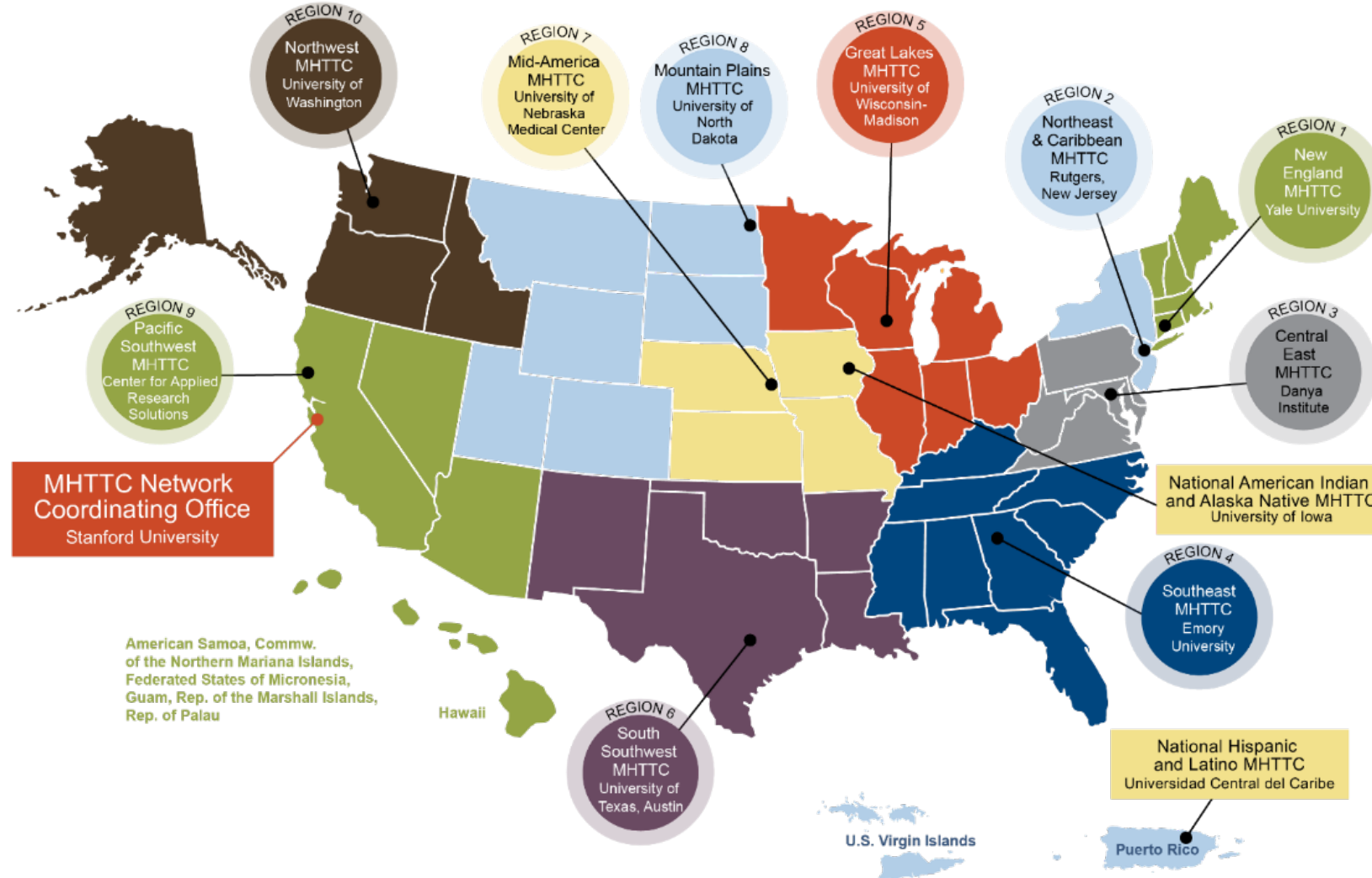


MHTTC

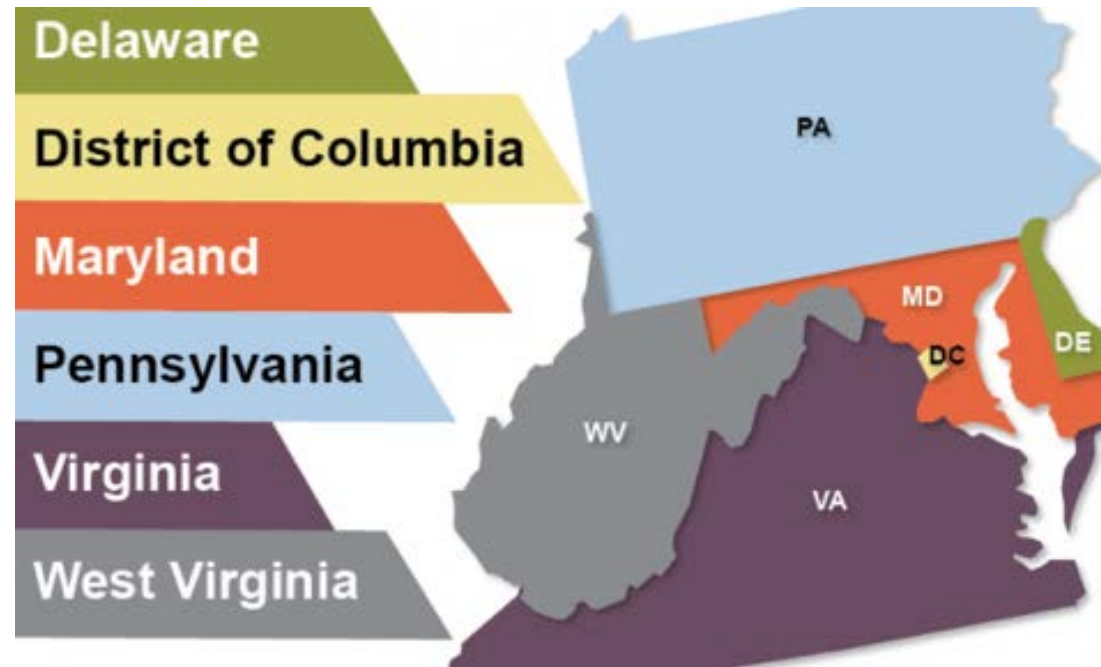
Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

MHTTC Network



Central East Region 3



Central East (HHS Region 3)

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

The MHTTC Network uses affirming, respectful and recovery-oriented language in all activities. That language is:

STRENGTHS-BASED
AND HOPEFUL

INCLUSIVE AND
ACCEPTING OF
DIVERSE CULTURES,
GENDERS,
PERSPECTIVES,
AND EXPERIENCES

HEALING-CENTERED AND
TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE

INVITING TO INDIVIDUALS
PARTICIPATING IN THEIR
OWN JOURNEYS

PERSON-FIRST AND
FREE OF LABELS

NON-JUDGMENTAL AND
AVOIDING ASSUMPTIONS

RESPECTFUL, CLEAR
AND UNDERSTANDABLE

CONSISTENT WITH
OUR ACTIONS,
POLICIES, AND PRODUCTS

Acknowledgment

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At the time of this publication, Miriam E. Delphin-Rittmon, Ph.D, served as Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

The opinions expressed herein are the views of the authors and do not reflect the official position of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), SAMHSA. No official support or endorsement of DHHS, SAMHSA, for the opinions described in this document is intended or should be inferred.

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Presented 2022

Black Mental Wellness, Corp.

- **Dr. Nicole L. Cammack:**
President & CEO
- **Dr. Danielle R. Busby:**
Professional Relations & Liaison
- **Dr. Dana L. Cunningham:**
Community Outreach & Engagement
- **Dr. Jessica S. Henry:**
Program Development & Evaluation



Black Mental Wellness, Corp.

The Mission of Black Mental Wellness

- To provide information and resources about mental health and behavioral health topics from a Black perspective
- To highlight and increase the diversity of mental health professionals
- To decrease the mental health stigma in the Black community

[Black Mental Wellness website](#)



Overview

Goals:

- Participants will be able to identify signs of caregiver stress
- Participants will be able to identify how stress and burnout impacts physical and mental health outcomes
- Participants will be able to identify strategies to support caregivers
- Mental health and caregiving support and resources

There are only four kinds of people in the world - those who have been caregivers, those who are caregivers, those who will be caregivers and those who will need caregivers.

Rosalynn Carter

Zoom Poll

- Please identify which category best describes you:
 - I have been a caregiver.
 - I am a caregiver.
 - I am the family member of a caregiver.
 - I am an advocate for caregivers.
 - I am a behavioral health professional who supports caregivers.



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What is Caregiving?

Caregiving

*A caregiver—sometimes called an **informal caregiver**—is an unpaid individual involved in assisting others with activities of daily living and/or medical tasks*

***Formal caregivers** are paid care providers providing care in one's home or in a care setting (day care, residential facility, long-term care facility)*

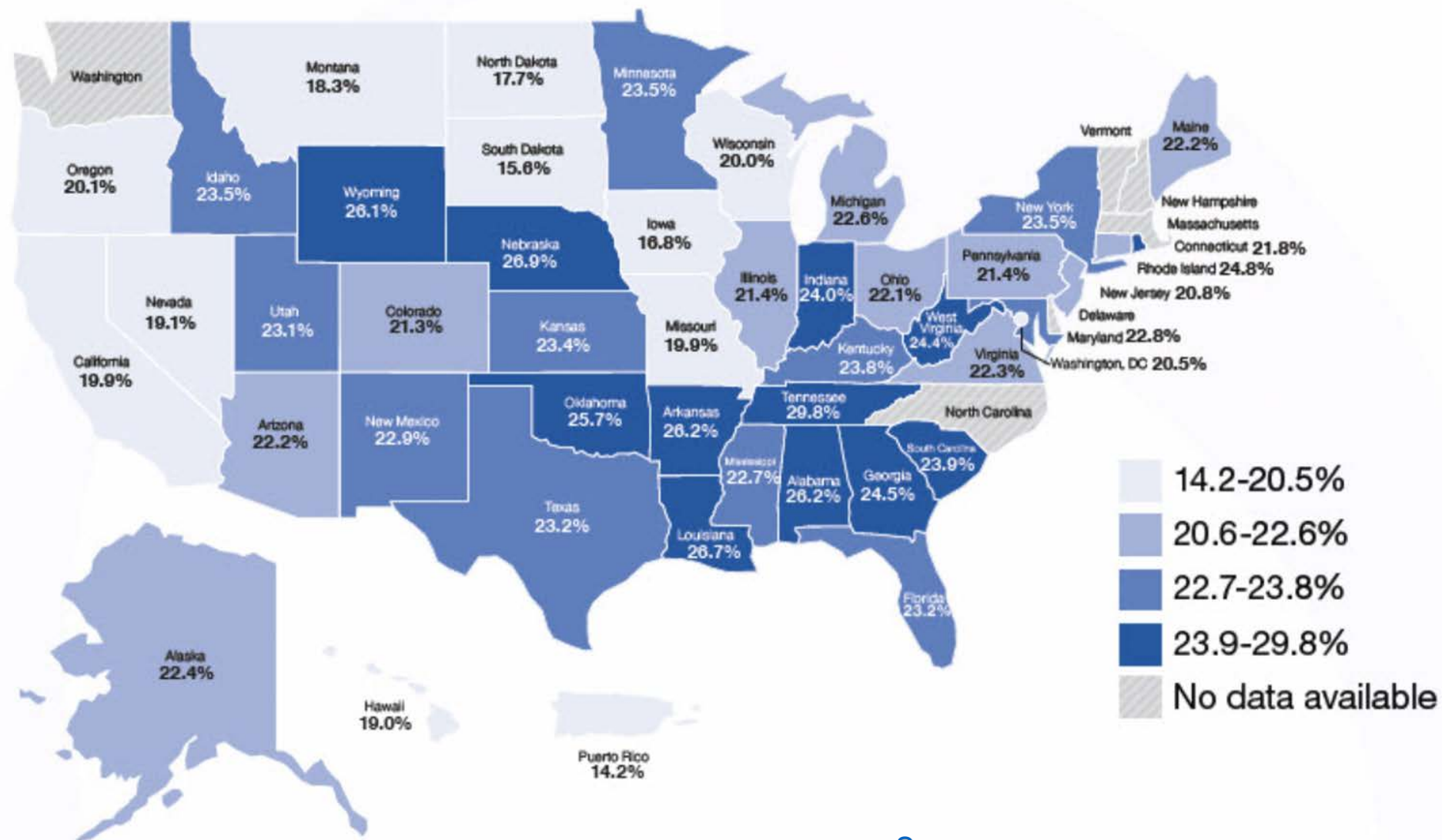


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Source

Figure 1: Adults aged 45 years or older who reported being a caregiver to a friend or family member



[Source](#)



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Caregiving Statistics

- More than 10 million millennials in the United States, who range from early 20s to late 30s, are acting as unpaid caregivers
- There are more than 42 million caregivers nationwide
- About 15.7 million adult family caregivers care for someone who has Alzheimer's disease or another dementia

[Alzheimer's Association. (2015). 2015 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures.]



Source



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Caregiving Statistics (cont.d)

- Over half (53%) of caregivers indicated that a decline in their health compromises their ability to provide care
- 14.5% of caregivers reported experiencing 14 or more mentally unhealthy days in the past month
- 17.6% of caregivers reported experiencing 14 or more physically unhealthy days in the past month
- 36.7% of caregivers reported getting insufficient sleep. Insufficient sleep (defined as fewer than 7 hours in a 24-hour period) may negatively impact a caregiver's health and also interfere with their ability to provide care
- Family caregivers provide \$450 billion in unpaid care annually for their adult loved ones



Caregiving Statistics (cont.d)

- Older caregivers are more likely to care for a spouse or partner. The average age of spousal caregivers is 62.3 [National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP. (2015). Caregiving in the U.S.]
- 57% of caregivers report that they do not have a choice about performing clinical tasks, and that this lack of choice is self-imposed
- 43% of caregivers feel that these tasks are their personal responsibility because no one else can do it or because insurance will not pay for a professional caregiver
- 12% of caregivers report that they are pressured to perform these tasks by the care receiver and 8% of caregivers report that they are pressured to perform these tasks by another family member



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Caregiver Stress and Burnout

Common Caregiving Stressors

- Limited time for yourself
- Financial strain
- Lack of support
- Fear or uncertainty about the future
- Isolation
- Demands of constant care
- Feelings of guilt
- Role ambiguity
- Navigating the barriers of distance for caregivers who may live in a different city or state

Understanding Stress

- Stress is a natural response to a threat
- Stress responses have a beginning, middle, and end
- How you respond to stress helps to control burnout
- Getting stuck in the stress cycle can lead to burnout

Symptoms of Stress

Physical Signs	Emotional Signs	Behavioral Signs
Headache	Anxiety	Overeating or undereating
Muscle tension or pain	Restlessness	Decrease Patience with others
Chest pain	Decreased motivation or focus	Drug or alcohol misuse
Fatigue	Feeling overwhelmed	Tobacco use
Sleep problems	Irritability or anger	Social withdrawal
Digestive Issues	Sadness or depression	Decreased interest in activities



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Warning Signs

- **Mood Changes**
 - Feelings of sadness or withdrawal lasting two or more weeks
 - Severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships at home or work
- **Intense Feelings**
 - Feelings of overwhelming fear for no reasons
 - Worries or fears are intense enough to interfere with daily activities
 - Physical symptoms: Racing heart or fast breathing
- **Substance Abuse**
 - Individuals may use drugs or alcohol to cope with feelings and loss



Warning Signs (cont.d)

- **Behavior Changes**
 - Drastic changes in behavior or personality, dangerous or out-of-control behavior
 - Fighting frequently, using weapons or expressing a desire to hurt others
- **Difficulty Concentrating**
 - Trouble focusing or sitting still, both of which might lead to poor performance at work
- **Unexplained Weight Loss**
 - Sudden loss of appetite
- **Physical Harm**
 - Grief can lead to suicidal thoughts and attempts at suicide



Caregiver Burnout

- Decreased energy
- Get sick more often
- Constantly feel exhausted
- Neglect your own needs
- Withdrawal from family and friends
- Caregiving does not give you any satisfaction
- Have trouble relaxing
- Increasingly impatient and irritable with the person you are caring for
- Feel helpless and hopeless

What Contributes to Caregiver Burnout?

- Unrealistic expectations and goals
- Lack of control
- Unreasonable self-imposed demands
- Lack of self-compassion
- Limited use of healthy coping skills



[Source](#)

Adapted from: Watson, P., Gist, R., Taylor, V., Evlander, E., Leto, F., Martin, R., Vaught, D., Nash, W.P., Westphal, R., & Litz, B. (2013). Stress First Aid for Firefighters and Emergency Services Personnel. National Fallen Firefighters Foundation.



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Support Strategies for Caregivers

Disrupt the Stress Cycle

- Deep Breathing
- Meditation
- Take a walk
- Cook
- Think of a loved one
- Play with your pet
- Mindfulness
- Dance
- Exercise
- A good hug
- Watch something funny
- Pray
- Read
- Music



Monitor Your Thoughts

- Notice when you are ruminating vs. problem solving
- Ruminating: thoughts or images are impacting our mood and make it hard to engage in activities
- Our brain often replays stressful events
- Increased rumination leads to more feelings of anxiety and unhappiness
- Problem-solving: Empowered and actively engaged in solving a stressful event
- Try to engage in an activity to break the rumination cycle

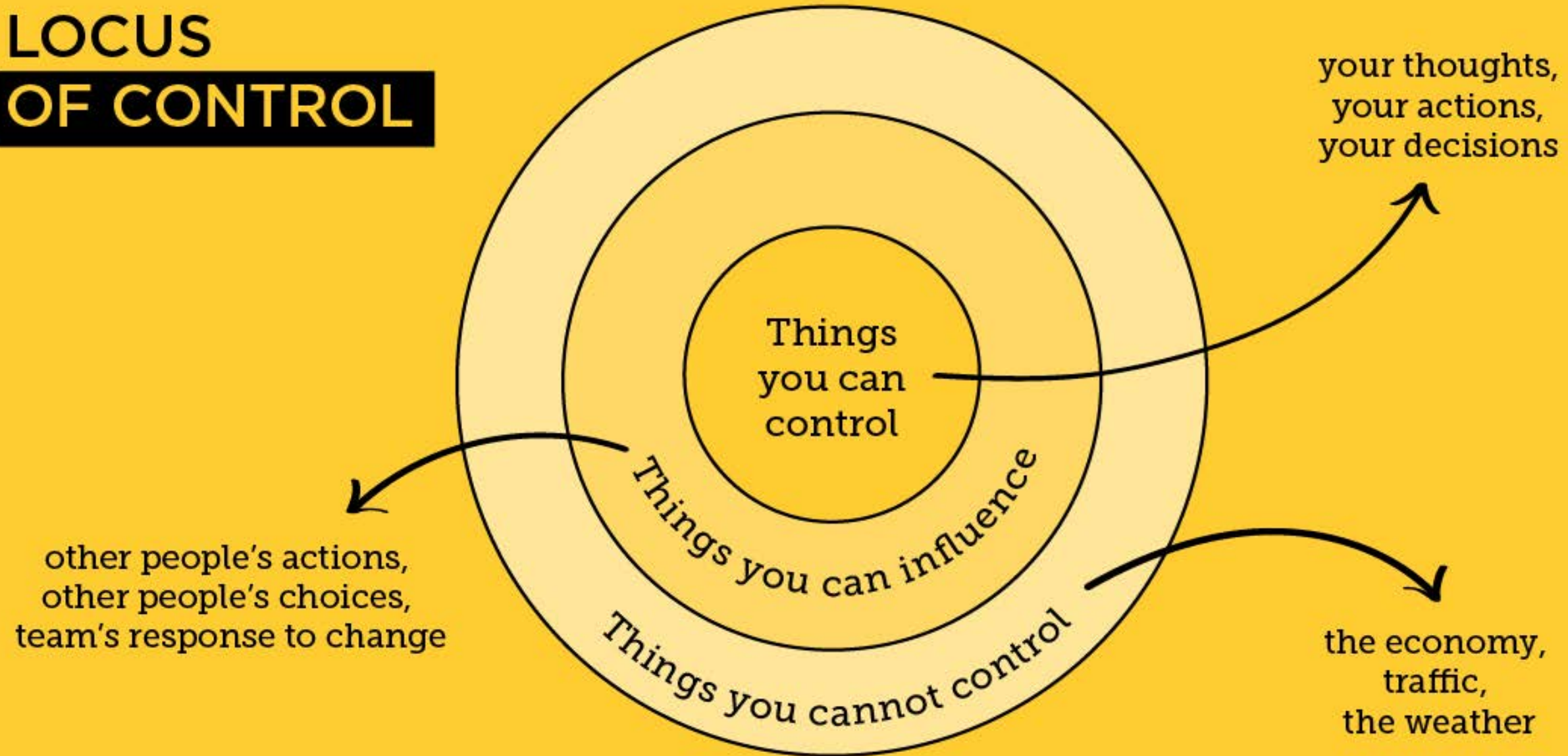
Stress Management for Caregivers

- Focus on the positive when you can
- Be Flexible and Willing to Compromise
- Adjust Your Expectations
- Keep Problems in Perspective
- Spend time with Family & Friends
- Nurture the initial relationship (e.g., child, spouse, etc.) while balancing caregiver role

Stress Management for Caregivers (cont.d)

- Remember why you decided to accept the role of caregiver
- Identify the benefits of caregiving
- Maintain life balance
- Acknowledge all of your feelings
- Accept what you can not change

LOCUS OF CONTROL





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GRATITUDE PRACTICE



Find Support

- Connect with close family, friends, and other community supports
- Invite family and friends to come together to discuss the care and additional responsibilities needed for your loved one
- Caregiver support groups can be helpful in connecting with others in similar circumstances





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COMMUNICATE ABOUT YOUR NEEDS

- Identify a caregiving task or a block of time that you would like help with
 - Be ready when someone says, “What can I do to help?” with a specific time or task, such as, *“It would be really helpful for me if you could stay with Mom Tuesday night so I can go to my book club for 2 hours.”*
- Be understanding if you are turned down. Don’t be afraid to ask again.
- Set up a shared online calendar or scheduling tool where people can sign up to provide you with regular respite or other caregiving tasks
- Identify a consistent time for a friend or family member to check in with you

[Source](#)



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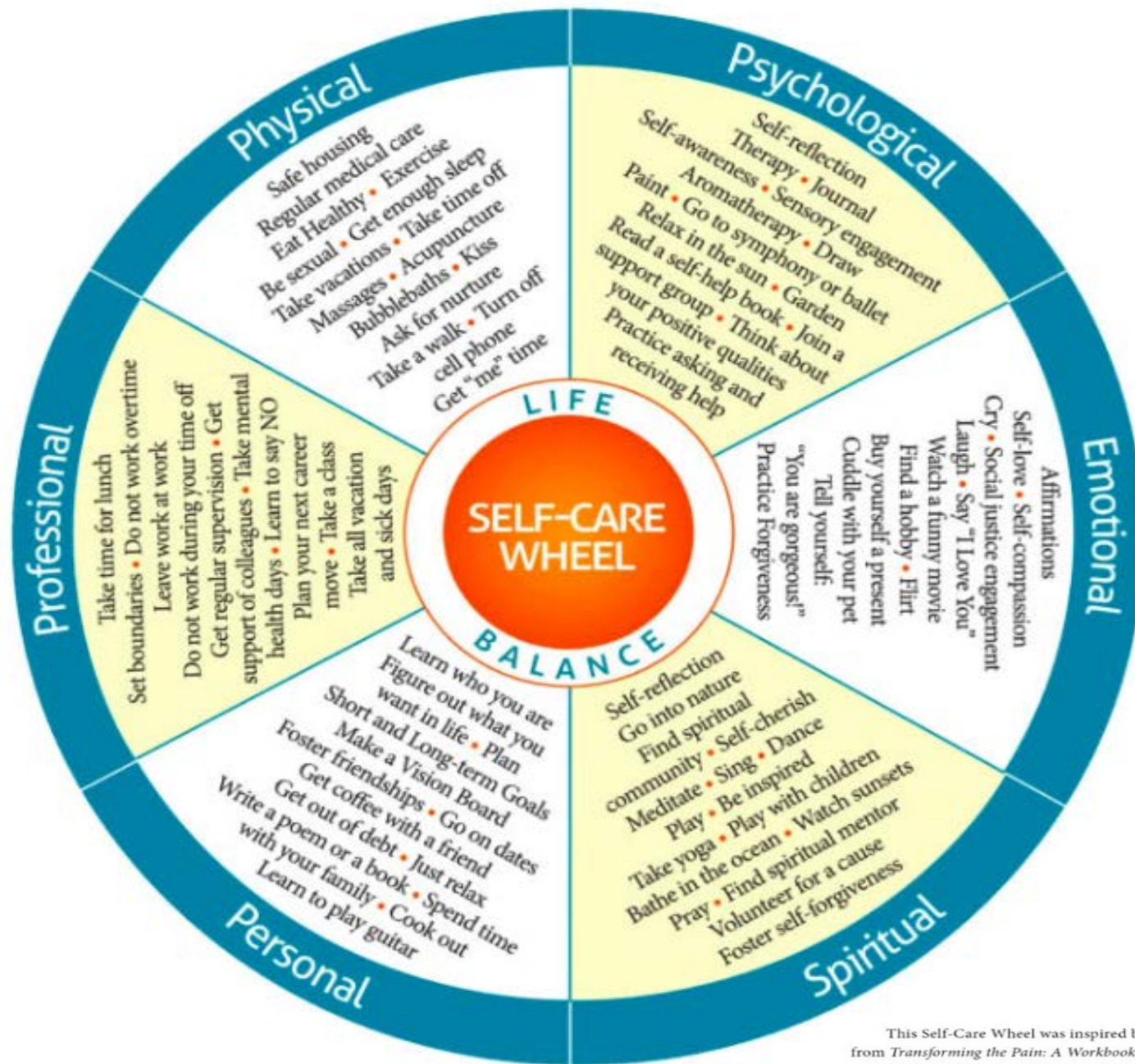
SELF-CARE

IS NOT.....

- selfish
- only something you do once a week
- spontaneous
- the same for everyone
- something that others need and you don't

IS.....

- responsible
- small strategies you can use throughout the day
- Scheduled
- about what works for you
- Something we all need



This Self-Care Wheel was inspired by and adapted from "Self-Care Assessment Worksheet" from *Transforming the Pain: A Workbook on Vicarious Traumatization* by Saakvitne, Pearlman & Staff of TSI/CAAP (Norton, 1996). Created by Olga Phoenix Project: Healing for Social Change (2013). Dedicated to all trauma professionals worldwide. Copyright © 2013 Olga Phoenix, All Rights Reserved.

www.OlgaPhoenix.com



Make a Caregiving Plan

- Start Early!
- Identify representatives for decision-making
- Consider family relationships and dynamics
- Identify preferences
- Develop legal documents
 - Court-appointed guardian
 - Post-life plans
 - Inheritance



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Caregiver Resources

- **AARP**
 - Caregiver Resource Center
 - Community Resource Finder
 - Events and Education
- **Go-Go Grandparent**: Provide transportation, groceries, home services & more - built better for older adults
 - Access services from partners like Uber, DoorDash, and Instacart, with or without a smartphone, 24/7
 - Trained concierge team members are always available by telephone to help put doctor's visits, medication delivery, dietary restrictions and groceries on autopilot



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Caregiver Resources

- **Family Caregiver Alliance**
[Website](#)
[Email](#)
[FCA CareNav](#)
[Services by state](#)
- Family Caregiver Alliance (FCA) seeks to improve the quality of life for caregivers through education, services, research, and advocacy.
- Caregivers can call FCA at (800) 445-8106 to learn about local services; or, visit their [website](#) and click on "Family Care Navigator."



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Mental Health Support

[Therapy for Black Girls](#)

[Therapy for Black Men](#)

[Psychology Today](#)

[Open Path Psychotherapy Collective \(Affordable Therapy\)](#)

[The LoveLand Foundation \(Vouchers for Therapy\)](#)

Employee Assistance Program

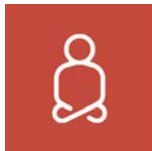
University Counseling Center



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Mental Health & Wellness Apps

Apps that can be useful in providing additional mental health support, coping skills, and resources



- **Liberate**



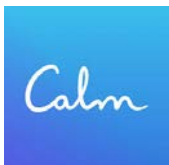
- **Headspace** (e.g., Acknowledging Our Privilege, Breathing in Hope, Breathwork for the Moment, Connecting to Ancestral Wisdom)



- **MindShift**



- **Army** (an alarm app that includes small activities that need to be completed in order to turn the alarm off; perfect for low motivation and seasonal depression)



- **CALM**

SAVE THE DATE!

Heal + Liberate.

Elevating Through Community Support and Knowledge
November 5, 2022 at 1pm EST

SAVE THE DATE



BLACK MENTAL WELLNESS PRESENTS...

**HEAL +
LIBERATE**

ELEVATING THROUGH COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND KNOWLEDGE
VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

NOVEMBER 5, 2022
1:00PM EST



Black Mental

<https://bit.ly/BlackMentalWellnessConference>



For More Information

[Black Mental Wellness Website](#)

Email

[Dr. Dana Cunningham](#)

[Dr. Danielle Busby](#)

Social Media



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Questions



Black Mental Wellness Series

Exploring Racial Stress and Intergenerational Trauma

June 23, 2022. 1:00pm - 2:00pm ET

[Register](#)

Appreciation



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a program managed by



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Let's connect:

