



Taking Care of Yourself While Taking Care of Others: Self-Care Tools for Healthcare Providers

Healthcare providers do such important work helping those in need of healing, yet many are stressed, overwhelmed, and worried especially given recent challenges and pressures. To continue providing high-quality care while remaining resilient in the face of ongoing challenges, self-care is critical. Self-care is a set of planned and deliberate actions that you take daily or weekly to manage your stress and create or re-create a feeling of wellness. Self-care activities are what you do to get well, feel well, and stay well. Remember caring for yourself is as important as caring for others!



Self-Compassion

Notice how you're feeling. Check in with your body, your thoughts, and your feelings. Don't judge them, just notice. Be kind to yourself. You are doing the best you can in very challenging circumstances. Try to keep your internal critic at bay.



Stress Reduction

Mindfulness activities and grounding techniques can be used to calm yourself and focus on the present moment. Pause and breathe deeply for 10 seconds. If you can make the time, take a longer break and try a guided relaxation exercise.



Social Connection

Support from others is critical. Connect with co-workers, friends, and family. Try setting a social goal – ask at least 2 co-workers how they're doing; tell someone you care about why you're thankful for them; send a motivational text to a friend.



Sleep

Organize your evening routine to go to sleep and wake up at the same time each day. A regular sleep schedule improves overall health and wellness, but can be hard to regulate. Try setting up a conducive sleep environment to support deep and restful sleep.

Be Kind to Yourself

- ♥ I care for myself physically, with rest, physical activity, and nourishing food.
- ♥ I care for myself spiritually, with a sense of purpose.
- ♥ I care for myself socially, with strong relationships.
- ♥ I care for myself emotionally, with recognition of my and others' feelings.
- ♥ I care for myself occupationally, with activities that are meaningful and rewarding.

Minimizing Stress at Work

- *Support Each Other: Check-in on your team members regularly and encourage them to do the same with each other and you. Discuss your experiences at work, provide needed emotional support, and try to incorporate some fun.*
- *Schedule time off from work and encourage your colleagues to do the same. You cannot continue to care for others if you are not caring for yourselves.*



- *Seek regular supervision and consultation from your administrator and your colleagues. Ask for assistance and support in managing difficult circumstances.*
- *Practice healthy habits by organizing walks, healthy lunches, and snacks, yoga, etc. at work with your colleagues.*
- *Work with administrators/supervisors to streamline time-consuming tasks and reduce unnecessary meetings.*

What Distress Can Look Like

1

Cognitive Signs

Forgetting things more often
Feeling confused
Having trouble concentrating
Difficulty making decisions

Useful Apps*

The Mindfulness App
Headspace

2

Emotional Signs

Fear, Worry, Anxiety
Anger, Guilt, Irritability
Sadness, Depression
Wanting to isolate

Useful Apps*

365 Gratitude Journal
Smiling Mind

3

Physical Signs

Stomach aches
Headaches, Tight muscles
Worsening chronic health problems
Change in energy level

Useful Apps*

Calm
Daily Water

4

Behavioral Signs

Change in sleeping, eating habits
Crying easily
Increased alcohol, tobacco, drug use
Difficulty carrying out daily activities

Useful Apps*

Slumber
Productive

If stress or distress persists for longer than two weeks and interferes with functioning at work or home, consider contacting a professional.

Behavioral Health Treatment Locator

<https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>

If you or someone you know needs help due to overwhelming sadness, depression, anxiety, feelings of harm to self or others, or lack of safety:

SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline

800-985-5990

Text TalkWithUs to 66746

TTY 800-846-8517

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

800-273-TALK

TTY 800-799-4TTY (4889)

SAMHSA's National Helpline

800-662-HELP

National Domestic Violence Hotline

800-799-SAFE

Remember

S Support each other and ask for support - reach out

E Exercise and stretch – move your body

L Learn about coping and self-care strategies

F Family and friends – stay connected

C Compassion for yourself and others

A Avoid people, places, and triggers that are stressful

R Rest, relax, and sleep

E Engage in self-reflection - check your stress level and how you are coping.