



Transcript:

TRAILS' Self-Care for Mental Health Professionals

Presenter: Natalie Rodriguez-Quintana
Recorded on August 10, 2021

PRESENTER: Hey, everyone, and welcome. We're going to give people a minute or so to get into the virtual room and get settled, and then we'll get started. All right, we'll get started so we can start on time and people can come in as they log on.

Again, welcome, everyone, to our webinar today, Self-Care for Mental Health Professionals. Our speaker today is Natalie Rodriguez-Quintana. And I will tell you a little bit more about her in a minute.

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We have a couple of housekeeping details for you. If you are having technical difficulties today, please individually message Kristina Spannauer at the bottom of your chat section and she can help you. If you have questions for the speaker, please put them in the Q&A also at the bottom of your screen.

We are using automated captioning during the presentation today. And a copy of the PowerPoint slides as well as the recording and any handouts will be available on the MHTTC website within about two weeks. At the end of this webinar, you will be directed to a short survey. We would really appreciate it if you could fill it out. It takes about three minutes and it's how we report our activities back to SAMHSA.

Certificates of attendance will also be sent to everyone who attends the full session. They will be sent out via email and take seven to 10 days. If you would like to see what else we're up to, feel free to follow us on social media. And if you are on our mailing list, please look for our weekly email with information on upcoming events.

Again, our presenter is Natalie Rodriguez-Quintana, and she's a post-doc research fellow at the University of Michigan's Department of Psychiatry working with the TRAILS program. Natalie's research is focused on improving access and delivery of effective mental health services for youth. Natalie's



clinical experience and expertise is in the treatment of depression and anxiety across the lifespan using cognitive behavioral therapy. She's also worked as a trainer, coach, and consultant in a variety of settings. So I'm happy to turn it over to her.

NATALIE RODRIGUEZ-QUINTANA: Hi, everyone. I just got a message saying that you can see my notes, so just give me one short second to be able to show you the correct slides. OK, one second. Thank you so much for your patience.

AUDIENCE: It looks good now.

NATALIE RODRIGUEZ-QUINTANA: OK, thank you so much. All right, well, hi, everyone. I'm so excited to be here with you today.

Like was said, my name is Natalie. I'm part of the clinical team at TRAILS.

And I'm really grateful to be with you all today and I hope you can get at least one skill out of what we're going to be talking about today. So the intention for today's webinar is that we're going to be laying some groundwork for self-care, really understanding why it's important, especially during difficult times.

And then, I'm going to share some specific strategies and approaches to coping as well, and engage in some practice.

So before we dive in, I did want to acknowledge our partners who have contributed to our work. So we have lots of partners, funders, et cetera. So I just want to show some gratitude towards them because this work wouldn't be able to be possible without them.

All right, so like I mentioned, I work at TRAILS. TRAILS is an implementation program aimed at increasing access to mental health care for young people.

And we think that the best way to help young people is to support people like you, the individuals who work directly with them.

So for those of you not familiar with the TRAILS model, there's going to be a webinar on Thursday, August 12, that will introduce the model. And I encourage you to attend if you're interested in learning more, or you can also log into our website, trailstowellness.org, for more information. And at TRAILS, we provide training, resources, implementation support for different tiers, so universal through social-emotional learning, early intervention and crisis response. And our goal really is to strengthen the muscle of experts that are already working in schools to help school professionals offer effective supports to youth and students. And we also work with community clinicians that help support school mental health professionals.



So for the first part of today's webinar, I really want to take some time to reflect on a few things. And I really want you to take a few minutes, do some reflection. What have you personally or your clients have been experiencing over the past year and a half or so?

All that has been going on is not normal, is not normal circumstances. And despite headlines talking about going back to normal, I don't think that there's truly a normal that we're going to be returning to. It might look a little bit different than what we were used to.

Because people have experienced real losses. People have needed to grieve some things that we will never get back. There's real hardships that have been faced. There have been changes, sometimes, even growth. That can't really be walked back.

And I think it's OK to think to yourself that you have done very difficult, yet amazing things for yourself, for your clients, for your families, and for your community. So please, take a moment to acknowledge this. I think sometimes, we're sort of in this go, go, go mode and we don't take time to pause and really think about what have we done over the past year and a half or so and really acknowledge it.

So the self-care that we're going to be talking about today is not going to solve all of the challenges that many of you have experienced or will experience. It won't solve the challenges that your clients experienced or will experience. But it's my hope that rather than trying to take these challenges away, which we can't really do. I don't have the power to do that. It's not your job, it's not my job to do that.

But instead, what we can do is learn different strategies to build a buffer or a margin of support to really help you or your clients manage stressors. So we're also not trying to put a bandage over what's going on. We're really learning how to best get through these difficult moments and these challenges.

All right, so we'll continue to reflect. And whether you're excited about this training or not, I want you to take time to reflect and think about what could you potentially get out of a training like this today. If you have a piece of paper, write it down. If you have your phone, maybe you can write it in a notes app, for example.

So think about, what can you get out of today? And what do you think about, how do you feel when you hear the word self-care? Because at the end, I want you to think back to what you wrote and see, is self-care what I was thinking it was, what my clients thought it was, and did I get out of this training what I really wanted to? So take maybe a few seconds to think that through and write it down.



I also, as I ask you to reflect and as we practice throughout, I'm going to ask you to write these things down. Feel free to also share them in the chat with each other. Sometimes, I look through the chat and bring some of those examples through. But I really do want to encourage you to participate with each other as you write these things down.

All right, so something happens when we spend every day caring for others. Sometimes, I like to call it vicarious trauma. This type of trauma can change the way that you view the world, yourself, other people. Sometimes, others call it secondary trauma. Other people overlook that and call it things like compassion fatigue or burnout.

So just as a reflection, if you're noticing things like intrusive thoughts, feeling hopeless or helpless, if you're experiencing emotional numbing, like it's hard to have that emotional response that you think you should be having, or if you're noticing yourself having thoughts of, you know, I'm just totally burnt out, these are things to really think about, notice, and take action towards addressing. And we really hope that today's training can help with some of those things. There's also great information online, or you can also gather information from your health care providers.

So if you have ever traveled by plane, although I know that has been really hard over the past year and a half or so, or if you've seen a clip in a movie about someone traveling in a plane, you will know that the flight attendants, they always recommend that you put on your oxygen mask first before you help other people, including children. And this is the same thing that we have to do with regards to self-care. And we need to take care of ourselves first to be able to effectively help those around us. And I think this is so important, especially for mental health providers.

So today, we're going to be talking about different self-care strategies that you can hopefully use for yourself to help you put your oxygen mask on and then be able to help others. So think about the skills that we're going to be talking about today as, how can I use these for myself, and how can I use them or help my clients use them? So when we think about it in this way, I really don't think about self-care as something that is nice to have, but something that we really need to have to be able to continue to do our very important roles.

So this is your reminder that you have to, you must put your own oxygen mask first. And I think self-care is one piece of that puzzle. Self-care is not going to solve everything, but it can help empower yourself build confidence, build calmness, build mindfulness to be able to carry forward.

All right, so as we continue to reflect, now, I want you to think about your sense of coping. Think about over the past year and a half or so, how have you coped? Maybe you can even think about like before the pandemic started, how were you coping?



And as our understanding of the pandemic evolved, whether we understood it as a short-term problem or a long-term problem, our coping might have changed as well, right? So take a moment to think about, how are you coping in March 2020, April 2020 to be able to get through the fear, the shock the uncertainty, and then think about how you've been coping in the past few months, maybe the past few weeks. What's been going well? What hasn't been going so well for you?

And try to consider these questions with kindness, without judgment. And we're going to work through some activities to help evaluate your coping skills. And ask yourself, right now, if you decided to shift the way that you've been coping or that you have been coping, how would that feel? Would that be difficult, challenging, will that make you anxious, worried? Think about how that would make you feel.

All right, one thing I do want to say and acknowledge is that I know in recent years, self-care has become a buzz word, and that's why I asked you early on to reflect and think about when you hear the word self-care, what do you think? Because sometimes, what you think self-care is isn't what I'm going to be talking about today, and I want to make that clear. I think in some cases, not all, obviously, but I think self-care has been treated as an excuse to lay down and just check out from whatever might be happening.

But think to yourself, if you've ever done anything like binge watch Netflix on the couch, how does your mind, how does your body feel after a long Netflix binge? And I'm not trying to say never watch your favorite shows, of course, but think about what that's doing for you. Are you enjoying it? Are you catching up on shows to be able to discuss with friends?

I think those are great reasons to watch a lot of different episodes in a weekend, maybe. Or are you watching it to zone out and avoid your real problems? Those are two-- same activity, but with very different implications. And I think it's very tempting-- and again, we're taking a nonjudgmental stance here. It's very tempting to choose these activities because we're exhausted. We're really stressed, anxious, and these really are quick fixes that, in the moment, we're going to feel good if we do them.

But good self-care is not always what feels good in the moment, like mindless eating or drinking. It's not the path of least resistance, like I'm just going to put on my sweat pants and be on the couch for hours at a time, days at a time. And it's not always the things that sound the most fun.

Sometimes, self-care really involves doing what we don't want to do, but we need to do. And self-care is often preparing ourselves for a marathon, for the long run, choosing activities that foster resilience, that restore us, and that address our universal needs of safety, belonging, and self-worth. And self-care is going to look very different for everyone because our lives are different, we have different interests.



We struggle in different areas of self-care, and what works for someone else might not be what works for you and might not be what you need. So keep those things in mind. So we really need to look inward, listen to ourselves. And these questions on the slides might allow you to reflect on what you specifically need to meet your self-care needs.

And some of the things that you have been doing might work right away, might help in the moment. So for example, if you have a headache and you take ibuprofen, take a nap, it makes sense to reach for these things because they help immediately. And we can think about these skills as some skills that are good for like a sprint versus a marathon, right? So for the short-term, they're quick, they're active, they're effective.

And there is really a whole other category of coping strategies that are not about feeling better in the moment or about immediate relief, but they do provide prevention or decrease our vulnerability, or are just more sustainable ways of coping in the long-term. So, for example, instead of only grabbing ibuprofen and taking it out for a headache, maybe we also plan on drinking a lot of water, taking some screen breaks, going for a walk, et cetera. So all those things can also help.

All right, so now, I want you to take maybe a minute or so to think about some of the challenges that you've had. It could be in the last month, weeks, et cetera, could be personal, it could be a work stressor, and think about how you have coped or how you have been coping. On the screen, we have this table with different feelings, like stress, worry, sadness. Does that apply to you? How are you coping with these feelings?

And think about how it's working. What places has it helped? What places has it caused more problems? And think about some of these questions.

Are there any harmful side effects to the way you've been coping, either right away, or later, in the long run? Does it hurt anyone or put anyone else in danger, including yourself? Does it help connect me to friends or family members that I trust? And then, I think this last question is very important. If that coping that you're using were to become a habit, how could it impact your well-being long-term?

So take a minute, think about that. Write it down. Feel free to share in the chat as well. Just take, again, one more minute to think about, how have you been coping?

All right, so you continue to think through your coping. A couple of reminders before we dive into the skills. So remember how I said that coping and self-care can be hard? That's because self-care requires mindfulness.



And we'll talk about this skill more in depth later, but mindfulness is really about being intentional with our attention and this is really a requirement for self-care both to feel restored in those self-care practices, but also to recognize which self-care strategies are needed in the moment. So I'm going to ask yourself to pause again and reflect, how much are you paying attention to how you're feeling throughout the day physically, emotionally, mentally?

And I think if we get in the habit of checking in with how we're feeling, listening to our thoughts, our feelings, our wants, our needs, we will be better equipped to notice what activities are restoring us and what activities are depleting. And it helps us be better equipped to respond in a way that it's nurturing to our wellness, when we're mindful, when we pay attention to all these different things.

All right, give you a couple more seconds to be thinking about how are you paying attention to how you're feeling throughout the day. All right, I see in the chat too much sometimes I can overthink it. Yeah, that happens sometimes. I think for that, the part of mindfulness, which is really about being nonjudgmental, like, I was over thinking for the last 30 minutes or hour. It's OK. Now I can refocus.

And then, if it's not very often, then that gives you an opportunity to recognize, you know what? I haven't checked in with myself for a few days, weeks, even months. Where am I at, how am I feeling, and what can I do for self-care? Thank you so much for sharing in the chat.

So self-care also requires strategies that work for you. And everything that we do at TRAILS is grounded in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, or CBT, and mindfulness strategies that have shown to be helpful for promoting mental health. And CBT offers opportunities and specific places to make small changes that can lead to big differences in how we feel in the moment and in the longer term.

And this model really shows the underlying theory of CBT that everything that we think, feel, and do is related to each other and can influence each other. So let me give you an example. So this has happened to me multiple times. My mom texted me in the middle of a meeting, in the middle of the workday saying, call me when you can. Thought that I have sometimes is, oh, no, there might be an emergency. Maybe something happened.

That might lead me to feel anxious, and my behavior might be, well, I need to stop what I'm doing and call her. But if I had recognized my thought in the moment and said, you know what? I might be catastrophizing.

Maybe I could use the thought, well, if it was an emergency, she would call me or she would let me know in the text that it's urgent. Then I might feel less anxious and be able to continue my work day and then just call her after work, which is what she likely means when she sends that text. Or I might take an



opportunity to cultivate joy and positive feelings in myself by feeling gratitude that she's thinking of me in that moment and she felt like she wanted to text me. So those are two different ways that I could have approached that.

So, again, this model shows us how our thoughts trigger different feelings, emotions. Those drive our behaviors and then impact the next situation, et cetera. It keeps going. And each of these are also points where we can intervene to improve. So we can change our behavior, we can change our thoughts, et cetera.

And labeled here are some strategies that you can find in the TRAILS self-care guide, which you can find on our website. Again, it's trailstowellness.org. And we're going to walk through many of these today so that you can learn about them and pick whichever you want to practice on. Maybe it's a combination of them.

And remember, these are skills that are being added to the toolbox that you already have. You already probably have many coping skills that work for you, but I'd be curious, are there any different skills that we're talking about today that I might want to try that seem appealing to me? And I also want to challenge you into considering those that maybe you have a negative reaction towards, like, oh, I don't think this one is for me. Be open. Give it a try. See if it works for you. You might be surprised that actually, this is something that I really like.

All right, so let's dive into the skills. So good self-care, especially during challenging times, involves noticing, acknowledging, and accepting the full range of emotions. There have been many, many challenges in the recent months and years, and these challenges are different for different people.

Everyone is experiencing something different. They have different feelings.

And so this means that each of us may be having slightly different emotional reactions and emotional experiences, and there is no right or wrong way to be feeling right now or ever. And when we notice our emotions, we really give ourselves a chance to use a coping strategy. Think about that. If we're able to recognize how we're feeling, that can indicate to us, hey, maybe now is a time where I can use this particular coping strategy.

When we decide to ignore or suppress our emotions, we usually might end up getting grumpy or irritable with the people that we love. That's just an example. And emotions themselves can really feel enjoyable or they can feel uncomfortable or both, but they're not good or bad. There's not really positive or negative feelings or they're good or bad.

So part of self-care is building awareness of the feeling in the moment rather than trying to push it away. This allows us to really learn different things that I think are essential, that emotions are not good or bad, that we ourselves are



not good or bad people for feeling any particular set of emotions, and that emotions rise and fall like waves. So emotions are not dangerous and they will pass with time if we let ourselves feel them. If we push them away, they might come back later with a vengeance, as they say.

So when emotions overpower you or they get the best of you, remind yourself that they're temporary and that they will come and go. And I think it's a good exercise to think to ourselves, if I'm feeling really sad in the moment, how does that look like? Does it go up and down? Does it go away? Does it come back. Just pay attention to that, again, without judgment and let yourself feel that emotion.

I think also lots of people experience what we call should thoughts. So telling ourselves, I shouldn't feel this way, I should handle this differently, I should be a better daughter, employee, et cetera. And practice telling yourself, it's OK to feel this way. It's OK. It's not wrong, it's not bad, or it's not good.

So how might you use the skill with yourself or with your clients? Well, you can do it very informally. You can check in with them to ask about how they're doing. You can check in with yourself. How am I feeling today? To what intensity?

Take an interest in your client's emotions and your own emotions. And plant a seed that those emotions matter, and try to follow up with a phrase that has a meaning. Something along the lines of, it's OK to feel that way. It's OK to feel anxious. It's OK to feel sad.

Or you can do something a little bit more formal, which is what we have on the screen. So this is our daily feelings log. And this asks you to identify what you're feeling, anxious, sad, angry, excited, et cetera, each day and to what intensity from 0 to 10.

0 is like, not sad at all. 10 is the saddest I've ever been. That helps you keep track of how you're feeling over time. So if we get in the habit of tracking and checking in with how we're feeling, we listen to our own thoughts, feelings, our wants and needs, we'll be better equipped to notice what activities are helpful and which activities are depleting.

All right, so now, I wanted to talk a little bit more about mindfulness. I know I mentioned that before. And I think mindfulness, like self-care, has also become sort of this buzzword. And you might see it at the gym, you might hear in a commercial, and it isn't always clear what it means, like, what do we mean by mindfulness?

And when we talk about mindfulness as a self-care strategy, we really are talking about focusing all of your attention in the present moment and taking, again, this nonjudgmental stance towards yourself. So often, I think we're so trapped in stressful thoughts about the past or the future that we really forget



to experience what's happening right now. That happens to me a lot when I'm having lunch or something like that where I'm like, wait, I need to finish this thing at work, and then lunch is gone, and I didn't even fully participate. And I love food, so sometimes I'm like, this is taking joy away from my day, right?

But I think that that's where the nonjudgmental piece comes into place because mindfulness does take a lot of practice and it takes a lot of focus, attention to be able to stay in the present. So it's OK when those things happen. You recognize it and then you refocus.

Like for the last 10 minutes, I've been eating this salad, and I didn't even pay attention. It's OK. Now, let me focus on my lunch for the next 10 minutes or so.

All right, so I think especially when there's a lot of uncertainty around, when plans keep changing rapidly, maybe sometimes an hour, an hour, things change, we can really use our ability to attend to the current moment to help us feel more in control. So I want you to do a quick check-in with yourself and look at that figure that we have that shows the past, the present, and the future and take a quick second, a couple seconds to reflect. Where are you spending your time and energy? Have you been worrying about the future or keeping yourself in the past? And I think these two states, past or our future, they steal joy from the present moment.

So feel free to think about that. Feel free to jot it down. Feel free to share in the chat, where have you been?

Maybe think about the last five minutes and in this training. Were you in the present moment, or were you thinking about something that happened in the past, planning for the future? Take a couple seconds to think about that. If you were noticing yourself being in the present moment, that's great. If you noticed, you know what, I've been planning for the meeting that I have tomorrow or the later this afternoon or thinking about something that happened earlier in the day, that's OK. Again, practice that nonjudgmental stance and just refocus and say, for the last 25 minutes, I'm going to try to be here in the present moment. And if you drift away, it's OK. When you catch yourself, bring yourself back to the present moment.

All right, so the next technique focuses on staying grounded in the present moment. And I want us to do an activity. It's a grounding activity, and it's a variation on what's on the screen.

So the activity on the screen has you ground yourself based on an object that's in front of you, which you're welcome to practice later on. I really invite you to do that. For now, we're going to be grounding ourselves just by noticing where we are in our environment since we're all in different spaces.



So take a deep breath. And let's begin with sight. Look around. Use your sense of sight to really immerse yourself wherever you are.

Are you at home? Are you in your office? Notice what different things you see in your space. Maybe you want to notice the light, the colors. Just immerse yourself wherever you are and take a few seconds. What can you see?

Now, let's do sound. Close your eyes if you're comfortable doing so and just listened intently for a few seconds. Try to reach and stretch the sense of sound, even if you're alone. So let's do that now.

What can you hear? Perhaps it's traffic, a plane going by, your fan, a pet moving around. What can you hear?

Now, take a breath in through your nose and notice what you smell. Is there something cooking? Is there a cleaning product, a book? What things can you smell?

Now, engage your sense of touch. Touch what's near you. Maybe you feel your keyboard, your feet inside your shoes or socks. Maybe it's your desk, your chair. What do you feel physically with your body?

Now, finally, engage your sense of taste. If you're eating something, great. If not, what does your mouth taste like? Is it coffee, another beverage, toothpaste? Anything else that you ate during the day? What can you taste?

Now, reflect on what you were thinking about while doing this exercise. Was your mind racing ahead or going back or connecting with where you were at the moment? Even if you didn't enjoy the exercise, that's OK.

So you can think of this exercise as a mini mental vacation. Even in a chaotic environment where there might be lots of noise, maybe kids are screaming, just try to immerse yourself with your senses and take a break. And if you enjoyed this activity, there are many more mindfulness activities available on our website for you to practice.

All right, so next, we're going to have two different skills. They're called recognizing what we can and cannot control, and also, challenging unhelpful thoughts. And we'll be talking about more of the thought or cognitive piece of self-care.

And I think whenever there's uncertainty, our brains really have a drive to focus on our worries and problem-solving and really try to prepare us for the things that might be coming. But there's a difference between worrying and planning. And if we worry about something that's inside of our control, we can plan, we can problem solve, that can be really helpful.



But when we're worrying about things that are out of our control, it can sometimes be paralyzing. It can be very unproductive, and frankly, unhelpful.

So the techniques here are really going to help you think about what you're worrying about, will help you evaluate your worries, problem solve what's in your control, and then help you select a skill to accept and tolerate the distress that comes with what's not within your control, which can be really hard.

So sometimes, worrying feels like it's helpful, right? We worry for a reason. And that's because a lot of the time, worrying feels like, I'm just worrying about it. I'm preparing for it. I'm problem-solving.

But what's really the key difference between worry and problem-solving? Both involve thoughts about the future, but unlike worry, problem-solving is about thinking through how we can improve the situation by taking steps that are, again, within our control. So the first step in this skill or process is to take this worry that you're having, identify it, acknowledge it, and then determine if it's something that you can't control or is it something that you can control.

So once we understand what's within our control, then we can decide what we're going to do. So if it's something that we can control, then we can ask ourselves some questions and turn it into planning and to problem-solving and to dealing with the situation. So some examples of those questions can be things like, well, what resources are available for me to help me stay informed?

Who can I contact for help? Who can I contact for emotional support? And what steps can I take to help me prepare for the situation?

But what happens when the worry's about something you can't control? Well, realizing that and accepting this fact that I can't control whatever I'm worried about can be really scary. We can't control things like what other people do, what risk they take, accidents that could happen.

And sometimes, accepting that we aren't in control can leave us feeling anxious, but it can also feel very liberating. Because when we realize that we're not in control of something, we have to focus on coping with that reality instead of trying to prevent a bad outcome or fixing something that we can't fix. That can leave you very powerless when you plan to do something and you really can't.

So here are some examples of how you might want to map out what you have control over. So I invite you to think about these circles, create your own. And these can be reminders to really help you decide if what you're thinking about is something within your control or outside of your control, or if it might be something that you have influence over.



So we have this circle where on the inside, you have your circle of control.

These are things like your posture, your tone of voice, how much exercise you do. Then the next layer, which I really like, is the circle of influence, and these are things that maybe we don't have on our own, direct control, but we might have influence over it. So our relationships, maybe our neighborhood, how we vote, things like that.

And then there's external things which are the things that we have no control over, like the economy, behavior of strangers, the weather, your birth order, things like that. So you can always create a map like this for your own. It can be, in general, what are the things you have control over or not? But then, also, is there a specific situation and then think through what you have control or no control over.

And so remember, if you found that the problem you're dealing with is largely out of control, then that next step is really to focus on acceptance. And if it is within your control, then that's when you can problem solve. So I want you to take a few seconds to think about one worry that you've had over the past few weeks and think about, is this something that you can control or something that you can't?

And then, if you can control it, what is one thing that you can do to problem solve? And if it's something you can't control, what is one coping skill that you can use to help with acceptance? Take a couple seconds to think about that.

All right, so the next skill is about noticing and increasing joy and positive emotions. And I really like this skill because sometimes it's really easy to lose sight of joy and humor, especially when there's tragedy or really difficult things going on. And I think there's always opportunity for joy, even in the middle of everything, even in the middle of very difficult situations. And I think it's really important to help us keep balance in life.

And I always like to think about this example of being in a funeral. And funerals are just usually sad, they're sad events, but I think a lot of the time people end up sharing all these wonderful stories about the person. There's laughter and there's so much gratitude. So you can think about it, in this situation, there are still things that will bring me joy, that will make me feel grateful.

And this can really help us increase our reward sensitivity, meaning that we can really train our brains to get more out of the positive experiences and to literally be more responsive to those positive things in life. And we can do this in several ways. So I think sometimes, we feel guilty about taking pleasure in things.

So that's where the should thoughts come into play. Because we might be thinking, well, I should be doing something else, or we shouldn't be enjoying



this because other people are struggling. We can create a list of activities, sensations, people, places, et cetera, anything that you can enjoy, think about those things.

Schedule more of those things that you enjoy into your days. Share your plan with others. That can be really helpful. And just think about just soaking up as much enjoyment as you can.

Enjoy the planning process, enjoy sharing that joy of planning with others, and enjoy the doing just by being present, like we talked about with mindfulness. And share about how did you feel afterwards. And that can help you practice gratitude for the joy.

And cultivating gratitude is one of those ways where you can build those positive emotions. And we have at TRAILS this Why I'm Grateful worksheet and this helps you reflect on things that you're grateful for, like your family, who you are, maybe a special friendship, even something silly that you might not otherwise think about. So remember, relieving all those positive experiences through sharing and writing them down can really help you get more enjoyment because you're thinking about them. Maybe they happened a few days ago, you're writing about them now, and you're like, oh, my god, that was such a wonderful thing to happen, right?

So think about what are some things that you're grateful for. Write them down. Feel free to share in the chat. Because of time, and I do want to leave time for questions, I'll keep moving along, but really think about, what is at least one thing that you're grateful about today?

All right, another strategy for self-care is getting active. And physical activity is important not only for our physical health, but for mental well-being as well. And we know that activity improves mood or can help maintain a stable or positive mood, but this can often be challenging, especially if you're not used to it.

So tracking activities does make a difference. Even self-monitoring about what have I been doing in the last week can be enough to change your behavior. So I invite you to try.

And there's no right way to track. So what works for you, like is it an app, is it a calendar, is it a to-do list, whatever works for you is great. There's no single formula, and everyone's circumstances are different. They're unique.

Your barriers will be different than other people. So think about what would work for you and feel free to experiment with different ways to get active, like watching videos, classes, going for a walk with friends. Just find what works for you.



And here are some tips that I do want to share. The first is just get started. Because usually, what happens is that we think that we need to be motivated in order to do something, but that's not true. Motivation often follows action, and it's OK to start small. It's OK if you're not good at it or the best at it. It's still worth doing. Also important to be realistic. Start where you are and recognize that resources and energy may be depleted, and so maybe you want to start with 5 minutes, 10 minutes, et cetera.

And the purpose of physical activity is to get your heart rate up, preferably for at least 15 minutes a day. But again, start, think about where you're at, and add little by little. You're not competing with anyone else.

And don't judge yourself. Use that self-compassion, that nonjudgmental stance. And lastly, I think the most important is that consistency is very important. And what you do every single day is more important than what you do in one single day.

So, for example, walking for one hour on Saturday versus walking 15 minutes five days a week, that will be better for consistency. So think about to yourself. Take a second.

What is one activity that you might want to practice over the next week? Is there something that you can do, like stretching between meetings, walk during lunch. What might work for you?

All right, and this last skill, very quickly to get to questions, is about finding balance. And I think we've talked about some important strategies to incorporate into your days. But you must remember to be flexible.

And I think over the last year and a half, if there's one thing I've learned is to be flexible with everything and anything. We have a lot of competing demands. And you can think about it as a pie, right?

There's only so much. It doesn't matter how thinly you slice it. You can't add an hour to every day. I wish we could sometimes.

And some days, we may use our self-care for physical activity. Some days, that time might need to be social because we need that connection to other people. So maybe you could combine a couple.

So remember, you're trying to take care of yourself across different needs, physical, love, belonging, self-esteem. So create a schedule that can help identify what structure you might need. What are some windows of flexibility?

And I think, importantly, you can start-- if you're having trouble kind of thinking about, where should I start, start with your basic physical needs. How's your sleep? Are you drinking enough water, et cetera, and you can move on from



there. Because it's much harder to feel good when those needs, those physical needs are not met.

Like, if you only slept for an hour, it's going to be really hard to say, OK, I'm going to go for a 30 minute walk. It might help you feel better, and I would encourage you to do it, but maybe it's like prioritizing that sleep. So, again, balancing that structure and flexibility is really crucial. So, again, I invite you to explore all these different resources that we've talked about today to help you nourish your body, your mind, and your spirit.

OK, lastly, patience and persistence. So tracking can help with behavior change, like I mentioned. We have this daily wellness journal that can help you keep track of some of the activities that you might want to try. It can also be a resource to establish a schedule.

These actually are fillable PDF. So you can open the link, you can write the text, you can save it. You could also print it out. Whatever works for you.

And, again, planning for self-care is very important. There's different ways to do it, but there's no one right way, so I'm just sharing a couple of different things that you can look through on our website, the different worksheets. So this is one of them. I encourage you to look through them, pick what works best for you. Share with your clients, with your family, whoever you think might benefit from something like this and let them find what works best.

And then finally, I did want to highlight one of the many TRAILS resources. These are the coping cards. These can be used as a meditation tool, a cognitive coping tool. They can be used for relaxation or guided imagery.

You can use it for grounding, use for five senses, use your imagination. It can also be used for motivation for physical activity. And it can also help you write down your self-care plan. So this, again, they're available on our website, and you can use any image that you like if this is something that might work for you.

All right, and that's everything I had. Thank you so much for coming today. Thank you for all the work that you do for yourself, for your community, for your clients, and I feel really grateful to be with you today. And I think we have a few minutes for questions, so I'm happy to stick around and see what questions and comments you have. Thank you.

PRESENTER: We don't have any questions in the Q&A right now, but since we do have a few minutes, please put any questions you might have in the Q&A, or you could raise your hand. Down at the bottom there, should be a raised hand icon. You could press that and then I can allow you to unmute if it's quicker to just ask out loud.



OK, last call for questions. Just a reminder that we will be sending out certificates of attendance via email to everyone who attended the full session. Those will take about seven to 10 days.

And we'll also be posting the recording, as well as the PowerPoint, on the Great Lakes MHTTC products and resources web page. That also will take about seven to 10 days. But you can check back there if you'd like to reference this training again.

So thank you so much, Natalie. This was a fantastic training. We will be doing a follow-up session on August 12, if you aren't registered for that yet.

Thank you, Sarah or Meredith, for putting that out there. The link is now in the chat. You can also find the link to register on the Great Lakes MHTTC website. And the one question that just came in was, will the charts be in the information you are sending out?

NATALIE RODRIGUEZ-QUINTANA: Not-- oh, go ahead.

PRESENTER: [INAUDIBLE]

NATALIE RODRIGUEZ-QUINTANA: Oh, Meredith is typing the answer. We can make the links available. You can also find them on the website, trailstowellness.org. So on the left side, you'll see different resources for self-care, and everything that I showed will be in there as well.

PRESENTER: And I probably can also include those links on just an additional last slide in the PowerPoint. So check with the PowerPoint for resources and stuff.

NATALIE RODRIGUEZ-QUINTANA: Awesome.

PRESENTER: Well, thank you, again. This was fantastic. Hopefully, we see many of you back here on August 12. So please, register if you're interested. And have a wonderful rest of your afternoon.

NATALIE RODRIGUEZ-QUINTANA: Bye, everyone. Thank you.