



Activity 5a

Self-Care Assessment Worksheet

Objective:

- Develop strategies for caring for yourself and acknowledge your limits.
- Identify ways to set limits, maintain self-care, and practice ways to recharge.

Steps:

1. Print one *Self-Care Assessment Worksheet* for each participant.
2. Have participants take the assessment and consider their score before moving on to the *Self-Care Plan Worksheet*.



SELF-CARE ASSESSMENT

Service providers who work directly with traumatized students may be vulnerable to the effects of compassion fatigue or secondary traumatic stress. This may result in feeling physically, mentally, or emotionally worn out, or feeling overwhelmed by the students' traumas.

WHAT TO KNOW:

- Be aware of the signs of compassion fatigue including:
- Difficulty concentrating/planning activities and lessons
- Denial or feeling numb/detached
- Irritability or impatience
- Intense feelings and/or thoughts about the trauma a student has experienced
- Dreams about the trauma a student has experienced
- Don't try to handle it alone.
- Guard against isolation.
- Get support by working with colleagues and/or administrators.
- Recognize compassion fatigue as an occupational hazard.
- Do not see a strong reaction to trauma as weakness or inability to handle your job.
- Realize that compassion fatigue can be the cost of caring.
- Seek help dealing with your own traumas.
- Any adult helping students with trauma, who also has their unresolved traumatic experiences, is more at risk for compassion fatigue.
- If you recognize signs of compassion fatigue, talk to a professional who is knowledgeable about trauma.
- Commit to practicing good self-care.
- Develop many other interests/hobbies/activities outside of your work.
- Spend time with others who are not experiencing traumatic stress.
- Eat well.
- Exercise regularly.
- Engage in some fun activities
- Take breaks from work during the day.
- Find a good way to self-reflect.
- Make time to laugh, and also to cry.



SELF-CARE ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

WHAT TO WATCH FOR:

Using the scale below, rate the following areas in terms of frequency:

5 = frequently

4 = occasionally

3 = rarely

2 = never

1 = it never occurred to me

Physical Self-Care

- eat three regular meals per day (breakfast, lunch, and dinner)
- eat healthy foods
- exercise regularly
- get regular preventative medical care
- get acute medical care when ill or injured
- take vacation days
- get massages (or something similar) at least once per month
- dance, swim, walk, run, play sports, sing, etc. just for fun
- get enough sleep
- wear clothes that you like and feel comfortable
- take time away from your phone
- meditate/pray/self-reflect
- write in a journal
- read literature that is unrelated to work
- learn something new/practice a skill

Emotional Self-Care

- let others know different aspects of you
- notice your inner experience – listen to your thoughts, judgments, beliefs, attitudes, and feelings
- engage your intelligence in a new area (art museum, history exhibit, sports event, auction, theater performance)
- practice receiving from others
- be curious
- say “no” to extra responsibilities sometimes
- spend time with others whose company you enjoy
- stay in contact with important people in your life
- give yourself affirmations, praise yourself
- love yourself

Adapted from Transforming the Pain: A Workbook on Vicarious Traumatization. Saakvitne, Pearlman & Staff of TSI/CAAP (Norton, 1996)



- _____ re-read favorite books/ re-view favorite movies
- _____ identify comforting activities, objects, people, relationships, places, and seek them out
- _____ find things that make you laugh
- _____ express your outrage in social action, letters and donations, marches, protests
- _____ play with children

Spiritual Self-Care

- _____ make time for reflection
- _____ spend time with nature
- _____ find a spiritual connection or community
- _____ be open to inspiration
- _____ cherish your optimism and hope
- _____ be aware of non-material aspects of life
- _____ try at times not to be in charge or the expert
- _____ be open to not knowing
- _____ identify what is meaningful to you and notice its place in your life
- _____ meditate
- _____ pray
- _____ sing
- _____ spend time with children
- _____ have experiences of awe
- _____ contribute to causes in which you believe
- _____ read inspirational literature, listen to inspirational talks/music

Workplace/Professional Self-Care

- _____ take a break during the workday
- _____ take time to chat with co-workers
- _____ make quiet time to complete tasks
- _____ identify projects and tasks that are rewarding or exciting
- _____ balance your caseload so that no one day is “too much”
- _____ arrange your workspace to make it comforting
- _____ get regular supervision or consultation
- _____ negotiate for your needs (benefits, pay raise)
- _____ have a peer support group
- _____ develop a non-trauma area of professional interest
- _____ strive for balance in your work and home life