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.

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

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- 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