

activity 1.4 Self-Assessment Tool: Self-Care

Take some time to complete the checklist below. You need not share your answers with anyone – this is simply for self-reflection. Remember that no one strategy works for everyone. This activity just gives you a way to think about the possibility of self-care in many aspects of your life.

How often do you do the following? (Rate, using the scale below):

5 = Frequently 4 = Sometimes 3 = Rarely 2 = Never 1 = It never even occurred to me

Physical Self-Care

- ☐ Eat regularly (e.g., breakfast and lunch)
- ☐ Eat healthfully
- ☐ Exercise
- ☐ Lift weights
- ☐ Practice martial arts
- ☐ Get regular medical care for prevention
- ☐ Get medical care when needed
- ☐ Take time off when you're sick
- ☐ Get massages or other body work
- ☐ Do physical activity that is fun for you
- ☐ Take time to be sexual
- ☐ Get enough sleep
- ☐ Wear clothes you like
- ☐ Take vacations
- ☐ Take day trips, or mini-vacations
- ☐ Get away from stressful technology such as pagers, faxes, telephones, e-mail
- ☐ Other: _____

Psychological Self-Care

- ☐ Make time for self-reflection
- ☐ Go to see a psychotherapist or counselor for yourself
- ☐ Write in a journal
- ☐ Read literature unrelated to work
- ☐ Do something at which you are a beginner
- ☐ Take a step to decrease stress in your life
- ☐ Notice your inner experience—your dreams, thoughts, imagery, feelings

- ☐ Let others know different aspects of you
- ☐ Engage your intelligence in a new area—go to an art museum, performance, sports event, exhibit, or other cultural event
- ☐ Practice receiving from others
- ☐ Be curious
- ☐ Say no to extra responsibilities sometimes
- ☐ Spend time outdoors
- ☐ Other: _____

Emotional Self-Care

- ☐ Spend time with others whose company you enjoy
- ☐ Stay in contact with important people in your life
- ☐ Treat yourself kindly (supportive inner dialogue or self-talk)
- ☐ Feel proud of yourself
- ☐ Reread favorite books, review favorite movies
- ☐ Identify and seek out comforting activities, objects, people, relationships, places
- ☐ Allow yourself to cry
- ☐ Find things that make you laugh
- ☐ Express your outrage in a constructive way
- ☐ Play with children
- ☐ Other: _____

activity 1.4 Self-Assessment Tool: Self-Care *continued*

Spiritual Self Care

- ☐ Make time for prayer, meditation, reflection
- ☐ Spend time in nature
- ☐ Participate in a spiritual gathering, community or group
- ☐ Be open to inspiration
- ☐ Cherish your optimism and hope
- ☐ Be aware of nontangible (nonmaterial) aspects of life
- ☐ Be open to mystery, to not knowing
- ☐ Identify what is meaningful to you and notice its place in your life
- ☐ Sing
- ☐ Express gratitude
- ☐ Celebrate milestones with rituals that are meaningful to you
- ☐ Remember and memorialize loved ones who have died
- ☐ Nurture others
- ☐ Have awe-full experiences
- ☐ Contribute to or participate in causes you believe in
- ☐ Read inspirational literature
- ☐ Listen to inspiring music
- ☐ Other: _____

Workplace/Professional Self Care

- ☐ Take time to eat lunch
- ☐ Take time to chat with co-workers
- ☐ Make time to complete tasks
- ☐ Identify projects or tasks that are exciting, growth-promoting, and rewarding for you
- ☐ Set limits with clients and colleagues
- ☐ Balance your caseload so no one day is “too much!”
- ☐ Arrange your workspace so it is comfortable and comforting
- ☐ Get regular supervision or consultation
- ☐ Negotiate for your needs
- ☐ Have a peer support group
- ☐ Other: _____

Source: Adapted from Saakvitne, Pearlman, and Traumatic Stress Institute Staff, Transforming the Pain: A Workbook on Vicarious Traumatization, 1996.

Discussion Questions

- What made an impression on you about this activity?
- What did you notice while completing the checklist?
- How did you feel after the checklist was completed?
- What thoughts do you have about the areas where you are doing well?
- What are areas that you would like to change/improve?