



Self-Care for Clinicians, Researchers, and Students in Psychology

Kyrsten Grimes, Georden Jones,
Alisia Palermo



Outline

- Introduction
- Sources of Burnout and Compassion Fatigue
- Self-Care Strategies
- Integration of Self-Care Strategies into Daily Routine
- Self-Care Action Plan

Introduction

What is all the hoopla around
self-care about?

Mindfulness Exercise





Introduction to Self-Care: What is Self-Care?

- Self-care: the care of oneself
- Actions one takes to reach optimal physical and mental health
- Activities one engages in to relax and attain emotional well-being



Introduction to Self-Care: Why is Self-Care Important?

- Avoid burnout and compassion fatigue
- Can lead to self-doubt and self-blame
- Maintain professional vitality
- Increase physical and emotional energy

be good to yourself



Who is Self-Care Important for?

- Students (i.e. undergraduate, graduate)
- Researchers
- Clinicians, therapists, counsellors
- Teachers
- Health professionals
- AKA everyone!



Sources of Burnout

Sources of burnout

- Work overload
- Lack of control
- Insufficient reward
- Breakdown of community
- Unfairness
- Significant value conflict
- Lack of fit between the person and the job

Feelings of burnout

- Exhaustion, including emotional exhaustion
- Cynicism
- Ineffectiveness
- Frustration
- Disengagement
- Stress
- Helplessness/hopelessness



Sources of Compassion Fatigue

- Exposure to hearing about a specific event or supporting a person who has suffered from a traumatic event
- Higher levels of helplessness
- Feelings of being isolated from a support network

Self-Care Strategies

I know self-care is important, but
how do I *do* it?



Self-Care Strategies for Your Internal Environment

1. Mindfulness

- Increasing awareness of burnout and compassion fatigue

2. Taking care of your physical health

- Sleep hygiene
- Healthy eating
- Exercise
- Do activities other than work!



Self-Care Strategies for Your Internal Environment

3. Stress/anxiety reducing strategies

- Paced breathing
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Body scan

4. Self-compassion

- Kristin Neff (<http://self-compassion.org/>)



Self-Care Strategies for Your External Environment

1. Set limits (and stick to them)
 - Learn to say no
 - Learn to set your limits in terms of timeframes and workloads
 - Become good at disappointing others – Yes, but...
2. Schedule activities
 - Schedule time to work
 - Schedule time for other activities
 - Create a calendar to visualize your workload



Self-Care Strategies for Your External Environment

3. Break it down

- Divide your tasks into smaller tasks and schedule time to work on them
- Use calendars to plan tasks for bigger projects (like your thesis)

4. Keep track

- Create lists to manage your tasks
- Set timeframes for each task
- Reward yourself when completed



Self-Care Strategies for Your External Environment

5. Create a work environment that works for you
 - Schedule important tasks at times when you are the most productive
 - Silence/music
 - 50/10 rule
 - Working buddy

Self-Care Action Plan

Let's do it!



Transfer to Everyday Life

Don't

- Don't be overly enthusiastic
- Feel guilty
- Treat your self-care plan as less important than your other responsibilities

Do

- Start small and gradually increase activities
- Practice mindfulness (if you do feel guilty)
- Make a plan and stick to it



**KEEP
CALM
AND
PRACTICE
SELF-CARE**

Create Your Self-Care Action Plan Now!

1. Identify two self-care activities you can start TODAY
2. Schedule them into your day
3. Plan ahead
 - How will you get around your barriers?



Resources and References

- Hughes, G. (2014). *Competence and Self-Care in Counselling and Psychotherapy*. Routledge: New York.
- Skovholt, T. M. & Trotter-Mathison, M. (2011). *The Resilient Practitioner: Burnout Prevention and Self-Care Strategies for Counsellors, Therapists, Teachers, and Health Professionals*. Routledge: New York.
- Weiss, L. (2004). *Therapist's Guide to Self-Care*. Routledge: New York.
- Linehan, M. M. (2015). *DBT Skills Training Manual*. 2 ed. The Guilford Press: New York.