

Trauma Stewardship Tools for Self Care

Create Space for Inquiry:

- Why am I doing what I'm doing?
- Why am I doing this work?
- Is this working for me?

Choose Our Focus:

- Where am I focusing my energy?
- What are my resources to replenish myself?

Before you start your day, remind yourself that you are making a choice to do this work. Consult with a wise and trustworthy person about your 'why' and ask them to listen and provide feedback. Write it down and when you go astray, remember what ***it is*** about and what ***it is not*** about.

For one day, pay attention to your thoughts. Are you seeing things half full or half empty? Can you reframe to see things half full, are you invested in seeing them half empty?

Trauma Stewardship Tools for Self Care

Build Compassion and Community:

- Who is my support system? Are they nurturing hopefulness, accountability and integrity?
- How do I show compassion through conflict? How do I take responsibility for my actions?

Finding Balance:

- How do I create a work environment that is balanced?
- Where can I cultivate gratitude?

(If it aligns)

Ask yourself what your ancestors and those who have raised you have done throughout time to heal themselves and others.

Consider your work routine, what moments can you reclaim to attend to your wellbeing?

Identify one thing you would love to bring to your work day, and do it. Look at your vacation time and start planning!

Self-Care Lessons Learned from Holding Spaces

Ask: Is this going to be helpful or harmful to my mental health?

Set intentions for spaces and my day- start my day off with a spiritual practice to ground myself

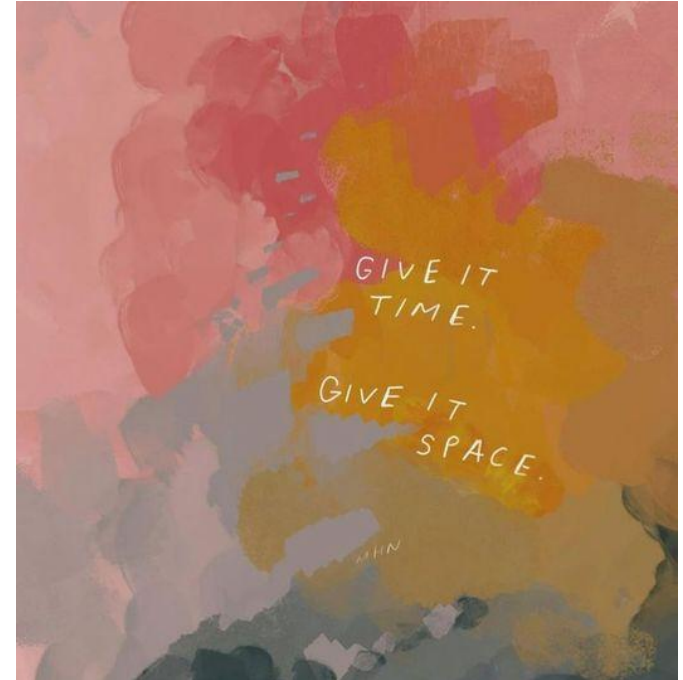
Debrief and connect with my co-facilitator or peer before or after holding space

Turn my phone off and/or leave it outside my bedroom/office to stay present and avoid scrolling

Go outside and get 15-20 minutes of sunshine in the middle of my work day and go into nature (redwoods) after my day is complete with a friend

Schedule breaks and use timers to ensure my time

Revisit coping mechanisms and remove those that are no longer serving me....





Self Care in Social Work Cox and Steiner (2013)

Types of Self Care

- **Physical self-care:** eating well, exercising, sleeping adequately, getting massages, accessing medical care, etc.
- **Psychological self-care:** self-reflecting, engaging in leisure activities, journaling, practicing receiving from others
- **Emotional Self-care:** praising oneself, laughter/play, expressing outrage through appropriate channels
- **Spiritual Self-Care:** Praying, meditating, developing awareness of nonmaterial aspects of life
- **Professional Self-care:** (taking a break, making quiet time, balancing workload, arranging work space.)
- **Social self-care:** Having a life outside of work that involves doing what the person enjoys and spending time with family and friends
- **Balance** (among work, family, relationships, play, rest. Etc.

“Self-care is the ability to refill and refuel oneself in healthy ways.” Gentry

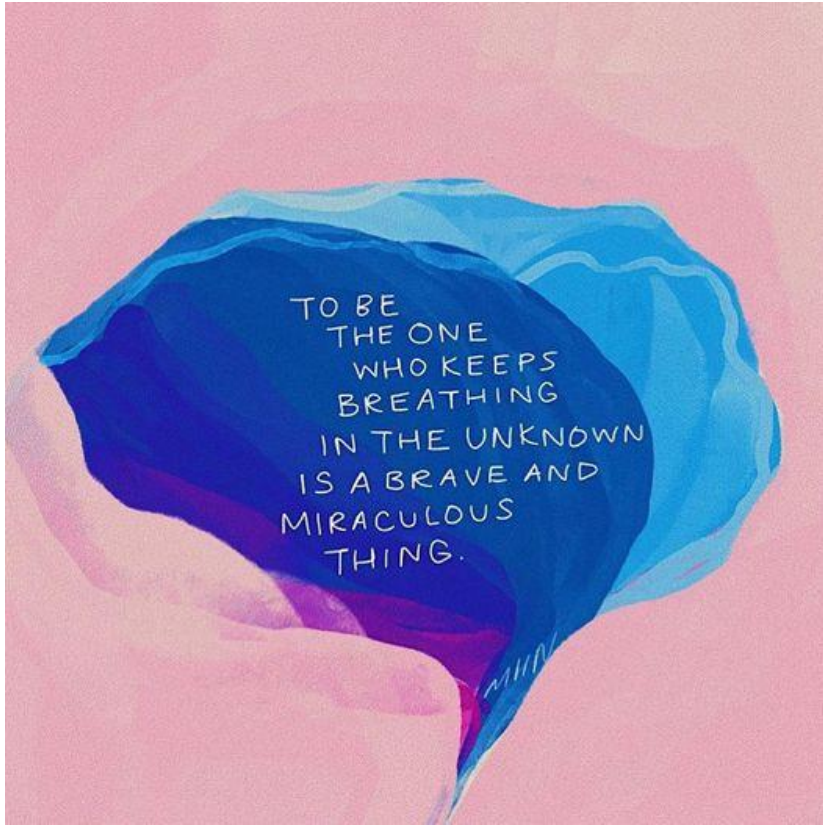


Self Care in Social Work Cox and Steiner (2013)

Examples of Self-Care

- Going on a silent retreat, writing, and reflecting
- Getting away from your normal routine
- Weekend hikes, going for a walk, being in nature, gardening
- Naps
- Shopping, self-pampering
- Having fun
- Spending time with friends and family
- Laughter/Comedy shows
- Eating healthy food, cooking
- Spoiling yourself with chocolate
- Saying 'NO'
- Sleeping in
- Taking lunch breaks consistently
- Getting a facial or massage and taking a long shower
- Speaking affirmations
- Going to church/temple/place of worship
- Getting help from co-workers
- Bringing your true feelings to supervision
- Reading a book, watching a movie

Do any of these types of self-care resonate with you?



Self-Care Strategy#1

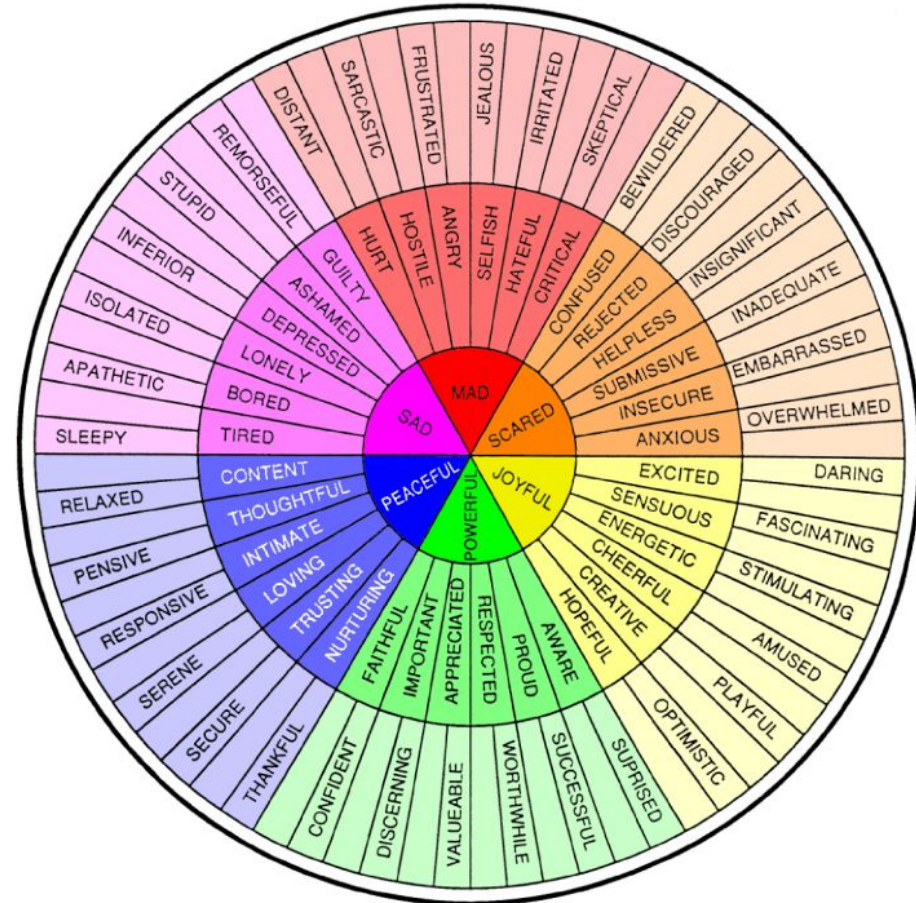
- **Create Space for Self-Care:** Look at your calendar and try to find short periods of time each week for a self-care activity that will help you feel replenished and centered. Schedule your self-care time. Commit to yourself that for a month you will not let anything get in the way of your self-care activity.
- At the end of the month pay attention to the impact your self-care activities have had on your wellbeing. [Did you sleep better? Feel calmer? Been less irritable? Been more energetic?]
- Write down any barriers that got on the way of your commitment to self-care. Think about how you will deal with these barriers next time.

Self-Awareness & Stress

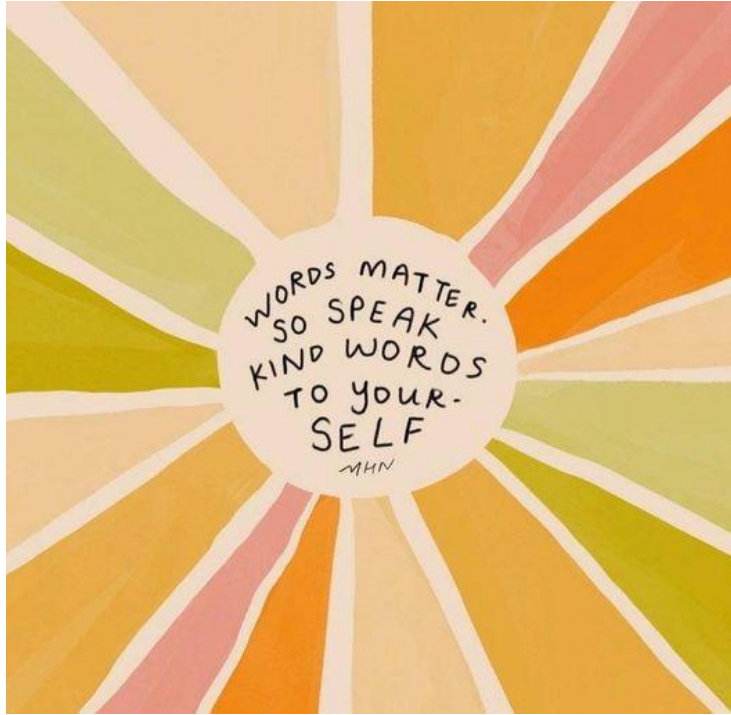
- Self-Awareness establishes the groundwork for self-care
- When we check in with ourselves regularly we can notice differences in our moods, emotions, and behaviors
- When we create space to recognize and understand our emotions, we can honor those feelings and feel them
- Emotions are neither good or bad, they are just insight to where we are vulnerable and what we value... Some questions to consider:
 - How are you feeling?
 - How do you know when you are stressed?
 - What are your early warning signs for being stressed?
 - What happens to your body, mind, and spirit when you are having stress overload?

The Feeling Wheel

Developed by Dr. Gloria Willcox
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Feelings vs. Stories



- In order to truly feel and heal from our experiences, it's important to separate our feelings from the stories attached to them.
- While the stories can help us to understand our feelings, they can also distract us from feeling the emotions themselves.
- Sometimes we may not understand why we feel how we feel – and that's okay.
- A compelling story isn't required to justify or validate the way we feel.
- Our feelings are valid and deserve to be felt completely.

Self-Care Strategy#2

- **Break Down Long Term Goals:** Consider a big goal that you have for your work and you might break it down into smaller victories? How might you celebrate these steps toward success?
- **Prioritization Practice:** When you feel grounded and are ready to start your day, make a list of what you are hoping to accomplish that day. Scan the list and determine what feels like a priority that needs to happen today and what could be done tomorrow, the next day, the end of the week and so on. Make sure you add a self-care item to your prioritization list!



Self-Regulation & Mindfulness



Self Care in Social Work Cox and Steiner (2013)

Self Regulation is the ability to understand and manage your behaviors and your reactions to feelings and things happening around you. Self Regulation:

- Helps us achieve restoration following exposure to difficult work-related challenges
- Helps stabilize our emotions and invites in tools to self-sooth
- Brings in balance of our empathy and care with our peers. E.g. 'I'm planting seeds', 'It is my job to listen and share tools with others. I can't make them choose to use the tools!' 'I am human.'
- Research shows mindfulness increases positive affect and decreases negative emotions (Schroevers & Brandsma,2010)
- Mindfulness activities are usually focused on building present moment awareness through sight, sounds, and touch. We aren't striving 'to do' but 'to be'

Mindfulness Activities

- **Visual Practices:**
 - Notice the colors in your immediate surroundings
 - Watch the movements of birds, animals, reptiles, and insects
 - Observe the sights as you drive your car
- **Auditory practices:**
 - Listen closely to the sounds of birds, dogs, and sounds around you
 - Focus on one instrument playing in a song
 - Sit in silence
- **Tactile practices:**
 - Engage in slow conscious breathing
 - Stretch your body
 - Take in the smells of lotions, soaps, and oils
 - Eat slowly, taking time to smell, taste, and appreciate the texture of your food
 - Notice the sensation of water covering your body when you shower or bathe

What practices are you drawn to? How could you build this into your daily activities?



Self-Care Strategy#3

- **Mindfulness Activities**
- Pick a visual, auditory, and tactile method to practice being present and letting yourself just 'be'. Take time over the next two weeks to 'try on' one of these mindfulness activities for 5 mins each day. Which method was most helpful in bringing you back into your body and promoting a sense of calm?



Work + Life Balance = Boundaries



“Boundaries are the distance at which I can love you and me simultaneously.”

-Prentis Hemphill

Here are some of the questions I ask myself to understand my boundaries.

- Am I doing this because I feel obligated, guilty, or pressured?
- Do I need to have this conversation right now?
- Does this drain me or give me energy?
- Do I need a break from social media, the news cycle, and certain conversations?
- Do I need to _____(insert things), right now? Ever?

What do boundaries mean to you?

What boundaries/self-care practices do you have in place? Where do you need to revisit them?


Boundaries + Self-Care in the Workplace

“The things you complain about the most are often indicators of where you need healthier boundaries.”

-Nedra Tawwab

Boundaries can also sound like:

- I'm not available right now, but I can talk to you later.
- I want to be here for you and I'm concerned, but here are some other resources you may find helpful.
- I'm not always available to respond to messages right way.
- My hours of work are xxx, if you send me something outside of my hours there may be a lag- you can reach x instead.



EVEN THE LONGEST,
HARDEST ENDINGS
LEAD TO BRAND-
NEW MORNINGS

Boundaries: Saying 'NO' from Christine Carter

- 1. Vague but effective:** “Thank you for asking, but that isn’t going to work out for me.”
- 2. It’s not personal:** “Thank you for asking, but I’m not doing any interviews while I’m writing my book.”
- 3. Ask me later:** “I want to do that, but I’m not available until April. Will you ask me again then?”
- 4. Let me hook you up:** “I can’t do it, but I’ll bet Shelly can. I’ll ask her for you.”
- 5. Keep trying:** “None of those dates work for me, but I would love to see you. Send me some more dates.”
- 6. Try me last minute:** “I can’t put anything else on my calendar this month, but I’d love to do that with you sometime. Will you call me right before you go again?”

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/21_ways_to_give_good_no

Boundaries: Saying 'NO' from Christine Carter

7. Gratitude: “Thank you so much for your enthusiasm and support! I’m sorry I’m not able to help you at this time.”

8. Give Dad a chance: “You know, I feel like moms are always getting to do the holiday parties at school. Let’s ask Dad if he wants to help this year.”

9. 5-minute favor: “I can’t speak at your event, but I will help you promote it on my blog.

10. Just No: “Thanks, I’ll have to pass on that.” (Say it, then stop talking!)

11. Gracious: “I really appreciate you asking me, but my time is already committed.”

12. I’m Sorry: “I wish I could, but it’s just not going to work right now.”

13. It’s Someone Else’s Decision: “I promised my coach (therapist, husband, etc.) I wouldn’t take on any more projects right now. I’m working on creating more balance in my life.”

14. My Family is the Reason: “Thanks so much for the invite, that’s the day of my son’s soccer game, and I never miss those.”

Boundaries: Saying 'NO' from Christine Carter

15. **I Know Someone Else:** “I just don't have time right now. Let me recommend someone who may be able to help you.”
16. **I'm Already Booked:** “I appreciate you thinking of me, but I'm afraid I'm already booked that day.”
17. **Setting Boundaries:** “Let me tell you what I can do...” Then limit the commitment to what will be comfortable for you.
18. **Not No, But Not Yes:** “Let me think about it, and I'll get back to you.”
19. **Say nothing:** “Not all requests require an answer. It feels rude to ignore a request, but sometimes it's the best way for everyone to save face.”
20. **Let it all hang out:** “Recently my daughter got injured in gym class. It was a week of visits to the ER, the concussion clinic, specialists, etc. I decided to just tell people what was going on, which sort of shut down the requests for a bit.”
21. **I'm “maxed out”:** “We need a ‘safety word’ for saying no—an easy way to tell people that we can't/won't do the thing they are requesting, but that it's not personal.

Boundaries: From My Colleagues!



My colleague John never says 'No' directly... He shares with his supervisor what is on his plate and asks them what they would like him to prioritize. It helps them understand his workload and also negotiate when he'll be doing something so he doesn't get overwhelmed!

"I really can't, If there is **another time** I'd be happy to though." - Kevin Moten

"What are you NOT going to do today?" - As an Icebreaker question from Roberta Chambers

"I'm sorry, I am **maxed out** today or for the rest of the week. Let's talk again on--." -Ellen Dayan

"Reducing frequency of standing meetings, reducing meetings from 60 minutes to 30. Asking staff out loud if certain meetings provide value to our work and discontinuing those meetings when the answer is no." -Karen Larsen

Self-Care Strategy#4

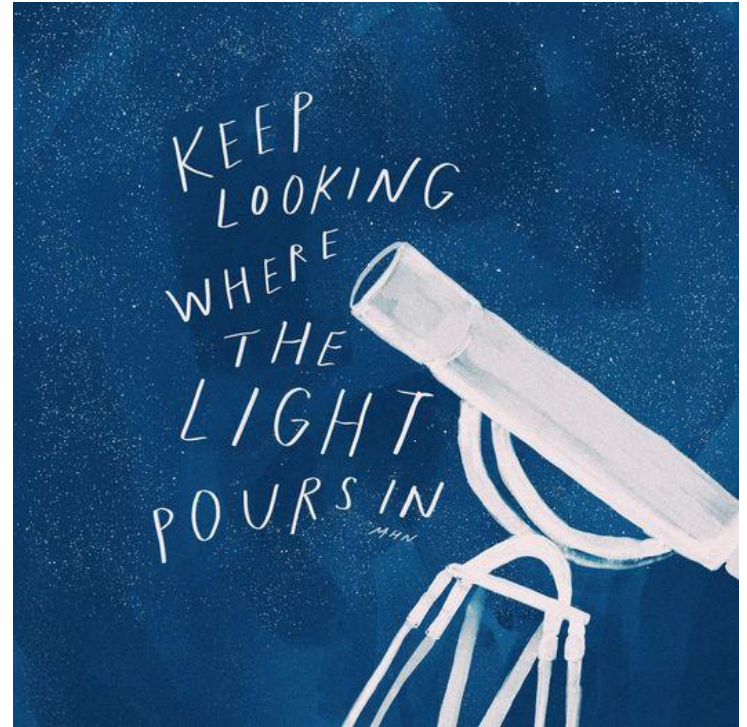
AND IN THIS
LETTING GO,
I'LL MAKE ROOM
FOR NEW
BEGINNINGS.
~MHN

Balancing Your Empathy

- Think about a difficult call or conversation you had with someone you were supporting. Close your eyes and see the person speaking to you about the trauma they have experienced. Pay attention to their body language, tone of voice and energy.
- Now imagine yourself saying to this person: “I care about you and what you’ve gone through, but I need to stand apart from your pain if I am to be helpful to you.
- Visualize yourself drawing a golden circle around where you and your peer supporter are standing. Then see yourself stepping outside of the circle. Notice that the person you are supporting is happy you have taken this important step. Pay attention to the emotions and beliefs you let go. Now repeat this visualization for other people you have support and need some empathetic boundaries with.

Regrounding Reflection

- How was that experience helpful for you? What did you learn about yourself? Your needs?



Self-Care Request Gratitude Poem

TODAY I WILL HAVE
GRATITUDE FOR:
1. MY PROGRESS
2. THE FREEDOM
TO START OVER
3. THE ABILITY TO
NOTICE LIGHT IN
THE LITTLE THINGS
4. ENDLESS GRACE
5. THE CHANCE TO
BE ALIVE ANOTHER DAY.
MHW.



By adrienne maree brown

Closing + Q&A



Thank you for sharing this time and space together. I am grateful for you.



Kelechi Ubozoh