We Matter Too

February 2023

Self Care Strategies for ALL Practitioners

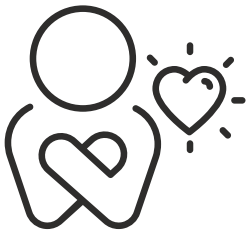
What is Self Care?

The ability of individuals, families, and communities to promote health, prevent disease, maintain health, and to cope with illness and disability with or without the support of a healthcare provider.

Self care promotes positive health outcomes such as:

- Fostering resilience
- Living longer
- Managing stress

Read more: https://www.everydayhealth.com/self-care/



Video: The Importance of Self Care for Early Care and Education Professionals (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x9tPoR4Ctec)

Stress

Recent studies indicate that people who take care of others often put their own needs last.

- Teaching-related stress can be triggered by: burnout, absorbing secondary trauma, compassion fatigue
- Can happen to anyone
- Preventing compassion fatigue can be addressed through self care strategies

Read more: https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/jul2020/preventing-compassion-fatigue

Positive Stress: Normal life experiences that are not dangerous or threatening. Often short term and one can cope with the support of loved ones.
Tolerable Stress: Longer lasting and more intense but is relieved by supportive relationships.
Toxic Stress: Events that continuously activate the stress response system with no protection or comfort.

Stress impacts you:

- Physically
- Behaviorally
- Emotionally
- Mentally

Manage stress by:

- Focusing on what you CAN do
- Manage your emotions
- Seek out support
- Make a plan
- Distractions

Responding to stress can be challenging; look for little things you can do each day to help yourself feel well.

Self Care Strategies

Putting protective factors into play for yourself:

- Personal resilience
- Social connections
- Knowledge of parenting and child development
- Concrete support in times of need
- Social emotional competence in children

Read more: https://ctfalliance.org/protective-factors/

Seven Types of Rest:

Spiritual Physical Mental Social Emotional Creative Sensory

Read more: https://ideas.ted.com/the-7-types-of-rest-that-every-person-needs/

Belly Breathing:

- The most efficient and relaxed way of getting enough air into your lungs
- Automatically slows the heart rate, helping relax and calm
- Supports the life skill of relaxation
- Can boost energy levels with a few minutes of relaxation throughout the day
- Emulated breathing during the regenerating processes (sleep, digesting, food, or resting)
- Increased awareness of the breath and its effect on the body

Read more: https://weespeech.com/the-benefits-of-belly-breathing/

Emotional Freedom Technique

1. Envision/notice/name what is bothering you.
2. Rank your level of distress 0-10.
3. Set it up, "Even though I _____, I completely love and accept myself.
4. Tap through your tapping points.
5. Take a deep breath.
6. Re-assess 1-10.

Read more: https://woodlandswellnessmd.com/emotional-freedom-techniques-eft.html/

Make a commitment to do one activity per day to focus on your body, your mind, and/or your spirit.

Additional Resources

Self Care and Professionalism
https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/infant-toddler-resource-guide/self-care-and-professionalism

Self Care is Not An Indulgence, It's a Discipline.
https://www.pathforward.org/self-care-is-not-an-indulgence-its-a-discipline

Taking Care of Yourself: For Early Care and Education Providers
https://cssp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Self-Care-for-ECE-Providers.pdf

CMHA BC and Anxiety Canada. (2016). **Wellness Module 2: Stress and Well-Being.** HeretoHelp. Retrieved on June 10, 2022 from https://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/wellness-module/wellness-module-2-stressand-well-being

Groves, O. (2021). **The Powerful History of Self-Care & How to Honor It Today.** Retrieved on June 10, 2022 from https://www.silkandsonder.com/blogs/news/the-origin-of-self-care-the-fascinating-historyand-3-huge-ways-it-can-help-you-right-now

Michel, F. (2008). **Assert Yourself. Perth, Western Australia: Centre for Clinical Interventions.** Retrieved from www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Assertiveness