



Now, More Than Ever:
**The Ethical Practice
of Rehabilitation
Professional Self-Care**

Acknowledgement & Disclaimer



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Developing innovative methods to train VR personnel in their work at State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies to deliver services to improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

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About Your Presenter



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Acknowledgement

- Thanks to **Nichole Tichy, MA, CRC** for providing excellent resources to corroborate the topics presented today.
 - Ph.D. Student
 - Program Coordinator GWCRCRE
- [Ethics and Self-Care: Why is professional self-care an ethical practice?](#)
 - More of a peer review approach in 2020
 - Our approach today is supported by pop culture/electronic materials



Unprecedented

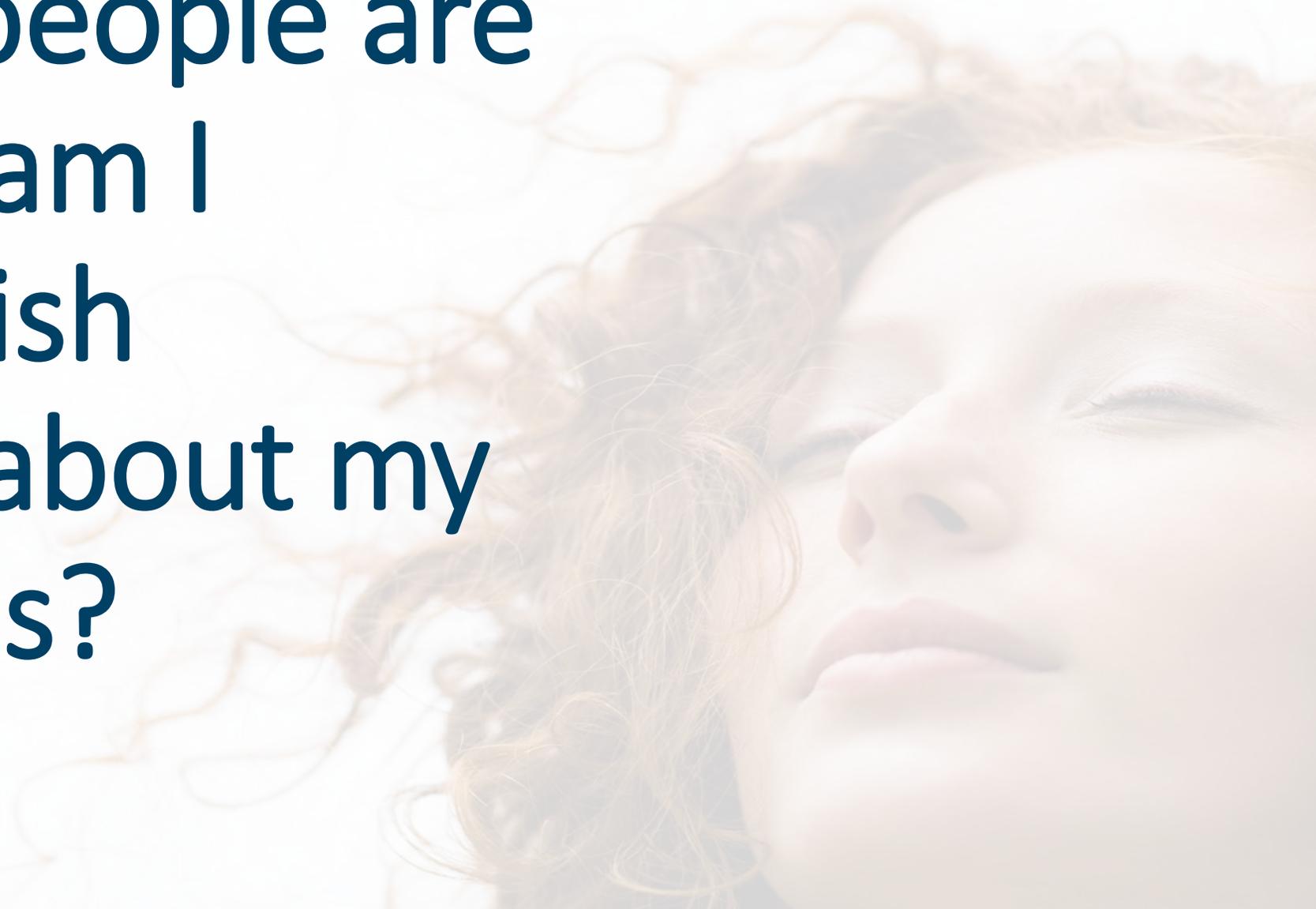
Unprecedented Times

- There is a reason why more than 1000 people registered for this webinar on Self-Care
- **Definition** – adjective – never done or known before – *Oxford Languages*

30 Alternatives to Unprecedented

- [30 Creative Alternatives to 'Unprecedented' in These Unprecedented Times \[Infographic\]](#)
- Uncommon, turbulent, stressful
- Strange, weird, whack
- Bananas, hot mess, cray

So many people are
hurting... am I
being selfish
worrying about my
own needs?





CRCC Code of Ethics Section D

- *Professional Responsibility*
- **Introduction** – “...In addition, rehabilitation counselors engage in self-care activities to maintain and promote their own emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual well being to best meet their professional responsibilities...”



Further and More Specifically

- **D1e – Monitoring Effectiveness**
- **D3 – Functional Competence a) Impairment**
 - Responsibility to attend to ourselves and to assist colleagues who may be experiencing barriers, challenges, or who may be struggling.



CRCC Code's Principles and Values

- **How do these relate to self-care and work life balance? Some of those values are:**
 - respecting human rights and dignity;
 - ensuring the integrity of all professional relationships;
 - acting to alleviate personal distress and suffering;
 - enhancing the quality of professional knowledge and its application to increase professional and personal effectiveness.



ACA Code

- **C2g – Impairment**
 - Counselors assist colleagues or supervisors in recognizing their own professional impairment and provide consultation and assistance when warranted with colleagues or supervisors showing signs of impairment and intervene as appropriate to prevent imminent harm to clients. (Also applies under F5b – Supervisees/Students)

Why Should Rehabilitation Leaders and Counselors Engage in 'Self-Care?'



Why Self-Care?

Self-care activities are intended to moderate or avoid ‘Burnout’.

Continuum:

- Vicarious Traumatization, Compassion Fatigue, and Burnout on one side
- Frustration, sadness, being cranky, tired, etc. on the other (daily hassles)
- It is important at all times, but especially when we are encountering unknown or unfamiliar expectations and challenges.

“Research has demonstrated that burnout can result in anxiety, depression, drops in self-esteem, substance abuse, decreased performance, and increased health problems.” (Alcorn, 2011)

Behaviors and Attitudes

The term self-care refers not only to an engagement in various practices but also to **having a caring attitude or 'being' caring toward oneself.**

(Kissil and Niño 2017).

From Posluns and Gall article (2019)





Cranky or Burned Out... How Can I Tell?

A colleague/supervisor has asked me to include an additional task in my scope of work that is not typically my responsibility...

- When I communicate and reflect...
 - Am I able to describe my feelings toward the situation?
 - Do my emotional reactions match the content I'm working with?
 - Am I able to find some joy in other activities that are unrelated to the situation at hand?
 - Am I perseverating on the topic or can I let it go?

I'm worried I'm not just cranky...
So what is Self-Care?



Operationally Defined & ‘De-Mystified’

Definition – Both Codes (ACA and CRC) note self-care as: **“activities to maintain and promote counselors’ own emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual well-being to best meet their professional responsibilities”**

It is merely taking the time to take care of our own needs, not at the exclusion of others, but to enhance our ability to work with others.

Self-care is a broad term referring to any actions or experiences that enhance or maintain counselors’ well-being (Eckstein, 2001).



Self-Care Is Individualized

Physical

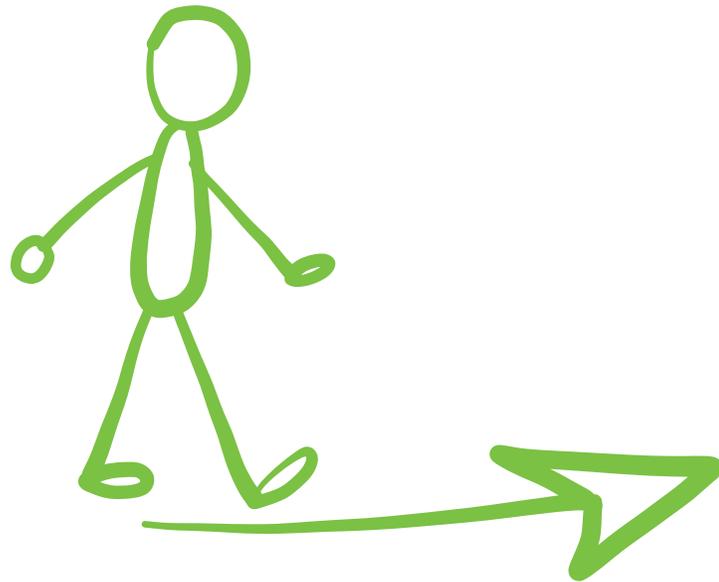
- Anything from taking chair push up breaks to running a marathon;
- Nutrition/eating – may have very different goals from watching what I eat to having food that comforts me

Spiritual

- Could vary all the way from being very involved in organized religion all the way to ‘be open to not knowing’ or ‘have experiences of awe’ or ‘try at times to not be in charge or the expert’.

➤ Posluns and Gall (2019)

Grand-daddy/Grand-momma of lit reviews on self-care in my opinion.



Broken down into these categories:

- Awareness
- Balance
- Flexibility
- Physical Health
- Social Support
- Spirituality

How can I take this
information and develop
a plan of action for my
Self-Care?



Spheres of Self-Care

Tip! Get these from the Resources section of Webinar web page!

Self-Care Assessments:

- Therapist Aid: [Self-Care Assessment Worksheets \(pdf\)](#)
- University at Buffalo School of Social Work: [Self-Care Assessment \(pdf\)](#)
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI): [Self-Care Inventory \(pdf\)](#)



Components of a Self-Care Plan



Physical



Psychological



Emotional



Spiritual



Relationship



**Workplace/
Professional**



Overall Balance

Additionally – what other areas are relevant to you?





Self-Care Plan: Many Different Formats

Umatter – Princeton University initiative

<https://umatter.princeton.edu/about>

Reach Out.com

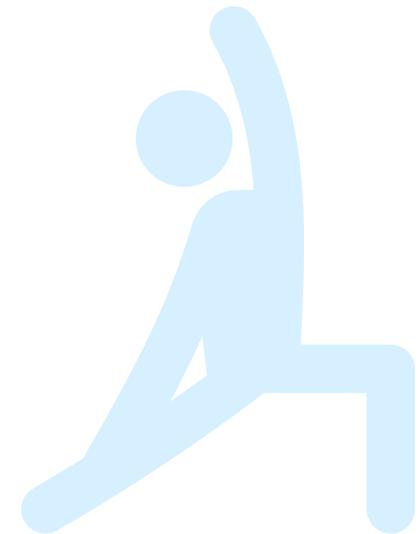
<https://schools.au.reachout.com>

Tip! We've included a few different formats for your consideration.
Get these from the Resources section of Webinar web page!

Extensive List of 'Self-Care During A Pandemic' Activities

[Kelsey Wells X Everyday Health: 5-Minute Stress Relief and Calming Flow \(video\)](#)

- Leave stress inducing foods in not so convenient places
- Develop a don't do list
- Change your passwords to be your Mantra
- Talk about it
- Practice kindness and gratitude like Lady Gaga



How does Self-Care relate to some responsibilities a leader/supervisor may have for modeling behaviors for colleagues?

Some General Questions



- Do you send emails way beyond work hours?
- Would those you manage/supervise describe you as over worked?
- Would those you supervise/manage indicate that you are interested in their professional development?
- Do your practices reflect cultural competence?
- How do you manage generational diversity during within your office?
Do you allow this to figure in relative to your means of contact with those you supervise/manage?

In our current 24/7 work climate, an important question is...

Where does life start and
work end and vice versa?



Role Strain and Stress

- Donald Super's Life Career Rainbow dates back to the late 1950's but is worth some consideration relative to role strain during the pandemic and as we emerge from it.
- Child, Student, Leisurite, Citizen, Worker, Parent, Spouse, and Homemaker
- At various different times in life, our percentages of effort vary. It's a stage theory with recycling.
- But the unplanned events over the past 2 years have led many to feel like the 100% available really adds up to a demand of 500%.



Pandemic Related Topics – Beyond Burnout for Medical Professionals

[Beyond Burnout: Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic Challenges to Self-Care \(pdf\)](#)

- **Moral Injury:** ‘means an injury caused by being involved in actions that transgress our deeply held moral beliefs.’
- **Racial Trauma:** Racial trauma has emerged as a major chief complaint among healthcare staff of color.
 - Discharging to ‘quarantine’ in overcrowded living situation.
 - Asian American healthcare workers being accused of starting the pandemic.



Harvard MGH Toolkit

(relating to the previous paper/link)

Harvard/MGH Trauma

Programs:

<https://hprtselfcare.org>

[10-Point Toolkit and Pocket Card for Self-Care During the COVID-19 CRISIS \(pdf\)](#)

Take care of your family, friends, and loved ones first!

1. Know your personal and organizational mission statement.
2. Achieve clinical and cultural excellence.
3. Engage in peer supervision and consultation.
4. Monitor and Regulate empathy.
5. Practice reflection: Spiritual and artistic
6. Utilize deep breathing, mindfulness, and meditation.
7. Conduct daily, personal self-care activities; taking care of body and mind.
8. Create beautiful, natural healing environments.
9. Evaluate self-care goals.
10. Restore human dignity through kindness, compassion, and empathy.

Self-Care Tips

Health Matters: How to Fight Pandemic Fatigue – 15 Self-Care Tips

15 WAYS *to* PRACTICE SELF-CARE



EAT A HEALTHY
SNACK TO
NOURISH YOUR
BRAIN & BODY



ENJOY A
CUP OF
HOT TEA



MAKE A LIST OF
SOME PEOPLE &
THINGS YOU ARE
GRATEFUL FOR



READ A BOOK
FOR 10 TO 15
MINUTES



TAKE A STRETCH
BREAK IN THE
MIDDLE OF
EMAILS



TAKE A WALK
OUTSIDE AND PAY
ATTENTION TO
WHAT YOU SEE



CALL A
FRIEND TO
CHAT



LIGHT AN
AROMATHERAPY
CANDLE



TURN YOUR
PHONE OFF FOR
30 MINUTES



LISTEN TO A
MEDITATION
OR WATCH A
YOGA VIDEO



TAKE FIVE
MINUTES TO SIT
DOWN & TAKE A
DEEP BREATH



GET INTO BED
15 MINUTES
EARLY



NOTICE THE WAY
THE WATER FEELS
WHEN TAKING
A SHOWER



JOURNAL
YOUR
THOUGHTS



SMILE, AND
REMEMBER TO
ENJOY WHAT
YOU ARE DOING

Psychological Flexibility

- Develop a plan of action for the day.
- Attempt to avoid becoming overwhelmed by planning details that may not lend themselves to being planned for at this point.
- Avoid using permanent solutions for evolving or temporary demands.



How does this all relate
to Ethics and Self-Care?



Work at Home and Boundaries

- Unprecedented 😊 - Work at home has meant something entirely different these past two years than ever before.
- So what is so different than before?



Current Demands

- Space to work... for you, partners, kids, parents
- Preparation for being on camera
- Separation of work/home
- Learning curve relative to technology
- Internet
- Protecting your privacy while work visits you in your home... why does the dog have to bark at the wrong time?
- Finding time/ways to connect with colleagues



Circling Back to Ethics

- Boundaries are something Rehabilitation Leaders and Counselors are familiar with.
- We've talked about boundaries with many different terms (crossings, extensions, dual relationships, etc.) as codes have evolved.
- 2017 CRCC Code language that I see as helpful to conceptualize this topic is '*Extending Professional Boundaries*' (A.5.g)



A.5.g and h – These are important sections for our consideration

- **Extending professional boundaries and documenting boundary extensions...**
 - initiated with appropriate consent
 - time-limited or context-specific
- **Document**
 - rationale for such an interaction
 - potential benefit
 - anticipated consequences



Extending Boundaries Can Be Positive

- **Apartment Therapy:** Your “Work Self” is Gone Now That Your Coworkers Have Seen Your Apartment
- Discussed the humanizing aspect of inviting others into our living space for meetings.



Design and Work From Home

- **StarTribune:** [You may be ready for your videoconferencing close-up, but is your makeshift office?](#)
- Talks about considerations relative to your work space and camera positioning.

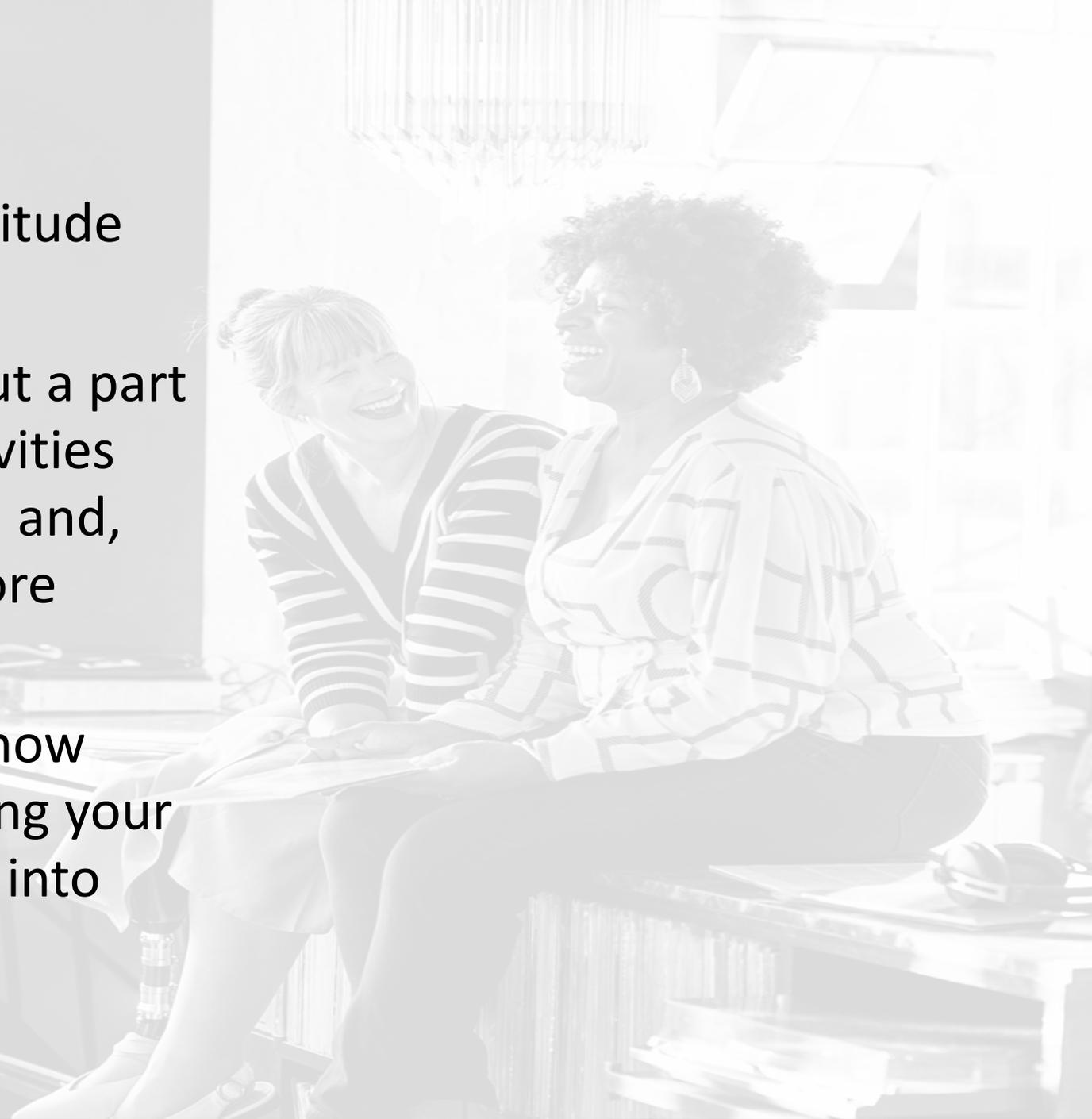


GW CRCRE Resources

- **The George Washington University Center for Rehabilitation Counseling Research and Education:**
[Telecounseling Resource Collection](#)
- Choosing a platform
- Preparing your office
- Counseling at a distance

Self-Care and Success

- Beyond practices and a kind attitude toward yourself.
- A self-care plan is important, but a part of that plan should include activities that set yourself up for success, and, quite frankly, make your job more rewarding.
- Such items include getting to know those around you, and expanding your approach to take others' needs into consideration.



I almost miss my commute time?
Is that normal?



Some Resources Speaking to Pandemic Commute Deprivation

- The Seattle Times: [4 ways to decompress now that your commute is gone](#)
 - The Washington Post: [Months of pandemic teleworking have left some missing their commutes](#)
 - The New York Times: [Can I Actually Be Missing the Commute?](#)
 - The Economic Times: [Missing Your Commute? Here's How To Recreate That Golden Hour During WFH](#)
 - Financial Express: [Missing quiet time during commute? Microsoft Teams brings 'virtual commute' time for users' rejuvenation](#)
- 



What do these resources commonly say?

- Both the Washington Post and NY Times articles emphasize the amount of people who miss not the commute itself, but what the commute provided.
 - The opportunity to separate work from home, the ability to engage in social activities, exercise, fresh air, time to wake up in the morning, and time to relax before going home.
 - Seattle Times suggests four ways to create a buffer such as keeping traditions, going outside, setting a ritual to mark the end of the day, and adopting quiet times.
- 



Teams Commuter Platform

- Microsoft Teams has created a built in “commuter platform” to help users tackle “to-do lists” as part of their “virtual commute.”
- Teams is a platform similar to Zoom, but this “to-do list” isn’t work related it’s more personal such as goals for books to read, podcasts, or exercise before or after work hours.

How does your
generational Identity relate
to your Self-Care needs?



Ability to Laugh and Self-Care

- Humor is curative
- Did you know there was such a thing as a geriatric millennial?
- **Entrepreneur.com** - [If you were born between 1980 and 1985, you are apparently a geriatric millennial.](#)



Work Life Balance

- **Elite Content Marketer:**
[Work Life Balance Stats You Need To Know In 2021](#)
- Interesting read
- Hours of work have increased
- Surveys show lots of work on the weekend
- And yet, Deloitte Millennial Global Survey of 2020 cited in resource says 60% of Millennials would like to continue working remotely post Pandemic and the 'stressed out all the time' category for Millennials and Gen Z fell during the Pandemic.



Work Life Balance as Public Health Issue

- **The Conversation:** [Work-life balance in a pandemic: a public health issue we cannot ignore](#)
 - Individuals increasing the number of hours working (on average individuals in the UK put in 2 extra hours a day, and in the US its reported as more).
 - “the sandwich generation” – individuals caring for both younger children and older parents.
- 



Generations and Technology

- Pretty common topic when comparing generational needs.
- If you are interested in learning a bit more about ethics, technology and supervision, please tune in for the QM Webinar to be available July 2021.



Technology has been crucial to business operations during the Pandemic.

What are some thoughts on how technology relates to Self-Care?



Technology

- **Code section J1a – COMPETENCE.**
 - When technology is used in the counseling relationship, rehabilitation counselors are held to the same level of expected behavior and competence as defined by the Code regardless of the technology used or its application.
- **Important questions include:**
 - What is helpful?
 - What creates overload?
 - What is distracting?



Continuum of Technology Users

- Do I have to?
- I need the basics.
- How does this work?
- I love this stuff!!!
- Are there ways you can connect people with the various approaches to enhance their self worth and benefit your group?

Is zoom fatigue a real thing? Is it just me?



Zoom Fatigue - Introverts

- **The Introvert Sisters Podcast:** [Zoom Fatigue is Real: Why Introverts Find Video Calls Hard | TIS Ep. 34](#)
 - **The Why:** “Zoom fatigue happens in part because it’s a constant reminder of how much the world has changed.”
 - **The How:** “You have to make more of an effort to appear friendly and switched on. You have to do so much performing.”
 - **The What:** “Take breaks. Set limits. Establish boundaries. It’s about mental health care, and self-care.”
- 

Zoom Fatigue Fixes

Stanford News (resource with associated solutions):

[Stanford researchers identify four causes for 'Zoom fatigue' and their simple fixes](#)

1. Excessive amounts of close-up eye contact is highly intense.
2. Seeing yourself during video chats constantly in real-time is fatiguing.
3. Video chats dramatically reduce our usual mobility.
4. The cognitive load is much higher in video chats.



Tips to Beat Zoom Fatigue

The Best Schools: [6 Tips to Beat Zoom Fatigue](#)

- **2020 Rule** - For every 20 minutes you spend looking at a screen, take 20 seconds to look at something 20 feet away.

Again, Humor Can Be Self-Care

- **The Boston Globe:**
[The 12 most annoying co-workers you face on Zoom](#)
 - **Who are the faces in the Zoom neighborhood?**





What is the best platform/approach?

- Let's not forget about good practices of meeting management.
 - What is the need this meeting is supposed to address?
 - Are there other ways to engage colleagues instead of a meeting?
 - Can you have roles for each meeting participant? If not, do they need to be at the meeting?
- 



More on Meetings...

- Do you have an agenda? Is the agenda the same every time, because if that's the case, you don't have an agenda.
- Minutes – These can help avoid having the same meeting each time.
- How will you engage meeting attendees?
- Are smaller subcommittees in breakout rooms going to generate more interaction?



What rules have you set for yourself?

- Do you text those you manage/supervise?
 - Do you have 'work hours' in mind and do you hold yourself accountable for those hours?
 - Do you have 'no email/text' blocks of time when you do not check either?
 - What is your message, how can you deliver in a manner that is clear and professional, and how can you deliver it with positivity?
- 



About that chat function in your meeting...

- **D.5. Responsibility to the public and other professionals**
 - **h. Disparaging remarks.** Rehabilitation counselors do not disparage individuals or groups of individuals.
- It's easy to send to all as opposed to privately message to Rob.
- Maybe keep a scratch pad and paper and write down what you'd like to say without sending it?
- Consider share screen and implications of text notifications while you are speaking.



Bluetooth and Alexa

- Consider disabling when in meetings and when counseling clients.
- Alexa can easily be triggered.
- Bluetooth... starting car may connect driver with your counseling session.

What information is out there speaking to work/life balance current day?



Pew Research

- **Pew Research Center:** [How the Coronavirus Outbreak Has – and Hasn't – Changed the Way Americans Work](#)
- Multiple messages –
 - **Socio-economic disparities** and how individuals with disabilities and low-income workers are less likely to have opportunities for telework.
 - A large number of individuals reporting a **strong desire to remain engaged in a teleworking** environment post-pandemic at least in some capacity.
 - New teleworkers are feeling a **sense of accomplishment in terms of work-life balance** and increased productivity
 - But they are experiencing a **disconnect between co-workers** and missing that inter-office social activity.



12 Steps to Work Life Balance

- **Industry Week:** [12 Key Strategies to Achieving a Work-Life Balance](#)
- **12** – Know when to ask for help.
 - Very self-care related!



The Slate

- **SLATE:** [COVID Killed Work-Life Balance](#)
 - Several practical tips, but potentially a good read just to know it's not you... other people have experienced challenges (and successes) when transitioning to work at home.



7 Tips on Pandemic Redefinition of WLB

- **The Enterprisers Project:**

[7 ways to redefine work-life balance during the pandemic](#)

- **7** – Remember, the pandemic will not last forever!

I feel 'blah' all the time.
Is it just me?



How do I stay alert and motivated when I feel sluggish and dull?

- **The New York Times:** [There's a Name for the Blah You're Feeling: It's Called Languishing](#)
 - “Languishing is a sense of stagnation and emptiness. It feels as if you're muddling through your days, looking at your life through a foggy windshield. And it might be the dominant emotion of 2021.”
 - Between depression and flourishing.
 - Flow is the “antidote”
- 



Bradley, Whisenhunt, Adamson, & Kress (2013)

Csikszentmihalyi (1996) used the term “flow” to describe the experience of being fully engaged in the creative moment (p. 110).

- During flow, the creator is so completely involved in the creative process that concerns and fears fade from direct awareness.

This function of the creative experience may be helpful for professional counselors who find themselves taking ownership of their clients’ issues.

- Externalization can also take the form of containment or compartmentalization.



The Atlantic – Late Stage Pandemic and the Brain

- **The Atlantic:** [Late-Stage Pandemic Is Messing With Your Brain](#)
 - Brain fog, forgetfulness, word finding challenges...
 - Mike Yassa, a neuroscientist at UC Irvine. “Based on everything we know about the brain, two of the things that are really good for it are physical activity and novelty. A thing that’s very bad for it is chronic and perpetual stress.”
 - Reason for optimism – Temporary context is not thought to be permanent.
- 

How am I going to navigate my feelings and my interactions with others as we re-engage?

I'm vaccinated. Now What?

Fears and Concerns

- Your concerns are likely shared or similar to those held by others.
- We're all a bit concerned about whether our social skills have atrophied during the Pandemic!
- Reach out. When we are able to know that our concerns are shared by others, and when we can hear differing concerns and provide support, the process is very therapeutic.





Risk Mitigation

- Some counselors tend to be excellent with mitigating risks.
- It may have felt uncomfortable when the CDC gave very different guidance in mid-May relative to masks.
- Some counselors are excellent in terms of spontaneity.
- Their reaction was likely jubilation.



Don't get in your own way!

- **Manage Expectations** – Don't overthink and become your own barrier.
- Accepting differing approaches to re-opening?
- Some may be brick and mortar, some may be at a distance, some may be hybrid...
- Travel used to be a good portion of many career positions in the past... what will that look like in the future?



Many Resources Pontificating Next Phase

- The New York Times: [The Pandemic May Mean the End of the Open-Floor Office](#)
 - SpaceIQ: [The Rise of Hoteling During the COVID Era](#)
 - Chargifi: [How to enable desk hoteling in a Covid-safe workplace](#)
 - MIT Sloan Management Review: [Redesigning the Post-Pandemic Workplace](#)
 - Forbes: [Preparing The Workplace For A Post-Pandemic World](#)
 - Harvard Business Review: [Workplace Design, Post-Pandemic Podcast](#)
 - Harvard Business School: [COVID Killed the Traditional Workplace. What Should Companies Do Now?](#)
- 



Additional Self-Care Resources

- [Your Self-Care Plan](#)
 - [CRCC Ethics Resources](#)
 - [Therapist Aid Self-Care Assessment](#)
 - [University of Buffalo - School of Social Work Self-Care Assessment](#)
 - [NAMI Self-Care Assessment](#)
 - [UMatter - Princeton University Initiative](#)
 - [UMatter Wellness Self-Assessment](#)
 - [ReachOut.com](#)
 - [ReachOut.com Self-Care Plan](#)
- 



Bottom Line From Resources

- The common theme from all of the above articles is that post-pandemic work likely looks hybrid.
- Implementing a variety of options including shared work spaces, hoteling, or something similar to a “WeWork” (Commercial Real Estate Firm) (not sure if they are a company anymore).
- Not only do companies see the value in remote work, but also understand that it saves in overhead costs to provide more flexible work options for employees.



Post Pandemic

- This is a perfect Self-Care 101 group project!
- There are a lot of unknowns.
- There is a lot of cumulative trauma from the period March 2020 until now.
- Focus on what you can control... your reactions, your self-care, and try to get in touch with your ability to trust.



Past Successes and Current Demands

Think about a time when you were feeling particularly overwhelmed.

What did you need?

What did you want those around you to know?

How could others have been helpful to you?

Questions





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