

My Self-Care Toolbox

Planning for self-care is important as a helping professional. When planning we need to know what we're preventing and what our personal vision of emotional fitness could be. Knowing the signs of the top 3 empathy-related injuries can help:



1. Compassion fatigue is a form of burnout that manifests as deep physical, emotional, and spiritual exhaustion. Compassion Fatigue can look like: Eating lunch while completing paperwork, making calls after hours, or returning emails on the weekends or in the evenings.
2. Secondary trauma is emotional duress that results when an individual hears about the firsthand trauma experiences of another. Secondary trauma can look like: withdrawal, isolating, being hyper-alert, feeling depressed, or feeling anxious. These symptoms can emerge suddenly and with little warning.
3. Burnout is a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress.

Burnout can look like: blurred-vision, difficulty finding words, difficulty focusing on the present moment, worrying about work all the time, feeling helpless and hopeless, and lack of creativity.

Armed with this information, create your own self-care plan using the worksheet below.

What does **emotional fitness** look like for me?

What are **my signs** of empathy-related injury?

What **can I do** to be proactive?

For My Mind

(Example: unplug for an hour, go cloud watching, or develop a gratitude practice.)

For My Body

(Example: eat healthy meals, get at least 7 hours of sleep, or exercise.)

For My Soul

(Example: meditate, focus on the beautiful, or find something that makes you laugh)

Take inventory of your Social Capital—Who in your life supports you? Who do you support? When was the last time you spent time with them? Who can be your accountability partner for your improved self-care practices?

Who can I go to for support?

Affirmations are powerful forms of self-talk. Practicing them often before they are needed assists in developing better mental health on the front lines of addiction. Writing affirmations is simple. Here are a few guidelines: Keep them short, use present tense, affirm what you desire, and engage powerful emotions. For instance: “Every day, in every way, I get better and better!”

What are **3 affirmations** that you can use to support you?



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