BEYOND THE BASICS OF SELF-CARE
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- Certified Public Accountant
- Mental Health Professional
- Working on my PhD in Psychology
- Dissertation: Humility
- Co-authoring a book with Des Cummings, PhD: Original Love
- Research: Character qualities, emotional intelligence, resilience
A GREAT STORY

- Diverse and developed characters
- Characters have flaws
- Grows from being the underdog
- Grows in character
- Unknown truths are discovered
- Rising and falling action
- Readers want to go on the journey with the character
BILBO BAGGINS

- He was ordinary
- Led an uneventful life: likes to relax, cook, hobbies, security – a homebody
- Goes on an adventure
- Challenges left and right
- Terrified, uncomfortable, and unhappy
- Eventually rises to meet the challenges
- Finds unknown capabilities
- In the end—he is changed— a brave and courageous hero
WHAT’S YOUR STORY

- What makes for a great story for your life
- How does your character develop
- Tests, Trials, and Tribulations
- Moving from burnout to a story of resilience
OBJECTIVES

- Understanding key concepts
  - self-care
  - compassion fatigue (traumatic stress and vicarious traumatization)
  - burn-out
- Balanced view of self-care, beyond the basics
- Applying various evidenced based self-care practices
The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet. This sort of denial is no small matter. The way we deal with loss shapes our capacity to be present to life more than anything else. The way we protect ourselves from loss may be the way in which we distance ourselves from life and help. We burn out not because we don’t care but because we don’t grieve. We burn out because we’ve allowed our hearts to become so filled with loss that we have no room left to care.
Care
• the process of protecting someone or something and providing what that person or thing needs

Self-Care
• the act of caring for yourself when you are ill or to stop yourself from becoming ill
The World Health Organization (WHO) recognizes stress related work issues as a syndrome of burnout:

**Emotional Exhaustion**
- No enthusiasm
- Drained
- Overextension
- Exhausted

**Depersonalization**
- Increased mental distancing from work
- Cynical
- Calloused

**Reduced Personal Accomplishment**
- Reduced efficacy
- Negative evaluation: Job effectiveness, Patients
- Losing meaning

Sounding familiar?
The Body Keeps the Score
It knows before our mind something needs to change: anxiety, depression, panic attacks, health issues, numbness, headaches, insomnia, indigestion,

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The Makings of Burnout

Higher Patient Ratios
Low Resources
Do More with Less
Regulation & Competency
Malpractice Suits
Inability to Say No
More paperwork
High Demands
Inability to Say No

LOSS OF CONTROL
WORK EFFECTS AND COSTS

Empirical research shows burnout rates in the medical profession from 21 to 67%  
- Think about quitting, changing professions  
- Quality of care  
- Impaired care giving  
  - Less empathetic  
  - Less collaborative  
  - Less present  
- Decreased patient satisfaction  
- Lower patient compliance
### Unhealthy Coping Skills
- Substance abuse
- Compulsive behaviors
- Suicidal ideation

### Somatic Symptoms
- Neurological
- Digestive
- Sexual
- Sleep

### Work Issues
- Dread working with certain clients
- Hypersensitivity
- Absenteeism

### Emotional Problems
- Moody: Lash out with anger, irritable
- Drained
- Reduce the ability to feel sympathy and empathy
- Develop heightened anxiety or irrational fear
Due to health care workers’ risk for burnout, compassion fatigue, addictions, etc. which could result in impaired functioning in caring for patients, self-care becomes an ethical responsibility.

(Barnett, Baker, Elman, & Schoener, 2007; Norcross & Guy, 2007; Wise, Hersh, & Gibson, 2012)
Self-Care is often Misunderstood

- Myth: There is a magic pill or one-size fits all: yoga, planting a garden, music, running marathons, organization, not wearing deodorant, finding motivation, etc. You be you!
- Myth: Buying into the billion dollar self-care industry of services and products to become more fit, desirable, intelligent, etc.
- Myth: You being an all consuming project. You are not a goal.
- Myth: You are allowed to be selfish. “Taking care of myself doesn’t mean me first. It means me, too.” L.R. Knost
- Myth: Mindless activities: eating, Netflix binging and then sleeping in, etc. Self-care is not ignoring your responsibilities.
- Myth: Being alone when you are really isolating yourself
- Myth: Attaining some kind of fill-in-the-blank “perfection” or worthiness from body to work to relationships to having it all together
Self-Care

Knowledge
Identification and prevention of burnout
Self-awareness
Self-reflection
Professional boundaries
Grief and bereavement
Body
Mind
Spirit

Mind, Will, & Emotions
Meaning and Purpose

Health
Positive changes in our life just don’t happen. I have to take action, the right action.
The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.

-Albert Einstein
DOWNWARD SPIRALS

- attentional fixation
- sympathetic system activation
- shrinking scope of attention
- mobilization
- fight, flight, or freeze
- stress appraisal
- shallow breathing, racing heart, tension building
- intensification of negative emotions & stress
- attentional narrowing
- In time resulting in depression, anxiety, and toxic stress
positive emotions broaden thought repertoire by broadening our scope of attention so that we are open to creativity, flexibility, and receiving...
UPWARD SPIRALS

FOCUS OF ATTENTION

Event

parasympathetic system activation
mindful awareness
broadening scope of attention
room for choices
wise response
bodily relaxation response
perception and insight
decentering
creativity, openness, flexible
flourishing
Attentional fixation
CBT or Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
Challenging your thoughts
Negative thought or the limiting belief
Say as loud as you can to yourself “FAULTY THINKING”

I am unlovable
I am a bad person/ permanently damaged
I am not good enough
I am worthless
I am insignificant
I am a disappointment
I am pathetic
I am dirty
I have to be perfect

I should have known better
It’s my fault
I can’t trust anyone
I am alone
I am abandoned
I don’t belong
I am powerless/helpless/trapped
I cannot get what I want
I am a failure
HELPFUL VERSUS UNHELPFUL THOUGHTS

HELPFUL THOUGHTS

UNHELPFUL THOUGHTS
CONTAINER
Most of us cannot design our life
We can’t always control our circumstances
But we can choose to experience positive emotions in the midst of suffering and loss.
Creating self-care plans

We take the inward journey to find our best self by using self care so that we are shaped and reimagined

We then take the outward journey to touch others
REFERENCES


