Unlock Potential: Prevention is Key

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Unlock Potential

- Potential – qualities or abilities that may be developed and lead to future success or usefulness
  - Capability
  - Possibility

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Prevention is Key

- Prevention – the action of stopping something from happening or arising
  - Our job is to remove obstacles and build skills
  - Find problems early before they have a chance to escalate

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Unlock our own Potential

- Engage in healthy behaviors at work and life
  - Prevent burn-out – help with the shortages problem
  - Use our full range of training and the NASP Practice Model to unlock our potential as School Psychologists
    - Research shows that a restricted role leads to burn out

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Wellness (from SAMHSA)

- Gives life a purpose
  - Active engagement in work and play that are fulfilling
  - Healthy mind, body and environment
  - Social relationships that bring us joy
- Self-care facilitates our wellness.

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Self Care:
A Privilege and A Responsibility

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What is self-care?

- Taking wellness seriously
- Activities and behaviors that nourish us
- A privilege
- Our responsibility

- Two types: Personal and Professional

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What isn't self-care?

- Being selfish
- Actions that deplete us
- Adding more tasks to you to do list
- An emergency burn-out prevention plan
- A New Year's resolution
- A quick fix

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Benefits of Self-Care

- More energy
- Job satisfaction
- Life satisfaction
- Gain perspective – better prioritizing of tasks
- Model self care for others
- Enjoy career/life balance
- Increase in happiness
- Mental and physical health benefits
- Enjoy healthy relationships
- Ethical practice

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What are the consequences of not taking care of oneself?

- More sick days
- Less productivity
- Career burn out
- Less enjoyment of job
- Compassion fatigue

*Mental health professionals are especially vulnerable to these consequences.

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Why does this happen?

- We take on the burdens of others
- We are overworked – shortages
- We say “yes”
- Lots of demands
- Few rewards
- Other ideas?

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Signs you need to focus more on self-care

- Increased anxiety
- Decreased patience
- Difficulty relaxing
- Changes in memory and focus
- Feeling more irritable/cynical
- Human being vs. human doing
- Experiencing less fulfillment at work

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My "aha" moments

- It's more than massages.
- We don't know we aren't doing self-care when we aren't doing self-care.
  - This was me!

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Questions

- How long has it been since you did something for yourself? What did you do?
- How do you take care of yourself at work?

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History can help us understand

- Mind body connection was discounted in the 17th century with the emergence of Rationalism
- Emotions couldn't be seen so weren't as important to our health
- Only recently has the connection been recognized again as important– especially as it applies to stress
- Need to focus our self-care energies on both the mind and the body

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Types of Self Care: Personal and Professional

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Personal

- Physical
- Psychological
- Social
- Emotional
- Spiritual

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Professional

- Staying up to date on research and practice
- Applying personal self-care at work

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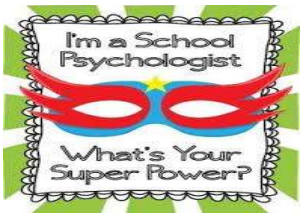
Self-Care Ideas and Tools

Why did you become a school psychologist?



Much of our job brings us joy. The rest of what we do is why we get a paycheck.

Thus, we have a really good hourly wage.

Professional – SNSPE and me

SNSPE
- Sunday meal prep
- Set out clothes
- Lunch break
- Only work at work
- Delete email from phone
- Visit a classroom
- Take a mental health day
- Smaller work bag
- Wear a uniform, change when get home

Me
- Organize desk/workspace
- Buy cool office supplies
- Splurge on a calendar
- Take a walk
- Breath breaks
- 60 second brain break

Personal SNSPE and me

SNSPE
- Exercise
- Healthy eating
- Hobbies
- Yoga/meditation
- Book club
- Music
- Journal
- Hiking/camping
- Time with friends and family
- Read
- See a therapist/counselor
- Self-care bowl of ideas
- Pets

Me
- Clean a junk drawer
- Donate clothes
- Laugh/humor
- Look at pictures of dogs on Instagram
- Read a cookbook
- Netflix

Dogs on Instagram – Please ♡ us.

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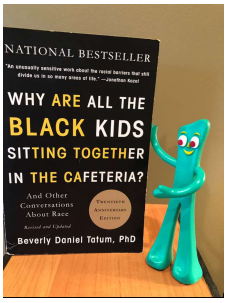
Professional – Professional Development

- Attend state and national conference
  - Learn, network, energize, support
- Listen to a podcast
- Facilitate or participate in a professional book club

Book Recommendation



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Professional Strategies

- File of Positives
  - Emails
  - Trinkets
- Build up your coworkers
- Ask for help.
- Lunch Bunch – with colleagues
  - May need to use technology
- When do you leave work?
- Take breaks – may need to set an alarm. Use this time to regroup and reorganize.
- Graduate Students – Wellness Committee
- Start a self-care team in your building
- Write articles on self-care– tell your story

Professional Strategies

Utilize Time Diaries:
- Document your activities.
- See where time is well spent and not well spent

Take control over your time and activities when
- appropriate.
- Early career SPs often do not do this enough.

Check in with your assertiveness
- Are you overly accommodating?
- Are you doing other people's work?

Practice saying no without actually saying no.
Delay agreeing to new tasks.
Connect with others
Ask for administrative support
Put self-care on your annual evaluation

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What does your "TO DO" list include?

- Add self-care
- Prioritize your self-care

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Helpful Reminder

- We have a very rewarding job.
  - Job satisfaction statistics for psychologists are high
- Rewarding job characteristics:
  - Challenging
  - Exciting
  - Stimulating
  - Helping others
  - Making connections

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Perspective

- Realize that you can't save all the children, but you can help many.
- Don't personalize.

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Owning self care

- What are you currently doing?
- What would enhance your self-care?
  - Include behaviors you want to increase and decrease

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Individualized Energy Plan (IEP)

- Select self-care activities
- Identify your barriers
- Identify your assets
- Monitor these activities
- Develop an accountability plan – share
- Celebrate successes

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IEP – Make the Commitment

- Self-Care Activity/Goal:
- Barriers:
- Assets:
- Monitor: Daily or Weekly
- Accountability:
- Reinforcement:

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Document

- Google docs
- Calendar
- Chart

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My Self-Care

- July – learned lessons
- Barriers – flexible schedule, motivation, lots on my plate, new role
- Facilitators – getting a schedule/routine, support from family and friends, apps

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My Plan

- 3 weekly goals (e.gs., meditate, yoga, strength, laugh, reach out to friends)
  - Document daily
  - Use my planner
  - Check progress every Monday morning
- Gratitude Journal
  - Brief entries - switched to online journal
- Daily text with my sister

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Meditation and Mindful Breathing

- Meditation changes brain waves
  - Many health benefits

- 4-7-8 Breathing
  - Inhale through your nose for 4 counts
  - Hold your breath for 7 counts
  - Exhale through your mouth for 8 counts

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Share your Successes

- #selfcareselfie
- #treatyourselftuesday
- @nasponline
- #naspadvocates

#selfcareselfie

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Helping Students with Self-Care

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Our Role

- We need to remember to put on our own oxygen masks before we assist others.
- Have credibility – e.g., don't teach a mindfulness group if you aren't doing it yourself.
- Our words and actions influence students.

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Teaching Healthy Habits

- Not all children have the privilege of learning self-care.
- Share websites and apps with families and teachers to help facilitate
- We can teach skills
  - Breathing
  - Kindness acts – Secret Kindness Agents

My Happy Place

Resources

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NASP Resources
Nasponline.org/self-care

- Individual Strategies
  - Self-Care: The Missing Link in Best Practice (Part I)
  - Self-Care: The Missing Link in Best Practice (Part II)
  - The Resilient School Psychologist
  - Developing Support Systems and Managing Stress (Early Career)
  - Thriving in Graduate School
  - Care for the Caregiver
  - NASP Find-A-Mentor Program
- Systemic Strategies
  - Reflective Supervision: A Clinical Supervision Model for Fostering Professional Growth
  - Retention Strategies to Support School Psychologists

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More from NASP

- Podcasts –
  - Promoting a Work and Life Balance -Michael Sulkowski
  - Solutions for Burnout – Heather Christian Martens
- Communique
  - Communicating effectively during early career transitions: Using self-reflections (Zuhkle and Mussman)

http://www.nasponline.org/publications/periodicals/communique/issues/volume-37-issue-8/communicating-effectively-during-early-career-transitions-using-self-reflection

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Websites

- http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/relaxation-technique/SR00007
- http://socialwork.buffalo.edu/resources/self-care-starter-kit/self-care-assessments-exercises/exercises-and-activities.html
- http://www.yogajournal.com/
- http://yogatothepeople.com/about-us/podcasts/
- http://stress.about.com/
- https://www.youtube.com/user/yogawithadriene

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Resources

- https://brenebrown.com
- https://gretchenrubin.com

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APPS

- Insight Timer
- Headspace
- Simply Being
- Breathe
- Breathe2Relax
- Chakra Chime
- Calm
- Mind Yeti
- Smiling Mind
  - (Alexa has several good apps)

Be kinder to yourself.
And then let your kindness flood the world.
-Pema Chodron

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