Avoiding Work Fatigue and Burnout

Through Sustainability and “Self-Care”
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Overview

- In this interactive webinar, you will:
  - Reflect a general understanding of secondary (or vicarious) trauma
  - Recognize potential impact of trauma on health outcomes and stress levels
  - Reflect an understanding of self-care and its importance
  - Identify at least three self-care strategies (for workplace or home)
  - Develop a self-care plan that could improve workplace/personal self-care
The cycle of wellbeing
How Does Stress Relate to Your Health Outcomes?

❑ Stress is actually a normal part of life.

❑ Stress can motivate you to get that promotion at work, or run the last mile of a marathon.

❑ But if you don't get a handle on your stress and it becomes long-term, it can seriously interfere with your job, family life, and health outcome.
Self-Preservation: Why it’s important to practice

“Caring for myself, it is self preservation, and that’s an act of political warfare,” Audre Lorde famously wrote in “A Burst of Light”

Yet it seems as there’s never any “right time to rest” when ensuring that the lives of black women living with HIV matter.

Stress Related to Racial Justice
“why racism matters”

The places we live, learn, work and play have tremendous impact on our health outcomes as black women living with HIV.

We need to be at the forefront of racial justice for black women, finding healthy balance of self-care in the Black Lives Matter movement can be difficult.

Self-care: How do we remain vigilant in pursuit of justice?
Self-Care Assessment

Based on Transforming the Pain: Workbook on Vicarious Traumatization
(Saakvitne, Pearlman, & Staff of TSI/CAAP (Norton, 1996)
Please rate the following areas in frequency:
5-frequently
4-occasionally
3-rarely
2-never
1-it never occurred to me
Physical Self-Care:
- eat regularly
- eat healthy
- exercise
- get medical care when needed
- take time off when sick
- dance, swim, walk, run, play sports, sing, or do some other physical activity that’s fun
- get enough sleep
- take vacations or mini-vacations
- take time for self/time away from telephones
- other:
Psychological Self-Care:
- make time for self-reflection
- have your own personal psychotherapy or counseling
- write in a journal
- read literature that is unrelated to work
- engage your intelligence in new areas or new activities
- decrease stress in your life
- notice your inner experience - listen to your thoughts, judgments, beliefs, attitudes, and feelings
- practice receiving from others
- say no to extra responsibilities
Emotional Self-Care:
- spend time with others whose company you enjoy
- stay in contact with important people in your life
- give yourself affirmation
- identify comforting activities, objects, people, relationships, places, and seek them out
- allow yourself to cry
- find things that make you laugh
- express your outrage in social action, letters, donations, marches and protests
- play with children
- other:
Spiritual Self-Care:

- make time for reflection
- spend time with nature
- find a spiritual connection or community
- be open to inspiration
- cherish your optimism and hope
- be aware of nonmaterial aspects of your life
- try at times not to be in charge or the expert
- be open to knowing
- meditate, pray, sing, have experiences of awe
- contribute to causes in which you believe
- read inspirational literature
- play with children
- other:
Professional Self-Care:
- take a break during the workday (e.g. lunch)
- take time to chat with co-workers
- make quiet time to complete tasks
- identify projects or tasks that is exciting and rewarding
- set limits with clients and colleagues
- balance your caseload/workload so no one day or part of a day is “too much”
- arrange your work space so it is comfortable and comforting
- utilize regular supervision or consultation
- negotiate your needs (benefits, pay raise, time off)
- have a peer support group
- develop a non-trauma area of professional interest
- other:
Relationship Balance and Self-Care:

- strive for balance within your work-life and workday
- make quiet time to complete tasks
- strive for balance among work, family, relationships, play and rest
- other areas of self-care that are relevant to you:
Definitions:

- What self-care is…
- What self-care is not…
- How to practice self-care…
Thinking about Self-Care

○ What is one thing you do to relax when you are stressed?

○ What is one thing you do to comfort yourself when you are feeling sad or hurt?

○ What is one thing you do to calm down when you are angry?

○ What is one thing you do to find peace when you are feeling scared?
Black Women’s Health

- The health issues that black women face are understandable, though not acceptable, when we understand the compounded stress associated with racism, sexism, and heterosexism.

- Additionally, familial expectations for black women to be all things for all people significantly affect their health outcomes.

- The myth of the strong black woman

- Statistics about black women’s health
Strategies for Wellness
(Beauboef-Lafontant 2009)

- Do what you love. What brings you joy? What are you passionate about? Take time to tap into your humanity and creative side, every day.

- Re-evaluate where you are in your life. Is this where you want to be? Shape your own career path. Academia is not the end all be all for any of us.

- Set priorities and boundaries--without apology. Remove toxic people from your life. Block out times to take care of yourself and make self-care just as much of a priority (or perhaps even more so) than other aspects of your life.
Strategies for Wellness, cont.

Get new role models--not role-martyrs. My role models are women who make time for themselves, family, and for friendships. I stopped glorifying women who gave it all til there was nothing left a long time ago.

Create a wellness manifesto and community. Hold yourself to this mantra, and check in with a community that keeps you accountable.
Self-Care Plan: reachout.com

“Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.” - Audre Lorde
Self-Care Plan

Creating a self-care plan with activities that you enjoy and that support your wellbeing
Physical Self-Care:
These are activities that help you to stay fit and healthy, and with enough energy to get through your work and personal commitments.

Psychological Self-Care:
These are activities that help you feel clear-headed and able to intellectually engage with the professional challenges that are found in your work and personal life.
Emotional Self-Care:
These are activities that allow you to safely experience your full range of emotions.

Spiritual Self-Care:
This involves having a sense of perspective beyond the day-to-day of life.
Workplace or Professional Self-Care:
This involves activities that help you to work consistently at the professional level expected of you.

Relationship Self-Care:
Is about maintaining healthy, supportive relationships, and ensuring you have diversity in your relationships so that you are not only connected to work people.
Suggestions for Success

- Keep this in a place where you can see it every day.
- Stick to your plan and practice the activities regularly.
- Re-assess how you are going at the end of one month and then three months.

A word of caution:
Self-Care is not selfish: You cannot serve from an empty vessel!
Thank You

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