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Assessing Your Self-Care

The most important aspect of self-care is time and time is often the most difficult thing to find.

Organisations and individuals must find the time and then use it wisely, to keep healthy, vibrant and be able to face a new day of challenges.

Family violence workers need:

* time to mend
* time to take a break
* time to debrief
* time to case plan
* time to celebrate
* time to participate in decision making
* time off
* time for social justice
* time to sing, dance, laugh and live

The following self-care assessment scale is designed as a tool to measure how well a counsellor/case worker is addressing their own needs. It is useful to revisit this assessment regularly, and to share parts of it with your supervisor. Not all of these activities may be relevant to you.

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 (e.g. breakfast, lunch, and dinner)

\_\_\_ Eat healthily

\_\_\_ Exercise

\_\_\_ Get regular medical care for prevention

\_\_\_ Get medical care when needed

\_\_\_ Take time off when sick

\_\_\_ Get massages

\_\_\_ Dance, swim, walk, run, play sports, sing, or do some other physical activity that is fun

\_\_\_ Take time to be sexual – with yourself, with a partner

\_\_\_ Get enough sleep

\_\_\_ Wear clothes you like

\_\_\_ Take vacations

\_\_\_ Take day trips or mini-vacations

\_\_\_ Make time away from telephones

\_\_\_ Other:

Psychological Self-Care

\_\_\_ Make time for self-reflection

\_\_\_ Have your own personal psychotherapy

\_\_\_ Write in a journal

\_\_\_ Read literature that is unrelated to work

\_\_\_ Decrease stress in your life

\_\_\_ Notice your inner experience – listen to your thoughts, judgments, beliefs, attitudes and feelings

\_\_\_ Let others know about different aspects of you

\_\_\_ Engage your intelligence in a new area (e.g. go to an art museum, history exhibit, sports event, auction, theatre performance)

\_\_\_ Practise receiving from others

\_\_\_ Be curious

\_\_\_ Say no to extra responsibilities sometimes

\_\_\_ Other:

Spiritual Self-Care

\_\_\_ Make time for reflection

\_\_\_ Spend time with nature

\_\_\_ Find or make time for a spiritual connection or community

\_\_\_ Be open to inspiration

\_\_\_ Cherish your optimism and hope

\_\_\_ Be aware of non-material aspects of life

\_\_\_ Try at times not to be in charge or the expert

\_\_\_ Be open to not knowing

\_\_\_ Identify what is meaningful to you and notice its place in your life

\_\_\_ Meditate

\_\_\_ Pray

\_\_\_ Sing

\_\_\_ Spend time with children

\_\_\_ Have experiences of awe

\_\_\_ Contribute to causes in which you believe

\_\_\_ Read inspirational literature (e.g. talks, music)

\_\_\_ Other:

Emotional Self-Care

\_\_\_ Spend time with others whose company you enjoy

\_\_\_ Stay in contact with important people in your life

\_\_\_ Give yourself affirmations, praise yourself

\_\_\_ Love yourself

\_\_\_ Revisit favourite books or movies

\_\_\_ 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, protests

\_\_\_ Play with children

\_\_\_ Other:

Balance

\_\_\_ Strive for balance within your work life and work day

\_\_\_ Strive for balance among work, family, relationships, play and rest

Workplace or Professional Self-Care

\_\_\_ Take a break during the workday

\_\_\_ Take time to chat with co-workers

\_\_\_ Make quiet time to complete tasks

\_\_\_ Identify projects or tasks that are exciting and rewarding

\_\_\_ Set limits with clients and colleagues

\_\_\_ Balance your caseload so each day or part of a day isn’t “too much”

\_\_\_ Arrange your work space so it is comfortable and comforting

\_\_\_ Get regular supervision or consultation

\_\_\_ Negotiate for your needs (benefits, pay raise)

\_\_\_ Have a peer support group

\_\_\_ Develop a non-trauma area of professional interest

\_\_\_ Other:

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