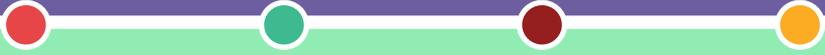
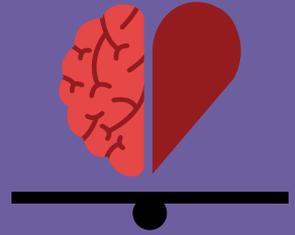
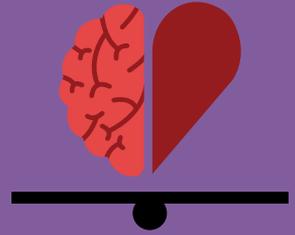


# #Wellness Deck



Cards to help with self care, communication, grief, and self compassion.

# #Wellness Deck



This toolkit provides examples of self-care in the forms of rejuvenating practices, routines, meditation, nutrition, and exercise suggestions, and examples to differentiate between self-care and things that actually cause more harm than good to the self.

# STEPS TO CONSIDER IN YOUR MORNING ROUTINE

- Wake at sunrise
- Drink warm water with lemon
- Go to the bathroom, eliminate
- Scrape your tongue (great for eliminating toxins!)
- Wash your face, mouth, teeth, and eyes
- Use a neti pot (cleanses the nasal cavities!)
- Self-massage (with organic coconut or sesame oil. A great self-love, care, and relaxation practice.)
- Exercise
- Bathe
- Meditate
- Eat a satiating and nutritious breakfast



# STEPS TO CONSIDER IN YOUR AFTERNOON ROUTINE

## **Lunch-time Routine**

- Make lunch your biggest meal of the day (when your digestive fires are most active!)
- Be mindful of your food. The colors and smells. Pray or bless the food. Give thanks.
- After eating, allow time for digestion. Spend 5-20 minutes lying on your left side.

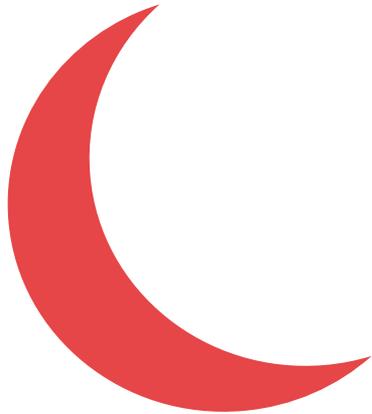
## **Afternoon/Early Evening Routines**

- Take time to relax before dinner (yoga Nidra, savasana)
- Eat a light dinner and then sparingly afterward (helps sleep)



# STEPS TO CONSIDER IN YOUR NIGHTTIME ROUTINE

- Set the mood by turning down the lights and/or lighting candles
- Stop using screens by 8 or 9 p.m.
- Avoid mental stimulation in TV or heated conversations, etc.
- Take a warm and relaxing bath
- Read an easy, light book.
- Bedtime at 10 p.m



# COMMITMENT: ONE THING

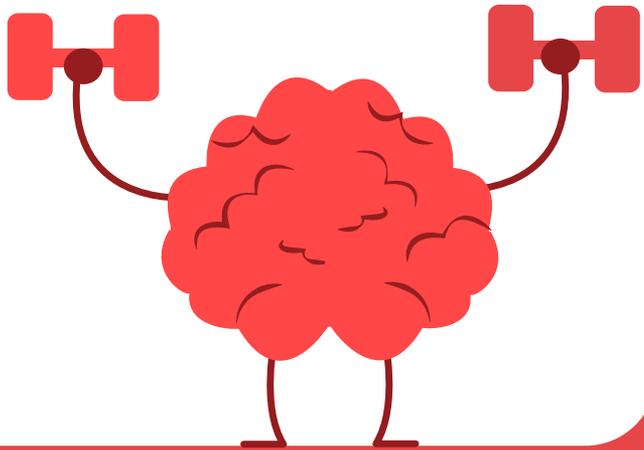
Self-care is about caring for yourself. Anyone can do it. Think about what is feasible for you and choose just ONE thing to incorporate into your routine. By choosing just one thing, you are more likely to feel fulfilled and satisfied rather than stressed and unsuccessful (Kellar & Papasan, 2013). If that one thing sticks, then add another. Be aware of how your self-care makes you feel and adjust your routines and practices as needed (i.e. during seasonal shifts or during menstruation, etc.).

1



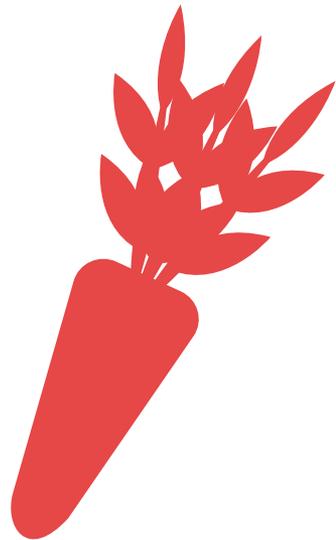
# MEDITATION

Though meditation can be beneficial at any time of day, some say meditating in the morning is best (Silcox, 2016). Some find 10 minutes of meditation to be settling for the mind and body. If feeling anxious or like you have a “monkeymind,” try sitting for 5-10 minutes in mindful meditation and practice nonjudgmental awareness.



# NUTRITION

If feeling lethargic, mentally exhausted, or depleted, look back at your meals. If you see a pattern of meals that are non-nutritious – make eating a nutritious meal full of whole foods – something you love to eat – one of your top priorities the next day.



# EXERCISE

If feeling lethargic or exhausted, look at your exercise routine. If exercise is nonexistent in your life right now, add in a 30-minute walk or run. Maybe lifting weights or practicing yoga is your go-to- workout. Carve out time in your week for your exercise.



# SLEEP

Are you getting enough sleep in a night? If yes, you probably feel energized and clear minded. If not, you may feel like you're dragging and fill up on caffeine to get by. If the latter is true for you, carve out time for a nighttime routine to help your mind prepare for sleep. Turn of screens by 8 or 9 p.m., dim the lights, read a light-hearted book or take a bath, and try to be in bed by 10 p.m. – all per Silcox's (2016) suggestions.



# SAYING NO

Saying “no” to someone else can mean saying “yes” to you. If you are a “yes” person and feel over whelmed, strung out, and like you are balancing too many tasks—make this your number one priority next week. Say no to things that don’t serve you and yes to things that do.



No!



# SETTING BOUNDARIES

Saying no is part of setting boundaries. Boundaries could be set in your relationships, in your work schedule, or even in your eating habits, etc. The point is to create space in your life for personal fulfillment and joy. If no boundaries means little space and time for yourself, or that you are being taken advantage of or unappreciated, then set some.



# HYGIENE

Self-care can be practiced in the forms of personal hygiene care. Maybe it's bringing morning showers into your routine, or daily self-oiling massages (See routines for more details).



# RELAXATION

Take time to be at peace, to soften your muscles and bring ease to the mind – think of Savasana at the end of yoga practices. If feeling up in the air or anxious, set aside some time for Savasana.



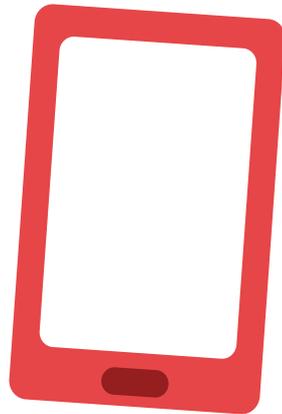
# HYDRATION

How do you know if you're dehydrated? Be aware of your skin, nails, lips, etc., if dry and coarse, you could be lacking water. Maybe next time you feel like snacking, drink water first, you could be thirsty instead. Also, for most hydration, try to sip on your water instead of taking big gulps.



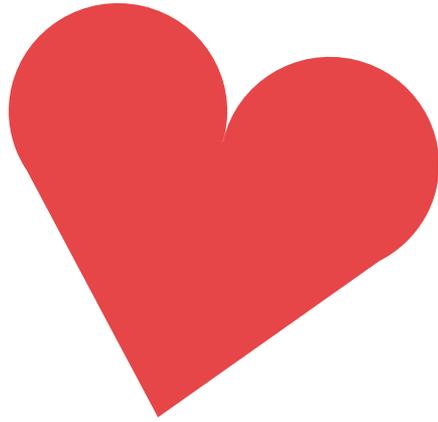
# LIMIT SCREEN TIME

You may work on a computer or have to cram for a test using your screens, but be mindful about how you do it. Maybe plan to take a short walk around the office every hour or commit to not using any screens at lunch. Also, be aware of how you use screens in your leisure time. Maybe limit screen use after 8 p.m. so you can prepare the mind for sleeping or limit screen use all together when you are home from work.



# FILL YOURSELF WITH THINGS THAT MAKE YOU FEEL ALIVE AND WELL

Do you love to dance? Then dance! Sing? Then sing! Hike? Hike! Think about the things that make you feel alive and well, and then create time do to them, and actually do them!

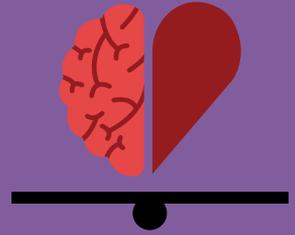


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# #Wellness Deck



## CONSCIOUS COMMUNICATION AND ACTION TOOLKIT



This toolkit encourages you to take responsibility for your experiences, feelings, and views, while also developing strong listening skills and ways to give and receive feedback that is empowering and helpful.

# OWN YOUR EXPERIENCE

**Use First Person Language**, also known as “I” Statements to encourage personal awareness and promote honest, clear, and emotionally intelligent communication skills.

- a. To practice conscious communication, one must first become aware of their experiences. Practice being aware of personal feelings, emotions, and thoughts, and actions without judgment.
- b. Once aware of one’s own experiences, communicate using “I” statements. Communicating from personal experience can be empowering and one can avoid making assumptions about others or saying things that are untrue.

*Rather than, “It’s freezing in here.”*  
Say, **“I feel cold.”**

*Rather than, “Yoga is so good for you, you know?”*  
Say, **“I feel like yoga has been great for my health and well-being.”**



# AVOID "WE" IN PLACE OF "I"

This projects one's personal experience onto another.

*Rather than, "We should go home now."*

*Say, "I'm tired and I'm ready to go home now."*

*Rather than, "People don't understand politics."*

*Say, "I have a hard time understanding politics and feel uncomfortable when political conversations arise."*

*Rather than, "That restaurant is always so slow."*

*Say, "Whenever I've eaten at that restaurant, I've had to wait a long time to be seated."*



# AVOID EXTERNALIZING FEELINGS

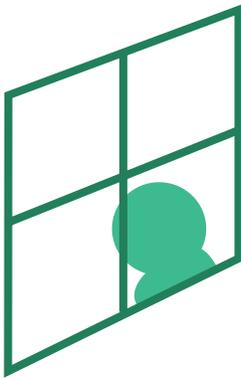
Avoid "you," "yours," "this," etc., when meaning "I," "my," or "mine," etc., to practice realizing feelings rather than turning away from them

*Rather than, "This workshop is dumb."*

**Say, "I don't understand why this workshop is important and I feel uncomfortable participating."**

*Rather than, "That sounds dangerous."*

**Say, "I feel nervous and scared about the potential risks."**



*anger*

*fear*

*sadness*

*discomfort*



# AVOID USING QUESTIONS TO MASK THE TRUTH

Sometimes we use questions to mask personal statements.

*Rather than, "Don't you think the dog is too overweight?"*

*Say, "I think the dog is overweight and I'm concerned about its health."*

*Rather than, "Where were you?"*

*Say, "I feel hurt because you didn't tell me you were going to be late."*

Statements like "I suppose," "I guess," etc. water down the truth.

*Rather than, "I suppose I could go."*

*Say, "I'd rather not go."*

*Rather than, "I'm just kind of mad."*

*Say, "I'm mad and upset."*



# AVOID NULLIFIERS THAT ESCAPE THE TRUTH

"I should" in place of "I could" and "but" in place of "and."

*Rather than, "I should go for a run today"*  
Say, **"I could go for a run today."**

*Rather than, "I'm interested in going, but don't know how to get there."*

Say, **"I'm interested in going and I don't know how to get there. Could you give me directions?"**



# PRACTICE

- Practice communicating feelings, thoughts, experiences, actions, etc., by using “I” statements and notice how you this makes you feel.
- Practice holding one another accountable to using conscious communication in the work place, school setting, and at home.



# PRACTICE CO-LISTENING

Objective: To encourage deep listening and to create more meaningful communication with empathy and compassion toward one another.

- a. Co-listening is practiced in pairs where one person is the speaker and the other is the listener. The listener gives their full attention to the speaker, practices awareness without judgment and withholds from reacting in any way. This prevents the speaker from changing their words or meaning based on the listener's reactions, no matter how small.
- b. Speaker verbalizes what they are aware of, without judgement, planning what to say, or feeling censored. They then notice what this experience is like – to speak truthfully without being analyzed or judged.
- c. The listener becomes aware of what it is like to listen, without commenting affirming the speaker, or thinking of what to say next.
- d. Switch roles.



# PRACTICE REFLECTIVE LISTENING

Objective: To encourage deep listening and to create more meaningful communication with empathy and compassion toward one another.

- a. Reflective listening is the next step of co-listening. After the speaker finishes talking, the listener reflects back what they heard, as objectively as is possible. They say, "What I heard/hear you say is: \_\_\_ Am I correct?" Then the speaker has the opportunity to say yes or explain what was not heard correctly.
- b. When the process is complete, roles switch.



# PRACTICE GIVING AND RECEIVING EMPOWERING FEEDBACK

Objective: To encourage empathy and compassion toward others while both giving and receiving feedback.

- a. When giving feedback in an academic or workplace setting, it is important to feel empowered and empower others when offering and receiving feedback.
- b. Offer feedback to inform, not criticize, with the intention to learn and support.
- c. Speak from personal experience. Use “I” statements.
- d. Use observed and simple examples: “When you did (the observe behavior or task), I experienced (feeling, thought, emotion, etc.). I appreciated/needed (something appreciated or a potential improvement point)
- e. Sandwich negative feedback between positive feedback.
- f. As the receiver of feedback – learn to discern between empowering and supportive feedback from non-constructive feedback.
  - View feedback as an offering – take what works, leave what doesn’t.

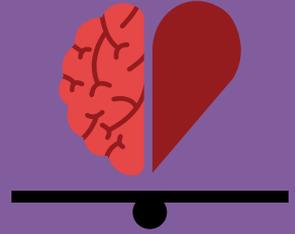


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# #Wellness Deck



Everyone grieves differently. This toolkit will discuss ways to give help and receive help when going through grief and loss.

# THOUGHTS AND REFLECTIONS:

Everyone grieves differently. It is normal to feel a wide array of emotions, see list, *Impacts of Stress and Crisis Incident* which is attached. The symptoms listed are all normal reactions to a distressing situation. There is a difference between distress and impairment. Most people have natural resources that will help them to be resilient from distress. Be aware of the difference as it will impact how you might respond to an individual.



## THINGS TO CONSIDER IF YOU ARE RECEIVING SUPPORT DURING A DIFFICULT TIME:

Asking and receiving support in times of need can be a very overwhelming and vulnerable.

- Support is a gift and denying the support is like denying someone the feeling of gratification they get when they give a gift. It is important to push past the guilt and be open to support.
- At the same time, it is important to have boundaries. Sending a group email or text clearly stating your boundaries could be extremely helpful and minimize negative feelings.



# TOOLKIT SAMPLE LETTER:

Hello everyone,

I want to thank you for your support and encouragement during this difficult time. I truly appreciate it. Many have asked how they can help and I wanted to share what would be most helpful for me.

Some examples:

- I need space
- I need to not talk about what is going on while at work
- I prefer to meet one on one outside or work to discuss what is going on
- Words of affirmation help
- Prepared meals would help
- I am open to whatever people would like to.



# IF YOU WANT TO GIVE SUPPORT TO SOMEONE:

- Grieving is an individualized and deeply personal process. There is no “one size fits all” when it comes to receiving support and sometimes what a person prefers or needs changes. It is important to be flexible and not take the individual needing space as a personal harm.
- Asking permission is key. It shows a level of respect for the person’s grieving process.
- If a person indicates they do not want or need anything, simply respect it. However, a note indicating the invitation for support is always open would be very meaningful and respectful.
- Consider your relationship with the individual. If you know them well, it might be far easier to provide support. It is always valuable to take note of what are the likes and preferences of those around you, proactively, so when something happens you can draw on that knowledge base. Perhaps you might consider asking someone who is closer to the individual what their preferences might be. The key is being respectful of the person’s individual needs.
- Sometimes it is helpful to replace, “can I help you with anything?” with a more assertive “I would really like to help you, is there anything specific you need?”



# TOOLKIT EXAMPLE PHRASES FOR SUPPORTERS

Would it be okay if, we...

- Brought you some meals
- Took you out to lunch
- Got you a gift card
- We would like to do something for you, do you have any preferences or would you like us to surprise you?
- We would like to do \_\_\_ for you, is that okay?
- We would like to do something for you, do you have any preferences?

*Would it be okay..?*



# CAREFUL QUESTIONS

There are questions that are well intentioned that can have a negative impact. It is important to consider the relationship with the individual. If there is not a strong personal relationship, it can end up sounding more like information mining rather than authentic support.

Questions to avoid:

- What happened?
- How are you doing?

People cope in different ways and for some people having to go over details could trigger them and cause undue stress. Let the person take the lead on what they are comfortable with sharing by simply offering an open ended invitation.

Alternate Statements:

- You do not have to tell me anything, I just want you to know you are in my thoughts and I am here for you if you need to talk.
- I just wanted to check in on you, I am here and you are in my thoughts.



# AFFIRMATIONS

## AFFIRMING STATEMENTS

- Wow, you are really strong.
- That must have been difficult.
- I am sorry. I see that this is hard for you.
- Thank you for sharing this with me, I know it is hard.

## AVOID

- Talking about times when you went through similar situations.



# CREATIVE AND SUPPORTIVE IDEAS:

Flowers are always a kind gesture; however, there are other things to consider when giving a gift.

- Many times individuals neglect their own self-care; therefore considering offering childcare so they can participate in a self-care activities or perhaps taking them or buying them a gift card for a self-care activity.
- As the person recovers from their trauma or grief, it is important that they have opportunities to be light and fun. Consider providing childcare or gift cards to help in this area.



# GIFT IDEAS

- Donating to a charity that is important to them or their loved one
- Gift cards for self-care
  - Massages
  - Pedicures
  - Favorite Restaurant
- Gift cards for fun activities
  - Bowling
  - Laser tag
  - Favorite concert
  - Plays
  - Sporting events
  - Musical events
  - Aquatic
  - Memberships
- Offer to pay for passes for a theme park
- Ask the person what their favorite family activity
- “We know you have been through a hard time and we wanted to provide you an opportunity to connect with your family. We would love to get you a gift card to your favorite activity, is there a few places you prefer or may we choose one for you?”  
*Note: phrased in a way that asks permission.*
- Consider developing proactive steps so that you are well equipped to provide respectful support.



# PROACTIVE CREATIVE STEPS

- Ask individuals to identify their preferences during difficult times
- Ask individuals what helps the feel well
- Ask individual what they like: food, activities, coffee
- Consider developing a warm-fuzzie program:
  - With the individuals, permission you could post encouraging notes or small treats on their desk for a week or a day.
- For more information contact your Work Life Consultant.



# THINGS YOU CAN DO YOURSELF

- Within the first 24-48 hours: try periods of appropriate physical exercise alternated with relaxation. This helps to alleviate some of the physical reactions.
- Recognize everyone will react differently - there is no right way. Make healthy choices that work for you.
- Structure your time; keep busy.
- Remember that you are most likely having normal reactions. Talk to a professional if they become severe and interfere with overall functioning.
- (Seek out professional help immediately if you experience suicidal thoughts, thoughts of self-harm, or harming others, or if you have serious medical issues such as chest pains, panic attacks, etc.)
- Talk to people, talking is healing.
- Be aware of numbing pain with overuse of drugs or alcohol.
- Reach out; people do care, let them know what you need and what will be helpful.
- Maintain as normal a schedule as possible.
- Spend time with others.



# THINGS YOU CAN DO YOURSELF CONTINUED

- Help your friends, neighbors, and co-workers as much as possible by sharing feelings and checking out how they are doing.
- Give yourself permission to feel rotten and share your feelings with others.
- Keep a journal/log; write your way through sleepless hours.
- Do things that feel good to you.
- Realize that those around you are under stress.
- Don't make any big life changes.
- Do make as many daily decisions as possible that will give you a feeling of control over your life i.e., if someone asks you what you want to wear, consider an answer even if you're not sure.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Don't try to fight re-occurring thoughts, dreams, or flashbacks - they are normal and will decrease over time and become less painful.
- Eat well-balanced regular meals (even if you don't feel like it).



# THINGS YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY CAN DO TO HELP YOU

- Listen! Be supportive! Don't be critical!
- Spend time with the person.
- Offer your assistance and a listening ear even if they have not asked for help.
- Reassure them.
- Help them with everyday tasks like cleaning, cooking, caring for family, or taking care of children.
- Give them some private time.
- Make sure they are taking time for themselves.
- Don't take their frustration, anger, or other feelings personally.
- Don't tell them that they are "lucky it wasn't worse." A traumatized person is not consoled by these statements. Instead, tell them that you are sorry such an event has occurred and you want to understand and assist.
- Be aware of resources and recommend them.
- If you're worried about their reactions or if they are more severe than you feel comfortable with, get them to talk to a professional or seek consultation yourself to see what to do to help.
- Help them seek out professional help immediately if they experience suicidal thoughts, thoughts of selfharm, harming others, or if they have serious medical issues such as chest pains, panic attacks, etc.



# IMPACT OF STRESS AND CRISIS INCIDENTS

Following a traumatic event or sudden loss, individuals or a group may experience a wide range of reactions, many of them normal and predictable. It is very common, in fact quite normal, for most people to experience emotional aftershocks when they have experienced a tragic event. Even though the event may be over, you may now be experiencing or may experience later, some strong emotional or physical reactions.

While everyone will be different and experience stress, grief, and loss in different ways, emotional aftershocks (or stress reactions) may appear immediately after the traumatic event, a few hours, or even a few days later. And, in some cases, weeks or months pass before the stress reactions appear. The length of time depends on the impact and severity of the event.

The understanding and support of loved ones usually help stress reactions to pass more quickly. Occasionally, the traumatic event is so painful that professional assistance may be necessary. This is particularly important if an individual is having thoughts of suicide, self-harm, or reactions that impact their health, safety, and overall functioning.\* This does not imply weakness. It simply indicates that the particular event was too powerful for the person to manage by themselves.

\*Requires immediate referral to a trained mental health professional.



# PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

- Fatigue
- Insomnia (may turn into hypersomnia)
- Underactivity
- Nightmares
- Hyperactivity
- Exhaustion
- Startle reflex
- Appetite changes
- Headaches
- Tension/Muscle aches
- Weight change
- Colds/Illness
- Pounding heart
- Teeth Grinding
- Rash
- Foot-tapping/finger-drumming
- Allergies
- Accident Prone
- Increase in alcohol, tobacco use\*
- Chest Pains\*
- Loss of Consciousness\*
- Panic Attack\*
- Seizures\*
- Loss of Consciousness\*

\*Requires immediate referral to a trained mental health professional



# EMOTIONAL SYMPTOMS

- Anxiety
- Guilt
- Depression
- Fear
- Emotional numbing
- Feelings of helplessness
- Oversensitivity
- Amnesia for the Event
- Frustration with bureaucracy
- The “blues”
- Mood swings
- Bad temper
- Crying spells
- Nightmares
- “No one cares”
- Nervous laugh
- Worrying easily
- Discouraged
- Little joy
- Helplessness
- Hopeless\*
- Thoughts of self harm
- Harming others\*
- Suicidal thoughts\*
- Thoughts of self harm\*

\*Requires immediate referral to a trained mental health professional



# MENTAL SYMPTOMS

- Forgetfulness
- Dull senses
- Poor concentration
- Low productivity
- Negative attitude
- Confusion
- Lethargy
- Whirling mind
- No new ideas
- Boredom
- Spacing out
- Negative self-talk
- Obsessive
- Perfectionism
- Hallucinations/delusions\*

\*Requires immediate referral to a trained mental health professional



# RELATIONAL SYMPTOMS

- Isolation
- Intolerance
- Resentment
- Loneliness
- Lashing out
- Hiding
- Distrust
- Using people
- Clamming up
- Lowered sex drive
- Few contacts with friends
- Nagging



# SPIRITUAL SYMPTOMS

- Emptiness
- Loss of meaning
- Doubt
- Unforgiving
- Martyrdom
- Looking for magic
- Apathy
- Need to “prove” self
- Loss of direction
- Cynicism



# COGNITIVE SYMPTOMS

- Difficulty with concentration
- Difficulty with solving problems
- Difficulty making decisions
- Difficulty remembering things
- Difficulty with higher level reasoning
- Inability to attach importance to anything other than stressor(s)
- Difficulty keeping up with work/studies
- Inability to understand consequences of behavior



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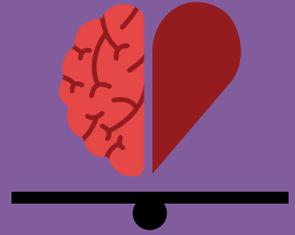
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# #Wellness Deck

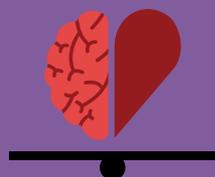


GRAND VALLEY  
STATE UNIVERSITY  
HUMAN RESOURCES

This toolkit will provide ideas on how to give yourself self compassion in your every day life.

# GUARD YOUR YES AND OWN YOUR NO

If you commit to something, be present and show up for it. But remember: You get to say no. People respect you when you're honest about what you want to do and know where you'd rather not put your time. You get to be selfish and pour into your own life. Give yourself permission to say no to protect your time.



# CARVE OUT TIME FOR MINDFULNESS AND REFLECTION EACH DAY

Get up early and give yourself enough time to journal, meditate, and write down things you're thankful for. What time of the day would best for you to do this? Start small and put 10-15 minutes of time on your calendar.



# PROTECT YOUR CALENDAR

Protect your calendar like it's the last bite of dessert. It's imperative that we establish healthy boundaries with others and make sure we're keeping track of everything we're planning to do. Take a peek at your calendar right now and ask yourself, does my schedule for the week reflect my values?



# BE HERE NOW.

If you commit to something, be present and show up for it. But remember: You get to say no. People respect you when you're honest about what you want to do and know where you'd rather not put your time. You get to be selfish and pour into your own life. Give yourself permission to say no to protect your time.

Being more productive doesn't simply mean just doing more. It means doing more of what we care about. You already have everything you need to shift where you're putting your energy and time, and to say yes to yourself more.



# REFERENCES

Caesar, S. (2018, January 25). How to Guard Your 'Yes' (and Own Your 'No) Success. <https://www.success.com/how-to-guard-your-yes-and-own-your-no/>

