

Self-Care: 20 Ways You Can Cope with Stress, Anxiety, and Isolation in Difficult Times

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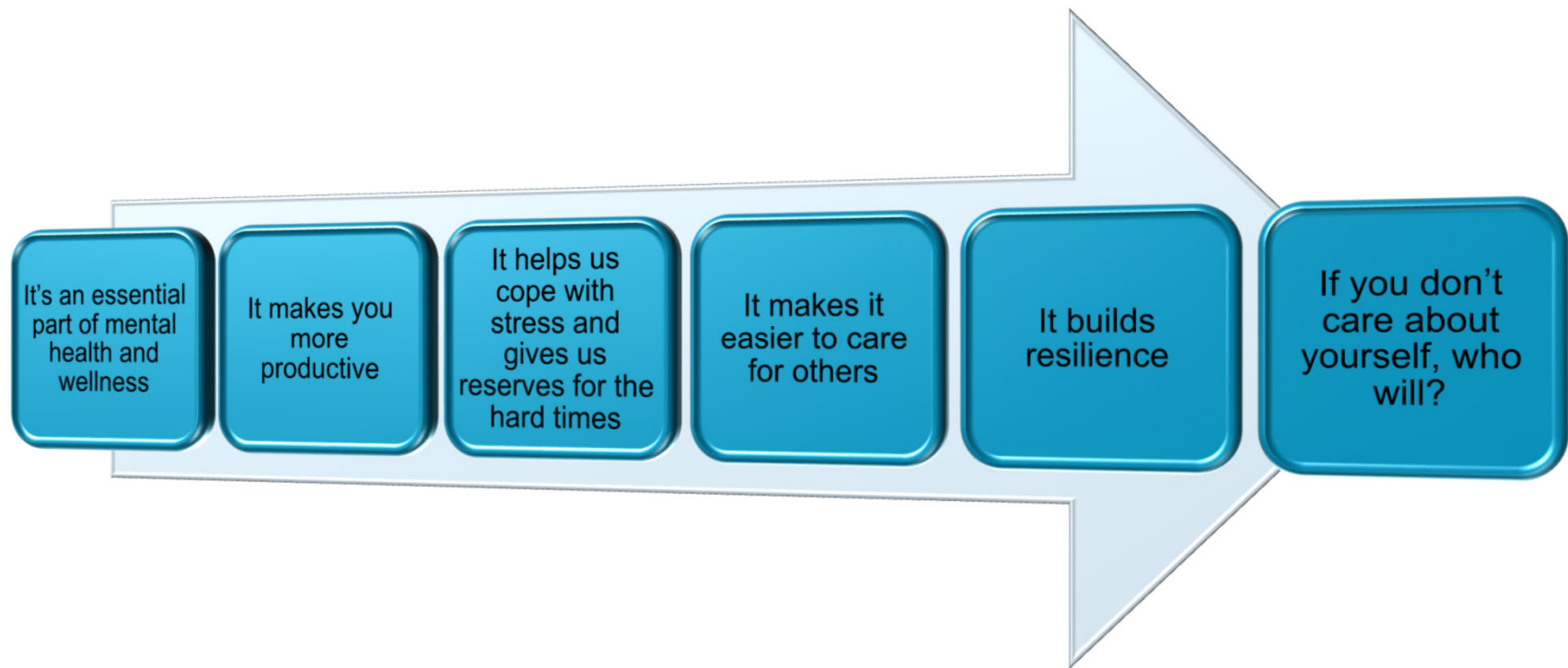
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Self-Care and COVID-19

Why Is Self-Care Important?



Why Is Self-Care Important?

Burnout:

Characterized by emotional exhaustion, cynicism and ineffectiveness in the workplace, and by chronic negative responses to stressful workplace conditions (Maslach & Jackson, 1981)

Job-related form of depression with multiple overlapping symptoms (Bianchi et al, 2015)

21-67% of helping professionals (in particular mental health) (Morse et al., 2012)

Some Reasons That Helpers Don't Get Help

- We think we should not have problems
- It's easier to help others than to get help for ourselves
- We think we should know how to solve our problems
- We view our problems as signs of failure or inadequacy
- We intellectualize to distance ourselves from emotional impact
- We feel embarrassed to seek help from our peers
- We can sabotage our own treatment

How Is This Crisis Different?

Universality


We are all experiencing this together

We are experiencing the same thing our clients are

Uncertainty

When will this end?

What will the world look like when this is over?



How Is This Crisis Different?

Grief

Loss of freedom

Loss of comfort

Loss of normalcy

Loss of safety

Loss of connection - unable
to grieve collectively

Loss of physical touch



In this crisis, how do we handle it in when our clients ask us about ourselves and our families?

Mirror Neurons

Mirror neurons allow us to imitate each other

They make up 10-20% of the neurons in certain areas of the brain (Keysers et al., 2011)

They are responsible for empathy (Rizzolatti and Craighero, 2005)

What happens if we can't rely on them the way we usually do?

Helplessness

Resource Scarcity

Being asked to do things counter to our training

- Unable to go to places we are used to feeling helpful
- New roles
- New responsibilities (e.g., keeping people isolated)

Coping with the impact in our own lives



Sleep and COVID-19

- Changes in dreams:
 - Bizarre
 - More vivid
 - Recurring
 - Better able to recall dreams
- Sleep
 - Parasomnia after REM
 - Broken sleep patterns

Virtual Meeting Fatigue

- Zoom Fatigue
 - New slang term
 - Virtual interactions can be extremely hard on the brain
- Non-verbal cues are missing
 - Hand gestures and body language
 - Poor video quality affects facial expressions
- Continuous partial attention

Flexibility and Resilience

A Personal Story

Courage

“Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the assessment that something else is more important than fear.” - FDR

For the helping professions, we may be conditioned to embody courage by showing up despite being afraid.

We also need to embody courage by taking care of ourselves, despite the fears and discomfort that creates.

How do we do this...?



Tips from the APA for Mental Health Professionals

Prioritize

- What can be delayed?
- Prioritize self care

Pivot

- What's on your back burner?

Routine

- Elements from "normal"
- Work clothes
- Packing lunch

Workspace

- Designate an area for work
- Creates boundaries

Learn Something

- Free online courses
- Professional or personal

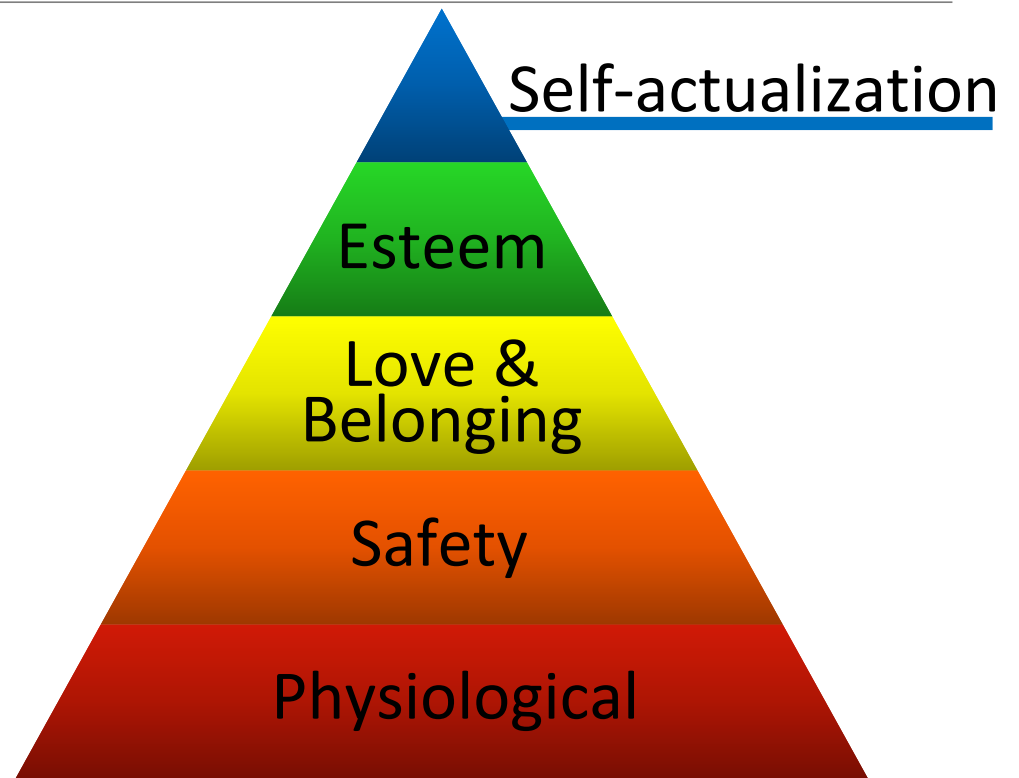
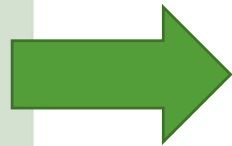
Stay Connected

- Zoom gatherings with family and friends
- Laugh!
- Connect with colleagues
- Common struggles

Tips from the APA for Mental Health Professionals

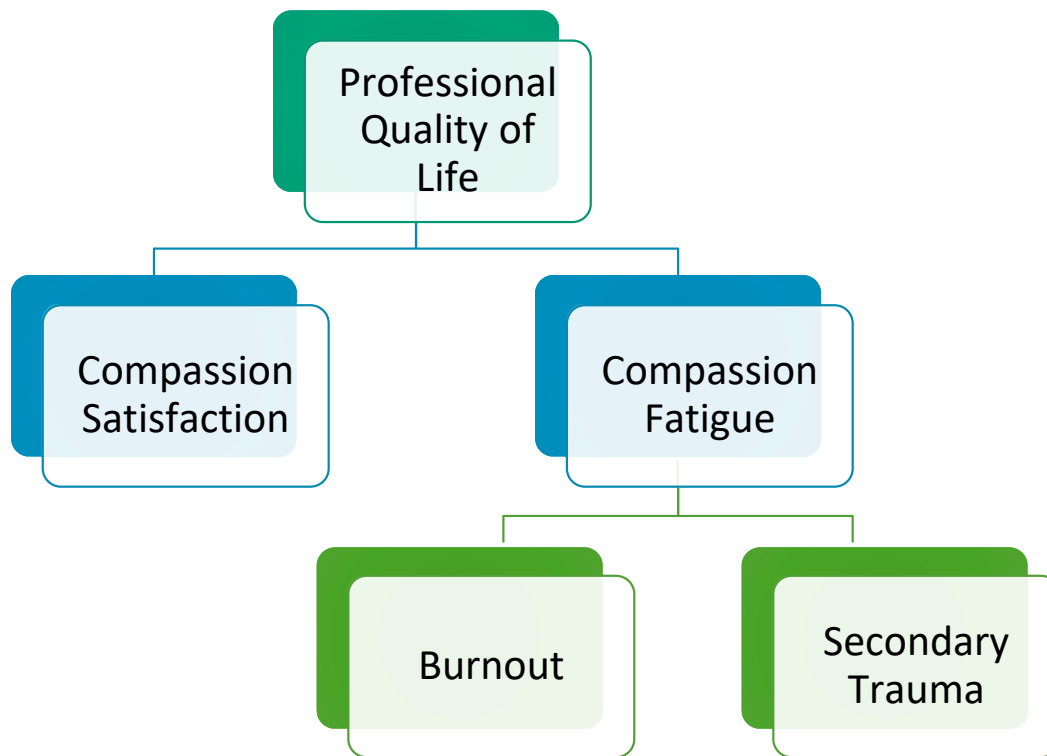
Cut Yourself Some Slack

- Change in productivity level is normal
- Prioritize self care
- Remember Intro Psych from college....



Assess Your Stress Level

Professional Quality of Life Scale



PROFESSIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE SCALE (PROQOL)

COMPASSION SATISFACTION AND COMPASSION FATIGUE

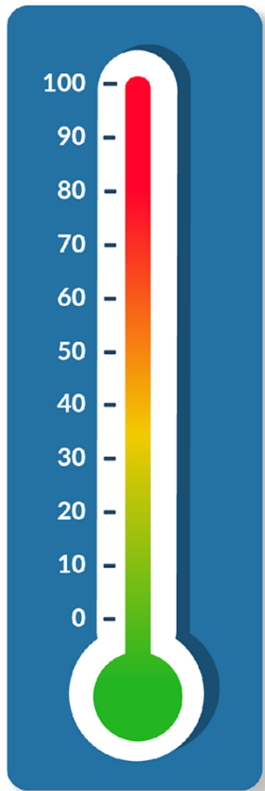
(PROQOL) VERSION 5 (2009)

When you [help] people you have direct contact with their lives. As you may have found, your compassion for those you [help] can affect you in positive and negative ways. Below are some-questions about your experiences, both positive and negative, as a [helper]. Consider each of the following questions about you and your current work situation. Select the number that honestly reflects how frequently you experienced these things in the last 30 days.

1=Never	2=Rarely	3=Sometimes	4=Often	5=Very Often
1. I am happy.				
2. I am preoccupied with more than one person I [help].				
3. I get satisfaction from being able to [help] people.				
4. I feel connected to others.				
5. I jump or am startled by unexpected sounds.				
6. I feel invigorated after working with those I [help].				
7. I find it difficult to separate my personal life from my life as a [helper].				
8. I am not as productive at work because I am losing sleep over traumatic experiences of a person I [help].				
9. I think that I might have been affected by the traumatic stress of those I [help].				
10. I feel trapped by my job as a [helper].				
11. Because of my [helping], I have felt "on edge" about various things.				
12. I like my work as a [helper].				
13. I feel depressed because of the traumatic experiences of the people I [help].				
14. I feel as though I am experiencing the trauma of someone I have [helped].				
15. I have beliefs that sustain me.				
16. I am pleased with how I am able to keep up with [helping] techniques and protocols.				
17. I am the person I always wanted to be.				
18. My work makes me feel satisfied.				
19. I feel worn out because of my work as a [helper].				
20. I have happy thoughts and feelings about those I [help] and how I could help them.				
21. I feel overwhelmed because my case [work] load seems endless.				
22. I believe I can make a difference through my work.				
23. I avoid certain activities or situations because they remind me of frightening experiences of the people I [help].				
24. I am proud of what I can do to [help].				
25. As a result of my [helping], I have intrusive, frightening thoughts.				
26. I feel "bogged down" by the system.				
27. I have thoughts that I am a "success" as a [helper].				
28. I can't recall important parts of my work with trauma victims.				
29. I am a very caring person.				
30. I am happy that I chose to do this work.				

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Subjective Units of Distress



- 100 Highest anxiety/distress that you have ever felt.
- 90 Extremely anxious/distressed.
- 80 Very anxious/distressed; can't concentrate. Physiological signs present.
- 70 Quite anxious/distressed; interfering with functioning. Physiological signs may be present.
- 60 Moderate-to-strong anxiety or distress.
- 50 Moderate anxiety/distress; uncomfortable, but can continue to function.
- 40 Mild-to-moderate anxiety or distress. ← Intervene here
- 30 Mild anxiety/distress; no interference with functioning.
- 20 Minimal anxiety/distress.
- 10 Alert and awake; concentrating well.
- 0 No distress; totally relaxed.

High Distress

Moderate Distress

Low Distress

Track Your Mood

20 Ways to Care for Yourself



#1

Limit Exposure to Distressing Content

Watch no more than one hour of news daily

Watch less, read more

If you must watch, watch more pleasant things

#2

Focus on What You Can Control

#3

Start a Gratitude Journal

- Write 3 things you are grateful for every day for at least 21 days
- No repeats
- Good for the whole family!

#4

Limit Junk Food Intake



Consumption
of Junk Food



Overall Feelings
of Wellbeing



#5

Focus on What You Can Do Now


#6

Be Kind to Yourself

Practice self-compassion

Immerse yourself in
simple comforts

Remind yourself that
you are doing the best
that you can



#7

Exercise 3-4 Hours a Week

#8

Practice Mindfulness Meditation

THE BENEFITS OF MINDFULNESS

Physical



Boost energy levels



Improves sleep



Reduces chronic pain



Improves heart function



Helps with digestive problems

Mental



Relieves stress



Reduces anxiety



Improves mood and happiness



Boosts concentration and focus



Improves self-esteem

#9

Plan at Least One Pleasant Activity Every Day



#10

Self-Soothe (Comforting Yourself through Your 5 Senses)


Touch stuffed animal, stress ball, cozy blanket, stretch

Hear music, guided meditation, nature

See snow globe, pictures, videos

Taste mints, tea, sour candy, chocolate

Smell lotion, candles, perfume



#11

Engage in a Solo Hobby

Something that:

- isn't related to work
- doesn't involve another person


#12

Go Outside

#13


Practice Yoga

Mental Health Benefits of Yoga:

- Decreases stress & anxiety
 - Helps you focus
 - Creates mindfulness
 - Increases self-esteem
 - Boosts confidence
 - Increases awareness
 - Encourages self-care
 - Improves meditation
 - Increases happiness
 - Promotes wellbeing
- 

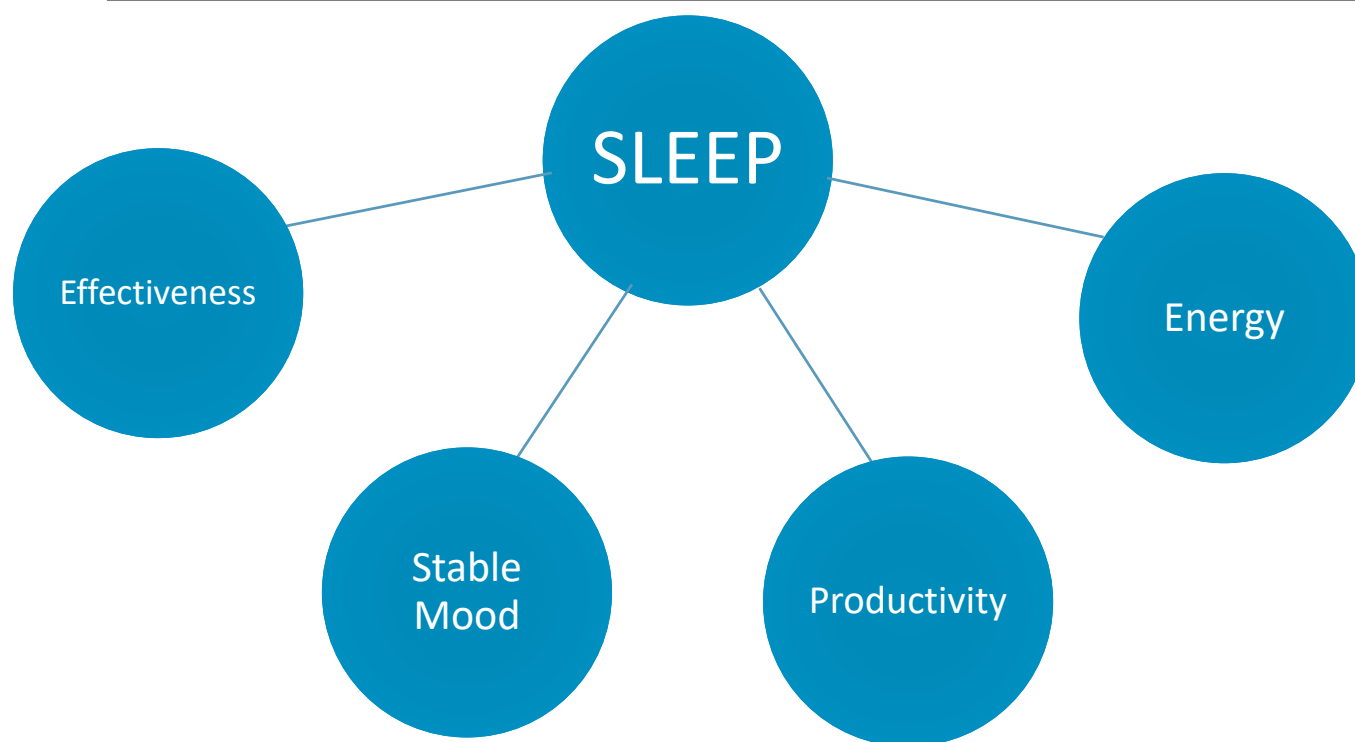
#14

Everyone Needs ONE Person in Whom to Confide

- Family member
 - Friend
 - Minister
 - Priest
 - Rabbi
 - Therapist
 - Mentor
 - Clinician
- 

#15

Sleep 6.5-7.5 Hours a Night



Follow good sleep hygiene practices

Allow adequate time for sleep

If these things don't work, seek help from a professional

#16

Ask Yourself Two Questions:

1. What gives your life meaning?
2. What gives you joy?

Do more of those things



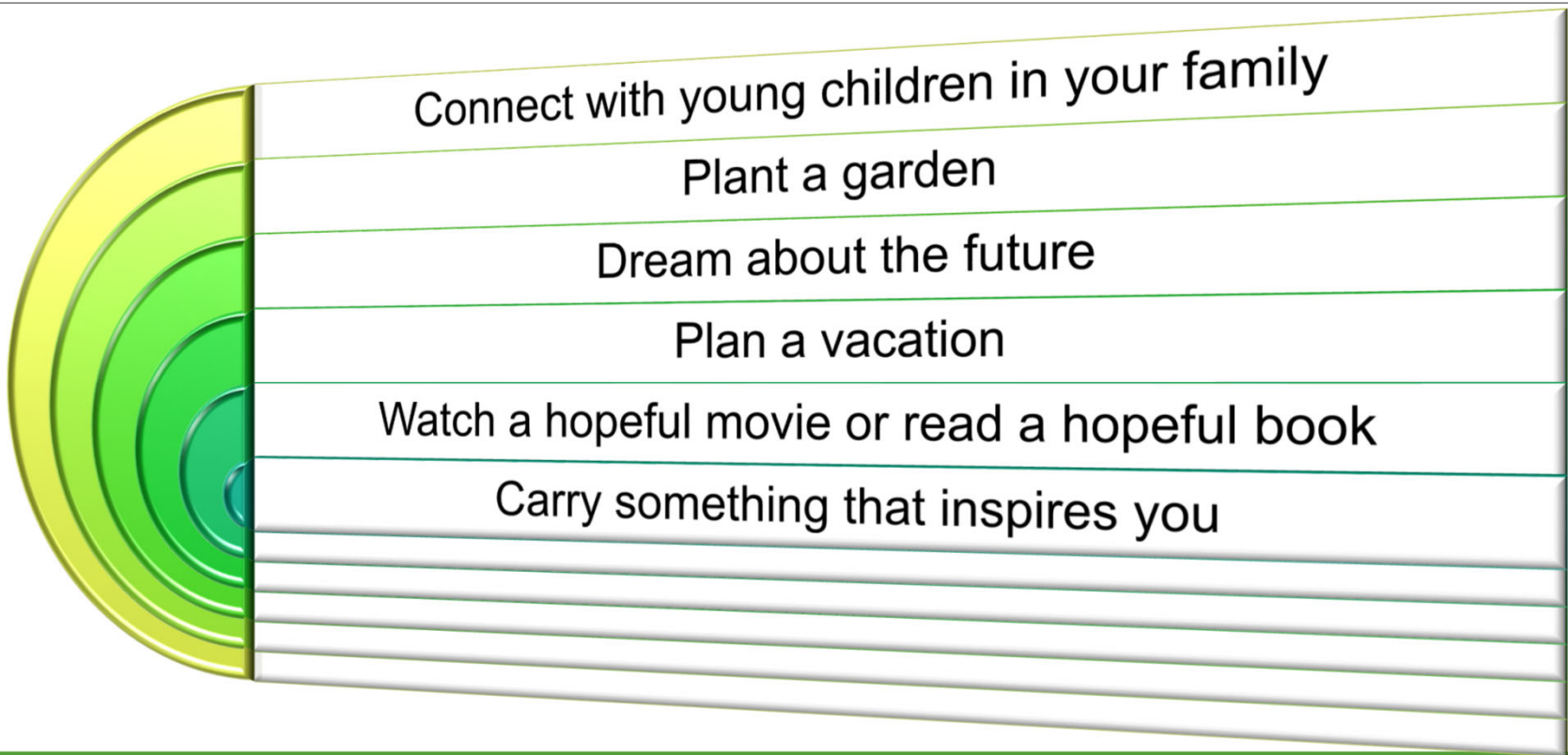
#17

Connect with Other People Daily

- Eat virtual meals with friends
- Have a social distance picnic
- Call friends and family
- Play games virtually
- Reconnect with someone you haven't talked with recently
- Watch movies simultaneously and text with friends
- Talk with your neighbors

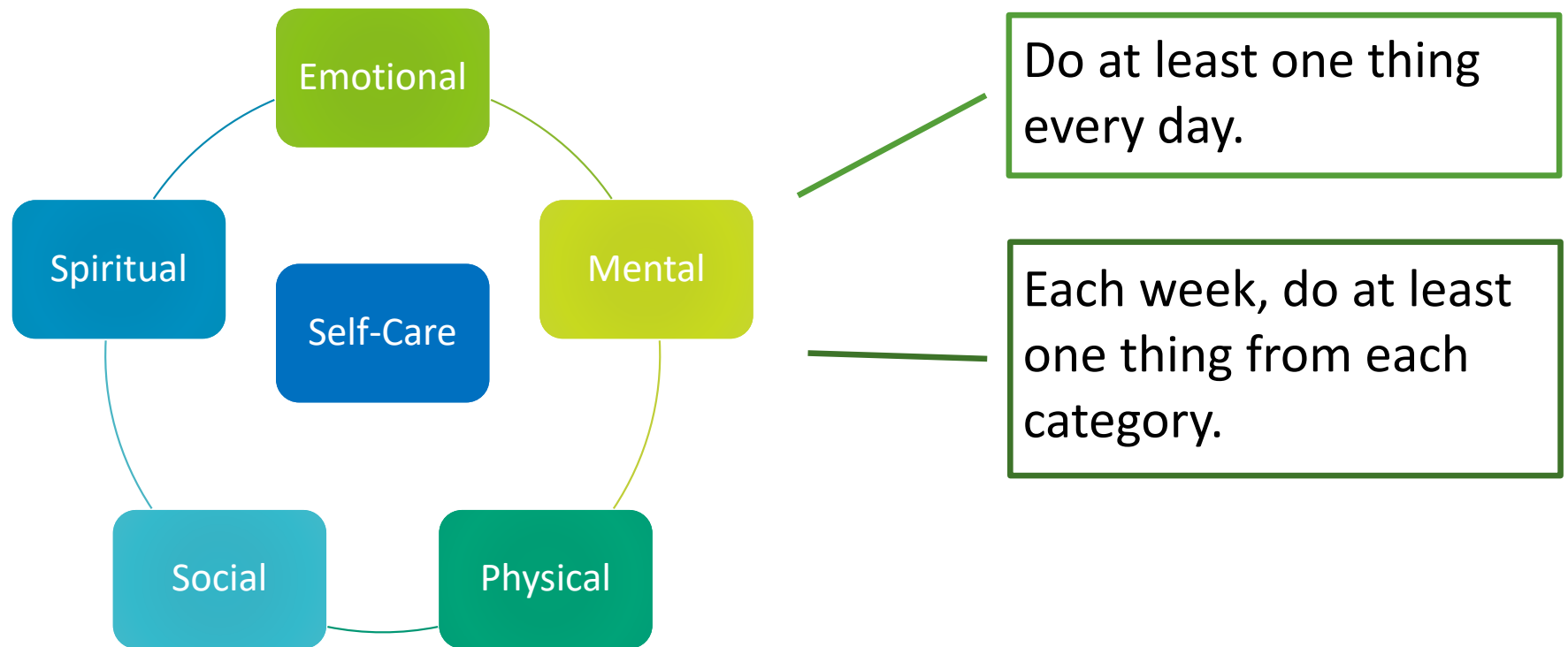
#18

Do Hopeful Things



#19

Develop a Self-Care Action Plan



#20

Look for Silver Linings

Find the good that's all around us....



The dogs of the world are having the best day ever!@DogsWorkingFromHome

Nitrogen Dioxide Pollution Over China Plummets

This could
save 77,000
lives!

<https://www.sciencealert.com/nitrogen-dioxide-pollution-has-dramatically-dropped-over-china-because-of-the-coronavirus>

The
Himalayas
Became
Visible for
the First
Time in
Decades

Venice's canals are clearer than they've been in decades

<https://www.cnbc.com/2020/03/18/photos-water-in-venice-italys-canals-clear-amid-covid-19-lockdown.html>

Photograph: Ocean Park Hong Kong/AFP via Getty

https://www.boredpanda.com/positive-news-coronavirus-illustrations-mauro-gatti/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=organic

https://www.boredpanda.com/positive-news-coronavirus-illustrations-mauro-gatti/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=organic

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Some Good News on YouTube

Kindness abounds!

Some Final Thoughts

Self-Care Can Be Cultivated



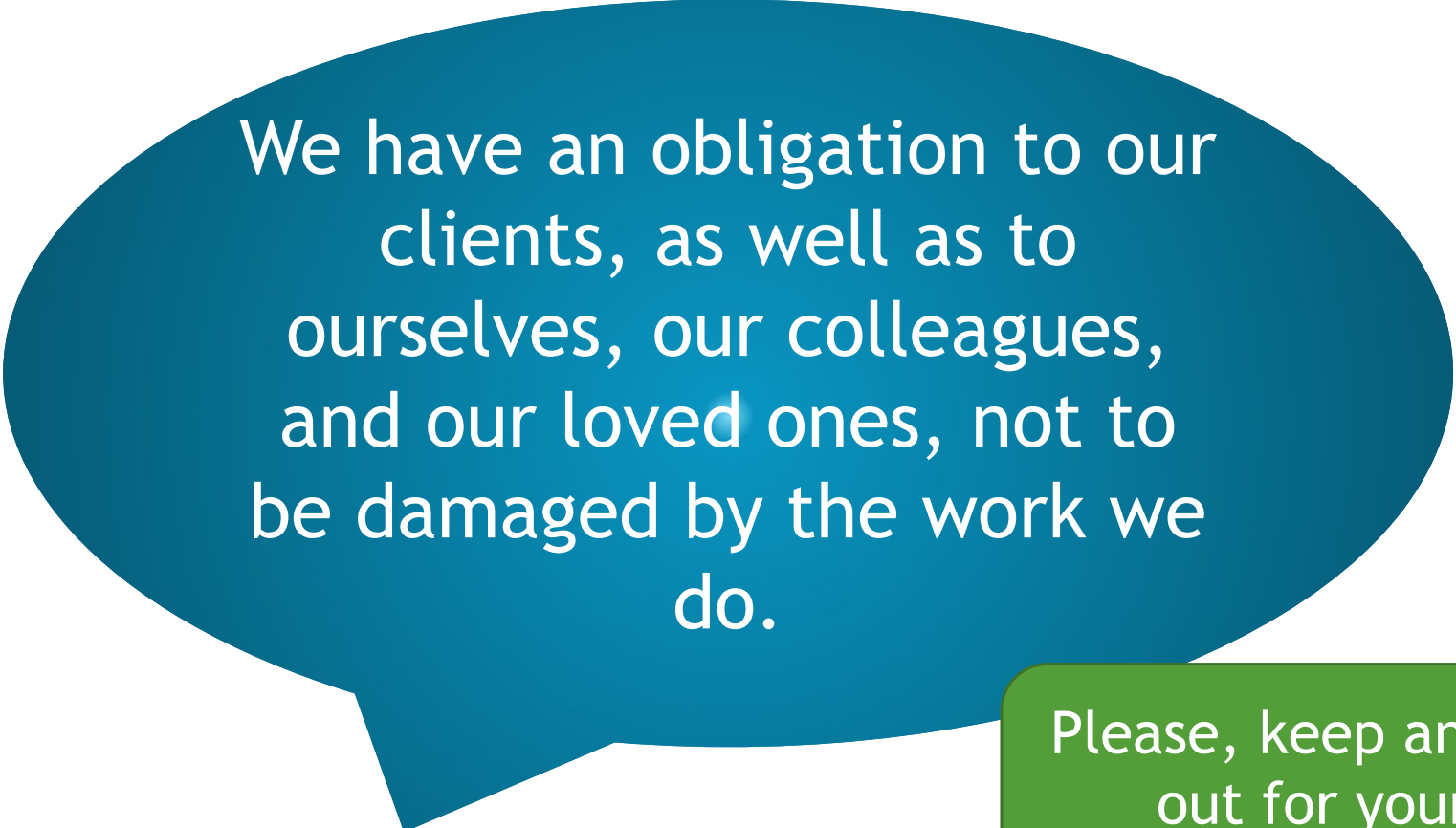
**You have only four days to start
caring for yourself in new ways**

A Question

The Japanese word for “crisis” means both “danger” and “opportunity”.

Which will this crisis mean for you?





We have an obligation to our
clients, as well as to
ourselves, our colleagues,
and our loved ones, not to
be damaged by the work we
do.

Karen Saakvitne &
Laurie Pearlman, 1996



Please, keep an eye
out for your
colleagues, too.

Resources

American Psychological Association

Resources for COVID-19

<https://www.apa.org/topics/covid-19/>



Self-Screening Tools

- Professional Quality of Life Scale

http://proqol.org/uploads/ProQOL_5_English_Self-Score_7_2011.pdf

- T2 Mood Tracker app

Free Mindfulness App

Mindfulness Coach App

Designed to support independent mindfulness practice.

Features:

- Mindfulness Training

- Practice Now

- Track Progress

- Build Expertise



Free Mindfulness Resources

- Free online Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction course:
<http://palousemindfulness.com/selfguidedMBSR.html>

- Guided mindfulness meditations available at
 - <http://www.va.gov/PATIENTCENTEREDCARE/resources/multimedia/index.asp>
 - <http://www.fammed.wisc.edu/mindfulness-meditation-podcast-series/>
 - <http://marc.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=22>

Self-Care Workbooks

- Self-Care Workbook:

http://www.figleyinstitute.com/documents/Workbook_AMEDD_SanAntonio_2012July20_RevAugust2013.pdf

- When Compassion Hurts:

https://www.beststart.org/resources/howto/pdf/Compassion_14MY01_Final.pdf

COVID Coach App





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graph LR; A((Questions?)) --> B((Final Thoughts)); B --> C((Thank You!))
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Questions?

Final
Thoughts

Thank You!
