

FUNDAMENTALS OF PROVIDING SERVICES TO SURVIVORS OF TORTURE: SELF-CARE FOR PROVIDERS

Lesson Summary

One of the most important elements in self-care is self-awareness of your own reactions and experiences in your work. From there, you can take action.

Self-Care: Assessment and Plan

Experience shows that consciously creating and maintaining a self-care plan is essential for providers in all service disciplines to sustain us as we engage in this challenging and rewarding work. Every plan needs to be individualized, practiced regularly, and assessed to make sure it is working.

- Professional Quality of Life Assessment (www.proqol.org):
 - To assess the positive and negative impacts of your work
 - Use to increase your self-awareness
- Create a plan by focusing on enhancing some specific area(s) of self-care to better nurture yourself physically, psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually. Consider the following as you create a plan:
 - Awareness of techniques, resources, and support you already use or have
 - Success does not have to be binary and notice what can be broken down into manageable pieces for you to do
 - Find a self-care buddy to help you be accountable for your plan

Self-Care Techniques

The same physiological stress process that impacts us when we suffer trauma can also impact us when we are vicariously exposed to the traumas of others. Since this stress process takes place in the physical body, we can intervene in the body to reduce and heal it.

For example:

- Meditation and mindfulness
 - Guided Meditation
 - Gratitude journal
- Aerobic Exercise
 - Playing a sport
 - Riding a bike
 - Working out at a gym
 - Taking a walk
 - Yoga

Resources and Support for your Self-Care

