

From: Saakvitne, K.W., & Pearlman, L. A., and the Staff of the Traumatic Stress Institute (1966). Transforming Pain: A workbook on vicarious traumatization for professionals who work with traumatized clients. New York: W.W. Norton.

## Self-Care Checklist

Rate how often and how well you are taking care of yourself these days by filling in the following checklist. When you are finished, look for patterns in your responses. Are you more active in some areas of self-care but ignore others? Are there items on the list that make you think, "I would never do that"? Listen to your inner responses, your internal dialogue about self-care and making yourself the priority.

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
- Do something at which you are not expert or in charge
- Decrease stress in your life
- Notice your inner experience - listen to your thoughts, judgements, beliefs, attitude and feelings
- Let others know 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
- Practice receiving from others
- Be curious
- Say no to extra responsibilities
- 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
- Reread favourite books, re-view favourite 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:

### ***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 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 (talks, music, etc.)

Other:

### ***Workplace or 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 are exciting and rewarding

- \_\_\_ Set limits with clients and colleagues
- \_\_\_ Balance your caseload so no one day or part of a day is “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:

### ***Balance***

- \_\_\_ Strive for balance *within* your work-life and workday
- \_\_\_ Strive for balance *among* work, family, relationships, play and rest