

Self-Care for Helping Professionals Group Introduction:

Welcome to the Self-Care for Helping Professionals Group:

As helping professionals, you share unique experiences and needs related to self-care. Helping professionals may work in many different fields, from healthcare, law enforcement, first responder/fire, mental health, education, social work, human services, and others. If you self-identify as a helping professional, you're in the right place!

Helping professionals are often socialized and trained to prioritize others' needs or wants before their own. Our work environments have higher stress. We help or intervene in situations that involve suffering, illness, trauma, and other challenging situations.

As a group, we often sacrifice parts of ourselves instead of caring for ourselves. We work hard and often neglect or become disconnected from our own needs. When this disconnect happens, helping professionals may experience chronic stress or burnout. Self-care is one strategy to counter these problems.

This is a 'doing' group more than a talking group. We may think about self-care or understand why it is important, but we can only accomplish self-care as an action. Coming together as a group helps us learn self-care skills. Practicing 'little and often' on our own in our daily lives helps us form self-care as a habit. Self-care is both a skill set and a habit.

As Socrates said, "...know thyself, for once we know ourselves, we may learn how to care for ourselves". The goals of this group are to guide your self-inquiry and to experience self-care skills.

Your journey is your own. Some things will work for you and others may not. We all bring our own unique personalities, values, life experiences, and stressors. Everything offered in this group is a suggestion, not a mandate.

If something does not feel right to you, skip it or swap it for something else. Take what you like and leave the rest.

When you attend this virtual group, be sure to be in the state of Massachusetts and logged in with video/audio in a private space. Be sure to have somewhere comfortable to recline or lie down for some of our guided experiences; some people prefer a couch or comfy chair, others a yoga/exercise mat. Each time we meet, we will start by talking about a concept or skill, practicing the skill, processing the experience, and then you will receive homework to practice and develop the skill more on your own.

I'm excited to meet you and get started!

Shari Harding, Doctor of Nursing Practice
Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
iRest Level 1 Teacher

Additional References and Resources:

Web-based:

American Nurses Association. Well-being initiative.

<https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/work-environment/health-safety/disaster-preparedness/coronavirus/what-you-need-to-know/the-well-being-initiative/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Emergency responders: Tips for taking care of yourself.

<https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/responders.asp>

National Association of Social Workers. Self-care for social workers.

<https://www.socialworkers.org/Practice/Infectious-Diseases/Coronavirus/Self-Care-for-Social-Workers>

iRest information: www.irest.org

iRest Free Recorded Meditations:

<https://www.irest.org/blog/resources-nondualism-other/self-care-treasury-retrospective-free-meditation-monday-offerings>

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Creating a healthier life: A step-by-step guide to wellness:

<https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/sma16-4958.pdf>

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Self Care for Healthcare and Social Service Workers Modules.

<https://www.samhsa.gov/resource/dbhis/self-care-healthcare-workers-modules>

United States Department of Veterans Affairs. Police Officer Toolkit.
<https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/care/toolkits/police/managingStrategiesPolice.asp>

Reliant Digital Therapeutics:

If you are a patient in Reliant for primary care, you can reach out to your PCP and ask to meet with a Behavioral Health Integrated Clinician to discuss our digital therapeutics. Many of these offerings include apps to help you with relaxation, meditation, and other self-care practices.

Books:

Lehrer, P. M. & Woolfolk, R. L. (2021). Principles and practice of stress management (4th ed.). Guilford Press.

Miller, Richard. (2015). The iRest program for healing PTSD: A proven-effective approach to using yoga nidra meditation and deep relaxation techniques to overcome trauma. New Harbinger Publications.

Miller, Richard. (2010). Yoga nidra: A meditative practice for deep relaxation and healing. Sounds True, Inc.