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Learning to Balance Your Mental Health to Better Serve Others

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Learning to Balance Your Mental Health to Better Serve Others



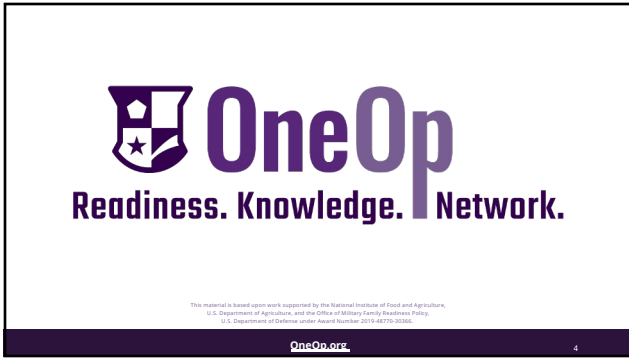
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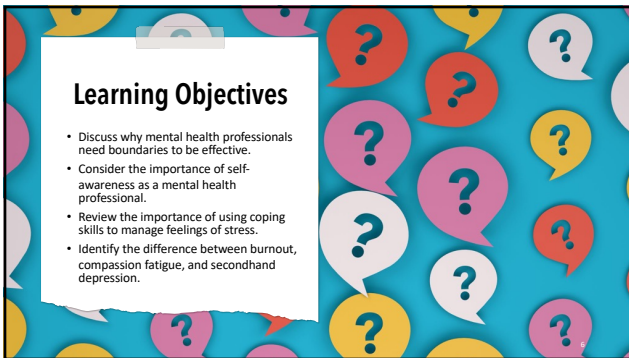
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Who are Mental Health Professionals?

Traditional

- Certified School Counselor
- Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (Associate, Fully Licensed, or Supervisor)
- Licensed Professional Counselor (Associate, Fully Licensed, or Supervisor)
- Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor
- Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor
- Licensed Independent Mental Health Practitioner, Licensed Mental Health Counselor
- Licensed Mental Health Practitioner
- Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor
- Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor of Mental Health
- Licensed Professional Clinical Mental Health Counselor
- Social Worker (Masters Level, Clinical, or Supervisor)
- Professional Counselor of Mental Health, School Psychologist
- Psychologist (Associate or Fully Licensed)

Non-Traditional

- Family Support Providers
- Peers Support Specialists
- Case Managers
- Recovery Care Coordinators
- Family Life Educators
- Patient Advocates
- Spiritual or Religious Counselors
- Life Coaches
- Art Therapists
- Yoga and Meditation Instructors
- Nutritionists and Dietitians

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What is it Like Being a Mental Health Professional?

- Helping others
- Rewarding
- Always learning
- Constantly challenged
- Job security
- Professional curiosity
- Self-reflection
- Multiple employment opportunities


- Draining
- Overworked
- Liability issues
- Licensing boards
- Ethical dilemmas
- Lack of life balance
- Burnout
- Compassion fatigue
- Secondhand depression

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Counseling Myths & Stigma




Counseling Is Paying For A Friend.




The Counselor Will Tell Me How To Live My Life.




Counseling Is Professional Advice Giving.




Only Crazy People Go To Counseling.




Counseling Is Only For Really Bad Problems.



Going To Counseling Is A Sign Of Weakness.




The Counselor Is Responsible For Everything That Happens In Session.



Counseling Will Quickly Fix My Life.

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Think About This...
 How can we help others be effective if we are failing to help ourselves be effective?



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4 Important Areas to Become an Effective Mental Health Professional




Reflection Boundaries Self-Awareness Coping Skills

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Reflection
 We must have a firm understanding that:

- Our thoughts (whether negative or positive) impact...
- Our belief systems (whether negative or positive) which impact...
- Our actions and behaviors (whether negative or positive).



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Three Cs of Negative Thinking

```
graph TD; C[Complaining] --> Cr[Criticism]; Cr --> Co[Comparing]; Co --> C;
```

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Belief Systems

Our belief systems (whether negative or positive)...

A belief system is a set of beliefs or principles that helps us interpret our everyday reality, understand, organize, and make sense of the world. A belief system is a network of beliefs that we each hold about what is, or should be, right and wrong and what is, or should be, true and false (Gurteen, n.d., para. 1).

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Actions & Behaviors

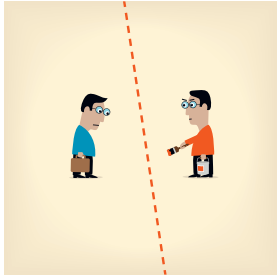
Our actions and behaviors (whether negative or positive)...

- Being patient with others versus being short with others.
- Asking for things versus unspoken expectations.
- Healthy communication skills versus unhealthy communication skills.
- Responding out of choice versus reacting out of emotion.
- Utilizing active listening skills versus planning a response while the other is talking.

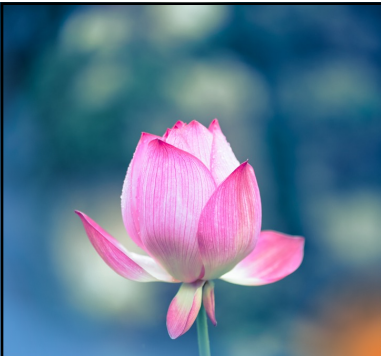
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Boundaries

- Setting clear, personal boundaries is vital to ensuring that relationships are mutually respectful, supportive, and caring. Boundaries create limits for acceptable behavior for yourself and the behaviors from others that you allow into your life.
- Personal boundaries are guidelines or limits that a person creates to keep themselves safe. Boundaries are NOT a weapon or a way to punish others.
- Unhealthy boundaries or a lack of boundaries creates: an inability to say "no," a weak sense of self-identity, and a people pleaser mentality. A lack of boundaries is the opposite of empowerment.



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Doreen Virtue


“Boundaries are a part of self-care. They are healthy, normal, and necessary.”

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How Do You Set Professional Boundaries?




First, assess your personal boundaries.




For boundaries to be effective, you must communicate clearly.



Do not delay when responding to boundary crossing.



Make choices that set yourself up for keeping your relationships professional.




Make steps to protect your time and energy.

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Setting Professional Boundaries

- 1. Identify your limits.**
 - What makes you feel uncomfortable and stressed? Honor your feelings and limits.
- 2. Pay attention to your feelings.** Rate how you feel on a scale of 1-10.
 - Cues that a boundary issue may be present:
 - Discomfort
 - Resentment (being taken advantage of/not being appreciated)
 - Guilt
- 3. Give yourself permission to set boundaries.** If not, you will feel drained, overextended, and exhausted.
- 4. Consider your environment.** Family, work, and social circles can have a strong influence on your behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions.

(Gionta & Guerra, 2015)



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What Are My Boundaries?

- Saying "no"
- Refusing to take blame
- Requesting respect
- Dictating your own feelings
- Creating your own identity
- Accepting help
- Asking for space
- Communicating discomfort
- Sharing mutually
- Using I-Statements
- Choosing when to be vulnerable
- Your right to privacy
- The ability to change your mind
- The right to your own time
- The right to hold true to your values
- The ability to communicate your needs
- The right to make your own choices


(Davenport, 2021)

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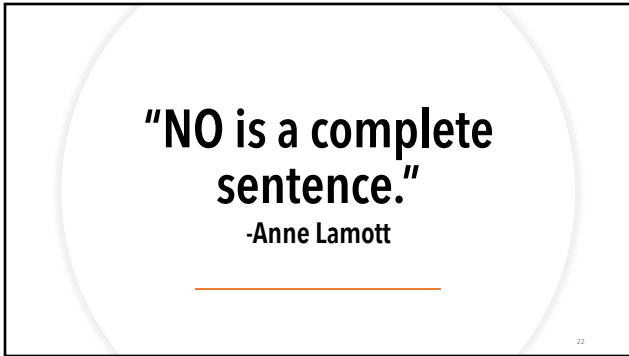
Benefits of Setting Boundaries

- Wards Off Burnout
- Improved Mental Health
- Improved Relationships
- Clear Expectations for Others
- Decreased Stress
- Improved Self-Care Capabilities
- Respect from Others and Self-Respect
- Promotes Autonomy

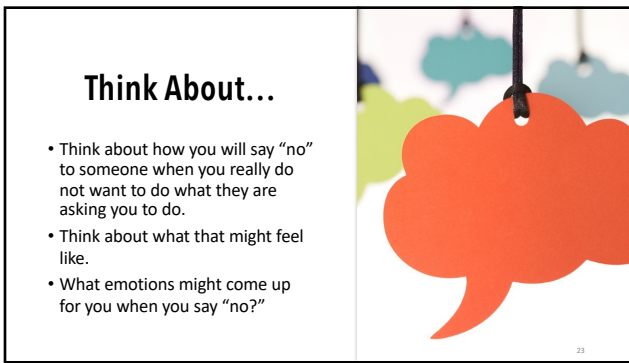
(Self-Care Catalyst LLC, 2022)



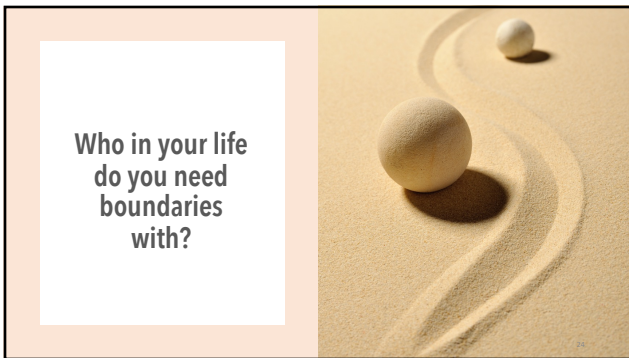
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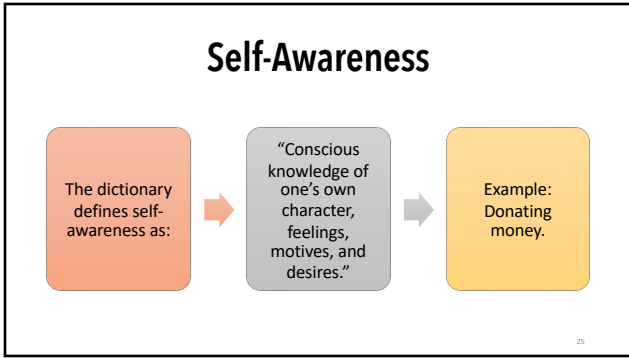
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How does Stigma & Shame Affect My Self-Awareness?

- Having a negative belief about something creates a negative perspective towards it.
- If you feel that something is bad or shameful, you will stay away from developing insight or exploring.
- When something is seen as being negative or shameful, we are less likely to ask for help.
- When we fear exclusion, we often try to be someone or something that we are not. This gap between actual self and who we want to be can cause issues of depression and anxiety.
- When we avoid looking at ourselves, examining our own thoughts, belief systems, motives, and feelings, we tend to be more likely to point the finger and blame others.

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Where does stress manifest in your body?

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Physical Consequences of Chronic Stress

- Headaches
- Stomachaches
- Ulcers
- Lower immunity
- Insomnia
- Heart attack
- High blood pressure
- Panic/anxiety attack



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Emotional Consequences of Chronic Stress

- Burnout
- Fatigue
- Depression
- Anger
- Resentment
- Irritability
- Anxiety
- Withdrawal
- Suicidal ideation



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Total Body Wellness


- Career
- Physical
- Social
- Spiritual
- Emotional
- Environmental
- Financial
- Intellectual

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Coping Skills

- The dictionary defines cope as how to deal effectively with something.
- Negative coping skills are things that we do that allow us to run, numb, or avoid the situations that are causing us discomfort. Positive coping skills are things that we do that place us in a better head space to deal with our discomfort. Neither positive or negative coping skills fix whatever the issue is that is causing the discomfort. Coping skills determine how we process our issues.
- Negative Coping Skills: procrastination, drugs, alcohol, or substances, blaming others, isolating or withdrawing from others, gossiping, criticizing others, manipulation, lying, enabling, denial, sleeping too much, or eating too much.
- Positive Coping Skills: Writing, drawing, painting, taking a warm bath or shower, taking a walk or being active, watching TV, movie, or listening to music, playing a game, reading, talking to someone you trust, setting boundaries and saying "no," listing what we are grateful for, creating healthy routines, or meditation.
- Remember, it's all about our intention. We can choose a positive coping skill and turn it into a negative one if our intention is to run, avoid, or numb ourselves.



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Types of Coping Skills

Diversions

- Writing, drawing, painting
- Music
- Taking a walk
- Watching TV or a movie
- Cleaning or organizing
- Reading
- Enjoying nature

Social/Interpersonal

- Talk with someone you trust.
- Surround yourself with positive people.
- Serve someone in need.
- Connect with an animal.
- Encourage others.

Cognitive

- Be grateful.
- Be flexible.
- Set goals.
- Focus on your strengths.

Physical

- Exercise.
- Get good sleep.
- Stick to routines and schedules.
- Use grounding techniques.

Set Limits

- Prioritize what is important.
- Use assertive communication.
- Schedule time to recharge.
- Set boundaries.

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Stress Reduction

Breath Focus

- Bring intentional attention to each breath.

Deep Breathing

- Inhale for 4 seconds, hold until 7, and exhale at 8.

Diaphragmatic Breathing

- Lie down, place one hand on your chest and one below your rib cage and focus on deep body breathing.

Pursed-lip Breathing

- Inhale slowly, pucker/purse lips; then exhale slowly.

Resonant or Coherent Breathing

- Inhale for 5 seconds; exhale for 5 seconds.

Grounding Techniques

- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Counting backward from 100 by 7
- Play categories
- Cool water on the skin
- Reframing

Mindfulness

- Drinking tea
- Enjoying nature
- Meditating
 - Structured or unstructured
- Stretching
 - Dynamic
 - Static
 - Yoga
- Taking a walk
- Unplugging from technology

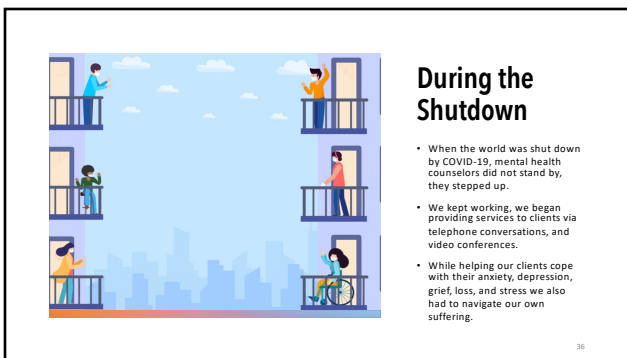
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Internal Stressors

- Internal stress comes from within us and is often the most common cause of stress (First Psychology Assistance, n.d.).
- We may worry about things that we cannot control which causes internal stress.
- Other causes of internal stress include a lack of assertiveness, low self-esteem, negative self-talk, uncertainty, and unrealistic expectations (First Psychology Assistance, n.d.).
- As mental health counselors, we had a multitude of our own internal stressors while assisting our clients in navigating their own internal and external stressors.



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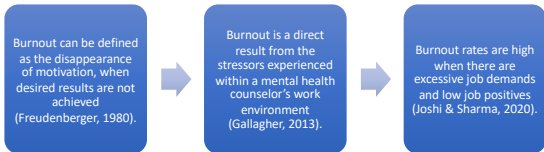
External Stressors

- External stress come from the environment and what is going on around us.
- External stressors might include death of a friend or loved one, employment issues, financial issues, major life changes, noise, overcrowding, or relationship issues (First Psychology Assistance, n.d.).
- The work environment that the pandemic created had its own unique twist on external stressors.
- While sheltering in place, many of us had to find little corners of our homes to conduct therapy in to retain client confidentiality.



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Burnout



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Factors Contributing to Burnout

-  Compassion Fatigue
-  Emotional Drain
-  Longer Duration of Therapy
-  Perceived Stress
-  Poor Therapeutic Effectiveness
-  Secondary Traumatic Stress

(Joshi & Sharma, 2020)

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Symptoms of Burnout


- Addictive Behaviors
- Being Inflexible with Self or Others
- Conflicts within Relationships
- Difficulty Concentrating
- Distancing Self from Clients
- Feeling Cynical
- Inconsistent Sleeping Patterns
- Poor Judgment
- Withdrawing Socially

(Farber, 1990; Gallagher, 2013; Wordle & Malygina, 2016)

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Compassion Fatigue

- The concept of compassion fatigue entails a state of biological, psychological, and social exhaustion or dysfunction that impacts as a result of prolonged exposure to companion stress (Figley, 1995/2015).
- Compassion fatigue is the stress experienced resulting from being exposed to individuals who have experienced trauma (Cocker & Joss, 2016; Figley, 2015; Robino, 2019).
- Unlike burnout, compassion fatigue, otherwise known as secondary trauma, comes from the relationship between provider and client (Figley, 2015; Gallagher, 2013; Robino, 2019).
- Compassion fatigue has symptoms that parallel Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (Figley, 2015; Gallagher, 2013).
- Compassion fatigue has been said to be the price of empathy (Hunter, 2016).



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Factors Contributing to Compassion Fatigue

- _____
- Lack of Support
- _____
- Large Case Loads
- _____
- Neglecting Self-Care
- _____
- Providing Therapy to Extreme or Severe Issues
- _____
- Stress at Home
- _____
- Unstable Management

(Ameritech College of Healthcare, 2015; Hunter, 2016)

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Symptoms of Compassion Fatigue



- Avoiding Reminders
- Feeling Numb
- Hinder Ability to Care for Clients
- Re-calling the Client's Traumatic Experience

(Figley, 2015; Gallagher, 2013; Robino, 2019)

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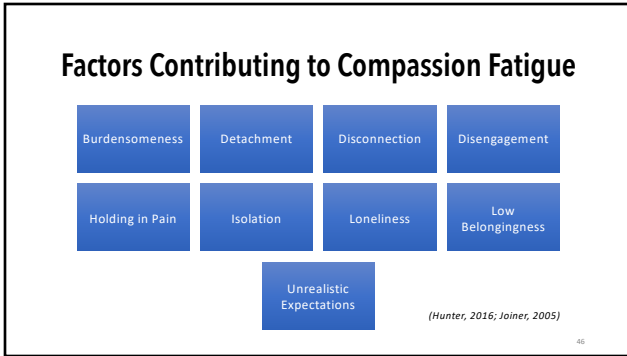
Secondhand Depression

- Secondhand depression is the result of counseling, empathizing with, and walking alongside those with depression (Hunter, 2016).
- Secondhand depression arrives once a provider has moved past burnout, and compassion fatigue (Hunter, 2016).
- Secondhand depression has similar symptoms to clinical depression (Hunter, 2016).



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Self-Care

Positive coping skills to support mental and emotional well-being:

- Doing Healthy and Enjoyable Things
- Exercise or Pursing Movement/Activity
- Healthier Eating
- Journaling
- Meditation
- Recharge
- Socialize
- THERAPY!

(BetterHelp, 2020)



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Combating Burnout, Compassion Fatigue, & Secondhand Depression

- Allowing Time to Heal
- Embracing Mindfulness
- Exercise or Activity
- Having Good Sleep Patterns
- Practicing a Health Diet
- Reaching Out to Community
- Seeking Professional Counseling


(Hunter, 2016)

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Stress Management for Counselors

Ways to cope with stress for school and/or work life:


- Consultation Groups
- Mindfulness Practice
- Mentors
- Music
- Positive Coping Skill Usage
- Projects of Interest
- Relaxation
- Social Support
- THERAPY!



(University of Nevada Reno, n.d.)

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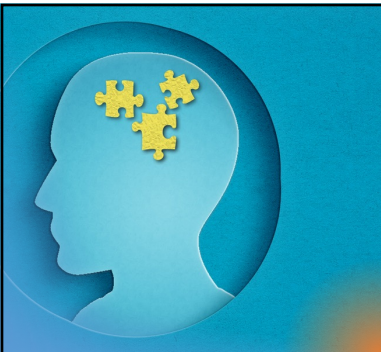


When is it Time to Ask for Help?

1. If you feel that every emotion is intensified or if you are snapping at every little stressor.
2. If you have numbed yourself to the point where you do not feel any emotion.
3. If you are isolating yourself from your friends and family.
4. If you are self-medicating with food, sleep, drugs, alcohol, or other negative coping skills.
5. If you have suffered a recent trauma or loss.

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When is it Time to Ask for Help?

6. If you don't find joy in the things that used to bring you joy.
7. If you have tried everything that has worked before to get out of the funk, and it's not working.
8. If the stress you are dealing with is interfering with work, school or having healthy relationships.
9. If you feel stuck.
10. If you have a bad habit of always assuming the worse, mentally beating yourself up, or having persistent negative thoughts.

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When is it Time to Ask for Help?


11. If you are constantly blaming yourself for other people's problems, or you are constantly blaming others for your problems.
12. If you feel helpless or worthless, like there is nothing that you can do.
13. If you are not sleeping, sleeping too much, not eating, or eating way too much.
14. If you feel that you are no longer helping people.
15. If you feel that you want to work on your personal growth and development and make changes in your life.

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Think About This...

- What areas in your life need more reflection?
- What kinds of boundaries, both personal and professional, need to be implemented?
- How can you cultivate self-awareness both personally and professionally?
- How can you utilize coping skills to manage burnout, compassion fatigue, or secondhand depression?



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Continuing Education



This webinar has been approved for 1.0 continuing education (CE) credits:

- Board Certified Patient Advocates (BCPA)
- Case Manager Certification
- Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE)
- Certified in Family and Consumer Sciences (CFCS)
- Social Work, LPC, LMFT

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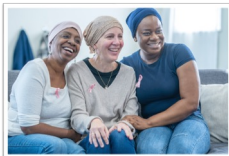


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Upcoming Webinar



The Importance of Nutrition in Breast Cancer Survivorship

October 25, 2023, 11 AM – 12:00 PM ET

This webinar provides information on nutrition and lifestyle issues that can arise during breast cancer treatment and survivorship. The presentation includes strategies to help providers working with families manage issues and review of current evidence on nutrition recommendations.

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