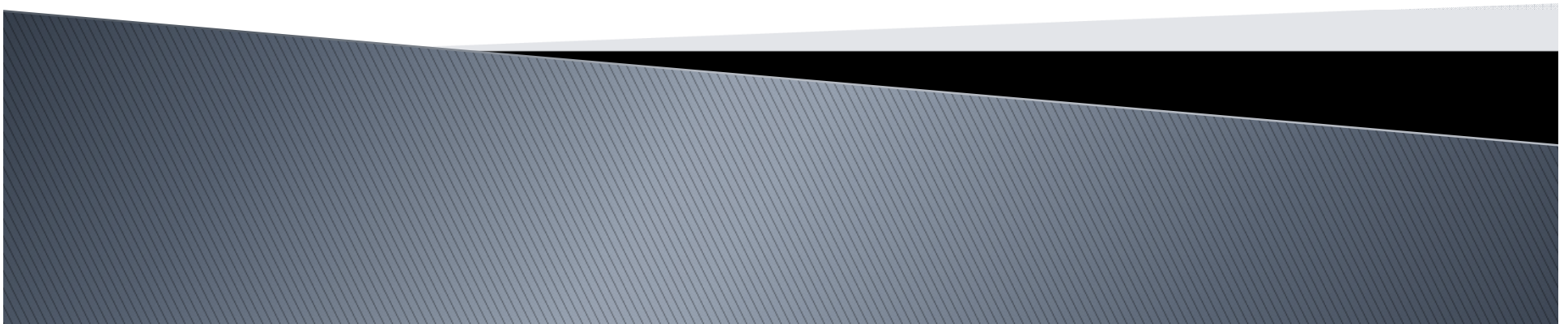


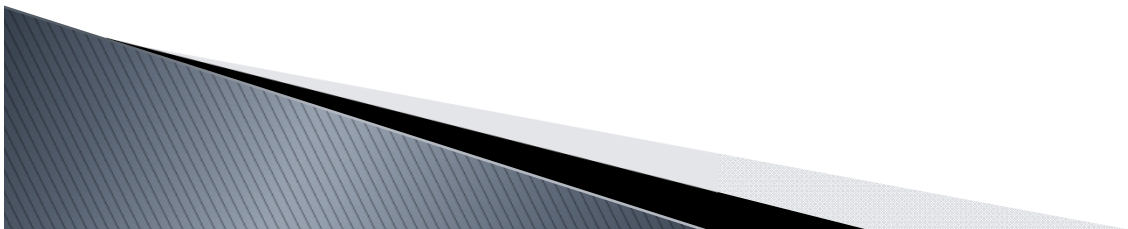
Suicide Prevention: Self-Care for the Care Givers

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www.patriciaburke.com



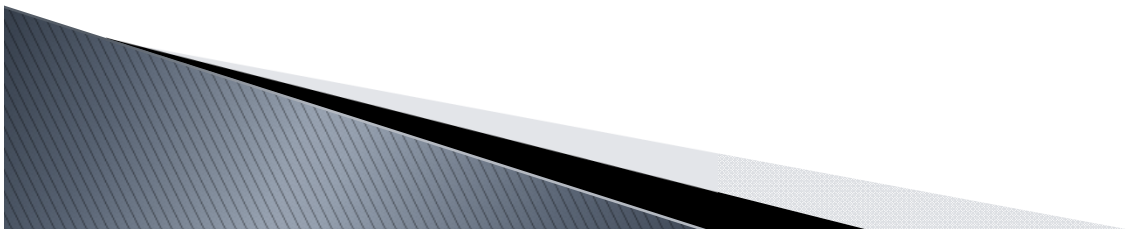
DISCLOSURE

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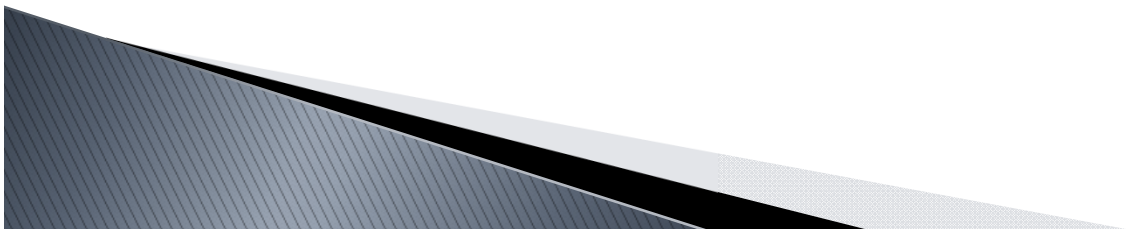
Landscape of Meaning

- ▶ Primary Stress Reactions
- ▶ Secondary Trauma
- ▶ Compassion Fatigue
- ▶ Vicarious Traumatization
- ▶ Burnout



Importance of Self-Care

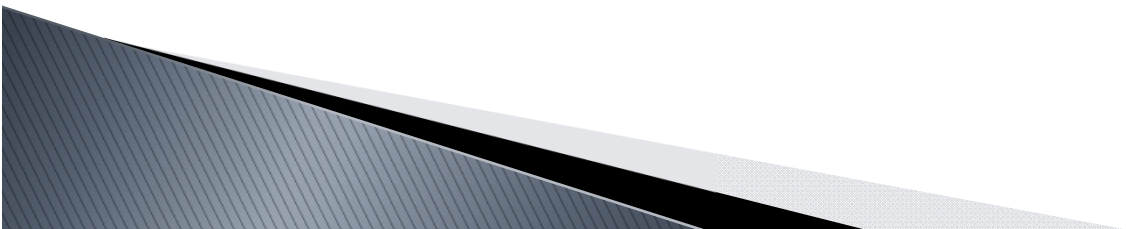
- ▶ Stress of high pressured treatment contexts
- ▶ Stress of working with suicidal people
- ▶ Complexity of working with people with co-occurring conditions



4 Steps to Well-Being

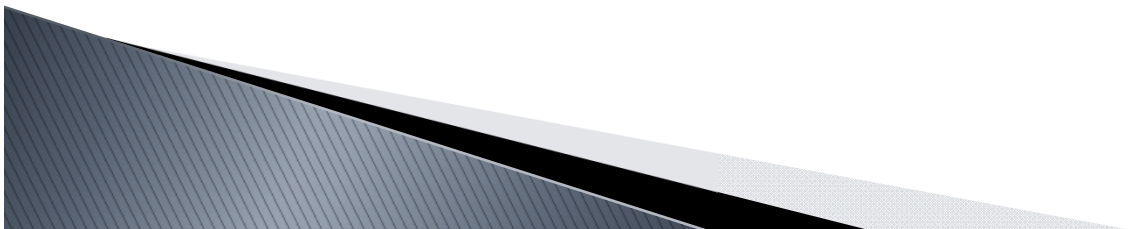
1. Tracking the Stressors
2. Enhancing Self-Care/ABCs
3. Building Resilience & Coping Skills
4. Making a Commitment to Self-Care

(Adapted from Mathieu, 2012)



Tracking the Stressors

Stress of Working with Suicidality	Typical Responses
1)	
2)	
3)	
4)	
5)	
6)	
7)	



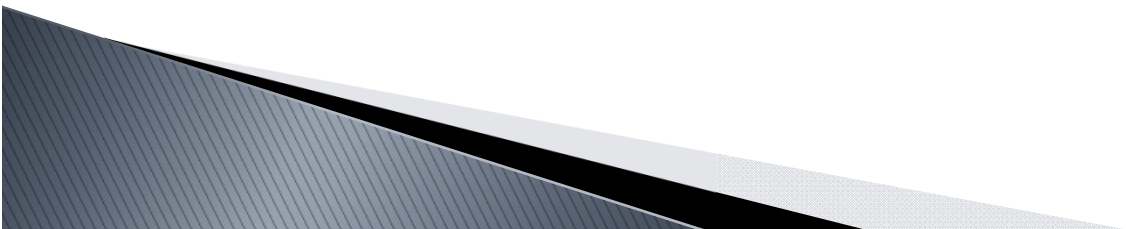
The ABCs of Self-Care

- ▶ *Awareness*

- ▶ *Balance*

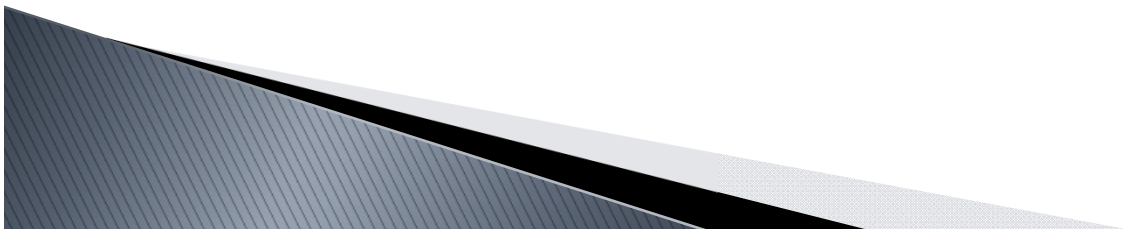
- ▶ *Connection*

(Saakvitne and Pearlman, 1996)



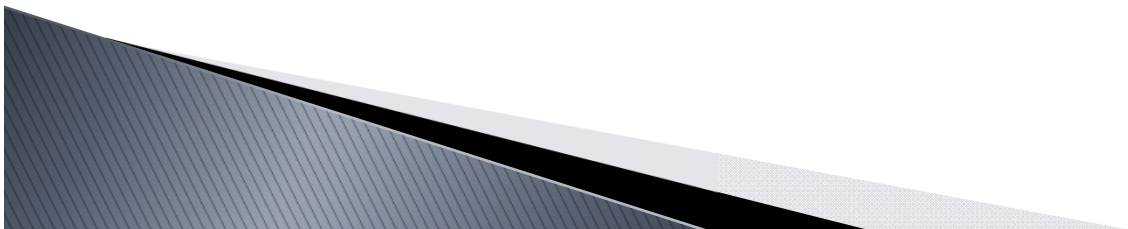
Awareness

- ▶ Being in tune with one's needs, limits, emotions and internal/external resources
- ▶ Quiet time and space that supports self-reflection
- ▶ Mindfulness: Non-judgmental Awareness



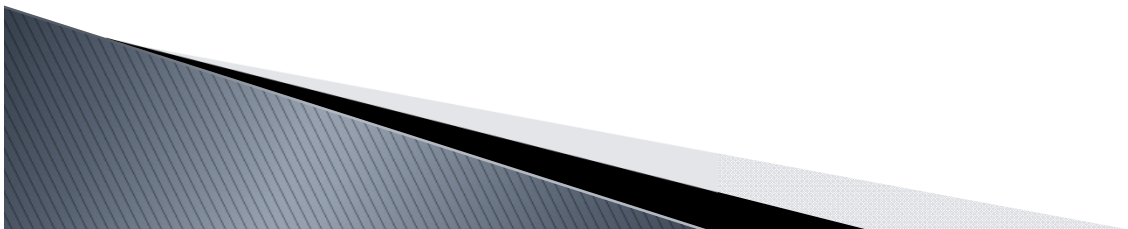
Balance

- ▶ Diversity of activities at work
- ▶ Work and play
- ▶ Activity and rest
- ▶ Focus on self & focus on others
- ▶ Provides stability
- ▶ Provides grounding during high stress



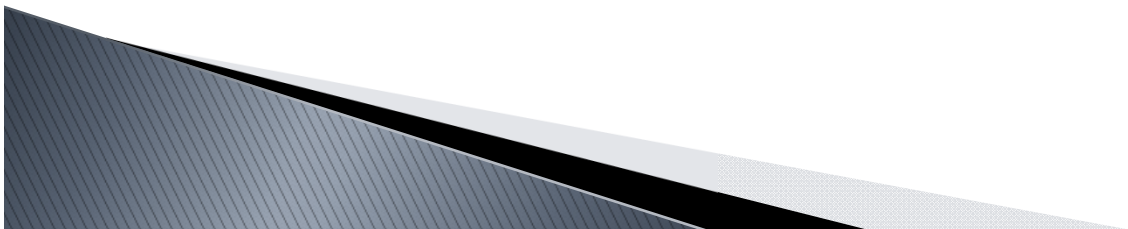
Connection

- ▶ Connection to oneself, to others, and to something greater decreases isolation and increases hope.
- ▶ Connection provides an anchor that supports us to be able to witness tremendous suffering.



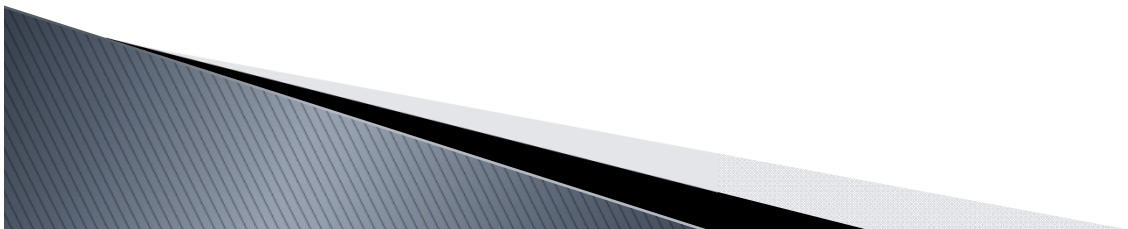
What is Mindfulness?

- ▶ Non-judgmental awareness
- ▶ Alert yet relaxed consciousness
- ▶ Compassionate witnessing of experience
- ▶ Curiosity



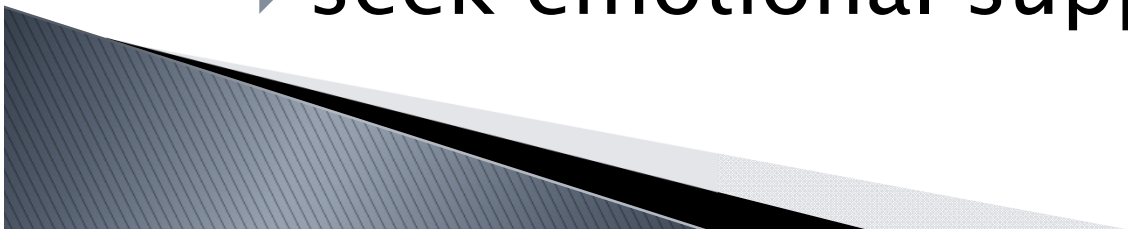
Mindfulness Enhances

- ▶ Witness stance
- ▶ Acceptance and tolerance of strong feelings
- ▶ Compassion for self and others
- ▶ Resilience (ability to rebound from adversity)
- ▶ Relaxation
- ▶ Peace of mind



Self-Care Activities

- ▶ talk with colleagues
- ▶ attend workshops
- ▶ social activities
- ▶ exercise
- ▶ limit client sessions/balance caseloads
- ▶ take vacations/take breaks
- ▶ listen to music/walk in nature
- ▶ seek emotional support



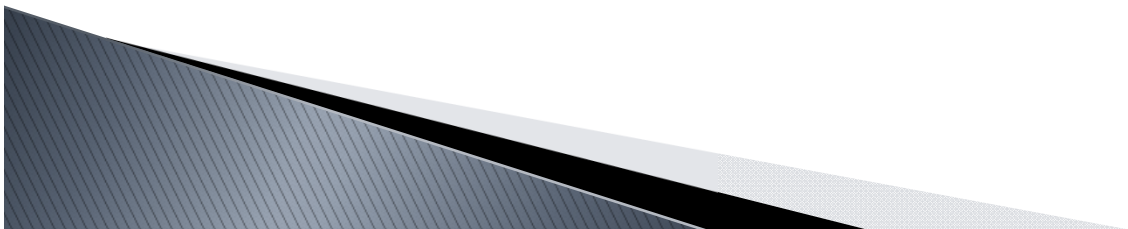
A Holistic Self-Care Plan

Personal

- ▶ 1) physical
- ▶ 2) psychological
- ▶ 3) emotional
- ▶ 4) spiritual

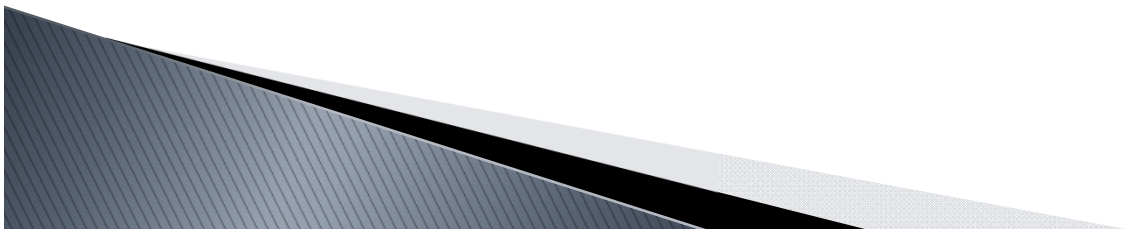
Professional

- ▶ 1) physical
- ▶ 2) psychological
- ▶ 3) emotional
- ▶ 4) spiritual



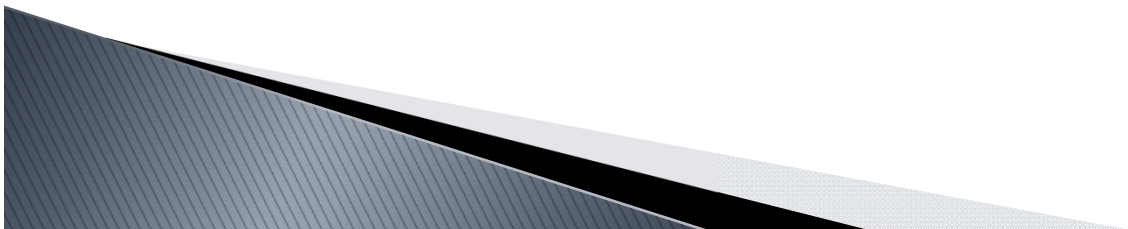
Physical Self-Care

- ▶ What are non-chemical things that help my body relax?
- ▶ What supports my body to be healthy?



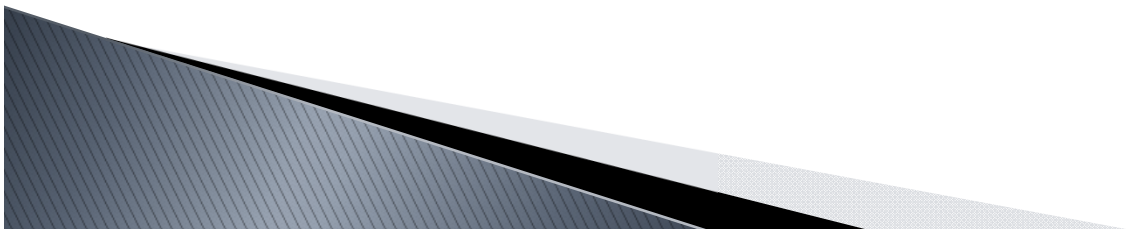
Psychological Self-Care I

- ▶ What helps my mind relax?
- ▶ What helps me see a bigger perspective?
- ▶ What helps me break down big tasks into smaller steps?
- ▶ What helps me counteract negative self-talk?



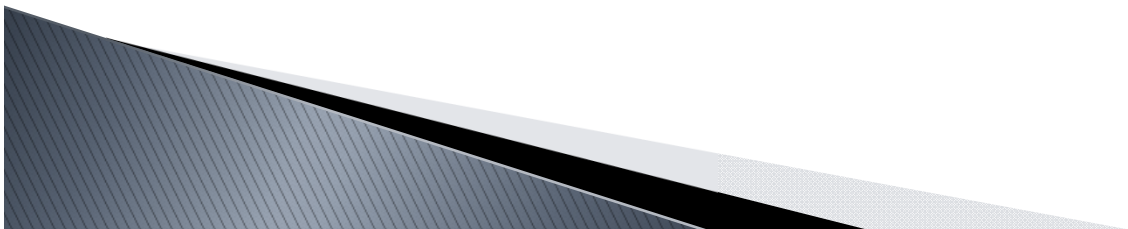
Emotional Self-Care I

- ▶ What helps me feel grounded and able to tolerate strong feelings?
- ▶ What helps me express my feelings in a healthy way?
- ▶ Who helps me cope in positive ways and how do they help?



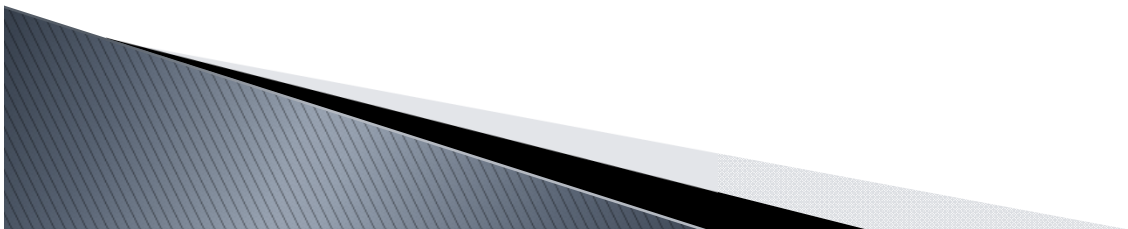
Emotional Self-Care II

- ▶ Who are at least three people I feel safe talking with about my reactions/feelings about clients?
- ▶ How can I connect with those people on a regular basis?
- ▶ What helps me feel connected to others?



Spiritual Self-Care

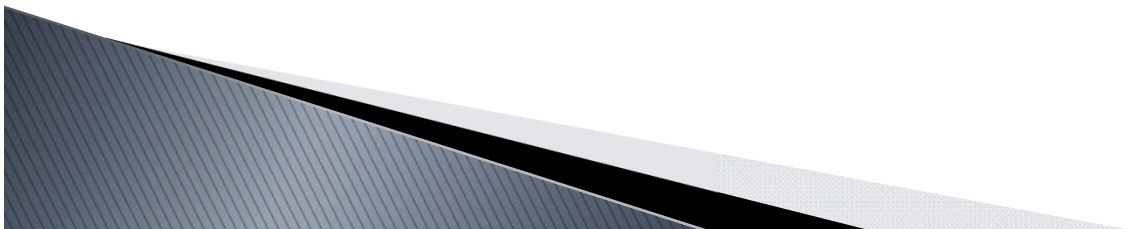
- ▶ What helps me find meaning in life?
- ▶ What helps me feel hopeful?
- ▶ What sustains me during difficult times?
- ▶ What connects me to something greater?



Making a Commitment to Self-Care

Make a formal, tangible commitment: Written, public, specific, and measureable promises of self-care

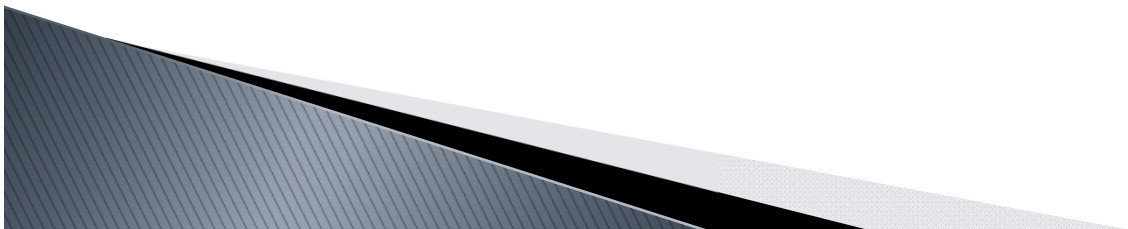
– Green Cross
Standards of Self-Care



Self-Care is an Ethical Imperative

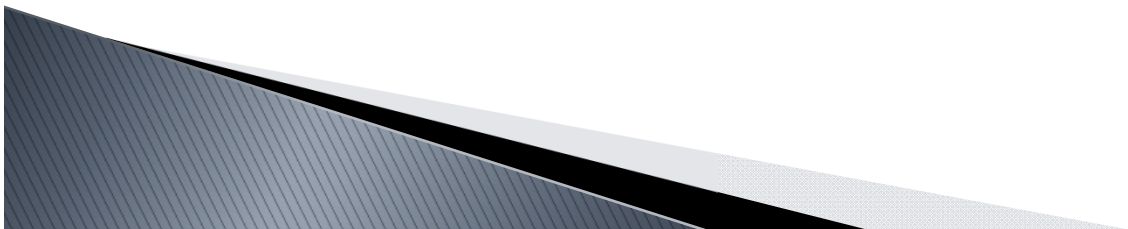
There must be a recognition that the duty to perform as a helper can not be fulfilled if there is not, at the same time, a duty to self care.

– Green Cross
Standards of Self-Care



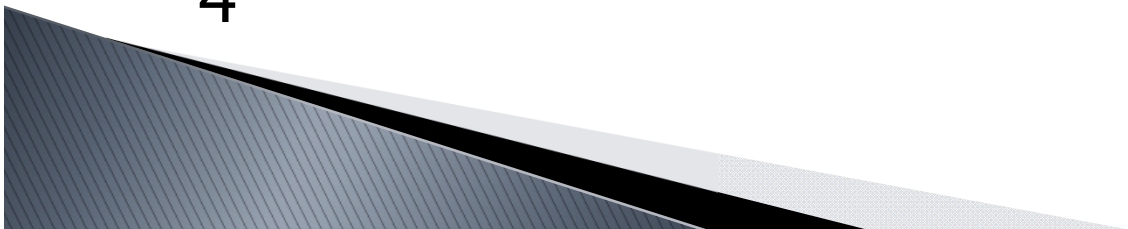
Final Thoughts

- ▶ Self-care is not a selfish action
- ▶ It is an action of self-acceptance and self-compassion
- ▶ It is an ethical imperative
- ▶ It is an acknowledgement of our humanity
- ▶ It allows us to continue the important work we are doing in the world



Selected References I

- ▶ Burke, P, A., Carruth, B. & Prichard, D. (2006). Counselor Self-Care in Work with Traumatized, Addicted People, In B. Carruth. (Ed.). *Psychological Trauma and Addiction Treatment*. New York: Haworth Press.
- ▶ Figley, C.R. (1995). *Compassion Fatigue: Coping with Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder in Those Who Treat the Traumatized*. New York: Brunner Mazel.
- ▶ Green Cross Academy of Traumatology. Standards of Self-Care. Retrieved from http://www.greencross.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=184&Itemid=124



Selected References II

- ▶ Saakvitne, K. W. & Pearlman, L. A. (1996). *Transforming the Pain: A Workbook on Vicarious Traumatization*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- ▶ Mathieu, F. (2012). *The Compassion Fatigue Workbook*. New York: Routledge.
- ▶ Stamm, B. H. (Ed.) (1995). *Secondary Traumatic Stress: Self-Care Issues For Clinicians, Researchers, and Educators*. Lutherville, MD: Sidran.