



### **SADI Corner – September Post**

With this month's SADI Corner, we are focusing on identifying the dimensions of self-care and touching on what it means to build a community of care. Self-care is essential for managing stress, preventing burnout, and mitigating compassion fatigue – all common occupational hazards for caring individuals. Self-care is also important for a sense of overall integrity, as it ensures we are “walking our talk.”

Imagine your self-care in four key dimensions of well-being: mind (mental/psychological), body (physical), heart (emotional), and spirit (spiritual/essence). You might picture yourself walking around a circle that has four quadrants and stopping in each one to reflect on it.

#### **Physical (the body) – to live, move, and breath**

Physical self-care involves ensuring an overall healthy lifestyle that includes eating healthy, drinking lots of water, and getting plenty of exercise. Consider decluttering your home and office so that you have a feeling of spaciousness and manageability. Take time away from computers, TV, and your smartphone (sedentary lifestyles are a health issue). Enjoy moments to rest and replenish.

**PAUSE & REFLECT: WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY DOING FOR YOUR PHYSICAL SELF-CARE?**

#### **Emotional (heart) – to love, care, and be in relationship with yourself and others**

Emotional self-care might include setting clear boundaries on your time and energy. Engage emotional boundaries within helping relationships, surrounding yourself with positive people and affirmative and inspiring messages. Address any issues or problems so that they do not build up. Give and receive love, kindness, and support. Spend time with people you care about and who care about you.

**PAUSE & REFLECT: WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY DOING FOR YOUR EMOTIONAL SELF-CARE?**

## **Psychological (the mind) – to learn, think, and grow**

Psychological self-care activities might include personal and professional development. Give attention to things that are in your control (your sphere of influence). Take time for personal reflection. Notice your inner experiences, thoughts, and feelings. Cultivate self-awareness through things such as journaling, getting feedback from others, meditation, coaching/counselling, and consultation or supervision – places where you can grow, learn, and reflect.

**PAUSE & REFLECT: WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY DOING FOR YOUR PSYCHOLOGICAL SELF-CARE?**

## **Spiritual (the spirit) – to connect with essence, purpose, and meaning**

Spiritual self-care might include prayer or meditation. You may want to visualize, practice gratitude, spend time in nature, and be aware of the non-material aspects of your life. Identify what is meaningful to you in your work and life. Practice mindfulness and being present in the moment.

**PAUSE & REFLECT: WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY DOING FOR YOUR SPIRITUAL SELF-CARE?**

## **Building a Community of Care**

It is important to understand that our care, our mental health is “everyone’s business”. It is imperative that we realize, it is not enough to provide resources and a list of things for others to do to care for themselves. We should also check in with them. Acknowledge the struggles they are facing, and learn to lean on one another in difficult times, without stigma. A community of care—where individuals discuss mental health issues openly and without stigma—merits attention and further development.

We need to extend that ethic of care and culture agency-wide and throughout our communities. Mental health needs to become everybody’s business; only then will we see the walls of stigma being torn down and the building of a community that cares.

Helpers, healers, and leaders are often focused on the results they are achieving with and for others. Self-care involves focusing on yourself and taking time to rest, reflect, replenish, and renew. Self-care includes taking stock of your own needs, goals, health, and accomplishments; taking time to nourish and nurture all of who you are.