



Caring for Ourselves in Times of Change

Tues, Feb 3rd, 2021, 1:15-2:30pm
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My inspiration: why I do what I do



My mom, Gilda, an RN for 30+ years, on the right



My Auntie Precy & Auntie Mely (both lifelong caregivers) and me

Who I Am



Why We're Here

- Understand physiological effect of stress on our bodies
- Learn simple and powerful self-care tools to help care for your health
- Develop a simple wellness plan
- To feel more connected to self, and each other
- Have fun!



Community Agreements

- Participate fully
- Be willing to try new things
- Be willing to share reflections
- Confidentiality
- Encourage yourself and each other



Breakout Room instructions

Use **GALLERY VIEW** and everyone **UNMUTE**

One person volunteers to go and then invites the next person.

Each person will share:

- Name
- Share 1 word of how you are doing right now
- Share 1 thing that has helped you get through this last year

Everyone gets 1 minute each. You will receive time prompts to warn you.

If you are having trouble being heard or understood through your mic, use the chat box to share.

What is Self-Care/Self-Healing?

- We are whole beings with whole lives
- Interdependence: healing ourselves, heals our families, cooperatives, communities, etc
- Our work is better when we are taking care of our whole selves and whole lives
 - 😊 employees are 12% more productive
 - 😊 workplaces outperform others by 20%
- We are diverse and our needs are diverse.



SELF CARE CAN LOOK LIKE

- BATHS
- WILD NIGHTS OUT
- A POETRY BOOK
- A TRASHY MAGAZINE
- GOING DANCING
- GOING TO THE WOODS
- DOING WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO TO FEEL LIKE YOU
- DOING WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO TO PAY BILLS
- ALONE TIME
- PEOPLE TIME
- GREEN JUICE
- WHOPPERS

SELF CARE NEVER LOOKS LIKE

- FORCING YOURSELF TO MEDITATE WHEN IT FEELS ITCHY OR ANNOYING OR LIKE "HOW DOES THIS EVEN WORK?"
- SPENDING TIME IN SOLITUDE WHEN SOLITUDE IS OVERWHELMING
- CHOOSING INTROSPECTION OVER FUN WHEN WHAT YOU NEED IS FUN
- SPENDING \$\$\$ ON A SERUM WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL A SERUM IS
- FEELING BAD THAT YOU'RE NOT MAKING TIME FOR "SELF CARE"

SELF CARE LOOKS DIFFERENT FOR EVERYONE



Mari Andrew (list) Ashley Lukashevsky (pic)

Self-care at Work:

To maintain balance, pacing, efficiency of our energy to sustain us over a lifetime of meaningful work.

- o Load management – The amount we do
- o Personal effectiveness and time management – how we distribute and focus our energies
- o Energy management – how we care for our personal energy system: mind/body/heart/spirit
- o State management – how we manage our state of being and handle stress, how we cultivate resiliency

TOOL: BODY SCAN

- Emotions, innate intelligence, and trauma are held in our bodies
- Embodied cognition “discovering” what our ancestors always knew
- Tuning in helps us to know ourselves to heal ourselves

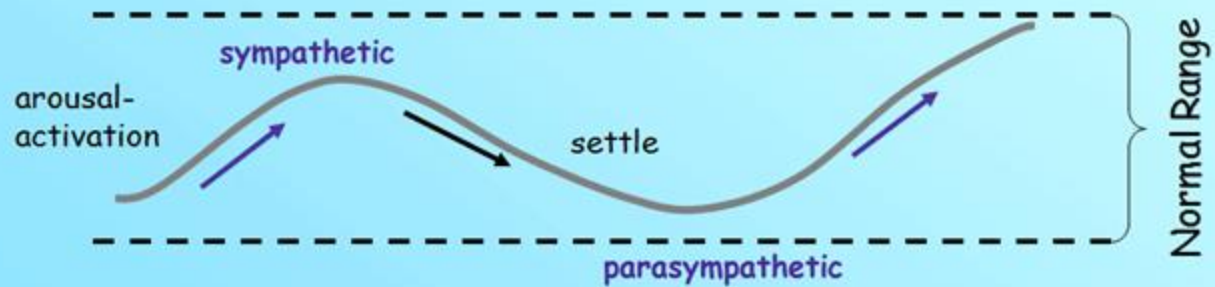


The genius of our bodies

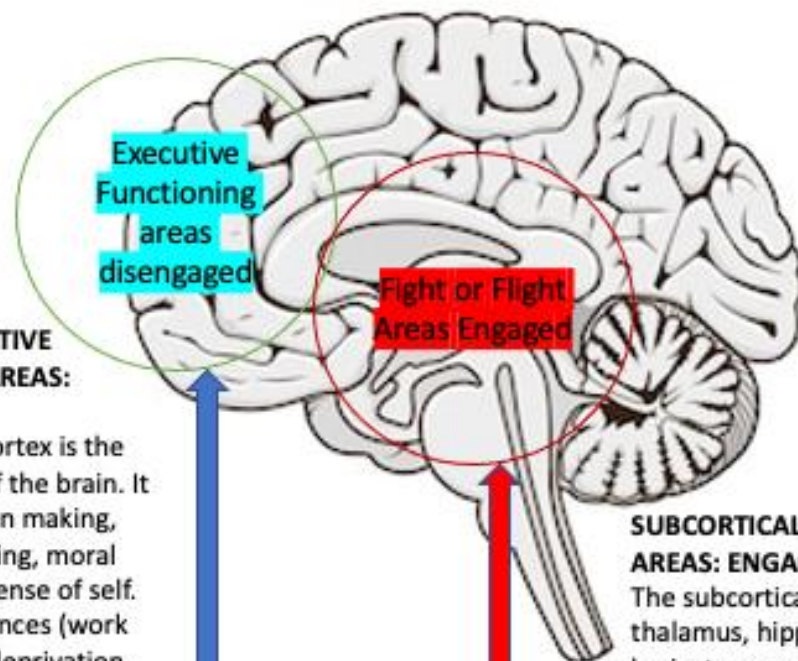
- Paying attention can help us heal ourselves
- Power of the mind to influence and CHANGE our bodies



A Healthy Nervous System



**You can't
be both
places at
once.**



**FRONTAL EXECUTIVE
FUNCTIONING AREAS:
DISENGAGED:**

The prefrontal cortex is the “CEO” or “ED” of the brain. It regulates decision making, judgment, planning, moral reasoning, and sense of self. Stressful experiences (work pressure, sleep deprivation, substance abuse, etc.) disengage the frontal lobes. Over time, that can lead to impulsive, short-sighted, even violent behaviors; increased anxiety; depression; substance abuse; and increased stress-related diseases

**SUBCORTICAL FIGHT OR FLIGHT
AREAS: ENGAGED**

The subcortical arousal system – thalamus, hippocampus, brainstem, and hypothalamus – mobilizes the body for action, increasing heart rate, respiratory rate, and muscle tone. The nature of this system is to bypass the frontal executive functioning and trigger the fight or flight mode

Stress is manifested as disease in our body

- lowered immunity to illness
- fatigue
- adrenal fatigue
- thyroid problems
- Difficulty falling asleep
- Autoimmune disorders
- Depression/anxiety
- Digestion problems
- Memory and concentration impairment



TOOL: BREATHWORK

Take a deeeeeeep breath (no, really!)

- ▶ Breath, mind (brainwaves) and heart(beat) are inextricably related
- ▶ You change one, you change the others
- ▶ Increases connection with body and emotions
- ▶ More awareness, more choice, more power
- ▶ Hard to repress our feelings when we breathe fully



How Stress Works*

- Stress kills by proxy - 60-80% of all diseases are due to stress
- Big & little stresses have the same effect
- Doesn't matter if it's only happening in your mind
- 1,400 biochemical processes

*HeartMath Institute



How Stress Works*

- We can become numb to stress
- Binge/purge solutions do not work
- Can make smart people do not-so-smart things



*HeartMath Institute

TOOL: MICRO-BREAKS

- ❖ Breaks of 20 seconds - 2 minutes every 15-20 minutes
- ❖ Attention span is only 14 minutes
- ❖ Excessive focus drains energy
- ❖ “Pushing through” is counter-productive
- ❖ Brains are like toddlers- need to flip between rest and stimulation to be healthy and energized
- ❖ Helps reverse the dangerous effects of a sedentary lifestyle
- ❖ Take a microbreak every 15-20 minutes to move and use your full range of motion and reboot your brain!

**A microbreak is a
30 second to
two-minute break
taken frequently
throughout the
working day**



Stretching



Doing a
tea round



Power
walking
around the
building



Chatting
to a
colleague



Changing
activity
or task



Daydreaming



Going to
fetch a
snack



Checking
your personal
phone



Tools for addressing stress in the moment

- Microbreaks: 20 sec - 2 min breaks taken every ~20 mins or so, stretch, power walk, daydream, grab tea/snack, etc
- Body scan
- Breathing techniques
 - It only takes 1 minute of deep breathing to clear bloodstream of cortisol
 - Triangle breath (inhaling, holding breath, exhaling for an equal count)
 - Making exhalation longer than inhalation
- Somatic tools: face contortions, orientation/tracking (gently turning head to side, looking for windows and doors), etc
- Humming
- Singing
- Praying
- Etc...

Other practices to help during these times

- Get enough sleep
- Exercise regularly (even if it's just a little!)
- Spend time in nature (or talking with your plant)
- Keep a regular routine
- Reach out to family and friends
- Connect to your life purpose and meaning: spirituality, relationships, social justice, etc

TOOL: Freewriting

- Write the **three words** you see below at the top of your page (in whatever language you'd like to write in)
- You will **write without stopping** for one minute about whatever comes to your mind- the only rule is **to incorporate the three words**
- Keep the words flowing! First thought, best thought!

ROUND 1: HOME - MOTHER - CLOUDS

ROUND 2: OCEAN - HOPE - POETRY

CARING FOR MYSELF

- ◆ Choose different aspects suggested on this slide to help evoke new thoughts
- ◆ Keep your pen moving! Let the words flow!

Think of an area in your life where you would like to create a shift in caring for yourself.

- Making this shift will make me feel...
- Making this shift will impact my life by...
- Habits I have that keep my situation the same include...
- Big and small things I can do to work towards this shift include...

Best practices for goal-setting

- Using self-care assessment as inspiration, come up with 3 wellness goals
- Make goals SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound
- Go slow and incrementally at first - try to keep goals under 10 mins
- Remember why you're doing what you're doing
- Create accountability structures
- Best plans are flexible and always being assessed
- Celebrate your wins



Breakout Room instructions

Use **GALLERY VIEW** and everyone **UNMUTE**

One person volunteers to go and then invites the next person.

Each person will share:

- Name
- Share about the area of your life where you'd like to better care for yourself
- Share one thing you are willing to do (or how you are willing to be) in order to shift that

When everyone has had a turn, you can chat to get to know each other better

If you are having trouble being heard or understood through your mic, use the chat box to share.

Presenters Notes

- This workshop has been informed and inspired by the ideas of many people and organizations over the years. Including but certainly not limited to: April Nishimura, Kirin Bhatti, Becka Tilsen, Claudia Cuentas, HeartMath Institute, Partners for Youth Empowerment, TREC, the healing justice movement, and the Zenyu Healing community and many many others.