

Essential Skills for Palliative Care Series

Self Care: Caring for Yourself When You Care for Others

Presenters:

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Host and Moderator: Jennifer Campagnolo, CHCA

Date: May 10, 2023



Canadian
Home Care
Association

BY
Pallium Canada

Land Acknowledgement





We recognize with humility and gratitude that Canada is located in the traditional, historical and ceded and unceded Lands of First Nation, Inuit and Metis Peoples. On behalf of us all, we acknowledge and pay respect to the Indigenous peoples past, present and future who continue to work, educate and contribute to the strength of this country.

THE CANADIAN INTERDISCIPLINARY PALLIATIVE CARE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

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A curriculum guide for educators and reference manual for disciplines providing palliative care.


 Health Canada Santé Canada

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A curriculum guide for educators and reference manual for disciplines providing palliative care.

What this framework seeks to achieve, and how to use it

This framework establishes a minimum national standard for palliative care in Canada.

It is written with several readers in mind:

- Individuals, managers and human resources personnel** will use it to fill skills gaps and guide hiring practices.
- Educators** will use it to identify minimum standards for palliative care competencies, weave the development of essential skills into existing curricula, or build new curricula to teach the competencies.
- National accreditation and regulatory agencies** will use it as a guide for establishing minimum national standards in palliative care.

Specifically, the disciplines with competencies in the framework:

-  Nurses
-  General Physicians
-  Social Workers
-  Personal Support Workers
-  Volunteers

The framework includes:

a. Twelve domains of competency:

 1. Principles of a palliative approach to care	 5. Care planning and collaborative practice	 9. Professional and ethical practice
 2. Cultural safety and humility	 6. Last days and hours	 10. Education, evaluation, quality improvement, research
 3. Communication	 7. Loss, grief, and bereavement	 11. Advocacy
 4. Optimizing comfort and quality of life	 8. Self-care	 12. Virtual care

b. Discipline-specific skills self-assessments:

- provide the health care practitioner with a snapshot of their own competencies;
- provide managers with tools to gauge the levels of palliative care competencies within a team;
- can guide professionals and managers as they customize continuing education plans.

c. Education resources


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Domain 8: Self-care

Self-care is paramount for health care providers. It encompasses a spectrum of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, including self-awareness and reflection, maintaining professional boundaries, and practicing holistic wellness strategies for the individual provider and the team.¹

¹ Canadian Partnership Against Cancer & Health Canada. *The Canadian Interdisciplinary Palliative Care Competency Framework*. Toronto, ON: 2021.



BUILDING **e**MOTIONALLY **i**NTUITIVE
COMPETENCY-BASED
PALLIATIVE CARE **S**KILLS

- The eiCOMPASS project aim is to improve the skills of health care providers in delivering emotionally intuitive, competency-based palliative care in the home setting.
- The project is building awareness of the **Canadian Interdisciplinary Palliative Care Competency Framework** with home care organizations across Canada.
- Emotional Intelligence training and tools are being developed to reinforce competencies and help home care providers apply their skills to deliver emotionally intuitive palliative care.
- The project aims to facilitate the adoption of the Competency Framework through our SPRINT™ Implementation Collaborative.

Visit our project site at: <https://cdnhomecare.ca/eicompass> or
contact Liz Angelevski at eangelevski@cdnhomecare.ca

Introductions



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VON Canada



CARING FOR YOURSELF WHEN YOU CARE FOR OTHERS

MICHELLE O'ROURKE AND CHERIE GILBEAULT

MAY 10, 2023

OBJECTIVES

- Recognizing the signs of compassion fatigue in staff and self
- Learning strategies to mitigate compassion fatigue
- Addressing compassion fatigue in the workplace
- Promoting resources for health care providers

CURRENT CONVERSATIONS AROUND EMPATHY AND COMPASSION

- ‘Compassion Fatigue’ coined in 1992, and the term was used to describe the loss of “the ability to nurture” among nurses. “The cost of caring”. Dr. Charles Figley developed a framework and started research – exploring the intersection between burnout and secondary traumatic stress.
- Counterpoint – ‘Compassion is not fatiguing’ – not an exhaustible resource. Now, researchers including Singer and Klimecki, are exploring the fact that when working in high stress, trauma-exposed environments, empathy can contribute to provider distress.
- More researchers starting to use the terms ‘Empathic Strain’ or ‘Empathic Distress’ instead of Compassion Fatigue.

COMPASSION FATIGUE

“A disorder that affects those who do their work well” Charles Figley

Profound emotional and physical exhaustion/erosion that takes place when helpers are **unable to refuel and regenerate**

- *Can be felt towards the people they serve, their colleagues, or their loved ones*
- *Changes their world view*
- *Often needs psychological intervention to address serious cases*

ISSUES RELATED TO COMPASSION FATIGUE

Vicarious Trauma: the profound shift that workers experience in their world view when they work with clients who have experienced trauma. We too become traumatized by the images and stories though we did not experience them ourselves. Often experienced with compassion fatigue.

Moral Distress: occurs when we are told to do things that we fundamentally disagree with or to which we are morally opposed; contributes to compassion fatigue.

Burnout: many non-helping professions suffer burnout; physical and emotional exhaustion experienced along with low job satisfaction, feeling powerless and overwhelmed at work. Does not necessarily mean we have lost the ability to feel compassion for others and can usually be resolved by changing jobs. Not the case with CF or VT.

LIVING THROUGH THE PANDEMIC HAS BEEN A TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE

Psychologist Dr. Jennifer Yaeger explains a few things which are helpful to know about trauma:

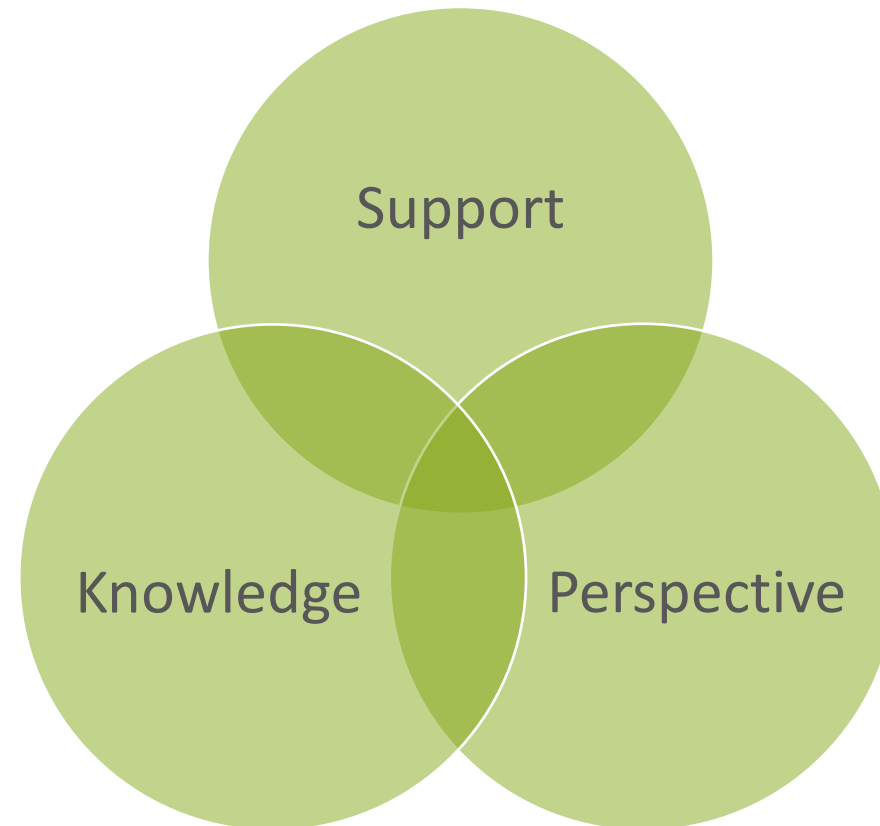
- Parts of our brains shut down in order for us to survive. As a result, we are not able to fully process a lot of what is going on around us
- Feeling somewhat numb and out of touch with our emotions is normal, especially if you have lived through trauma before
- In-depth processing of trauma happens years later, when we feel emotionally safe to deal with it.
- When in the midst of trauma, just getting by emotionally and functionally is okay. Lowering expectations and being kind to yourself and others is vital

COMMON SIGNS OF COMPASSION FATIGUE

- Becoming cynical or defensive; not enjoying work; difficulty caring
- Physical signs: aches; pains; dizziness; difficulty sleeping; impaired immune system
- Feelings of anxiety, depression, numbness; feeling depleted, overly sensitive, detached, apathetic, exhausted, irritable, angry, withdrawing from others; difficulty concentrating
- Behavioural signs include substance use; other addictions; absenteeism; avoiding clients; diminished sense of enjoyment; problems with intimacy; hypervigilance; hypersensitivity; loss of hope; difficulty separating professional and personal lives

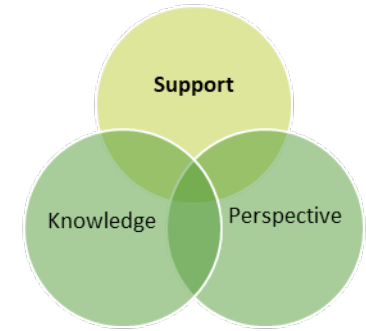
Francoise Mathieu; The Compassion Fatigue Workbook

STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING CHALLENGES



*O'Rourke
Healthy Caregiving, pg. 66*

SUPPORT

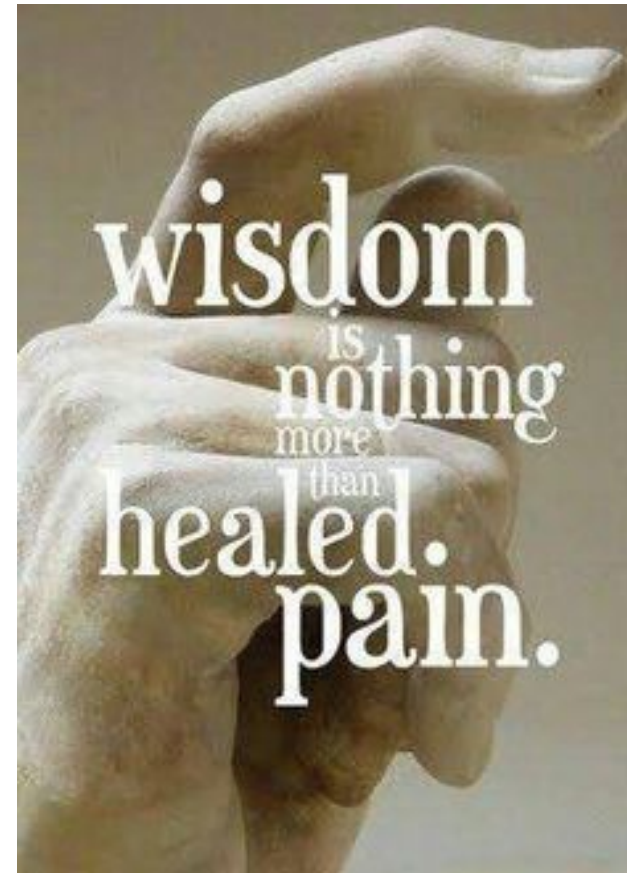


- In our personal and professional circles
- ‘Check-in’ often – with yourself, with your colleagues, with your supervisor
- Be creative - Zoom support groups; check-in at meetings; building more supports into workplace
- Seek out help/counselling if you identify that you are struggling – tell someone you trust
- Invest in the time you need for this – make it a priority
- We can’t usually ‘fix’ what is happening, but we can be present to one another – hold space for them; acknowledge the suffering

KNOWLEDGE

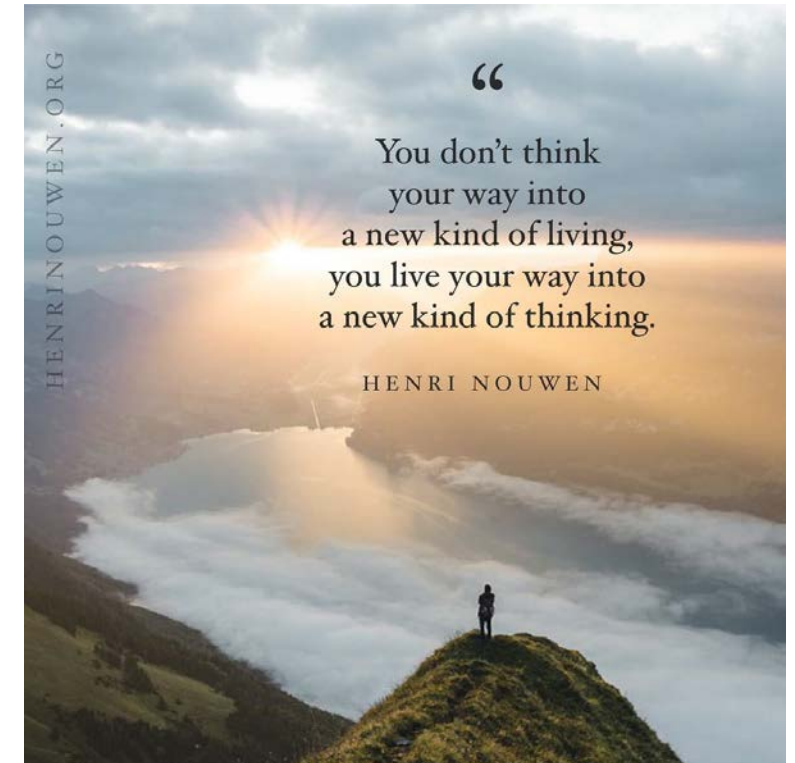
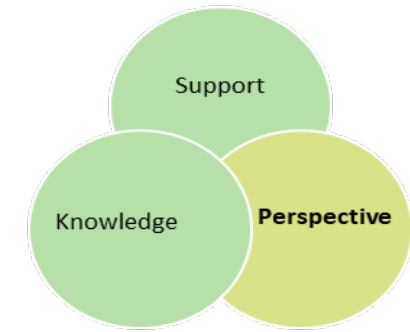


- Understanding workplace issues such as Compassion Fatigue; Vicarious Trauma; Burnout; Grief, Moral Distress...
- Learning about Wellness and practices to sustain healthy caring; decreasing stigma around addressing our mental health
- Remembering this takes life-long/ongoing learning and practice



PERSPECTIVE

- Distinguish between solvable and unsolvable worries
- Keep expectations (for yourself and for others) realistic
- One day/one decision at a time – focus on the present
- Remain hopeful
- Remember we are all human!
- Read/watch something that is inspiring/uplifting; titrate the news
- Boredom – the great generator of creativity
- Balance between looking inward and looking outward
- Focus on care and compassion - for our families, friends, colleagues and clients – but also for ourselves



COMPASSION SATISFACTION

The pleasure you derive from being able to do your work well.

- Pleasure to help others through your work
- Positivity about colleagues and your ability to contribute to the work setting and/or the greater good of your community
- Finding meaning and purpose in your work

Reconnecting with the rewards of the work

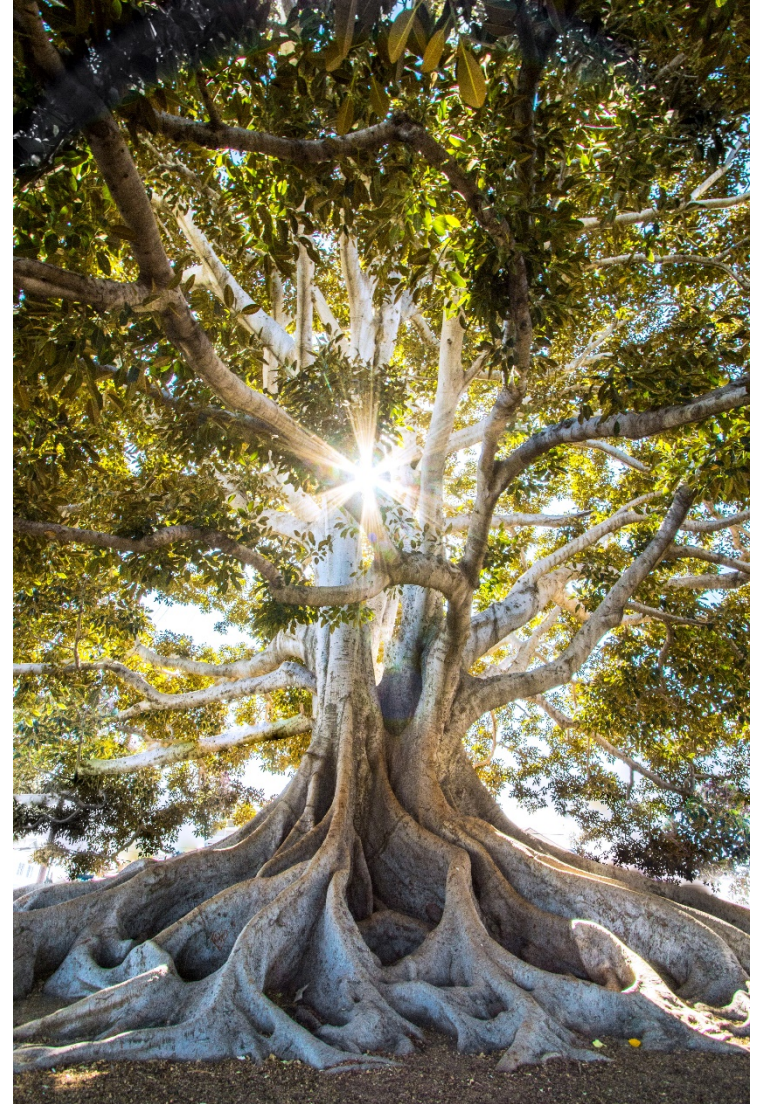
What made me choose this line of work? What keeps me going? What sustains me? How have I made a difference to others? Is this still the right job for me?

Francoise Mathieu; The Compassion Fatigue Workbook

RESILIENCE

What protects helpers and keeps them healthy?

1. Self-care
2. Improved Self-Awareness
3. Reducing chronic stress



CARING FOR YOURSELF

Self-care is an **intentional way of living** where our values, attitudes and actions are integrated into our day-to-day routines – not one more thing to add to our growing ‘to do’ lists.

- Who holds you? What refreshes you?
- You can't give what you don't have!
- As important to receive as it is to give!

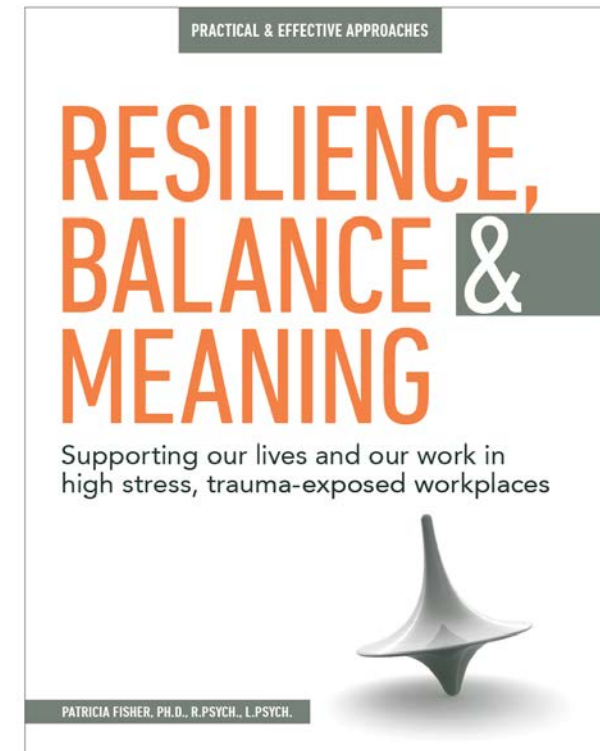
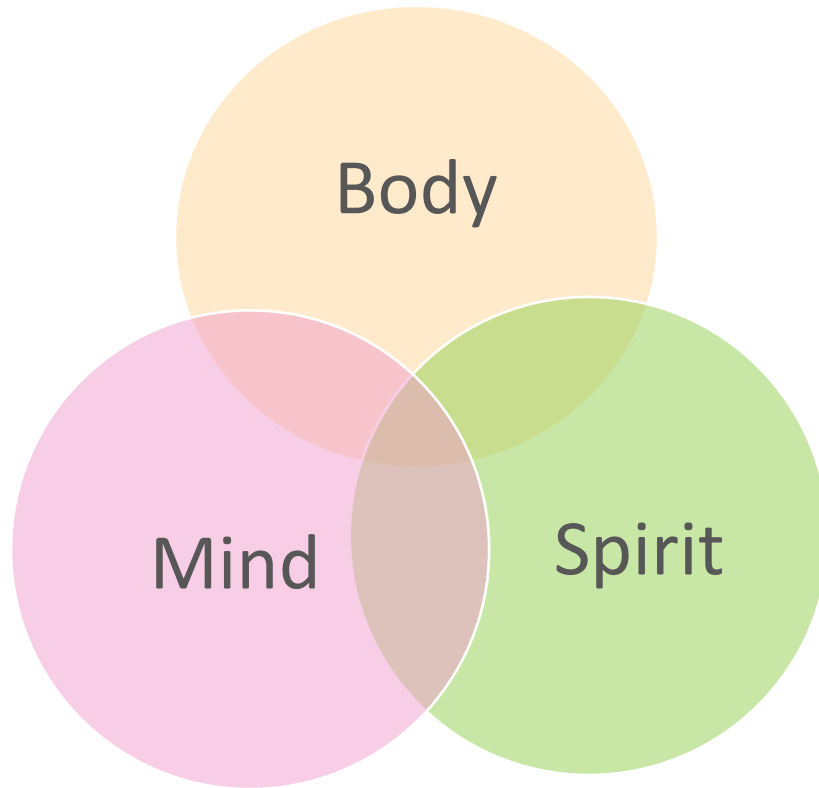


You wouldn't let this
happen to your phone.
Don't let it happen
to you either.

SELF CARE IS A PRIORITY.
NOT A LUXURY.

CARING FOR YOURSELF

is an inside job!



www.tendacademy.ca

Self-Care Inventory; ProQOL

SELF-CARE

- Take stock of what's on your plate/prioritize/delegate/be selective
- Find time for yourself every day
- Quiet time; unplugged
- Identify what refreshes you and build it in to your schedule
- Enjoy nature, the arts, music
- Time with family; friends.....
- Humour – don't take yourself too seriously!
- Give yourself permission; no guilt in caring for yourself



SELF-CARE

- Maintain a personal life outside work
- Remember to play!
- Exercise, sleep and eat well
- Seek out support
- Take time to reflect on what you have given/received
- Tend to your own spiritual needs/cultivate an inner life
- Learn the words 'no' and 'enough'
- Engage in self-reflective practice



How are you doing?

The Mental Health Continuum

Originally developed by the Mental Health Commission of Canada



Adapted from: Watson, P., Gist, R., Taylor, V. Evlander, E., Leto, F., Martin, R., Vaught, D., Nash, W.P., Westphal, R., & Litz, B. (2013). Stress First Aid for Firefighters and Emergency Services Personnel. National Fallen Firefighters Foundation.

SELF AWARENESS

- Self-Reflective Practice - routine
- What has been given/received
- Grief/Loss History
- Biases and Beliefs
- Inner work/psychological/spiritual growth
- Aware of your health and body's reactions
- Coming to terms with your own mortality
- Practicing Self-Compassion



SELF-COMPASSION

“Self-compassion is a practice in which
we learn to be a good friend to ourselves
when we need it most -

To become an inner ally rather than an inner enemy.

Typically, we don't treat ourselves as well
as we treat our friends.”

Kristen Neff/Christopher Germer

The Mindful Self-Compassion Workbook

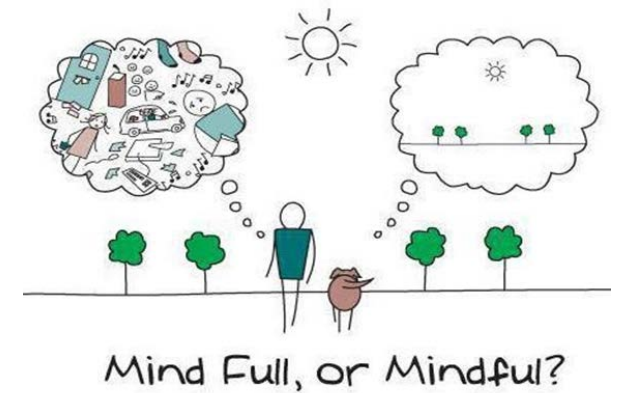
EXERCISING SELF-COMPASSION

- Managing expectations
- Practicing mindfulness – finding ways to be compassionate to ourselves in the moment, especially when we are feeling stressed



MINDFULNESS

- An awareness of the present moment with acceptance
- Noticing what is happening, while it is happening
 - not focused on the past or the future



- Regular attention to mindfulness helps us to be more attentive to ourselves and others
- Not about a 'calm', 'quiet' mind or other 'perfection seeking' – about reality; can be caught up in the chaos and not really be aware of what is going on in the moment; not about being happy and blissful

MINDFULNESS

- Can be helpful in all aspects of our lives -- eating more mindfully; walking more mindfully; working more mindfully; living more mindfully....
- Mindfulness is about savouring... using our senses to help us focus on the moment
- More intentional; more aware; more awake – opposite of multi-tasking!
- Mindfulness is fostered in disciplines such as meditation, yoga, guided meditation, contemplative practice; Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness is not about what one *does* but how one *is*

- Basic practice – focus on breathing; on physical sensations of the body (something to focus on that is not the chaos of our thoughts)
- Become familiar enough that you can use it at will – small doses many times a day
- Can be formal or informal – on the go or in a quiet, space; can mark the time

Healthy self-care is as much about “letting go” as it is about taking action.

It has to do with *letting go* of:

- frenzied schedules
- meaningless pursuits
- unrealistic expectations
- negative self-talk; ‘should’s and ‘shouldn’t’s
- feeling the need to please everyone
- low self-esteem



...and taking time to learn how to ‘be’ and not just ‘do’

We are human ‘be’ ings not human ‘do’ ings!

REDUCING CHRONIC STRESS

Decreasing our body's cortisol levels

- eased with body awareness; exercise; managing our stressors and schedules
- mindfulness exercises and mindful living
- relaxation training; breathing exercises; yoga; guided meditation
- mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR)

STRATEGIES FOR STAFF

- debriefing with colleagues; ongoing conversations - staff meetings; shift change; regular gatherings
- formal debriefing, especially after a difficult situation
- watching out for each other; challenging each other to self-care; supporting each other; affirming each other; avoiding gossip and negative talk
- enjoying some social time together; smaller networks; support groups
- staying connected through social media; newsletters; gatherings
- ways of sharing memories; rituals; celebrating lives
- ongoing engagement and evaluation – providing feedback and suggestions
- engage in good self-care and self-awareness practices – personal responsibility
- boundaries between personal and professional lives



STRATEGIES FOR THE ORGANIZATION

- Naming and discussing issues and Compassion Fatigue in the work place; availability of EAP/Support
- Supportive work environment; proper opportunities for debriefing and decompressing; frequent engagement with staff
- Professional development; peer support/mentoring; building leadership
- Adapting workloads when necessary
- Staff appreciation events; team building exercises/events
- Arrange for adequate resources; develop strong, compassionate teams
- Provide opportunities for supporting 'self-care' – complimentary therapies; flexibility; attend to the physical setting being conducive to wellness
- Ongoing education, training, support; encourage feedback and input
- Developing a 'no blame' workplace culture and encouraging input, ideas, reporting of risks

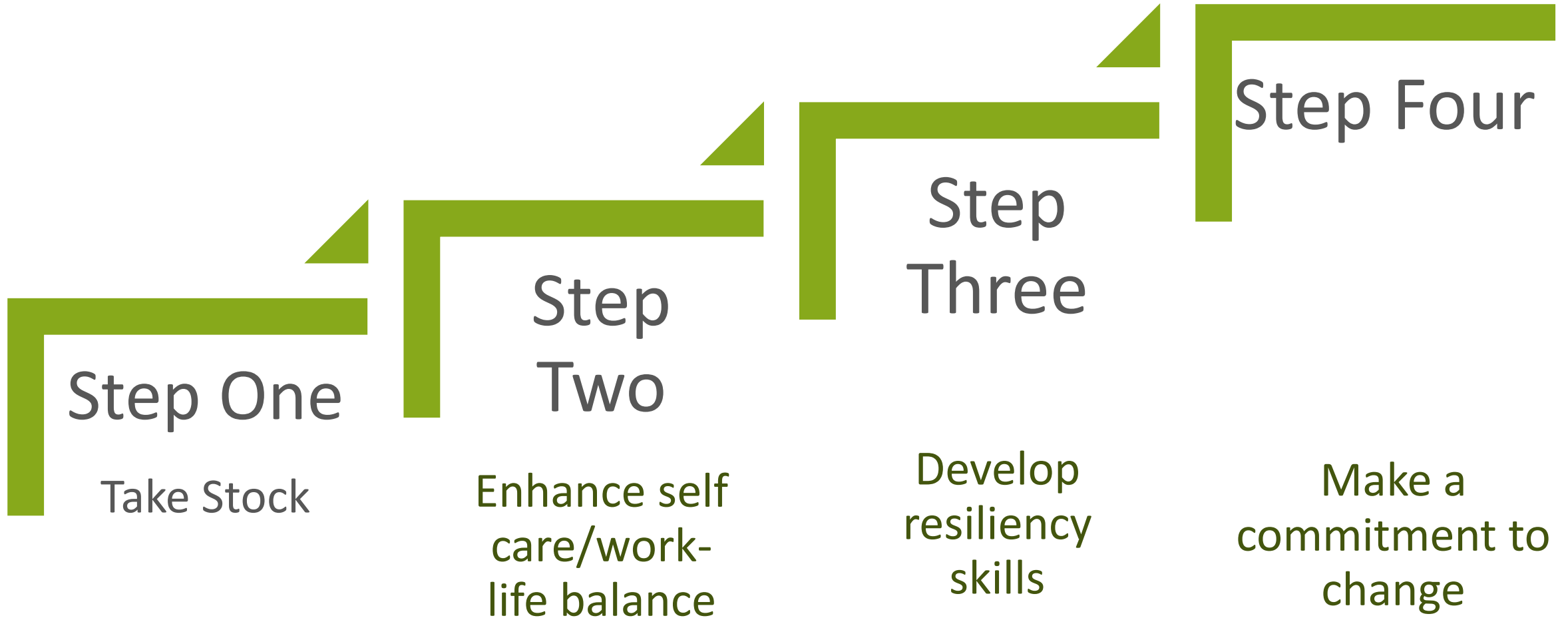


**I meditate. I burn candles.
I drink green tea, and I still want
to smack some people.**



MY WELLNESS PLAN

FROM FRANCOISE MATHIEU; THE COMPASSION FATIGUE WORKBOOK



STEP FOUR – MAKING A COMMITMENT TO CHANGE

Reflect on the work done today and come up with a plan

Consider sharing your plan with a friend, coach, colleague who can gently but firmly hold you accountable

1. One Change I could make in the next **WEEK** –
 - what do I need to put in place to make that happen?
2. One Change I could make in the next **MONTH**
 - what do I need to put in place to make that happen?
3. One Change I could make in the next **YEAR**
 - what do I need to put in place to make that happen?



TAKE CARE OF
yourself.

TAKE CARE OF
each other.

RESOURCES

- www.tendacademy.ca – many resources including Compassion Fatigue Workbook
- Mental Health Commission of Canada - www.mentalhealthcommission.ca
- Kristin Neff and Self-Compassion – <https://self-compassion.org>
- Mindfulness resources – <https://www.mindful.org>
- ***The Mindful Self-Compassion Workbook; Kristin Neff and Christopher Germer, 2018, The Guilford Press***
- ***Healthy Caregiving: Perspectives for Caring Professionals***, Michelle O'Rourke, 2020
- available through Amazon or on www.selahresources.ca

Nursing meeting
to address self
care for care
givers.



Case study of Staff and Compassion fatigue



Fall and Winter of 2022 post Covid

Findings:

- Decreased productivity of required paperwork
- Decreased team morale
- Increased sick time
- Increased mental health days and increased anxiety among nurses

Solutions



- Information on EAP provided to all staff
- Attendance review and Occupational Health team involved to support nurses
- March 2023 1st face to face nurses meeting
- Increased socialization among nurses at the meeting .
- Had a speaker presentation on self care for caregivers and all staff presented with a book on Healthy Caregivers

Nursing testimonials



"It felt nice to hear that as a caregiver we sometimes also need care for ourselves . It is so true that often we forget about ourselves and taking the time for us makes a big difference in all of our everyday tasks. The part that really resonated with me is that everyone at some point has experienced trauma and we area still living the trauma from covid and we may not realize it."

Nursing testimonials



"I liked it was presented from a nurse and truly was able to understand the emotional and not just the physical toll the job can take on you. She was able to speak from experience which made it more interesting."

"Being told to feel for yourself and not just the patient while at work is important and is something I believe will take lots of practice but it did feel positive hearing it from an experienced nurse and just verbally being told it is ok to do so."

Nursing testimonials



"It was reassuring that I'm not alone with these feelings. I have struggled over the years with my emotions dealing with death and dying. This presentation gave me validation. I felt supported and I recommend this for all health care workers."



Thank you

Questions & Discussion



The eiCOMPASS Project

Developing the knowledge, attitudes and skills needed to provide high quality home-based palliative care.

For more information on the work the CHCA is doing to promote awareness of the **Canadian Interdisciplinary Palliative Care Competency Framework**, please visit our website and learn about our new **eiCOMPASS Project**.

<https://cdnhomecare.ca/eicompass/>

Liz Angelevski eangelevski@cdnhomecare.ca



You can also follow us on Twitter and LinkedIn!



CHCA ECHO Hub

<https://cdnhomecare.ca/palliative-care-echo-hub/>

REGISTER NOW

Next ECHO session:
June 14th 12-1pm

Communication: Engaging Children and Families in Serious Illness Conversations

ECHO SESSIONS FOR 2023-24

Essential Skills for Palliative Care

Do you have the core competencies to provide high quality home-based palliative care?

The Canadian Interdisciplinary Palliative Care Competency Framework establishes a minimum national standard for palliative care in Canada and provides a guideline for core competencies for nurses, personal support workers, social workers, doctors, and volunteers. For home-based palliative care providers, the Canadian Interdisciplinary Palliative Care Competency Framework offers a foundation for continuous education, skill-building, and practical application.

Essential Skills is the theme for the 2023-24 Home-Based Palliative Care ECHO sessions. The learning sessions and resources will address the priority competency domains in the Framework and share knowledge, experience, and expertise in specific palliative care domains.



Cultural safety and humility

Creating Safe Spaces for People with Life-Limiting Illness

April 27, 2023 | 12:00 – 1:00pm EST



+ LEARN MORE



Self-care

Caring for Yourself when you Care for Others

May 10, 2023 | 12:00 – 1:00pm EST



+ LEARN MORE



Communication

Engaging with Families in Conversations about Serious Illness

June 14, 2023 | 12:00 – 1:00pm EST



+ LEARN MORE