

SMART Self-Care: Proven Stress Management Strategies for Counselors

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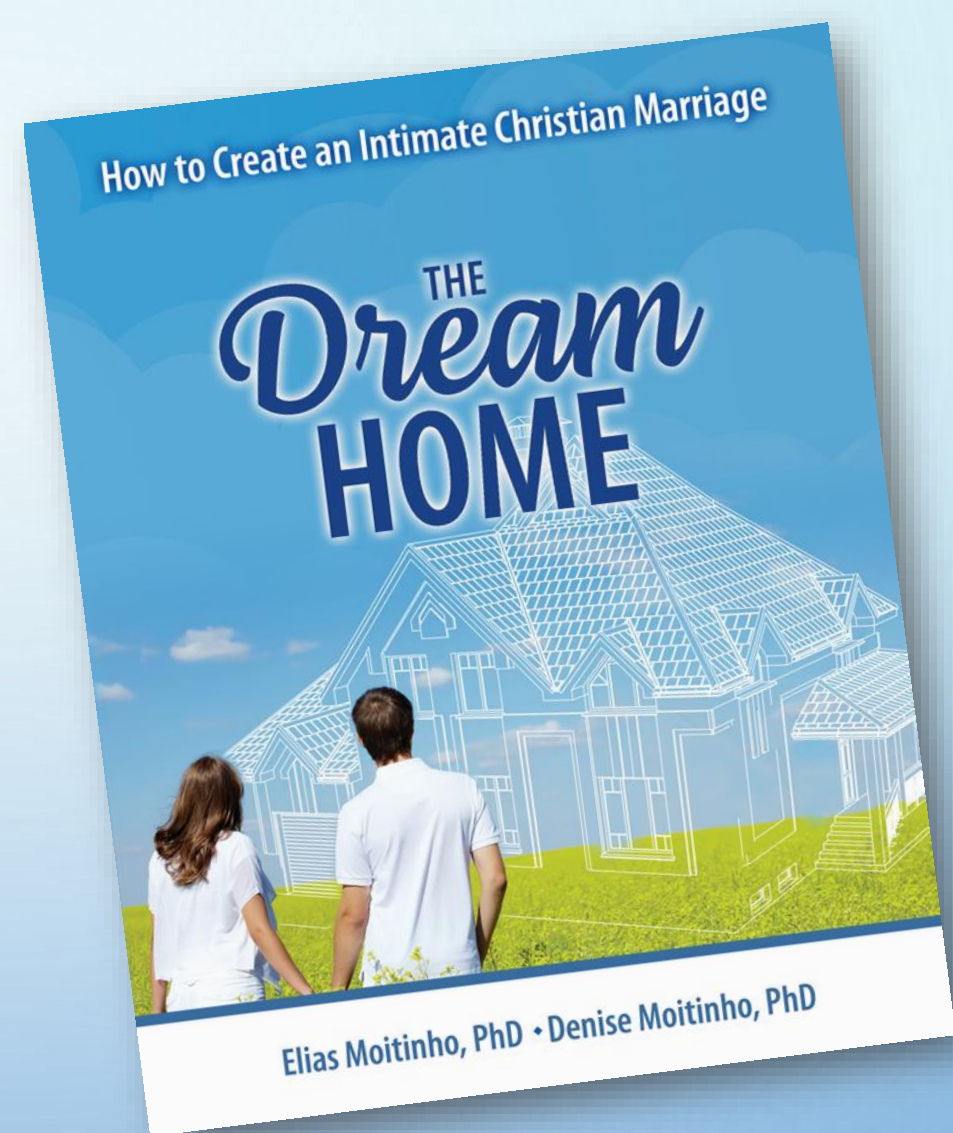
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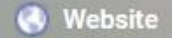


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<https://www.youtube.com/c/MotivationandGrowth>

Learning Objectives

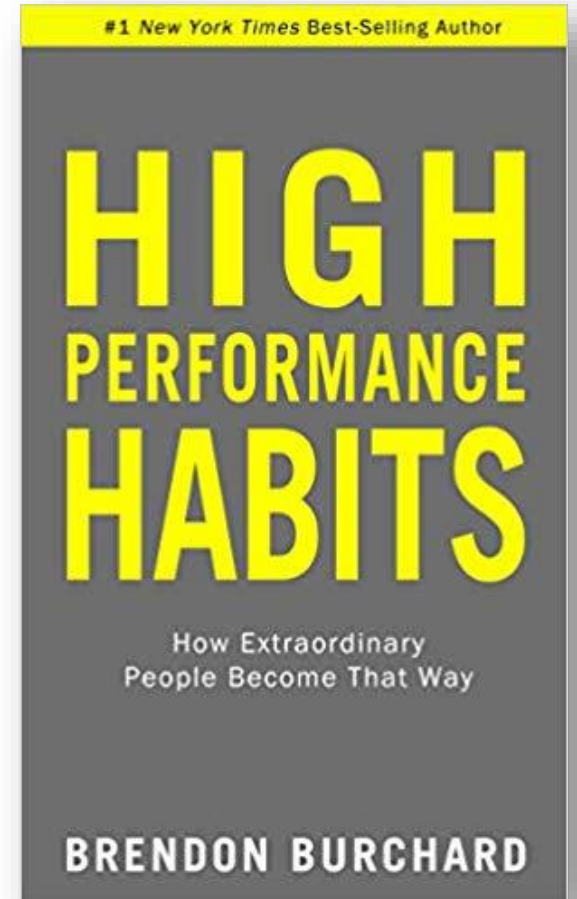
Participants will:

- 1. Identify unique stressors counselors face**
- 2. Describe multidimensional stress management strategies for counselors**
- 3. Explore SMART goals to manage stress and thrive in the counseling profession**

High Performance

“To succeed beyond standard norms, consistently over the long term.”

(Burchard, 2017, p. 14)



Burchard, B. (2017). *High performance habits: How extraordinary people became that way*. Carlsbad, CA: Hay House Inc.

WHAT IS STRESS?

**"the nonspecific response
of the body to any
demand made upon it"**

(Selye, 1974, p. 14)

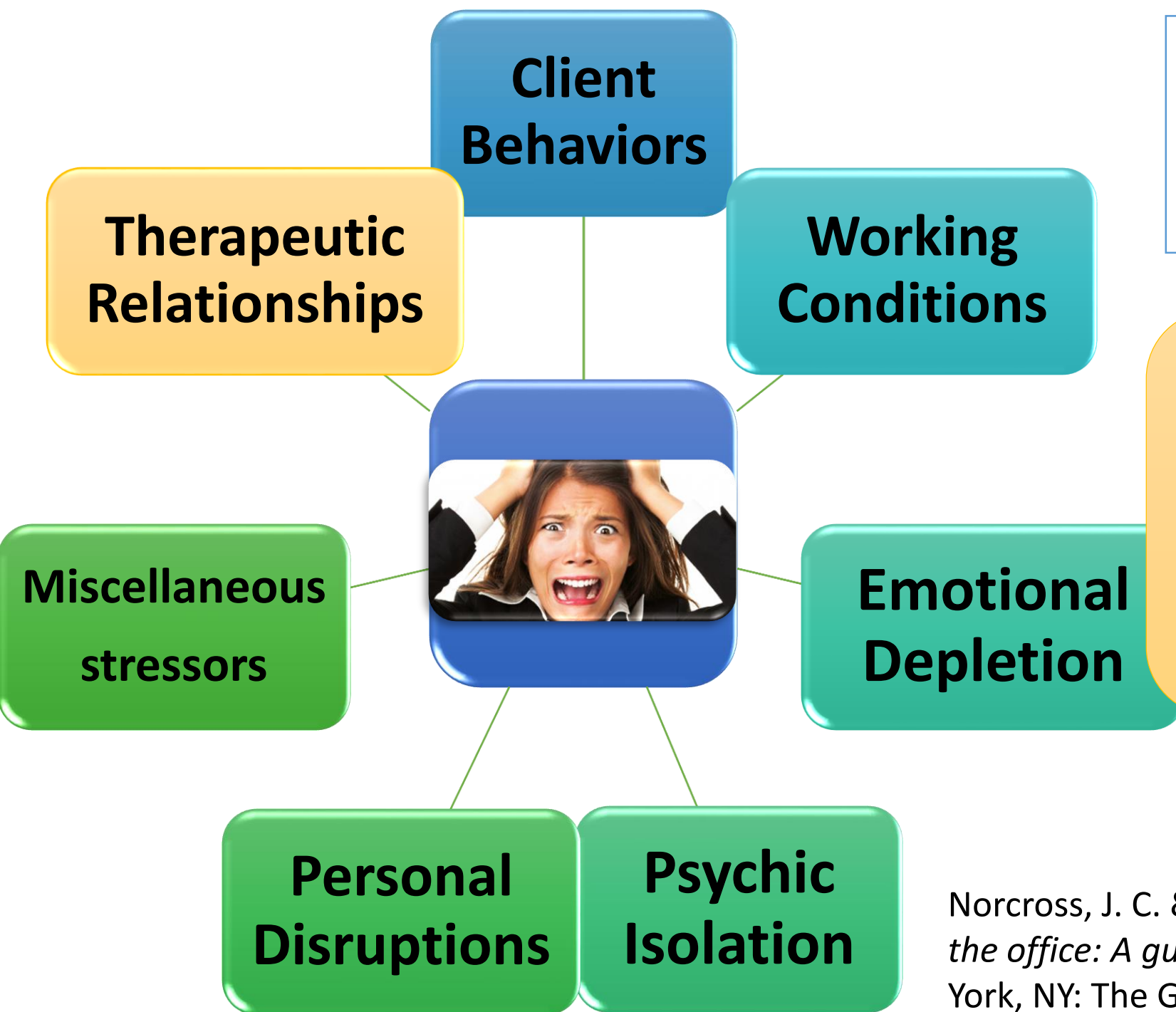
Stress without Distress

*How to achieve a rewarding life style,
in harmony with the laws of Nature,
by using stress as a positive force
for personal achievement and happiness.*

Hans Selye

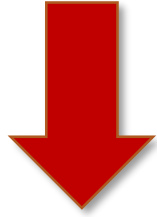
Recognizing the hazards

Stress in the Counseling Profession



Norcross, J. C. & VandenBos, G. R. (2018). *Leaving it at the office: A guide to psychotherapist self-care*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Adverse Consequences of Caring for Others

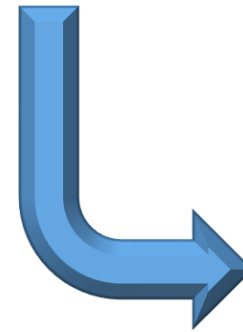


Stress

Distress

Impairment

**Improper
Behavior**



**Secondary Traumatic Stress
Compassion Fatigue
Burnout**



Norcross, J. C. & VandenBos, G. R. (2018). *Leaving it at the office: A guide to psychotherapist self-care*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Secondary Traumatic Stress. Retrieved from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/trauma-toolkit/secondary-traumatic-stress>

Self-Awareness

What is causing stress in your *professional* life?

- Growing case load
- Secondary stress reaction
- Documentation demands
- Ethical dilemmas

Another suicidal client,
angry teenagers, I need to
get CEUs, answer emails,
staff meetings, I need to
complete documentation...



Stress Response

Table 3.1. Affective, Behavioral, Cognitive, and Physiological Stress Responses

<i>Affective</i>	<i>Behavioral</i>	<i>Cognitive</i>	<i>Physiological</i>
Anxiety	Escape/Avoidance	Worry	Autonomic Arousal
Depression	Substance Use/Abuse	Catastrophic Thinking	Neuroendocrine Activation
Anger	Social Withdrawal	Poor Concentration	Muscle Tension
Guilt	Over/Under Eating	Selective Attention	Hyperventilation
Fear	Irritability Aggression Inactivity	Thought Blocking Rumination Hopelessness	Compromised Immune Function

Retrieved from <http://www.severehypertension.net/hbp/more/models-of-stress/>

Unhealthy Coping Strategies

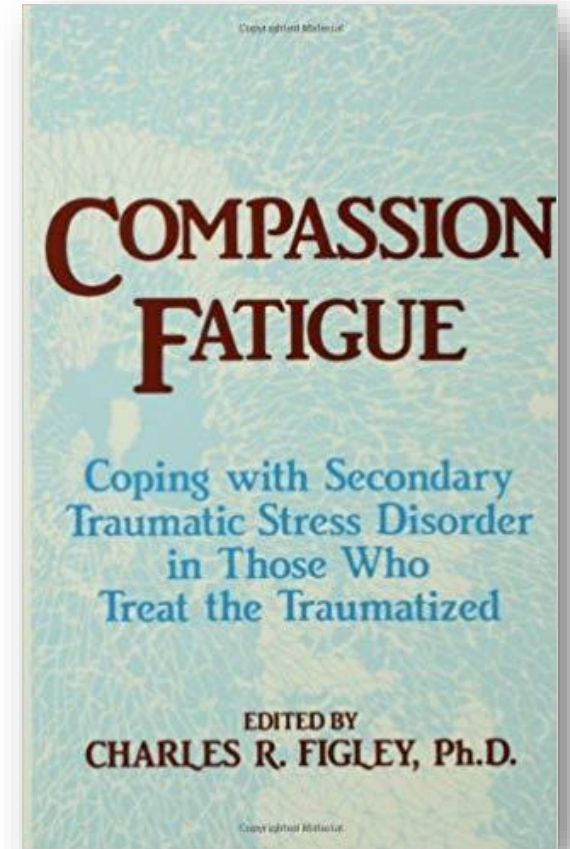
- Self-medication
- Increased caffeine intake (energy drinks)
- Sleeping less
- Overwork
- Substance Abuse



Compassion Fatigue

Reduced capacity or interest in being empathic

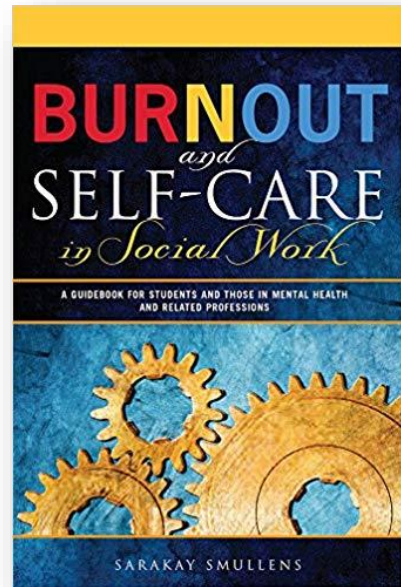
- The cost of caring
- “bearing the suffering of clients”
- “the natural consequent behaviors and emotions resulting from knowing about a traumatizing event experienced or suffered by a person” (Figley, 1995, p. 7)



Figley C. R. (1995). Compassion fatigue as secondary traumatic stress disorder: An overview. In: Figley C.R. , editor. *Compassion fatigue: Coping with secondary traumatic stress disorder in those who treat the traumatized*. New York: Brunner-Routledge. pp. 1–20.

Compassion Fatigue

- Emotional exhaustion
- A profound sense of inability to help
- Cynicism
- Isolation
- Clients are no making progress
- I am failing my clients
- Despair over the efficacy of . . .
- Despair of the organization challenges
- The need for personal regeneration



BURNOUT

A lit matchstick is shown against a dark background. The matchstick is lit, with a bright orange and yellow flame extending from the tip. Blue smoke or steam rises from the flame, creating a dramatic, ethereal effect. The matchstick itself is light-colored and appears to be made of wood or a similar material.

“The three key dimensions of this response are an overwhelming exhaustion, feelings of cynicism and detachment from the job, and a sense of ineffectiveness and lack of accomplishment”

(Maslach & Leiter, 2016, p. 103)

Burnout

“Burnout is a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who work with people in some capacity.

A key aspect of the burnout syndrome is increased feelings of emotional exhaustion -- as emotional resources are depleted, workers feel they are no longer able to give of themselves at a psychological level.

Another aspect of the burnout syndrome is the development of depersonalization, that is, negative, cynical attitudes and feelings about one's clients . . .

A third aspect of the burnout syndrome, reduced personal accomplishment, refers to the tendency to evaluate oneself negatively, particularly with regard to one's work with clients. Workers may feel unhappy about themselves and dissatisfied with their accomplishments on the job.”

From the Maslach Burnout Inventory Manual, 1996.

<http://www.mindgarden.com/117-maslach-burnout-inventory#horizontalTab5>



A hand is shown at the top of the frame, holding a lit matchstick. The flame is bright yellow and orange. Below the matchstick is a large, dense field of unlit matchsticks, arranged in a grid-like pattern. The matchsticks are light brown with dark red heads. The background is dark, and the matchsticks are resting on a light-colored surface. The word "BURNOUT" is written in large, bold, black capital letters across the middle of the image.

BURNOUT

How are you doing?



Running on empty is not an option

Uh oh.



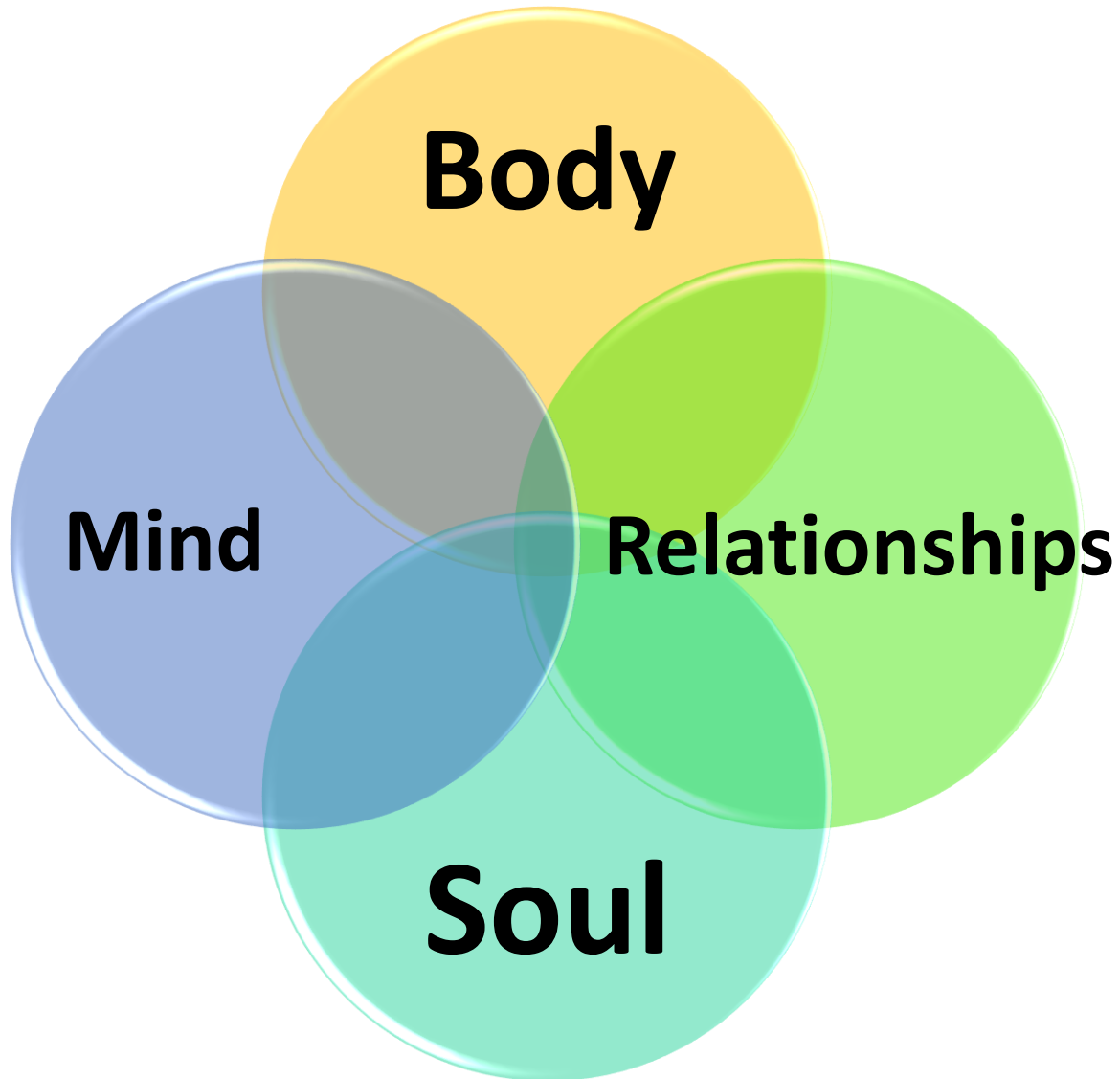
Stress Self-Assessment Test

<http://www.stress.org/holmes-rahe-stress-inventory/>

<http://www.compassionfatigue.org/pages/lifestress.html>



Multidimensional SELF-CARE Strategies



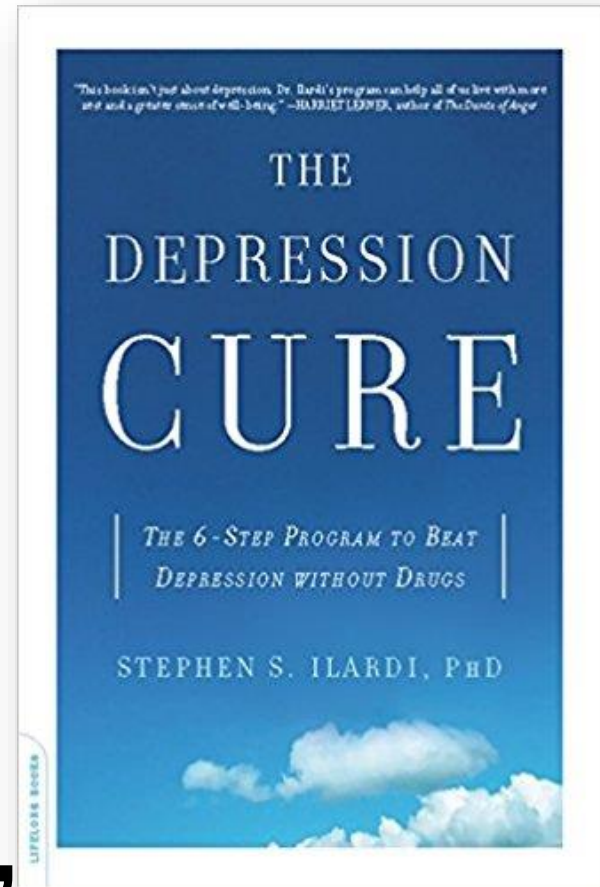
“counselors engage in self-care activities to maintain and promote their own emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual well-being to best meet their professional responsibilities”

ACA Code of Ethics



“Human beings were never designed for the poorly nourished, sedentary, indoor, sleep-deprived, socially isolated, frenzied pace of 21st-century life.”

(Ilardi, 2009, p. viii)

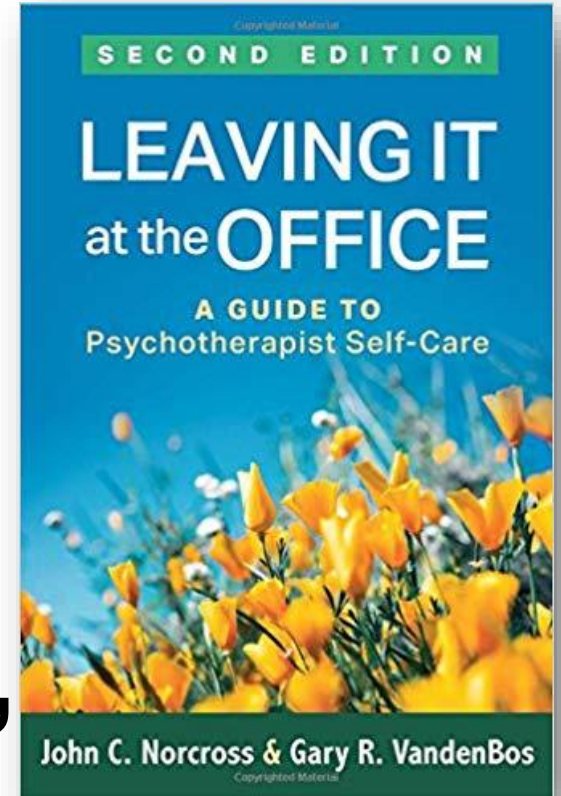


Ilardi, S. S. (2009). *The depression cure: The 6-step program to beat depression without drugs*. Boston, MA: Da Capo Press.

“Self-care is not a narcissistic luxury to be fulfilled as time permits, it is a human requisite, a clinical necessity, and an ethical imperative.”

(Norcross & VanbenBos, 2018, p. 15)

Norcross, J. C. & VandenBos, G. R. (2018). *Leaving it at the office: A guide to psychotherapist self-care*. New York, NY: the Guilford Press.





“Self-care is best viewed as an ongoing preventive activity for all mental health practitioners.”

Corey, G., Corey, M. S., & Callanan, P. (2011). *Issues and ethics in the helping professions*. 8th ed. Belmont, CA: Cengage Learning. p. 73

Self-Care Activities

“The most common recommendations have included:

- a) **changing work patterns** (e.g., working less, taking more breaks, avoiding overtime work, balancing work with the rest of one’s life);
- b) **developing coping skills** (e.g., cognitive restructuring, conflict resolution, time management);
- c) **obtaining social support** (both from colleagues and family);
- d) **utilizing relaxation strategies;**
- e) **promoting good health and fitness;** and
- f) **developing a better self-understanding** (via various self-analytic techniques, counseling, or therapy)”

(Maslach, & Leiter, 2016, p. 109)

Self Care Activities

PROFESSIONAL SELF-CARE

- Supervision
- Group supervision
- Peer support
- Tutorials
- Conferences and workshops
- Personal therapy
- Personal development groups
- Check-ins
- Skills groups
- Journal writing

PERSONAL SELF-CARE

- Physical self-care activities**
 - Healthy diet
 - Exercising
 - Being outdoors
- Psychological self-care activities**
 - Seeing friends and family
 - Spending time alone
 - Watching TV/films
 - Reading and writing
 - Mindfulness exercises
 - Music

A paradigm shift

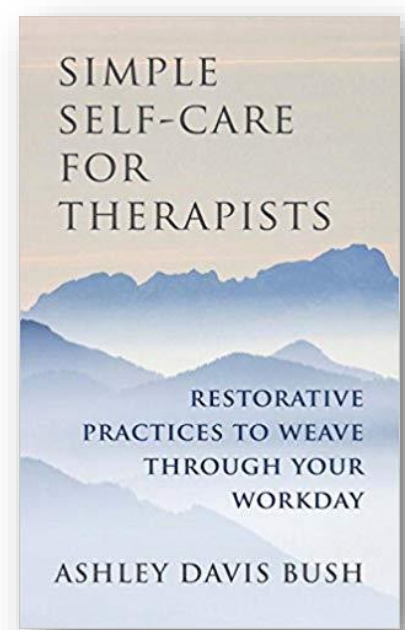
MACRO Self-Care

Activities that “require some larger combination of time, effort, and financial resources” (p. xix)

e.g., vacation, exercise, hobbies, supervision, sleep, healthy diets.

MICRO Self-Care

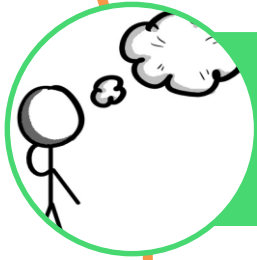
“practices that are simple enough to fit into your existing schedule, your current energy level, and your budget. Micro practices are based on the concept that self-care is possible one bite-sized piece at a time.” (p. xix)



Conceptualizing Multidimensional Self-Care



Take Care of Your Body



Take Care of Your Mind



Take Care of Your Relationships



Take Care of Your Soul



Take Care of Your Body

- Have an active lifestyle

- Have a healthy diet



<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>

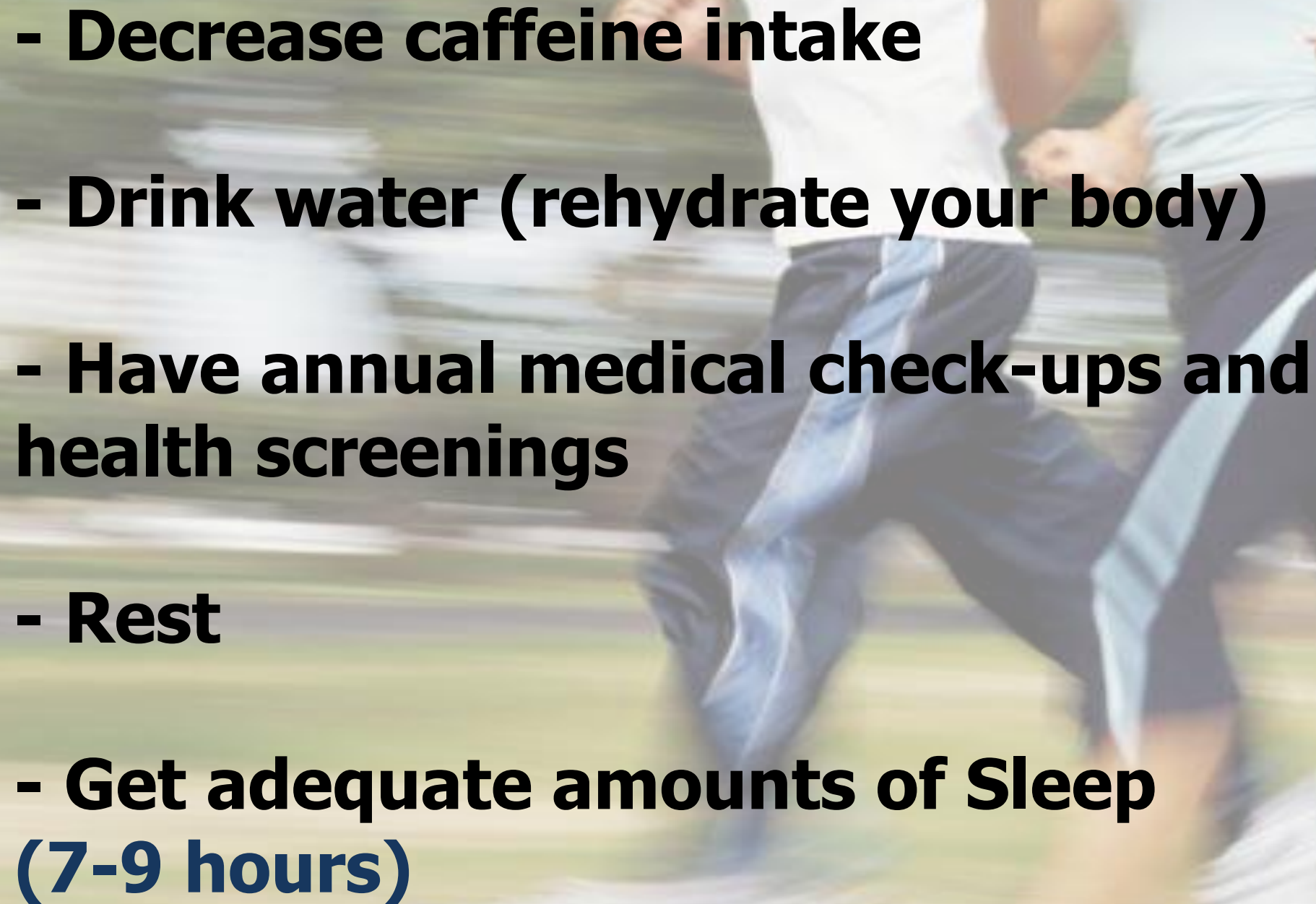
“2 hours and 30 minutes a week of moderate-intensity, or 1 hour and 15 minutes (75 minutes) a week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, or an equivalent combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity”

<http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/factsheetprof.aspx>

People in the U.S. walk an average of **4,774 steps a day**

Althoff, T., Sosič, R., Hicks, J. L., King, A. C.; Delp, S. L., et al. (Jul 20, 2017). *Nature*. 547/7663: 336-339.
DOI:10.1038/nature23018



- 
- A blurred background image showing several runners in motion on a track. The runners are wearing athletic gear, including white and light blue shirts and dark blue pants. The motion blur is horizontal, suggesting they are running from left to right.
- **Decrease caffeine intake**
 - **Drink water (rehydrate your body)**
 - **Have annual medical check-ups and health screenings**
 - **Rest**
 - **Get adequate amounts of Sleep (7-9 hours)**

Shattering the Sleep Stigma

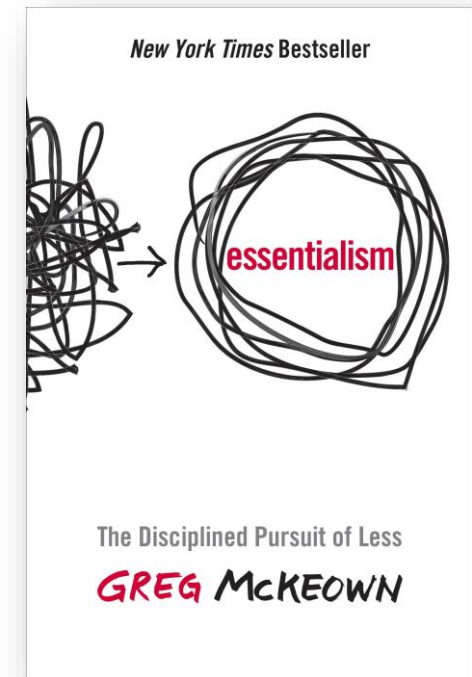
McKeown, G. (2014). *Essentialism*. Currency. p. 96

Nonessentialist Thinks

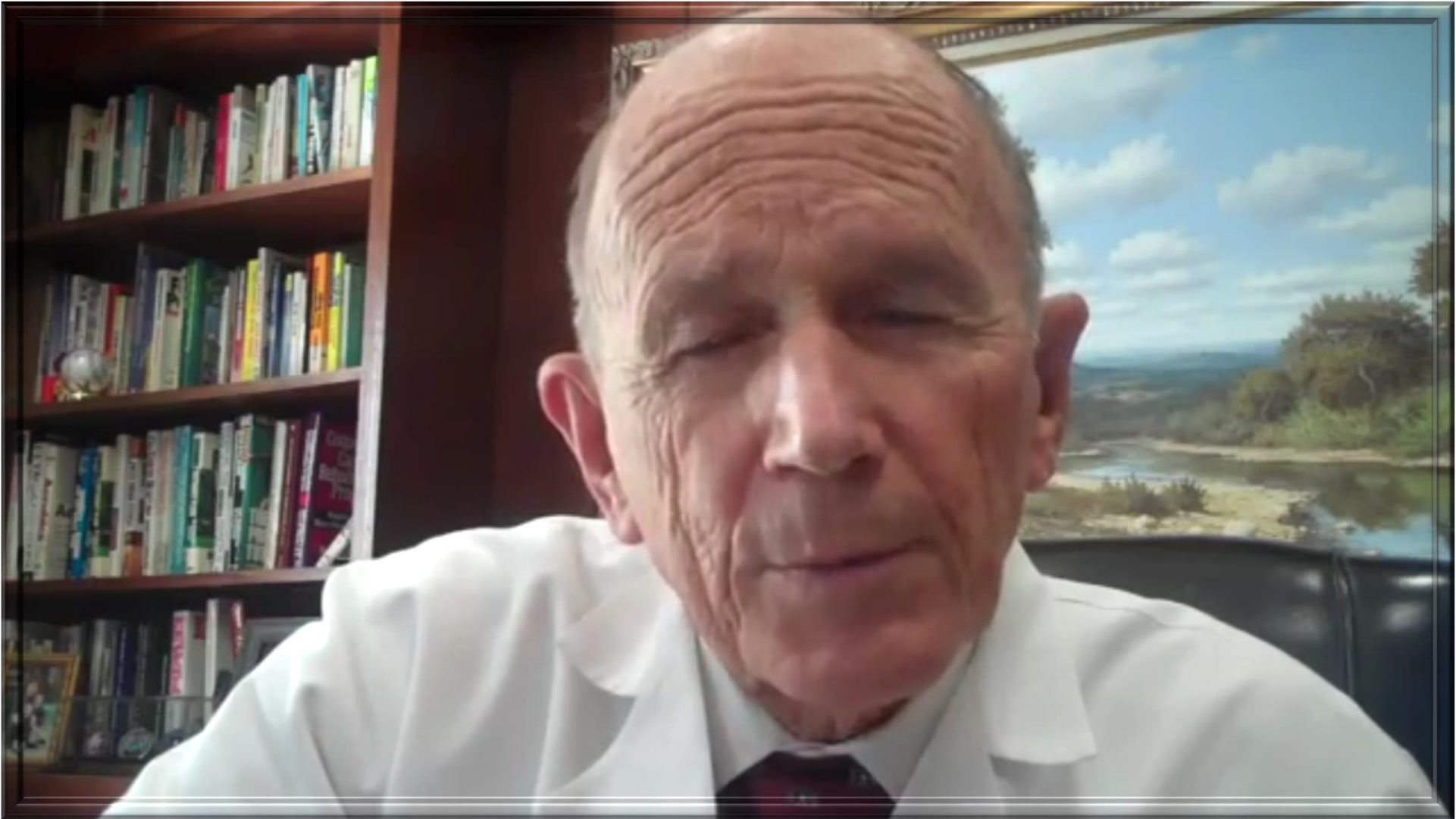
- One hour less of sleep equals one more hour of productivity.
- Sleep is for failures.
- Sleep is a luxury.
- Sleep breeds laziness.
- Sleep gets in the way of “doing it all.”

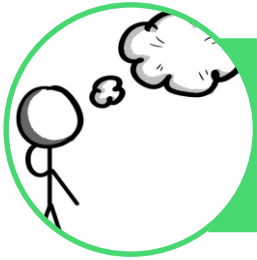
Essentialist Knows

- One hour more of sleep equals several more hours of much higher productivity.
- Sleep is for high performers.
- Sleep is a priority.
- Sleep breeds creativity.
- Sleep enables the highest levels of mental contribution.



Kenneth H. Cooper, MD, MPH





Take Care of Your Mind

The Healthy Mind Platter



The Healthy Mind Platter, for Optimal Brain Matter

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Retrieved from https://m.drdansiegel.com/resources/healthy_mind_platter/

Address Unhealthy Thinking

- ANTs
- Core Beliefs
- Schemas

Awareness

CBT Strategies

- Cognitive Restructuring

- Positive Self-talk
- Be realistic

New Behaviors






■ **Be Realistic**

- **Acknowledge the reality of the emotional, relational, and administrative demands of the counseling professional**

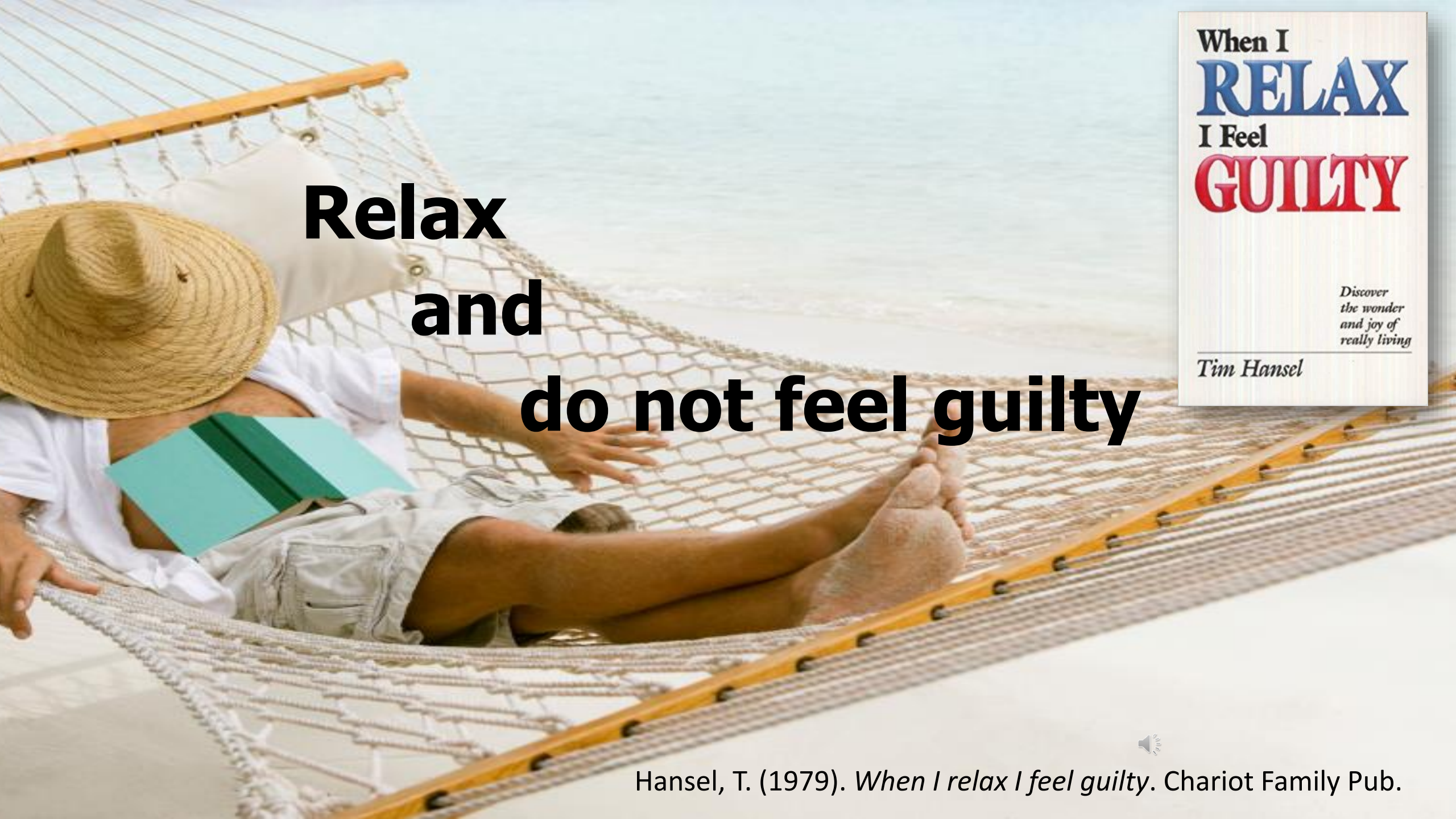
■ **Establish Your priorities**

- **Define your top priorities**
- **Live by your priorities**

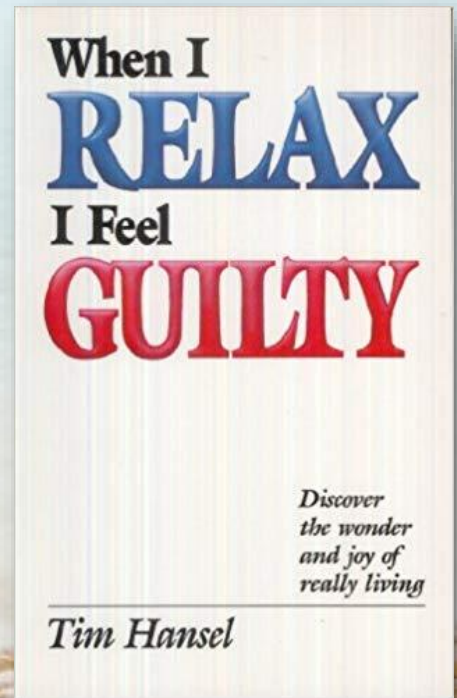


Have a hobby
Be interested in something
besides work
&
Do it regularly





**Relax
and
do not feel guilty**



Hansel, T. (1979). *When I relax I feel guilty*. Chariot Family Pub.

Engage in Healthy Breaks

Healthy Escapes (Norcross, & VandenBos, 2018)

Take Mini-Vacations (Hansel, 1979)



Meaningful detachment vs Procrastination or avoidance

Unplug (*Digital Detox*)

Unplug for an hour, 2 hours,
half a day

**“What are you afraid of
missing when your phone
and computer are shut off?”**

(Bush, 2015, p. 196)





Take Care of Your Relationships



Colleagues
Staff



Clients



Family
Friends

Your Relationships

Set Healthy Boundaries

- Learn to say “No”
- Set Boundaries in the Office
 - With Clients
 - In the best interest of clients
 - To protect your effectiveness
 - With Colleagues
- Set Boundaries outside the Office





Take Care of Your Soul

- **Relationship with God**
(my faith: Christianity)
- **Spirituality**
(my practices)
 - Christian Devotionals/Meditation
 - Prayer & Worship
- **Seek to find meaning and purpose in life**

Create your SMART Self-Care plan

SMART Goal Worksheet

Today's Date: _____ Target Date: _____ Start Date: _____

Date Achieved: _____

Goal: _____

Verify that your goal is SMART

Specific: *What exactly will you accomplish?*

Measurable: *How will you know when you have reached this goal?*

Achievable: *Is achieving this goal realistic with effort and commitment? Have you got the resources to achieve this goal? If not, how will you get them?*

Relevant: *Why is this goal significant to your life?*

Timely: *When will you achieve this goal?*

