



From *Caring for Yourself is a Radical Act: Self-Care Guide for Youth Working in Community*, ([www.ywcacanada.ca/data/research\\_docs/00000346.pdf](http://www.ywcacanada.ca/data/research_docs/00000346.pdf))

### Tools for School Staff Self-Assessment and Care

The first step toward self-care is an assessment of current levels of burnout and secondary traumatic stress or vicarious traumatization as well as current self-care practices. The following tools assist in such an assessment.

- The Professional Quality of Life: Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue version 5 (ProQOL V) (2009) measures burnout and compassion fatigue, along with compassion satisfaction, providing a more balanced understanding of trauma work impacts by including a strengths-based scale of pleasure derived from being able to do the work. [http://www.proqol.org/ProQol\\_Test.html](http://www.proqol.org/ProQol_Test.html)
- The Skovholt Practitioner Professional Resiliency and Self-Care Inventory (2016) provides self-reflection for those in the helping, health, and caring professions (including teaching). The questions focus on Professional Vitality, Personal Vitality, Professional Stress, and Personal Stress. [http://www.leadership.umn.edu/news/documents/Gold\\_ResiliencyInventory.pdf](http://www.leadership.umn.edu/news/documents/Gold_ResiliencyInventory.pdf)
- The Self-Care Assessment, developed by Saakvitne & Pearlman (1996), can also be used to assist helping professionals in becoming more aware of ways to prevent and manage vicarious traumatization. <http://socialwork.buffalo.edu/content/dam/socialwork/home/self-care-kit/self-care-assessment.pdf>
- The Satisfaction with Life Scale is another tool to find out where you are on the spectrum of happiness, and satisfaction with your life. There is an explanation of the scores, and where you are along the spectrum. You can then determine where you need to go for your own life satisfaction. (Ed Diener, Robert A Emmons, Randy J Larsen and Sharon Griffin in the 1985 Journal of Personality Assessment). <http://internal.psychology.illinois.edu/~ediener/SWLS.html>

Remember, approaching these tools with a perspective of self-compassion can help support long-term and ongoing change that can improve engagement in the educational system.

## ATTACHMENT 1.6

According to the Compassion Fatigue Awareness Project, in order to move forward on a path to wellness one must continually commit to authentic self-care that includes:

- Practice noticing when you are wanting things to be different than the way they are. (*Book: Loving What Is, by Byron Katie; thework.org*)
- Stop your thinking or feelings from controlling your life by changing how you perceive them (*Byron Katie's Work*). Disown them.
- Do just what has to be done right now, for that's all you can do.
- Let go of the belief that you should be able to control the 'stormy situations' in life.
- Health-building activities such as exercise, massage, yoga, meditation.
- Eating healthy foods.
- Drinking plenty of water.
- Practicing the art of self-management. Just say no.
- Developing a healthy support system: people who contribute to your self esteem, people who listen well, people who care.
- Organizing your life so you become proactive as opposed to reactive.
- Reserving your life energy for worthy causes. Choose your battles.
- Living a balanced life: sing, dance, sit with silence.
- Leave time for the quietness of simply being present with yourself. (mindfulness meditation, music, nature...)

(Found at <http://www.compassionfatigue.org>)

### Tools for Student Self-Care

The fundamentals of self-compassion and self-care are also relevant when addressing student wellness. Adolescents should be encouraged to learn skills which can help manage stress and other challenges in their daily life. While it can be difficult for school staff to respond to the multitude of needs that students today present, there are a number of resources and websites created to increase awareness around identifying and addressing youth wellness.

The [Break Free from Depression](#) curriculum developed by Boston Children's Hospital has been widely implemented in high schools nationwide. This 4-module classroom curriculum focuses on raising depression awareness and recognizing early signs of mental health struggles in adolescents. Through the progression of the modules, trained facilitators provide an overview of depression, engage students in discussion and conclude with activities that seek to increase coping skills and target students' existing habits. While the activities are not meant to replace treatment for people struggling with mood disorders, they serve as supplementary lessons for all individuals regardless of emotional struggles.

Some of these activities include:

- Journaling
- Deep Breathing Exercises
- Muscle Relaxation
- Guided Imagery and Visualization
- Challenging Negative Thoughts
- Top Ten Approach to Beating Stress
- Group/School-Wide Activities

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One of the activities highlighted in the Break Free from Depression curriculum is *Beating Stress Before It Beats You - The Top Ten Approach*. This activity focuses on: teaching students about stress, healthy and unhealthy coping, and creates a space for discussion as students are asked to share everyday stressors, their warning signs/symptoms of stress and the ways in which they are handling stress. *(For a copy of BFFD Module 4 materials, please see the attachment.)*

Another great resource for youth includes the [Making Friends with Yourself](#) website. This site includes tools for promoting self-compassion and encouraging insight. Among the items provided are:

- Audio Meditations
  - Compassionate Body Scan
  - Music Meditation
  - Giving and Receiving Compassion
  - Instructions for Doing a Mindful Daily Activity
  - Instructions for Mindful Eating
- Opportunities for Teen and Teacher Trainings

Similarly, the University of Michigan Depression Center - [Classroom Mental Health](#) page holds a number of student wellness worksheets and printable activities that can easily be adapted for individual or group settings. The following are some examples of tools staff and students can access through the website and its resources:

- Student Self-Care Toolkit (Managing Stress, Exercise, Nutrition, Sleep, Goal Setting)  
<https://www.classroommentalhealth.org/self-care/student/>
- Weekly Motivator Tool - Self Care Program  
<http://www.campusmindworks.org/downloads/weeklymotivator.pdf>
- Thought Record Worksheet - Challenging Cognitive Distortions  
<http://www.campusmindworks.org/downloads/cognitivedistortion.pdf>

*(Materials courtesy of University of Michigan - [CampusMindWorks.org](#))*

### Additional Self Care Tools and Information

- Greater Good Science Center:  
[http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how\\_self\\_compassion\\_can\\_help\\_teens\\_de\\_stress](http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_self_compassion_can_help_teens_de_stress)
- Psychology Today, Your Ultimate Self-Care Assessment: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/living-the-questions/201504/your-ultimate-self-care-assessment-resources>
- Wellness Worksheets, SAMHSA  
<http://www.integration.samhsa.gov/health-wellness/wellness-strategies/wellness.pdf>