



# Finding Peace: Self-care for Activists, Advocates and Allies

The Big Event  
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# Objectives

- Provide space to explore self-care needs
- Discuss burnout and compassion fatigue
- Identify self-care practices to support well-being while working toward change



# Self-care

- Self-care is
  - any action that will benefit one’s physical, mental and emotional well-being
- Self-care in activism is to choose behaviors that balance the effects of the emotional and physical stress of “the work”
  - physical and psychological self-preservation

I have come to believe  
that caring for myself is  
not self indulgent.  
Caring for myself is an  
act of survival.

*The*

Audre Lorde



# Burnout and Compassion Fatigue

- Burnout
  - a state of chronic stress that can cause:
    - physical and emotional exhaustion
    - cynicism and detachment
    - feelings of ineffectiveness and lack of accomplishment
- Compassion fatigue
  - is the emotional residue or strain of exposure to working with those suffering from the consequences of traumatic events

# Know the signs

## Burnout

- **Fatigue**
- **Anger & Frustration**
- **Negative reactions toward others**
- **Cynicism**
- **Negativity**
- **Withdrawal**

## Compassion Fatigue

- **Sadness & Grief**
- **Nightmares**
- **Avoidance**
- **Addiction**
- **Somatic complaints**
- **Increased psychological arousal**
- **Changes in beliefs, expectations, assumptions**
- **“witness guilt”**
- **Detachment**
- **Decreased intimacy**

# Self-care Strategies

- Validate Your Feeling
- Set Boundaries
- Plan
- Connect
- Focus on health and wellness
- Activate

# Validate Your Feelings

- Validate Your Feeling
  - Gratitude Lists
  - Talk to someone
  - Journaling
    - Making Meaning

you can feel  
sadness  
joy  
grief  
gratitude  
and more  
all at the same time.  
you are allowed to feel it all.

< YOUR JOYOLOGIST >

# Making Meaning

- A new expressive writing tool that allows people to put their thoughts and feeling into words to help relieve stress and anxiety.
- Expressive writing can:
  - Reduce stress
  - Improve sleep
  - Improve mental health
  - Potentially boost the immune system

# Making Meaning

mi-makingmeaning.org/topic/roge-patients-coronavirus/prompt/general/2

MakingMeaning [About](#) [Science](#) [Resources](#)

**What are your thoughts and feelings about your life right now?**

You may choose to write about how the coronavirus crisis is affecting you, or about anything else that's on your mind right now. Really try to address the issues that are most important and significant for you.

For the next 5-10 minutes (or longer if you like), really let go and explore your deepest thoughts and feelings about your life right now. You may choose to write about how the coronavirus crisis is affecting you, or about anything else that's on your mind right now. Really try to address the issues that are most important and significant for you.

Enter at least 50 characters

# Set Boundaries

- Set Boundaries
  - Energy is a valuable resources
  - Say “no” or “not at the moment”
- Plan
- Connect
- Focus on health and wellness
- Activate

# Set Boundaries



# Plan

- Bring self-care with you wherever
  - Breath work/meditation
  - Positive mantras
  - Personal mottos
  - Hopes for the future

# Connect

- Find a mentor
- Find a self-care partner
- Seek professional support

# Focus on Health and Wellness

- Develop healthy habits and practice
  - Drink plenty of water
  - Eat whole foods and vegetables
  - Get a good night's sleep
  - Move your body

# Activate

- Do you need to take a step up and into your power or do you need to take a step back?
- Set Up
  - Reduce feelings of helpless/hopelessness
- Step Back
  - Rest is a form of resistance



How will you engage in self-care  
moving forward?

# Resources

- Making Meaning
  - <https://mi-makingmeaning.org/topic/rogel-patients-coronavirus/>
- MHealthy Wellness Resources
  - <https://hr.umich.edu/benefits-wellness/health-well-being/well-being-u-m/well-being-resources-during-covid19-pandemic>
- Michigan Medicine Office of Health Equity & Inclusion
  - <https://ohei.med.umich.edu/anti-racism-support-and-tools>

