

Self-Care Activities for Your Group

Everyone can benefit from incorporating more self-care strategies into your group meetings. Here are some activities to consider including in your group to promote self-care and prevent secondary traumatic harm.

On-the-spot ideas

Activities that you can use on the spot if group members are experiencing symptoms of vicarious trauma:

- Breathing exercises, such as blowing bubbles
- Move—stand and stretch, take a quick walk around the room, practice a chair-yoga exercise
- Use humor to defuse—tell a joke or find something comical in the room
- Practice a quick mindfulness exercise, such as popping a chocolate or mint into your mouth and closing your eyes while you spend 30 seconds tuning out everything else
- Color, doodle, or draw
- Pause and play a short piece of calming music
- Do a three-minute writing exercise—invite everyone to stop talking and spend a few minutes writing about how they are feeling at the moment

Come up with your own quick fixes to use in times of stress:

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Ongoing exercises

Activities that can be built into the group’s regular schedule and structure:

- Gratitude moment—everyone names a few things they are thankful for today
- “I see you” moment—participants pair up and spend one minute sharing strengths, positive attributes, or other appreciations about one another
- “Gift exchange”—everyone names one gift, talent, or strength they bring to the group
- LOL moment—everyone goes around the room and shares the funniest thing they did, saw, or experienced this week or month
- Success stories—everyone shares one success they experienced in the past week or month
- Looking forward—everyone names one thing they are looking forward to between this meeting and the next

Come up with your own self-care routines to build into support group meetings:

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