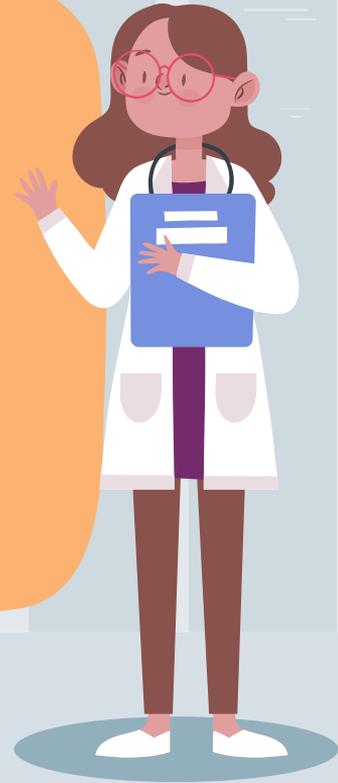


Self-Care

In Times of Crisis & Uncertainty



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Two Questions...

1. Do I recharge with people or by myself?
2. Do I talk out my thoughts or process them internally?



Quarantine Affects Introverts & Extroverts!

Extroverts

- *Traveling limits, work-from-home, less face-to-face, in-person limits, canceled events*
- *If need people to recharge, get creative about connecting with people*

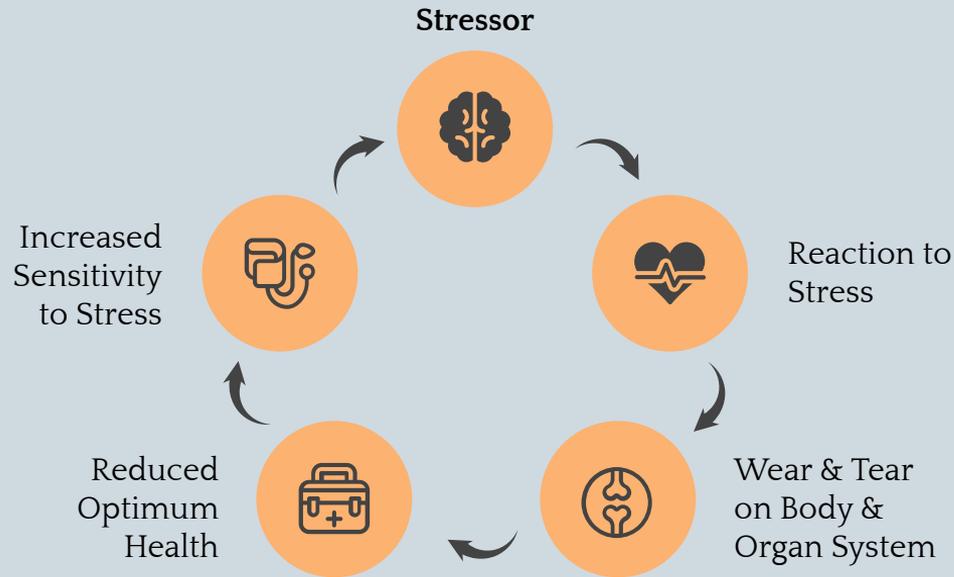
Introverts

- *More people in your space, less personal/private re-charge time*
- *If you need personal space to recharge, get creative about protecting your personal time*

Figure out the personality needs of you and your family:
Work to protect them so that recharging can happen.



Stress Affects Us



Stress gets worse when...

- It is prolonged
- We can't fix, solve or help the problem
- When the stressor overwhelms our usual ability to cope
- When it involves uncertainty or doesn't have a predictable ending point
- When multiple issues complicate or add to the stressor
- How we cope makes it worse
- When others don't understand the impact of the stress

Coping vs. Regulation

True self care helps you regulate emotions

- Coping could be healthy or unhealthy - coping simply changes the feelings in the moment
- Self Regulation calms and soothes a person long term. Before, during and after you need it
- Positive Self-Talk: Say “I know this will be _____(hard, uncomfortable, painful) but I can handle it and I will get through it.”



Self-Care is Often *Un-Beautiful*

“It is making a spreadsheet of your debt and enforcing a morning routine and cooking yourself healthy meals and no longer just running from your problems and calling the distraction a solution.

It is often doing the ugliest thing that you have to do, like sweat through another workout, or tell a toxic friend you don't want to see them anymore or get a second job so you can have a savings account. Or (maybe) figure out a way to accept yourself -- so that you're not constantly exhausted from trying to be everything, all the time and then needing to take deliberate, mandated breaks from living.

A world in which self-care has to be such a trendy topic is a world that is sick. Self-care should not be something we resort to because we are so absolutely exhausted that we need some reprieve from our own relentless internal pressure.

True self-care is not salt baths and chocolate cake, it is making the choice to build a life you don't need to regularly escape from.

And that often takes doing the thing you least want to do. It often means looking your failures and disappointments square in the eye and re-strategizing.

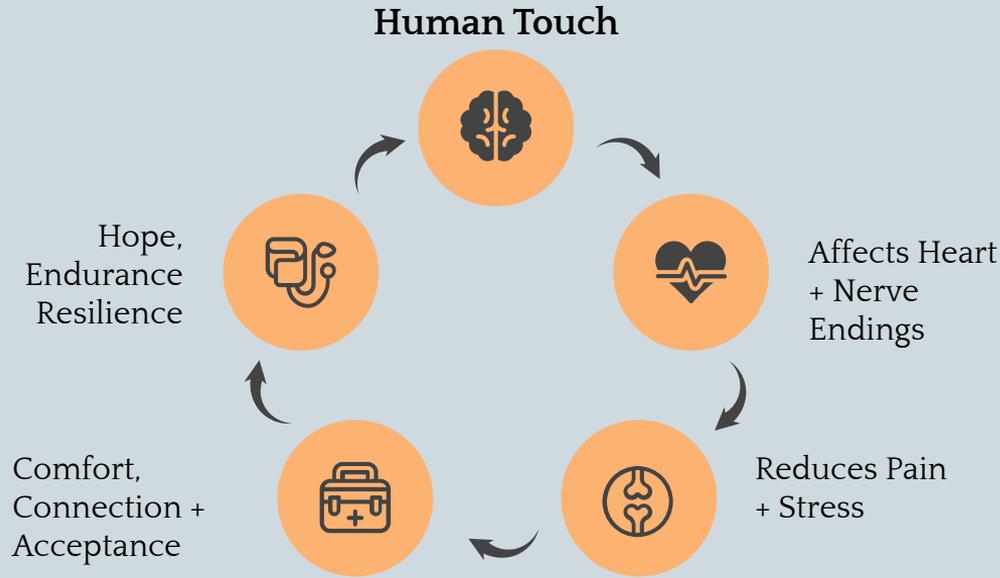
It is letting yourself be normal. Regular. Unexceptional. It is sometimes having a dirty kitchen and deciding your ultimate goal in life isn't going to be having abs and keeping up with your fake friends.

If you find yourself having to regularly indulge in consumer self-care, it's because you are disconnected from actual self-care, which has very little to do with “treating yourself” and a whole lot do with parenting yourself and making choices for your long-term wellness.

It is no longer using your hectic and unreasonable life as justification for self-sabotage in the form of liquor and procrastination. It is learning how to stop trying to “fix yourself” and start trying to take care of yourself.... and maybe finding that taking care lovingly attends to a lot of the problems you were trying to fix in the first place.

It's becoming the person you know you want and are meant to be. Someone who knows that salt baths and chocolate cake are ways to enjoy life, not to escape from it.”

Humans need to be Touched



Social Distancing has created an absence of Touch! How to Help:

- Look for safe opportunities to touch + be touched
- Take a shower or have a warm bath
- Cuddle a pet or ask to walk someone's dog
- Be wholly present with people, even if you cannot touch
- Don't just 'check in' on people who are alone, connect with them meaningfully

Self Regulation + Endurance = **Resilience**

Resilience is a steady endurance that creates a confident maturity in oneself which enables a person to rely on others and trust God.

Perspective Shift

- Believe that hard times and difficult situations can provide meaning, deepen faith, strengthen resilience and build maturity.
- Trust that if God allowed it, then in His Sovereignty, He has a purpose for it.

Goals

- Learn how to tolerate intense emotion (instead of ignoring, avoiding, distracting)
- Learn “the Power of the Pause” - Being able to interrupt intense emotion so you can decide how you want to respond.

Individual Indicators of Distress

Emotional Indicators

- Anger
- Sadness
- Prolonged Grief
- Anxiety
- Depression

Physical Indicators

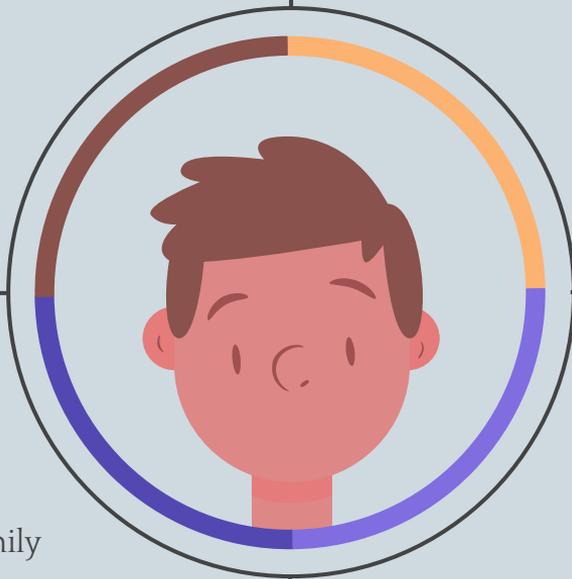
- Headaches
- Upset Stomach
- Lethargy
- Constipation
- Tightness in Chest
- Disrupted Sleep

Personal Indicators

- Self-Isolation
- Cynicism
- Mood Swings
- Irritability with Spouse or family
- Inability to relax
- Discontent

Workplace Indicators

- Avoidance
- Missed meetings or appointment
- Apathy
- Tardiness
- Lack of motivation
- Daydreaming
- Less job satisfaction



“The Self is limited. It has only so much energy. If it is not renewed, then depletion will take place. Too often we don’t avail ourselves of the type of activities that truly renew us. When this occurs, we run a greater risk that we will unnecessarily lose perspective and burn out, which is not only sad for us, but for the people we are in a position to help in our circle of family, friends and coworkers.”

Robert J Wicks (2003)

Burnout



Causes of Burnout: Robert J Wicks

- Inadequate quiet time, physical rest or ability to personally recharge
- Vague criteria for success or lack of positive feedback on efforts made
- Inability to deal with anger or other interpersonal tensions
- Extreme need to be liked, promoting unrealistic involvement with others
- Neglect of emotional, physical or spiritual needs
- Working with people who are burned out
- Extreme powerlessness to affect needed change or being overwhelmed by administrative tasks
- Lack of appreciation from people you serve
- Prejudism in life or work
- High conflict in family, home, work or ministry
- Savior complex - inability to recognize what we can and cannot do in helping others in need
- Overstimulation or isolation and alienation

Self-Care Strategies for Distress

It doesn't require too much to take a step back to be refreshed & regain perspective.

Emotional & Mental

- Spend time with friends
- Cry. A good cry helps.
- See the good in yourself
- Be funny and enjoy humor; Laugh
- Exchange negative self talk for compassion and forgiveness

Physical

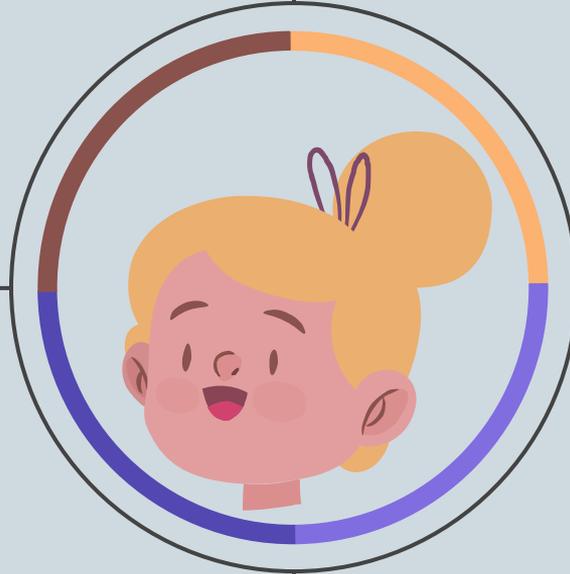
- Sleep Well
- Breathe deeply
- Have a sane, balanced, no-shame relationship with food
- Dance, walk or run on purpose
- 30 minutes of daily exercise

Personal

- Self -reflect
- Self management over time management
- Make time to have fun and play
- Introverts: protect personal time
- Extroverts: schedule people time

Workplace

- Take breaks
- Celebrate success and accomplishment
- Set limits
- Use vacation time
- Reduce unnecessary interruptions



Decision Making Fatigue

“Decision Fatigue is the decline in the quality of decisions made by a person after many decisions are made in a row.”

Roy Baumeister, Social Psychologist



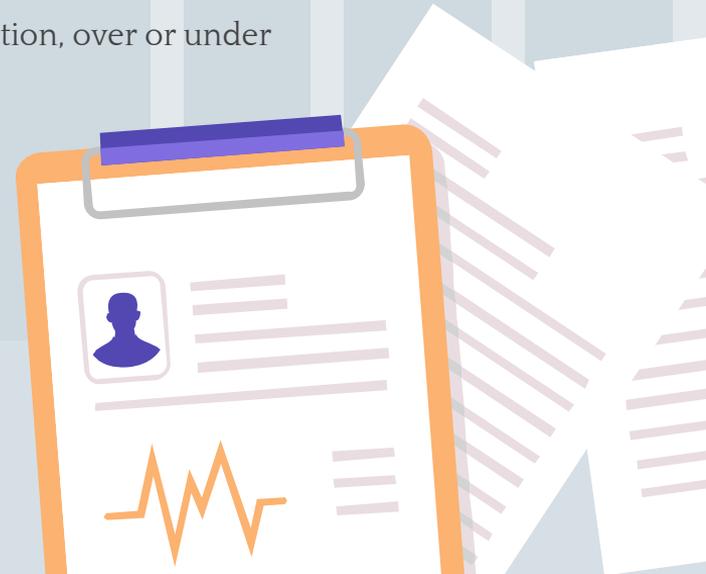
Neurosequential Network
Dr. Bruce D. Perry, M.D., Ph.D.

How to Minimize Decision Fatigue

Limit or delegate unnecessary or unimportant decisions	Einstein = same lunch every day Steve Jobs = same outfit Pairing (ADHD)
Take breaks and self regulate (calm) between decisions	Little decisions = little break Big decision = big break
Make important decisions when rested; refreshed	After a weekend, meal or in the morning
Minimize group decision making (analysis paralysis)	Select, empower and trust people to make decisions
Get comfortable with being undecided	Do not feel pressured to decide before you are ready
Fast decisions are often reactive and take more time to undo	Take the time to decide, then be confident in decision

Practical Self Care Ideas

- Focus on the now -- you can't change the past, and worrying about the future is wasted energy. Do what you can with what you have and where you are at now.
- Spend cautiously
- Wake up a little bit earlier to provide margin for unplanned crises
- Get rid of or fix things that don't work
- Instead of worrying → problem solve. What can you do? Ask yourself how much of your stressful thinking is actually helpful?
- Accept what you cannot change
- Know your personal signs of stress (sighing, irritability, extra snarkiness, isolation, over or under eating/drinking, shutting down) -- monitor and interrupt
- Learn to say NO when requests are unreasonable, trivial or unrewarding
- Write things down -- don't rely on your memory
- Pace yourself - take breaks intermittently. Go outside.
- Eat colorful, healthy food
- Get your feelings off your chest to a safe, sympathetic listener. If you don't have a person that meets that criteria -- find one!
- Limit sugars, junk food, caffeine, alcohol and tobacco
- Journal your thoughts and feelings
- Get help with the jobs that aggravate you
- Do what you dread first -- get it over with when you have more energy



What if real self care, truthful self talk & trusting God is not enough for you right now?



Talk with a Therapist, Christian Counselor, Church Elder or Pastoral Staff



Talk with your doctor about medication. Sometimes a light, consistent dose of an anti-anxiety medicine can take enough of the anxious edge off so that you can do the healthy things that will help you calm anxiety