

Self-Care and Preventing Burnout for Culturally Specific DV/SA Organizations:


Module Goal: Provide culturally specific domestic violence and sexual assault organizations with the knowledge and tools to implement effective self-care practices and prevent burnout among staff and advocates.

This module aims to build organizational capacity to enhance the well-being of advocates and sustain quality services to survivors.



Section 1: Introduction

- . Understanding the Importance of Self-Care and Burnout Prevention
- . The Power of Healing for Individuals and Communities



*“The greatest thing you can do for yourself, your family, and your community is to take intentional care of yourself. We are the community, and the community is us; we cannot be separated. Each survivor of violence is alive due to inherited strengths, ancestral wisdom, support networks, and environmental assets.
WE ARE OUR COMMUNITIES' GREATEST STRENGTH”*

Healing is always present in everything we do





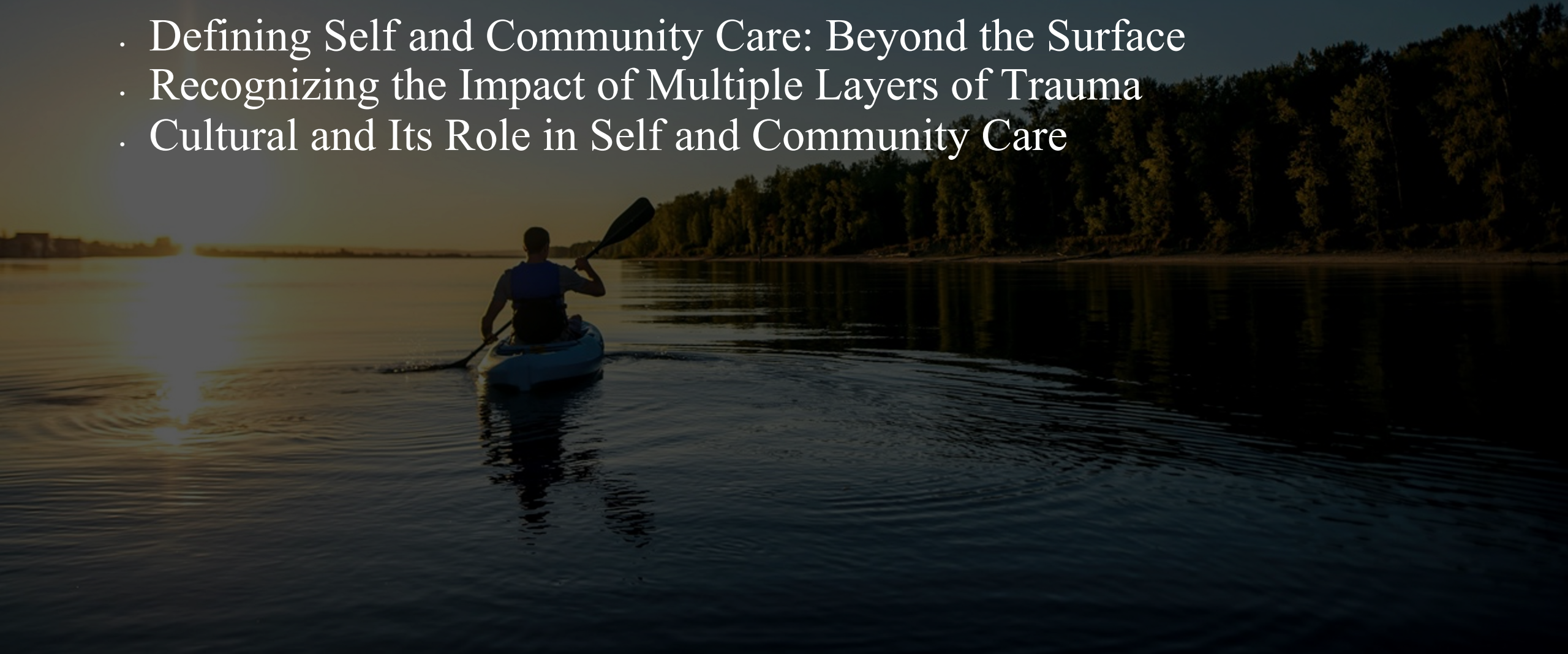
The past is not a burden; it is a scaffold which brought us to this day. We are free to be who we are - to create our own life out of our past and out of the present. We are our ancestors.

**When we can heal ourselves,
we also heal our ancestors,
our grandmothers, our
grandfathers, and our
children.**

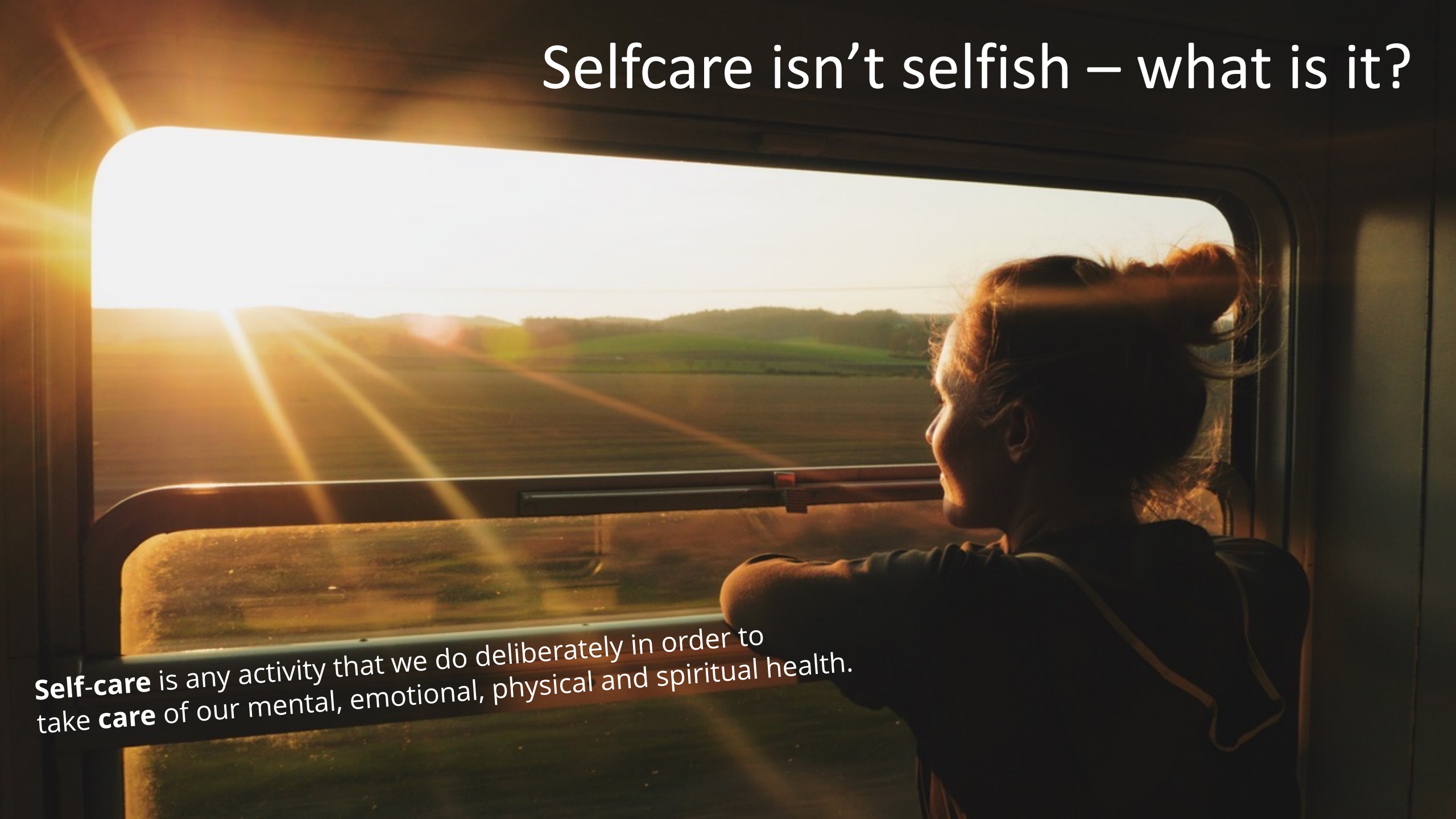
- Pamiovan Rita Pitka
Blumenstein
(Yup'ik from Tununak)

Section 2: Foundations of Self-Care

- Defining Self and Community Care: Beyond the Surface
- Recognizing the Impact of Multiple Layers of Trauma
- Cultural and Its Role in Self and Community Care



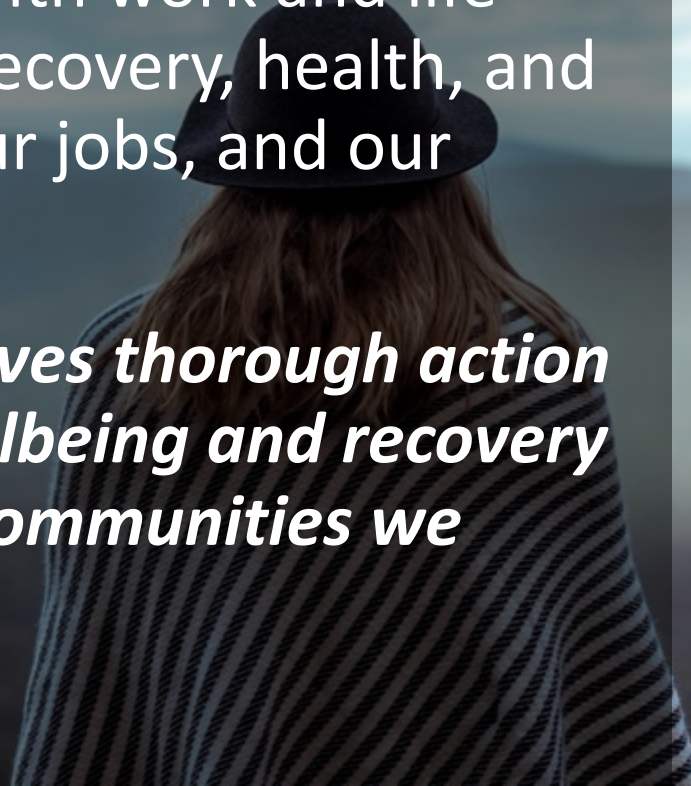
Selfcare isn't selfish – what is it?

A person with their hair in a bun is seen from the side, looking out of a train window. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright, golden glow and lens flare effects across the scene. The landscape outside the window consists of rolling green hills and fields. The person's arm is resting on the window sill.

Self-care is any activity that we do deliberately in order to take **care** of our mental, emotional, physical and spiritual health.

- Lack of self-care in a helping profession can contribute to burnout or compassion fatigue.
- Depletion, whether physically, mentally, emotionally or spiritually, can lead to reactivity; and we may even experience challenges to our perceptions and judgments.
- Lack of self-care combined with work and life stressors may put personal recovery, health, and wellness at risk, as well as our jobs, and our relationships.
- ***As we practice loving ourselves thorough action and self-care, we model wellbeing and recovery for others, groups and the communities we serve.***

Self-care creates a foundation for sustaining health and overall wellness



“I never understood that my grandparents went to boarding school because they never talked about it. If a car pulled in our driveway, my Grandma would tell me to hide. I never understood why but I ran and hid until she said it was safe to come out. I asked her about this, she simply said, ‘I was told the same thing and one time I didn’t hide good enough and they got me.’ She said, ‘I was taken away to school and it wasn’t good.’ For me, I never forget the fear I felt while hiding. This is only one example of how my traumas are tied together. I couldn’t make sense of this until I learned about boarding schools and what happened. The sexual assaults that happened in my family changed my family’s ability to care for me. When I was assaulted, I was changed too but I found my way back. My culture saved my life.”

Anonymous Victim/Survivor





Many of us have trauma from:

- Childhood sexual abuse
- Physical abuse or neglect
- Substance use disorders
- Psychiatric issues (Mental illness)
- Disabilities (Physical, hidden)
- Chronic or untreated medical conditions
- Growing up in a home where domestic violence or active substance misuse was present
- Growing up or currently living in a dangerous neighborhood societal oppression
- Historical trauma
- Intergenerational grief
- Poverty
- Homelessness
- Incarceration



The true story of violence against Native people, until very recently, has been that Native people are more likely to be harmed than to graduate from college, own land, or live past the age of 55.

TOGETHER, WE ARE CHANGING THIS STORY.

Many of us come to this work with our own histories of violence. Some of us continue to fight for our lives. This reality means that we have our own weight of pain to carry as we show up to witness the bravery and strength of those seeking support.

This makes self-care vital to our well-being.

Environmental Connectedness

Community Connectedness

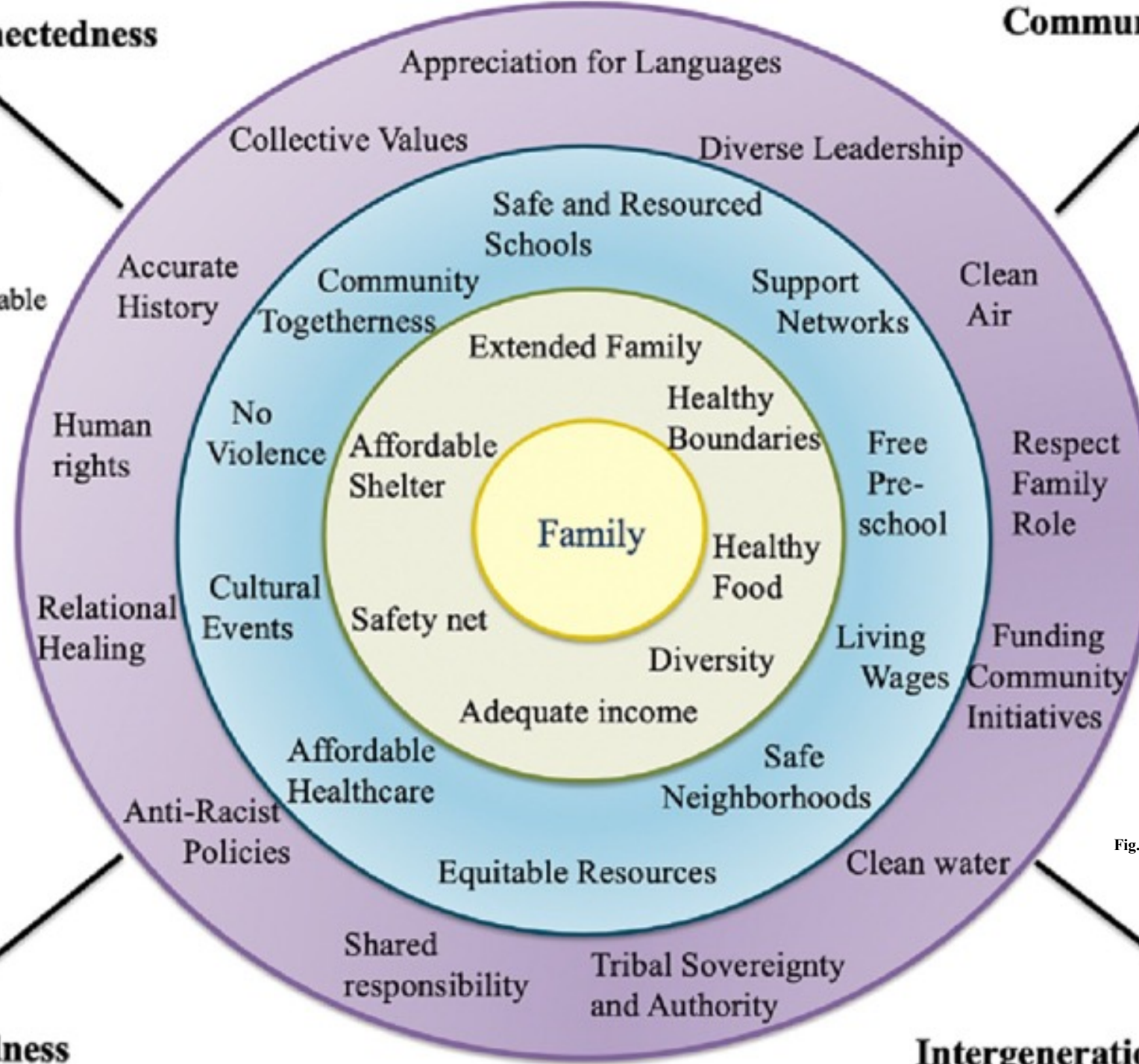


Fig. 1. Connectedness framework for systems change
(Chase & Ullrich, 2022).

Family Connectedness

Intergenerational Connectedness

Section 3: Building a Self-Care Toolkit

- Identifying Individual Needs and Preferences
- Self and Community Care Practices for Physical Well-Being
- Nurturing Emotional Resilience: Strategies and Techniques
- Fostering Spiritual, Cultural & Community Nourishment



What does self-care mean to you?

SELF-SOOTHING

Activities that provide distraction
and/or comfort in difficult times

TV BINGEING



BUBBLE BATH

FANCY
BEVERAGES



SINGING
LOUDLY

GETTING
OUT INTO
NATURE



FRESH
FLOWERS



TIME OFF
FROM HOME
RESPONSIBILITIES
& CHILDCARE

CUDDLING



EXERCISE



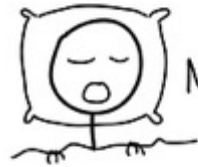
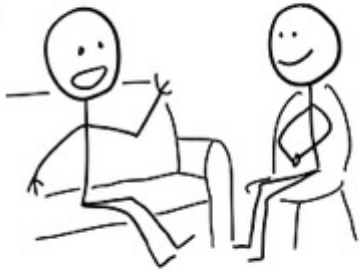
Self-soothing is INCREDIBLY important to our well-being.
Sometimes, these activities may not
be stabilizing us, or creating
opportunities for us to address
health and wellness.



SELF-CARE

Activities that help you find meaning, and that support your growth & groundedness

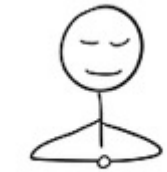
GOING TO
THERAPY



NAPPING



EATING WELL
FOR YOUR BODY



MEDITATING

TAKING
OWNERSHIP
OF YOUR
FINANCES



GETTING
MEDICAL CARE

MASSAGE



EXERCISE



saying
YES and **NO**
when you really
mean it

YOGA



SETTING -
& KEEPING! -
BOUNDARIES

@deannazandt

***Do you feel the
difference between
soothing & care?***



Building a Self-Care Toolkit

Physical

Exercise + Rest

Nutrition

Emotional

Expression

Relationships

Mental

Interest

Flow

Spiritual

Connections

Purpose

Cultural & Community

Identity

Practice

Prepare for writing



Building a Self-Care Toolkit

Physical

Exercise + Rest

Nutrition

The things you do to take care of your body in healthy ways. Examples include: sleep; nutrition; exercise; and health care visits.

How well do you take care of yourself physically? Identify three activities that you currently do and/or plan to engage in from this point forward to take care of yourself physically.

1)

2)

3)

Building a Self-Care Toolkit

Emotional

Expression

Relationships

The things you do to take care of your feelings in healthy ways.

Examples include: maintaining support systems; journaling; and talking about feelings in healthy ways.

How well do you take care of yourself emotionally? Identify three activities that you currently do and/or plan to engage in from this point forward to take care of yourself emotionally.

1)

2)

3)

Building a Self-Care Toolkit

Mental

Interest

Flow

The things you do to take care of your mind and understand yourself better.

Examples include: reading for pleasure, writing; and, engaging in continued education for additional knowledge/skill.

How well do you take care of yourself psychologically? Identify three activities that you currently do and/or plan to engage in from this point forward to take care of yourself psychologically.

1)

2)

3)

Building a Self-Care Toolkit

Spiritual

Connection

Purpose

The things you do to gain perspective on life.

Examples include: prayer; meditation; contact with nature.

How well do you take care of yourself spiritually? Identify three activities that you currently do and/or plan to engage in from this point forward to take care of yourself spiritually.

1)

2)

3)

Building a Self-Care Toolkit

Cultural & Community

Identity

The things you do to gain perspective on life.

Examples include: Community events that highlight and honor Indigenous history and cultural perspectives. Specific education groups on historic trauma, historic grief, and historic cultural losses and healing circles.

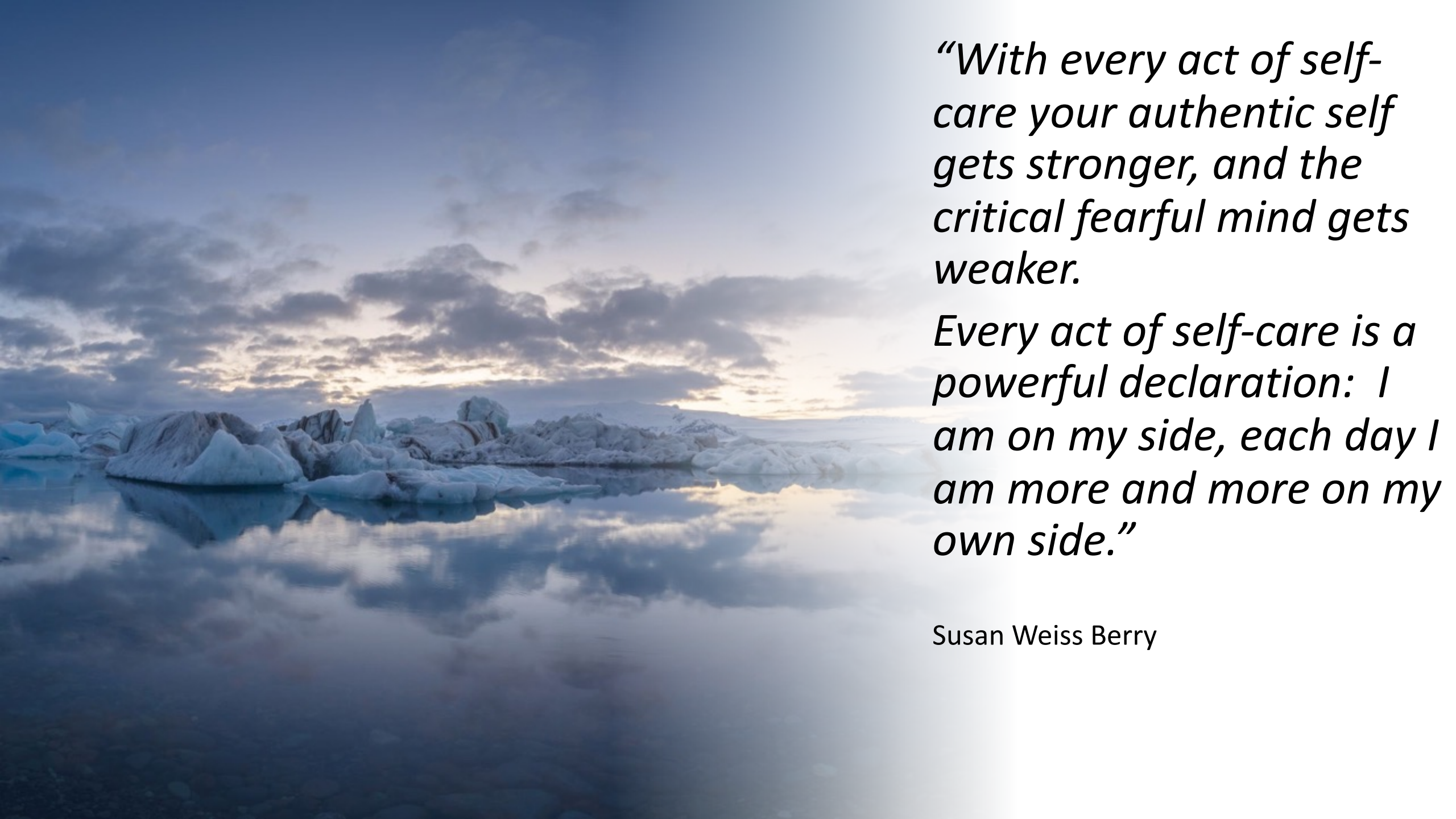
How well do you take care of your connection to culture and community? Identify three activities that you currently do and/or plan to engage in from this point forward to take care of yourself spiritually.

1)

2)

3)

Practice



“With every act of self-care your authentic self gets stronger, and the critical fearful mind gets weaker.

Every act of self-care is a powerful declaration: I am on my side, each day I am more and more on my own side.”

Susan Weiss Berry

The background of the slide is black, adorned with several white feathers of varying sizes and orientations. The feathers are scattered across the frame, with some appearing in the foreground and others in the background, creating a sense of depth. The lighting highlights the texture and structure of the feathers, particularly the central rachis and the delicate barbs.

Section 4: Organizational Strategies for Burnout Prevention

- Creating a Supportive Organizational Culture
- Supervision and Peer Support: Nurturing a Community Focused Team
- Recognizing Warning Signs and Addressing Burnout

Why is it important to feel seen and understood ALL THE TIME but in this case — in the workplace?

What do you need to be your full self at work? What do staff and supervisors need to know about you for you to feel valued, heard, and understood?

What are the benefits of being able to be your full self at work and feel valued, heard, and understood?

What are the consequences when you do not feel valued, heard, and understood and do not feel you can be your full self?

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

**Have you experienced increased mental health concerns
in the last 1-3 year?**

**Have you experienced increased substance use concerns
in the 1-3 last year?**

Are you comfortable seeking help from your employer?

Are you comfortable accepting help from your employer?

Since 2020 there has been increased MH and SUD concerns in our organizations

- 55% reported increased MH concerns
- 36% reported increased SU concerns



What are the bear-riers?



68%

of workers say they would **NOT**
be comfortable seeking help
from their employer



59%

of workers say they would **NOT**
be comfortable accepting
employer help if it was offered

Solutions



*"We can't give people
what we don't have, and
we can only take people
as far as we have gone
ourselves"*

CLove



Self

Supervision

Organization

Community

Healing-Centered Workplaces: Relational Strategies

- Ongoing supervisory support, including reflective supervision and strengths-based coaching
- Recovery-oriented team building activities
- Assess job performance based on established duties, not on substance use status or completion of recovery services
- Actively fight against stigma within oneself, the workplace, and greater community
- Be trustworthy and maintain confidentiality
- Support flexibility so that people can access desired supports
- Work to prevent and address secondary trauma and burnout
- Integrate healing practices and recovery support
- Willingness to shift the language that is used during staff meetings

TREE OF LIBERATION

LEAVES: ACTIONS

Create plans together
based on their goals

Ask clarifying questions to
understand the whole story
& needs

Share resources
& education for their friends
to have

TRUNK: BELIEFS

"They can do _____"
"They're telling me the truth"
"They care about the community"

Capable
Trustworthy
Caring

ROOTS: PERCEPTIONS

TREE OF STIGMA

LEAVES: ACTIONS

Ignore the story & project
your own agenda

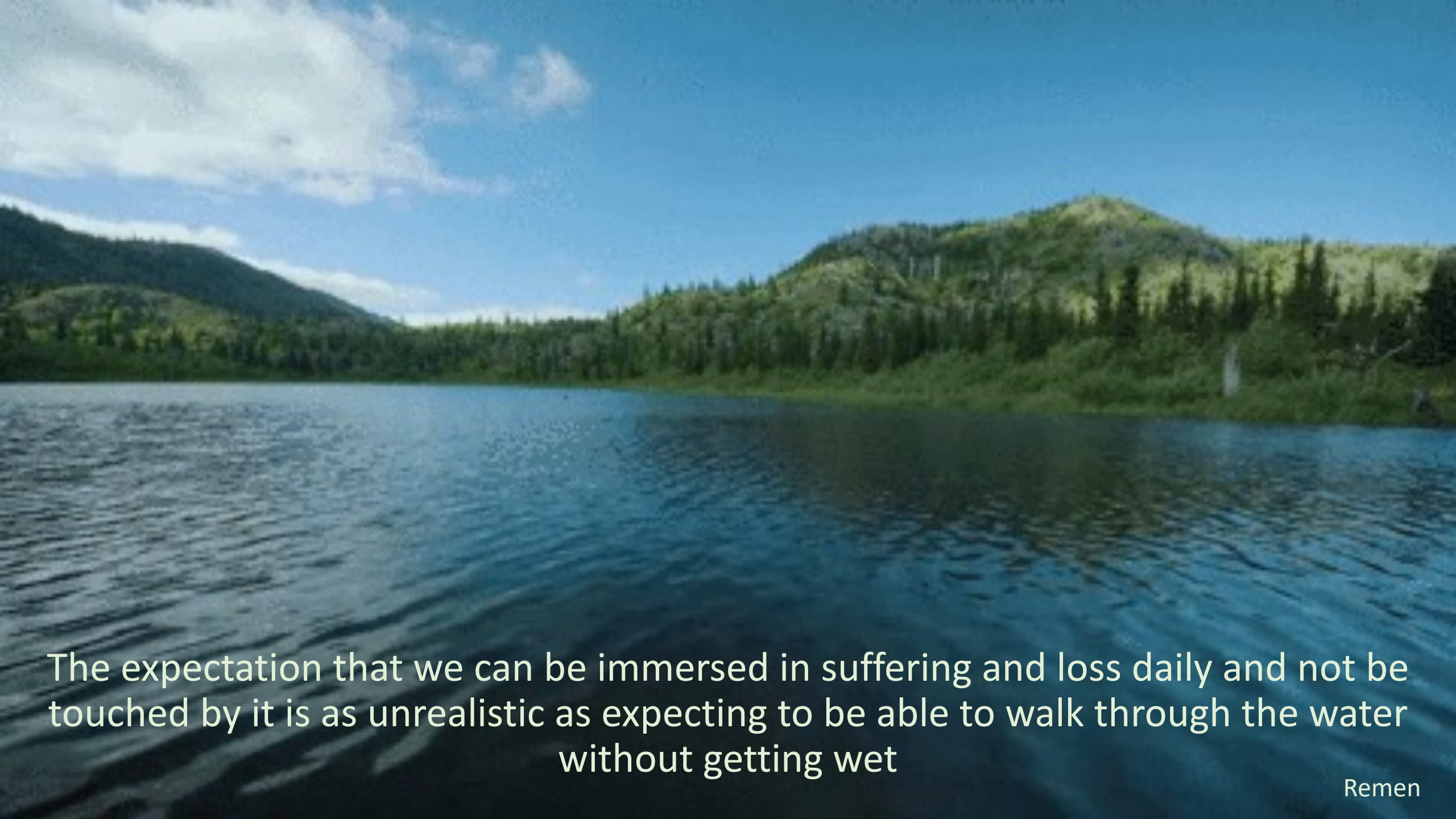
Require mandatory XYZ
because "they won't do it
otherwise"

Only talk about the
"disease" & not about what
they have control over

TRUNK: BELIEFS

"They're probably lying"
"They don't have the willpower"
"They can't help themselves"

Not trustworthy
Lazy
Sick



The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through the water without getting wet

A photograph of a coastal scene on a foggy day. In the foreground, there is a rocky shoreline with patches of ice and snow. A long bridge with multiple spans and a central arch is visible in the middle ground, partially obscured by the thick fog. The sky is overcast and grey.

WHAT IS COMPASSION FATIGUE?

- It is a type of stress caused by caring for others
- It can occur suddenly
- **Symptoms of Compassion Fatigue are:**
 - Less ability to function
 - More stress than usual
 - Caregiver feels traumatized
 - Working harder, getting less done
 - Irritability
 - Feeling bored
 - More sickness, aches, and pains

What is compassion satisfaction

- **Compassion satisfaction** is about the pleasure you derive from being able to do your work.
- For example, you may feel like it is a pleasure to help others through what you do at work. You may feel positively about your colleagues or your ability to contribute to the work setting or even the greater good of society through your work with people who need care.



Professional Quality of
Life

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graph TD; A[Professional Quality of Life] --> B[Compassion Fatigue]; A --> C[Compassion Satisfaction]; B --> D[Burnout]; B --> E[Secondary Trauma];
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The diagram is a hierarchical tree structure. At the top is a box labeled 'Professional Quality of Life'. A line from this box branches into two boxes: 'Compassion Fatigue' on the left and 'Compassion Satisfaction' on the right. From the 'Compassion Fatigue' box, another line branches into two boxes: 'Burnout' on the left and 'Secondary Trauma' on the right. All boxes are light blue with a darker blue header and a thin blue border.

Compassion Fatigue

Compassion
Satisfaction

Burnout

Secondary
Trauma

10 signs you may be experiencing burnout

1. Exhaustion
2. Lack of Motivation
3. Frustration, Cynicism and other negative emotions
4. Cognitive Problems
5. Slipping Job Performance
6. Interpersonal Problems at Home & at Work
7. Not Taking Care of Yourself
8. Being Preoccupied with work.. When you're not at work
9. Generally Decrease Satisfaction
10. Health Problems

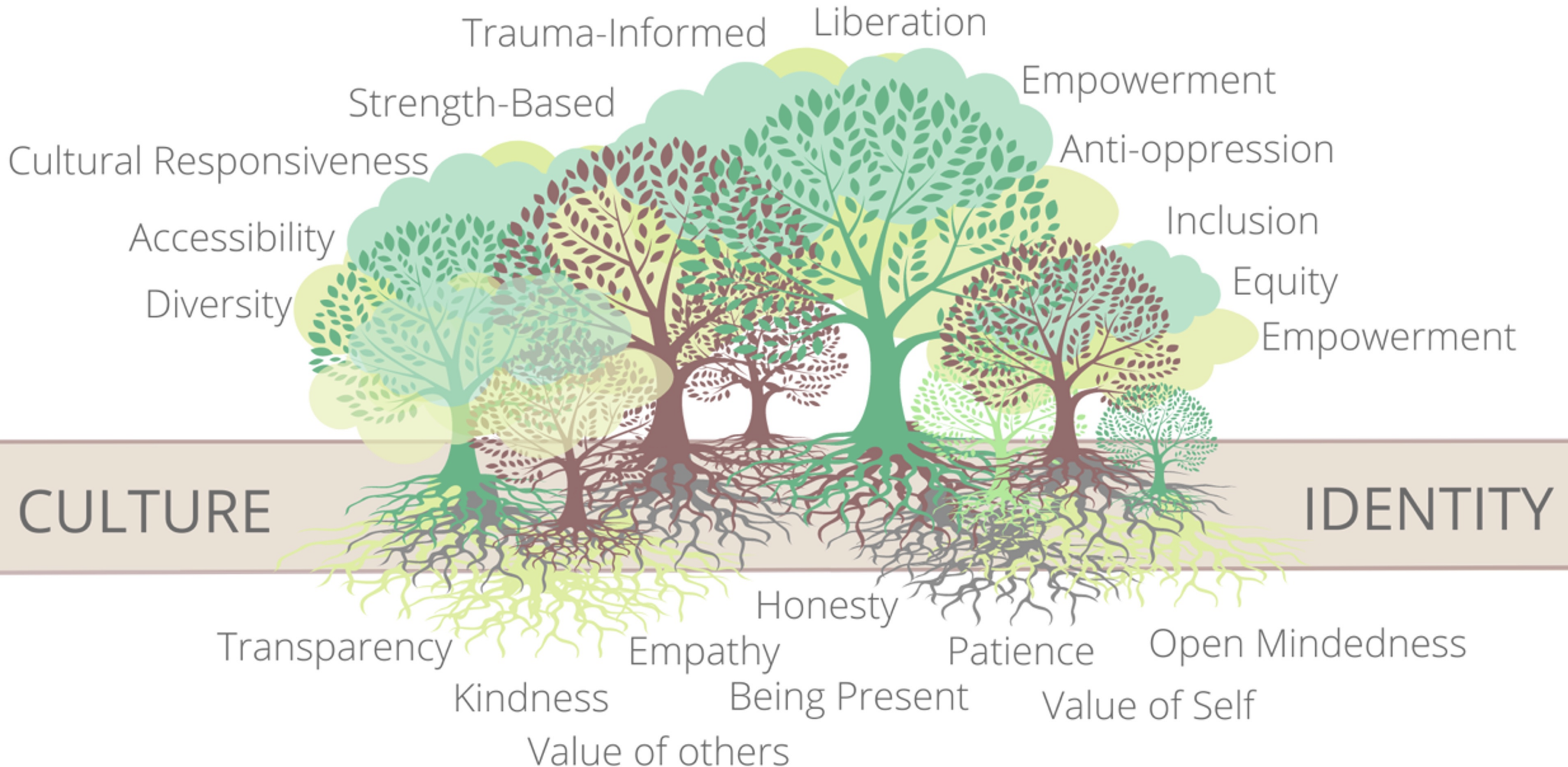


Section 5: Integrating Self-Care into Advocacy Work

- Incorporating Self-Care and Healing into Advocacy Strategies
- Enhancing Survivor-Centered Services through Advocate Well-Being



Healing Centered



Essential learning:

Trauma-informed work is, at heart, relational, it requires us to be emotionally present and connected—to ourselves, to each other, to the work itself, and to the people we are working with.

Being able to do that hinges on our ability to be aware of our own feelings, needs, and responses and to be attentive to each other's. Or, more simply, we are talking about two key ingredients of trauma-informed work:

1. **Reflection and Awareness**—which involves both self-awareness and awareness of others; and
2. **Caring and Compassion**—which involves caring for ourselves and caring for each other. This means intentionally creating the time and space to be reflective and the emotional safety to be both honest and gentle with what we see.



I invite you to understand –
not judge – my family and the
contact with my partner. My life
is my business, filled with my
joy to celebrate, my hardship
to endure, and my decisions
to make. I ask that you listen,
support me, and offer help that
makes things better for me and
my children.

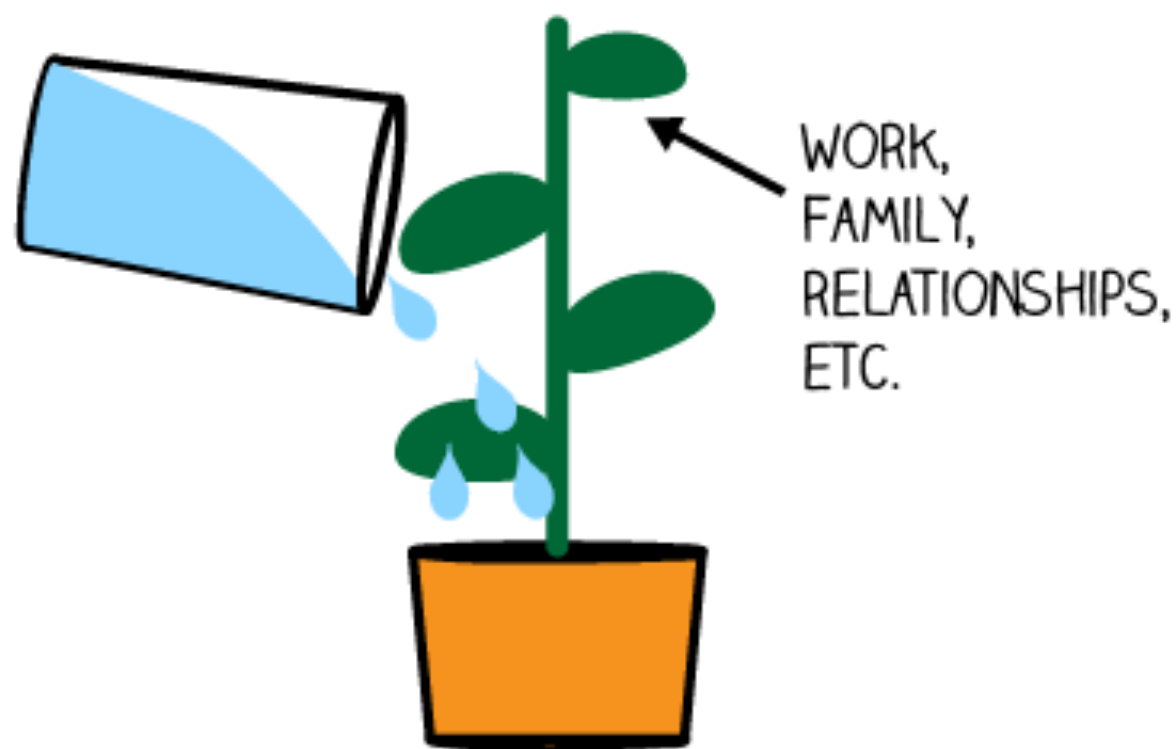


SELF-CARE REPLENISHES YOU




ACTIVITIES THAT
SUPPORT YOUR
WELLBEING

SO YOU CAN GIVE TO OTHERS



WORK,
FAMILY,
RELATIONSHIPS,
ETC.

A dreamcatcher with several feathers and dark beads hangs from the top of the frame. The background is a soft, out-of-focus sunset or sunrise, with warm orange and yellow light on the left transitioning to a pale blue on the right. The dreamcatcher's feathers are silhouetted against the bright light, creating a glowing effect.

*“Love of others
and love of
ourselves are not
alternatives.”*