



Self-Care in the Face of Cumulative Trauma: Current Events Participant Workbook

Introduction and disclaimer

Self-Care in the Face of
Cumulative Trauma: Current Events
SupportLinc Employee Assistance
Program (EAP)



Disclaimer

The general views, thoughts and opinions expressed in this presentation are expressly those of the presenter. The presentation is intended to provide general tips, advice and coping skills, and may not entirely pertain to your circumstance or you as an individual in a professional or clinical capacity. For specific advice on your unique situation, please reach out to a licensed financial or clinical professional for a confidential, one-on-one consult. Curalinc Healthcare and the presenter are not held responsible or liable for any consequences or damages due to an individual taking action based on the information presented herein.



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Objectives

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This training is designed to help you:

- Discuss different types of traumas and how it occurs
- Learn what cumulative trauma is and how it affects people
- Recognize possible reactions to distressing events
- Learn about triggers and grounding techniques to combat them
- Understand what self-care is
- Recognize the different effort levels of self-care techniques

What would you like to get out of today's presentation?



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What is trauma?

What is trauma?

Trauma is a response to any event a person finds physically or emotionally threatening or harmful either directly or indirectly.

Do you typically respond with fight, flight or freeze response?



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Possible traumatic current events



- Mass shootings
- Abortion laws
- Transgender children’s medical care
- CRT
- Banned books
- Educational monitoring and standards
- Refusing medical/mental health care
- Elections
- LGBTQ+ rights



How you can you show sensitivity and kindness to those around you?



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Types of trauma

Types of trauma

Acute	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Loss of a loved one• Victim of violence or injury• Natural disaster
Complex	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Childhood emotional abuse• Domestic violence• Prolonged exposure to violence or bullying
Historical or intergenerational	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Racism• Sexism• War

What areas of trauma may you have experienced in your life?



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Types of trauma continued

Types of trauma continued

Vicarious/ secondary

- Exposure to a traumatized individual
- 'Cost of caring' for others

Reverse vicarious

- Awareness of possibility of trauma to others

Interactional

- Others' trauma response that is triggering

Are you or a loved one currently experiencing any of these types of trauma?



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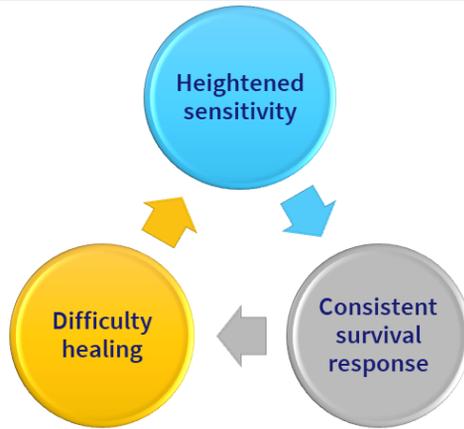
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Cumulative trauma

Cumulative trauma



How has cumulative trauma manifested in your life?



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Possible reactions

Psychological and emotional

Possible reactions

Psychological and emotional

- Heightened anxiety or fear
- Irritability, restlessness or overexcitability
- Feelings of sadness, moodiness or more crying than usual
- Feelings of helplessness or hopelessness
- Feelings of numbness or detachment
- “Survivor guilt” or feeling of self-blame that you escaped the tragedy
- Re-experiencing of the traumatic event
- Feelings of estrangement or isolation from others
- Hypervigilance



What are some of your warning signs, symptoms or triggers?



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Grounding techniques

Grounding techniques

Name 1 thing you can taste	Name 2 things you can smell	Turn on some music	Focus on breathing
Put your feet on the floor	Name 4 things you can hear	Call a friend or a safe person to talk to	Name 3 things you can feel
Name 5 things you can see	Remind yourself of the date/time	Journal	Stretch

Choose 1 or 2 grounding techniques that you want to try.



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Defining self-care

Defining self-care



- Intentional act of meeting one's emotional, physical or spiritual needs
- Helps restore and refresh the mind, body and spirit
- Our mind and body are deeply connected
- It is NOT selfish

Do you currently make time for self-care? If not, how can you make it a priority?



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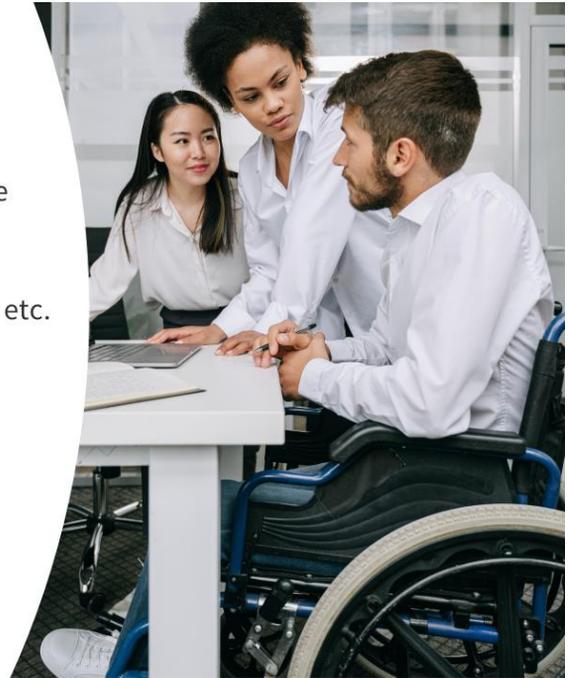
Self-care techniques

Low effort

Self-care techniques

Low effort

- Take a 10-minute break from whatever you're doing
- Take a short nap
- Apply body lotion, face creams, essential oils etc.
- Listen to a podcast, audiobook or music
- Watch a light-hearted TV show or movie
- Reach out to a friend or family member
- Make a gratitude list
- Drink water



What low effort self-care technique can you incorporate into your routine?



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Self-care techniques

Medium effort

Self-care techniques continued Medium effort

- Read a book
- Take a bath
- Stretch
- Make a meal
- De-clutter your space
- Make a list of goals
- Do physical activity
- Go for a long drive, walk or bike ride
- Try meditation
- Knock things off your to-do list



What medium effort self-care technique can you incorporate into your routine, when needed?



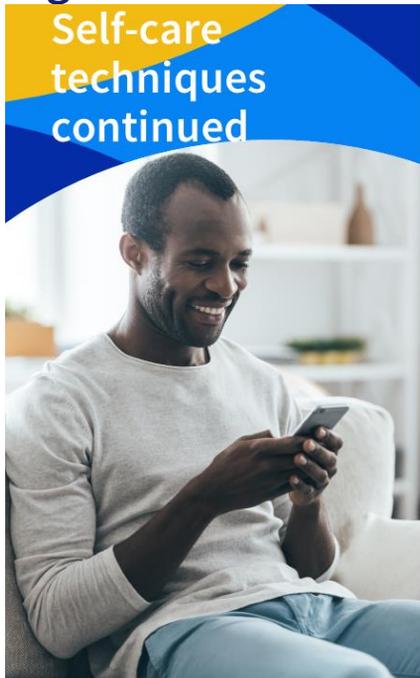
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Self-care techniques

Higher effort



Higher effort

- Plan a fun weekend get-a-way
- Rearrange a space in your home
- Journal daily
- Find places to volunteer that mean something to you
- Learn a new skill
- Connect with your spirituality
- Set boundaries wherever needed in your life, relationships etc.
- Try a new method of physical activity
- Say “no” to things causing you distress

What higher effort self-care technique can you incorporate into your routine when possible?



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Actions

Actions

- ✓ Self-care
- ✓ Develop and communicate boundaries
- ✓ Healthy advocacy
- ✓ Helping others
- ✓ Healthy social support
- ✓ Counseling

Choose one or two concepts to apply in your life.



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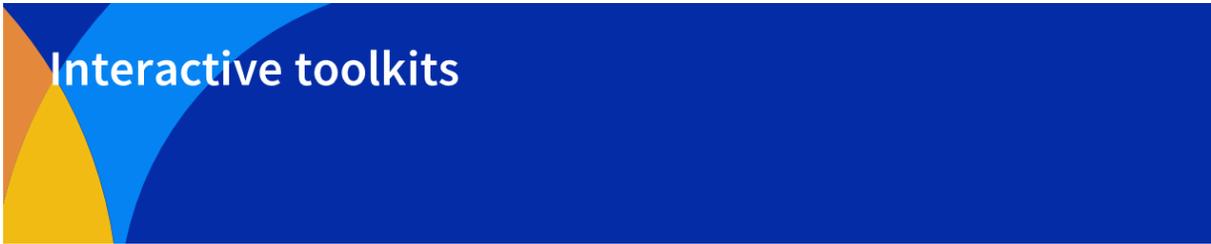
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Interactive toolkits



Mindfulness

www.mindfulness.tools

Practical tools and exercises for incorporating mindfulness into everyday life.

Resiliency

www.resiliency.tools

Skill development resources to help you 'bounce back' from challenging situations.

Meditation

www.meditate.tools

Easy-to-use collection of resources that includes guided meditations, tip sheets and more.

Sleep fitness

www.sleepfitness.tools

Information and resources to help you learn good sleep habits and achieve healthy sleep.

Visit 1 toolkit today to see what self-care resources are available to help you.



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What is SupportLinc?

What is SupportLinc?

The SupportLinc Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a health benefit, separate from your medical insurance, offered by your employer to help you manage life's daily challenges.

SupportLinc can refer you to professional counselors, services and resources that will help you and your eligible family members resolve a broad range of personal and work-related concerns.

What services are included? Work-life benefits



Legal consultation

Free in-person or telephonic consultation with a licensed attorney
No employment law



Dependent care referrals

Expert referrals to child and adult/elder care providers, facilities and other resources



Financial consultation

Expert guidance and consultation from financial professionals



“Convenience” referrals

Guidance and referrals to a variety of daily living resources: home improvement, entertainment services, pet care, auto repair, wellness, travel, handymen, volunteer opportunities etc.



Identity theft consultation

Free consultation with an identity theft recovery professionals
Tailored recovery action plan



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Getting started

Getting started



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SupportLinc

Support for everyday issues. Every day.



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Additional resources

Collective trauma is a shared emotional reaction to an event with difficult circumstances and devastating outcomes. People often feel powerless when tragedies occur. You may be experiencing a wide range of emotions including anger, uncertainty, despair, grief or numbness – each is a common reaction to collective trauma.

What happens to you following a distressing or traumatic incident is a personal thing. You and your co-workers may have different feelings and reactions to that same incident. This is natural, and you will be making your own adjustments as you recover. As time goes by, your recollection of the incident will fade, but it is likely, depending upon what happened, that the memory may never go completely away. It can be helpful for you to talk about what happened, and not just think about it, which can result in more problems. Find a friend, a family member or someone supportive who can listen and let you express yourself.

Common reactions

After exposure to an intense, unusual event, some people experience reactions that are out of the ordinary for them. These are normal reactions to a situation that is not normal and can be dealt with in a healthy way.

As the initial shock subsides, reactions vary from one person to another. The following, however, are normal responses to a traumatic event:

Feelings become intense and sometimes are unpredictable. You may become more irritable than usual, and your mood may change back and forth dramatically. You might be especially anxious or nervous, or even become depressed.

Thoughts and behavior patterns are affected by trauma. You might have repeated and vivid memories of the event. These flashbacks may occur for no apparent reason and may lead to physical reactions such as rapid heartbeat or sweating. You may find it difficult to concentrate or make decisions or become more easily confused. Sleep and eating patterns also may be disrupted.

Recurring emotional reactions are common. Anniversaries of the event, such as at one month or one year, can trigger upsetting memories of the traumatic experience. These triggers may be accompanied by fears that the stressful event will be repeated.

Interpersonal relationships often become strained. Greater conflict, such as more frequent arguments with family members and co-workers, is common. On the other hand, you might become withdrawn and isolated and avoid your usual activities.

Physical symptoms may accompany extreme stress. For example, headaches, nausea and chest pain may result and may require medical attention. Preexisting medical conditions may worsen due to stress.

Tips for coping

- Talk about what happened and how you felt. Do not be afraid to let others know you need support.



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Additional resources

- Structure your time more carefully than usual and maintain control over your daily schedule where you can. Do not agree to do things you do not want to do. It is important that you care for your needs right now.
- Return to a normal routine as soon as you can. Wake up, eat and sleep when you normally do.
- Exercise and eat right. Avoid foods high in fat, salt, and sugar.
- Do not abuse alcohol or other drugs. It is never a good idea to try and medicate emotions that do not feel good. It usually means we just have to deal with them later.

Grief

After a traumatic incident, we sometimes have a sense of loss, such as our peace of mind and sense of security. Other times the loss may be a friend, co-worker, or significant person in our lives. As we grieve, we all experience the same stages of grief. The timing and duration of the healing phases vary by person but include:

- Denial
- Shock
- Anger
- Sadness
- Acceptance

It can take time before the pain and sadness go away; we cannot put a timetable to that process. We each take our own paths, and it is not fair for you to compare yourself to how others are doing. What has been shown to help is talking about your feelings with someone you trust.

Getting back on track

It is okay to acknowledge what you are feeling after a traumatic incident. When something traumatic happens, we may wonder “What did I do to deserve this?” or “What could I have done differently?” Indecision, doubt and worry and being over-cautious can keep you trapped at the moment of the trauma and prevent you from moving forward. Instead, focus on the present and what you need now to help you. Being able to do that will help you get back your life and happiness. Know that you do not need to deal with this alone, and you can contact your Employee Assistance Program for support and guidance.

For further resources, please go to your portal and use the search bar to type in “Coping with Civil and Political Unrest Flash Course” and “Coping with Grief Flash Course.”



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