

## Session: Flexing Your Core – Domain 8 Self-Care

### Facilitator: Leanne Drumheller

### November 17, 2023

Most of us in healthcare are experts at providing care to others. When we talk about self-care it's common for health care providers to be more uncomfortable as there is a vulnerability in receiving. Because of this natural discomfort, we have to **practice** receiving.

*What is your relationship like with receiving? Are there ways you can think of to increase your tolerance around this vulnerability?*

- Sometimes our self-care comes at the end, not always a high priority
- Always felt more comfortable giving than receiving
- More difficult to receive than give, probably common in helping profession. Colleagues have been receptive when I've asked for support. It's felt humbling, surprising and realizing people do want to help
- Like building a muscle, you need to build the muscle to receive support. Can be painful and uncomfortable in the building process
- Power dynamics with giving and receiving
- Don't want to be a burden to colleagues as we know they are dealing with their own stuff
- We connect with colleagues when we are vulnerable

#### Self-Care Toolbox

We can think of self-care like a toolbox for taking care of and fixing our home. If we let things go for too long, the work to repair can add up. Having a self-care 'toolbox' can be a good plan for being in health care long term.

Common toolbox items: the 'basics' - sleep, eating healthy, exercise, connection with others. There are specialty tools – for example; taking breaks, setting boundaries, talking with a trusted friend or counsellor. And finally, noticing when you're struggling with decisions or habits that are harmful to your well-being.

*What are some items in your tool box and what might help you to remember to use this tool box each day?*

- Rituals, making it routine (with some flexibility). With routines can set boundaries
- Approach ourselves with compassion when we aren't doing what we'd like to do (eating healthy, exercise)
- Timing – be able to cancel when needed and set boundaries
- Protect sleep – not scheduling things later into evenings

## Supporting Colleagues

### Ways to support your colleagues

- Offering support with an open invitation
- Not minimizing your team members concerns
  - We work in solutions-focused environment and offering solutions/fixes can be experienced as minimizing
- Using phrases like “I hear you” to show them you are taking them seriously
  - Phrases can be tricky at times, can feel disingenuous at times
- Checking in with your team members throughout the day
- Simply asking how they are doing throughout the day
- Offering help and assistance whenever possible to other team members
- Encouraging colleagues to take breaks
- Connecting, for example asking colleagues if they want to sit outside with you on break

*When have you felt most supported by colleagues? What did the colleague do to make you feel supported?*

- My team is fairly supportive of each other, very thankful
- Sharing things together, even something simple like afternoon tea with team

*Have you every had an experience where the support wasn't helpful*

- Coworker took a situation I shared with them to lead without my knowing and I didn't feel ready at that point. They were looking out for me. Maybe if they have given me a heads up that they would take it further if I didn't it wouldn't have felt so challenging at that time