

Innovations in Counseling (Part 12 Session 8)

Radical Self-Care and Peace: Strategies for Folx Bridging the Gap

Webinar Follow-up Question and Answer Session with Jasmaine Ataga, PhD, NCC, ACS, LPC, RPT-S

Question from Anonymous:

How does collective community care come into play or interaction with self-care?

Answer from Presenter:

Collective community care and self-care are deeply intertwined and mutually supportive. Collective community care involves creating and sustaining environments where individuals support each other and share resources, fostering a sense of belonging and mutual aid. This communal approach to care complements self-care by:

- **Enhancing Resilience:** Collective care provides a support network that helps individuals cope with stress and challenges, reducing the burden on personal self-care practices.
- **Encouraging Shared Resources:** Community care often includes shared resources like counseling services, wellness programs, and social support networks, which can alleviate some pressures on individual self-care routines.
- **Building a Supportive Environment:** Individuals contribute to a culture prioritizing well-being by engaging in collective care, making self-care practices more accessible and normalized within the community.
- **Reducing Isolation:** Collective care helps combat feelings of isolation, which is crucial for mental health. Feeling connected and supported by a community can enhance the effectiveness of individual self-care efforts.

While self-care focuses on individual well-being, collective community care creates a supportive backdrop that enhances and reinforces self-care practices, making them more effective and sustainable.

Question from A. Vosburg:

When you try something out of your comfort zone and it does not work, is it important to try it again? If so, how many times should you try it?

Answer from Presenter:

Trying new things outside of your comfort zone is valuable for personal growth and development. When an attempt does not succeed, evaluating and reflecting on the experience is often beneficial before deciding whether to try again. Here are some considerations:

- **Reflection:** Reflect on why the attempt did not work. Were there specific factors or conditions that contributed to the outcome? Understanding these aspects can inform whether a different approach or strategy is needed.

- **Resilience and Adaptation:** Trying again can build resilience and adaptability. Each attempt provides learning opportunities and insights that can lead to eventual success or improvement.
- **Timing and Frequency:** There is no set number of times one should try again, as it varies based on the context and individual goals. It is essential to balance persistence with practicality. If an approach repeatedly fails, modifying the strategy or seeking additional support or training may be helpful before trying again.
- **Self-Compassion:** Practice self-compassion and avoid being overly critical of yourself. Recognize that failure is a natural part of growth and learning.

As I stated in my webinar, I went kayaking twice, and both times, my discomfort level was above my joy level. That was enough to let me know that I tried my best and that kayaking was not for me in terms of self-care.

Question from Anonymous:

What are some self-care recommendations for counselors, or counselors-in-training who are experiencing burnout?

Answer from Presenter:

Counselors and counselors-in-training experiencing burnout can benefit from various self-care strategies tailored to their unique needs. Here are some recommendations:

- **Regular Supervision and Peer Support:** Engage in regular supervision and seek support from colleagues or mentors. Peer support can provide validation, insight, and practical strategies for managing burnout.
- **Boundaries and Work–Life Balance:** Set clear boundaries between work and personal life. Ensure you have time for rest and activities that recharge you outside your professional responsibilities.
- **Self-Reflection and Mindfulness:** Practice self-reflection and mindfulness techniques to stay aware of your emotional state and manage stress. Mindfulness can help you stay grounded and reduce feelings of overwhelm.
- **Physical Health:** Prioritize physical health through regular exercise, a balanced diet, and adequate sleep. Physical well-being significantly impacts mental and emotional health.
- **Professional Development:** Engage in professional development activities that inspire and motivate you. Continuing education and skill-building can reignite passion and provide new perspectives on your work.
- **Self-Compassion:** Practice self-compassion and avoid self-criticism. Recognize that burnout is a common challenge, and treating yourself with kindness and understanding is essential.
- **Hobbies and Relaxation:** Incorporate hobbies and relaxation techniques into your routine. Activities such as reading, gardening, or creative pursuits can provide a much-needed break from the demands of counseling work.

Implementing these self-care strategies can help mitigate burnout and promote overall well-being. Regularly reassessing and adjusting your self-care practices is essential for maintaining balance and resilience in your professional life.

Question from L. Waters:

Where can we find information on the Nigeria trip you mentioned?

Answer from Presenter:

You can visit my website, [Zen360.org](https://zen360.org), to find out more about my services and, more specifically, the [Zen360 Nigeria Outreach](https://zen360.org/nigeria-outreach) page to find out more about the June trip.-Link--<https://zen360.org/nigeria-outreach>