

## Self-Care Assessment

The following self-care assessment scale is by Saakvitne and Pearlman from the Traumatic Stress Institute. It is designed as a tool to measure how well you are addressing your own needs. It is useful to revisit this assessment regularly.

Rate the following areas in frequency:

5=frequently, 4=occasionally, 3=rarely, 2=never, and 1=it never occurred to me.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Physical Self-Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Eat regularly (e.g. breakfast, lunch and dinner)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Eat healthily</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Exercise</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Get regular medical care for prevention</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Get medical care when needed</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Take time off when sick</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Get massages</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Dance, swim, walk, run, play sports, sing, or do some other physical activity that is fun</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Take time to be sexual – with yourself, with a partner</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Get enough sleep</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Wear clothes you like</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Take vacations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Take day-trips or mini-vacations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make time away from telephones</li> </ul> <p><b>Psychological Self-Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make time for self-reflection</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Have your own personal psychotherapy</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Write in a journal</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Read literature that is unrelated to work</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Do something at which you are not expert or in charge of</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Decrease stress in your life</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Notice your inner experience – listen to your thoughts, judgments, beliefs, attitudes and feelings</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Let others know different aspects of you</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Engage your intelligence in a new area (e.g. go to an art museum, history exhibit, sports event, auction, theater performance)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Practice receiving from others</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Be curious</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Say no to extra responsibilities sometimes</li> </ul> <p><b>Emotional Self-Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Spend time with others whose company who enjoy</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Stay in contact with important people in your life</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Give yourself affirmations, praise yourself</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Love yourself</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reread your favorite books, review favorite movies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify comforting activities, objects, people, relationships, places, and seek them out</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow yourself to cry</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Find things that make you laugh</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Express your outrage in social action, letters, donations, marches and protests</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Play with children</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

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| Spiritual Self Care   | Workplace or Professional Self-Care   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make time for reflection</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Spend time with nature</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Find a spiritual connection or community</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Be open to inspiration</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cherish your optimism and hope</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Be aware of non-material aspects of life</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Try at times not to be in charge or the expert</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Be open to not knowing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify what is meaningful to you and notice its place in your life</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Meditate</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pray</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Spend time with children</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Have experiences of awe</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Contribute to causes in which you believe</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Read inspirational literature (e.g. talks, music)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Take a break during the workday (e.g. lunch)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Take time to chat with co-workers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make quiet time to complete tasks</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify projects or tasks that are exciting and rewarding</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Set limits with clients and colleagues</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Balance your caseload so no one day or part of a day is “too much”</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Arrange your work space so it is comfortable and comforting</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Get regular supervision or consultation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Negotiate for your needs (benefits, pay raise)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Have a peer support group</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop a non-trauma area of professional interest</li> </ul> <p><b>Balance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Strive for balance within your work life and work day</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Strive for balance among work, family, relationships, play and rest</li> </ul> |

From *Transforming the Pain: A Workbook on Vicarious Traumatization* by Karen W. Saakvitne and Laurie Anne Pearlman. Copyright 1996 by the Traumatic Stress Institute/Center for Adult and Adolescent Psychotherapy.

## Making a Commitment to Yourself Action Plan

Write down three things you can do to address secondary trauma for each arena: professional and personal.

### ***Professional***

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### **Personal**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_