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SWK 649: Professional Seminar I

Compassion, Spirituality, and Self-Care

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My professional capacity for compassion, spirituality, and self-care has been impacted on a personal and professional level. Reflections and readings from self minus care and social work and crafting a rule of life: an invitation to the well minus ordered way aided in my transition to an enlightenment within self regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in a practical situation.

Daily stress is a constant factor while living in New York City. From transportation, workplace politics, or family responsibilities any individual can begin to feel taxed physically, mentally, and spiritually. Understanding how stress affects us allows for us to discover ways to combat and thrive abundantly.

When a frightening stimulus presents itself, a 92nd window opens. During this brief period of time, the brain releases chemicals that surge through the body, producing an automatic, physiological experience. This fight or flight response results in elevations in heart rate, blood pressure, and blood sugar, with increase blood flow from essential organs in the muscles. within 90 seconds from the original trigger, the chemical basis of the fear dissipates. At this point, one can make a choice to manage the emotions, or let the neurological circuit continue to run (Bolt Taylor, 2006).

Being informed about the biological effects, as I had recently become interested in ensuring my health was up to par post-pandemic. My stress levels were heightened due to my concerns of acquiring Covid. I had been placed in environments due to my

employment on a daily basis that were less than appropriate, placing me susceptible to contraction.

Escalating job stress may also manifest in restlessness and agitation, overreaction to minor events, social withdrawal, and increased use of alcohol and drugs. (Anshuetz, 1999). I'm glad that the last two were not engaged, but the others were definitely activated. I did not know that my reaction to change was going to be affected in this manner. However, I am presently more engaged in the workplace and committed to further developmental and growth.

I have integrated self-care practices into my work and personal journey in different ways. At work I have brought plants which provide me with comfort, as I take short breaks to care for them by pruning and watering. This allows my mind to detach from an activity such as documentation for a brief period of time. While at work, I also practice breathing techniques at my desk. This allows me to call my mind while relaxing, my body, and focusing on something within my control, e.g. breathing. Oftentimes while working in the office at Acs (administration for children's services) challenges and obstacles arise that are out of my control. By centering myself through these breathing techniques, it allows me to calm myself down, and reduce any natural anxiety about a task. I remember my supervisor asking me how do I remain so calm? I responded that it takes practice. I also enjoy physical activity and some non aggressive stretches and exercise can be productive. This can also include a walk in the community during lunch.

In my personal life, I have engaged in physical activities that include spartan races, marathons, workout challenges between family and friends. These activities get me excited and also produce positive self-care habits that are healthy, physically and mentally. I have recently incorporated spiritual, praise & worship in my workouts and it is very uplifting as I pray throughout the workout and give thanks to The Lord in all movements. This is a must try at home workout.

This allowed me to realize that my self-care journey has no limits and could be implemented any and everywhere. Reflecting on text from Macchia, I honed into my musical skills/talent. I have also had an interest in writing music and also had a desire to learn to play the guitar. Using a different part of the mind is helpful for me and takes a load off of obsessing thoughts and overthinking.

Crafting a rule of life text help deep in my spiritual life and practice of self-care as a social worker. This text improved my spiritual and financial priorities. By being in prayer and being in community, one can continue to review oneself from the constant effects of stress. The Bible can be used to strengthen us spiritually, and can provide answers to situations while taking time to reflect with The Lord during such passages. Finding solitude in prayer with The Lord can provide you with peace of mind. Seeking solitude with a purpose and having intention in what you desire to achieve from such an activity can provide better results by filling your cup with godly things and His restorative strength.

Matthew 6:19-21, do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

In reflection, I also feel that by thanking God for the things that you do currently possess, can be a self care activity as opposed to looking at what you don't have and it becoming a stressful onset. I am grateful for the things that I do have, and look forward to the things that God will provide me. Realizing that I had not reflected on the things that God has already provided me because I was looking toward the things that I didn't have.

Setting up a weekly money routine that couples with my daily morning, weekly, and monthly routine. The reason that I decided to do this was because I wanted to reduce the anxiety based around financial responsibilities. I check on my finances weekly. Starting this could be difficult, however, I asked my cousin/best family member to be my accountability partner. My cousin's job will be to keep me motivated and support me. My cousin will aid me in reminding me why I wanted to begin this task and how it will look once completed. Having an accountability partner can also be a self-care practice, as I have come to the understanding that I am not able to do all things by myself. I have come to accept that sometimes I have to lean on others for assistance such as family members, friends and especially The Lord.

I have yet to do so, but I also plan to begin traveling and taking time to explore different communities and cultures. I will also begin a body regimen that includes saunas and massages. Traveling with family and friends to ensure that I am making memories is important to me, as I would often work and miss all events. I also want to introduce investing in self-care practice for my body by ensuring that my body is being tended through detoxing and purification through saunas and relaxing muscles used throughout my workouts and at work.

References

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