

Reflection Paper

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Author Note

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Self-care is often perceived from a personal perspective rather than a professional one, which might lead people to solely think about it from a personal perspective and decrease their ability to view it from a professional one. My perspective has shifted as a result of reading *Self-Care in Social Work*. The authors of the book (*Cox & Steiner, 2013*) have successfully captured the interest of their readers by offering vital information regarding professional self-care. In light of the significance of self-care, I think everyone should make time to establish their own self-care rules and adhere to them. However, when I compare personal and professional self-care, I can see the differences between the two. Personal self-care is when a person sets aside time to relax whereas professional self-care specifically has to do with setting boundaries.

When conceptualizing the process of self-care, (*Cox & Steiner, 2013*) emphasize the significance of the three "S"s: self-awareness, self-regulation, and self-efficacy, which, in my opinion, is essential for understanding self-care in a deeper sense. Understanding how a lack of self-care can negatively affect people, but most importantly how it affects social workers, and can result in them experiencing burnout, compassion fatigue, and secondary trauma as a result of the stressor of work-related issues. The NASW Code of Ethic was updated to include self-care as it becomes more accepted. But after reading this book, I now understand that self-care may involve many different forms, including social self-care, physical self-care, mental self-care, emotional self-care, and spiritual self-care.

In what ways have you integrated self-care practices into your work and personal journey:

Self-care at work is an important part of preventing stress or burnout. Maintaining a healthy and safe environment can feel more at ease and focused throughout the day once learning

how to maintain a physical and mental health at work. Self-care is a technique to remind myself that I am a person first, before I am an employee. Whereas I can feel more in control and content with my workday by implementing a self-care regimen into my daily schedule. I carefully evaluate my demands from two separate viewpoints and ask myself whether they are personal or professional needs when combining my self-care regimen with my work and personal journeys. Understanding the differences between the two not only enables me to make conscious decisions about how I react to different circumstances, but it also enables the development of a self-care routine that respects both my personal and professional self-care boundaries. Even though the boundaries may be the same, it is helpful to check that I don't let the stressors or the two overlap, so that work doesn't become a problem at home and home doesn't become a problem at work. I think by setting precise boundaries will help me in to hold myself accountable in my self-care practices.

What are you learning about your self-care journey and spirituality:

The growth of the three "S"—self-awareness, self-regulation, and self-efficacy—requires the practice of self-care, which I have learned to be essential. Self-awareness establishes the foundation for self-care, self-regulation helps recovery after exposure to difficult work-related stress, and self-efficacy is our assessment of our individual capacity to carry out tasks and produce positive results. I've discovered that putting spiritual self-care into practice will improve my connection. The most authentic expression of who I am is my higher self. The version of myself that is unrelated to and unaffected by the ego or fear is known as my higher self. This self, however, acts from a soul-centered perspective and is in line with my deepest desire.

Connecting with my higher self has giving me the ability to experience freedom from a different perspective. Only a small portion of my higher self exists in the bodily form that I am

so accustomed to. It's the unbounded, eternal shape of my soul consciousness. It's the part of me that motivates people, guides them with intuition, and teaches them with wisdom. My aspirations, wants, and secret desires are all fully known to my higher self. My interactions with it, though, have probably only been temporary. My higher self is not just a connection, it is in alignment with the perfect will of God for my life.

In what ways is creating a “rule of life” helpful to deepening your spiritual life and practicing self-care as a social worker? What are you learning about yourself:

Creating a "rule of life" has been very helpful in deepening my spiritual life and practicing self-care as a social worker. It has allowed me to establish a routine that prioritizes activities such as prayer or meditation, exercise, rest, and time with loved ones. Through creating a rule of life, I have learned more about my values, priorities, and areas where I need to work to improve my self-care, roles, and relationships. I even discover new habits and practices that has been helpful in being more centered and grounded, which can ultimately lead to greater fulfillment and effectiveness in my work as a social worker. I've come to realize how crucial self-awareness is to become a successful social worker. Although a social worker's work is very rewarding, there are times when it can also have unfavorable effects that leave the worker with overwhelming or even traumatic experiences.

Mindfulness is one of the practices that has clarified my rule for life. Mindfulness is a conscious effort to be aware of whatever is happening in the moment, without judging or criticizing what is found. Mindfulness encouraged me to be alert, aware, and accepting of myself in every moment. Additionally, it enabled me to attend to my life more fully by allowing me to slow down the hectic pace I frequently maintain. Techniques used in mindfulness include awareness of breathing, bodily awareness, and single-focus tasking. In taking a moment to

acknowledge what I have seen and allowing myself to experience any emotions that arise. The difficulties I encountered along the way might be easier to handle if you take the time to include the little joys of life into your daily routine.

Conclusion

In conclusion, having the opportunity to learn more about myself from two separate perspectives the natural me and the higher version of myself—has been phenomenal. Learning that self-care goes beyond what I previously thought it to be was an extensive knowledge of its depths. It was great to have the opportunity to put this knowledge into practice, though learning about it is one thing. The knowledge I gain from the rules of life will be essential to my ongoing progress in discovering new things about myself every day while also keeping in mind the routines and goals that I have established.

References

- Cox, K., & Steiner, S. (2013b). *Self-care in Social Work: A Guide for Practitioners, Supervisors, and Administrators*. N A S W Press.
- Macchia, S. A. (2012). *Crafting a Rule of Life: An Invitation to the Well-Ordered Way*. InterVarsity Press.