



## **Focusing on the Forgotten...Me!**

### **Body scanning meditation:**

Sit in a comfortable position with your legs uncrossed and your arms, legs and head supported.

Take 2 slow, deep breaths.

Notice: Do you feel tense or relaxed? Don't judge. If there is tension, breathe through it.

Notice your feet and legs. Do you feel tension or are they relaxed? Don't judge. If there is tension breathe through it.

Notice your abdomen. Is it tense or relaxed? Don't judge. If there is tension breathe through it.

Notice your chest and arms. Do they feel tense or relaxed? Don't judge. If there is tension breathe through it.

Notice your head and neck. Do you feel tension or relaxed? Don't judge. If there is tension breathe through it.

### **How do you notice when you are feeling stress?**

- Physical Signs
- Emotional Signs
- Cognitive Signs
- Behavioral Signs
- Social Signs
- Spiritual/ Sense of Meaning

### **Barriers to self-care:** (circle the ones that ring true to you):

- There is no time to take care of myself.
- There is no money to take care of myself.
- It is selfish to focus on myself.
- If I focus on how I feel, it could be too painful or overwhelming.
- If I don't do it, it won't get done, or it won't get done right.



- There is too much at stake. I have to be in control. I need to control the outcome.
- I just cannot say NO! If I say no, I run the risk of others being angry with me.
- It's my role, my job, my identity; I am socialized to be the Caregiver.

How can you challenge or work with some of the above beliefs?

### **Strategies for self-care:**

- Be flexible and willing to make changes. Over time, you may need to add new alternatives to self-care options as your life changes.
- Find no or low cost activities. They are available if we are open and creative.
- Short periods daily when you can do something just for yourself. Don't wait for a vacation; add some self-care minutes to each day.
- Planned chunks of time. Try to plan ahead for a chunk of time, hours or days where you can have a break from your demands to focus on you.
- Make a routine or shake up a routine. Sometimes daily rituals provide self-care. Sometimes it helps to shake up the routine and try something new.
- Retreat or reach out to restore. You may restore yourself with alone time or you may need to reach out for support. Often a balance of both options helps.

### **Energy out versus energy in:**

Identify the people, places, and activities that deplete or take energy from you, and identify the people, places, and activities that restore you or give you energy or relief. Are you putting out more than you take in? Are you out of balance? Where or how can you conserve energy and where can you add to your energy stores?

**Healing connections** - Identify some connections that you will commit to in the week ahead.

- **Physical movement:** stretch, dance, walk
- **Senses:** sight, sound, smell, taste, touch
- **Emotional:** laugh, cry, journal or notice simply notice your feelings
- **Social:** call a friend, greet a neighbor, write a letter
- **Cognitive:** meditate, learn something, read, imagine, remember
- **Nature:** notice seasons, sit outside, bird watch, plant seeds
- **Spiritual:** remember your values, pray, celebrate rituals