

Caring has a Cost: Health and Self-Care for Health and Care Professionals

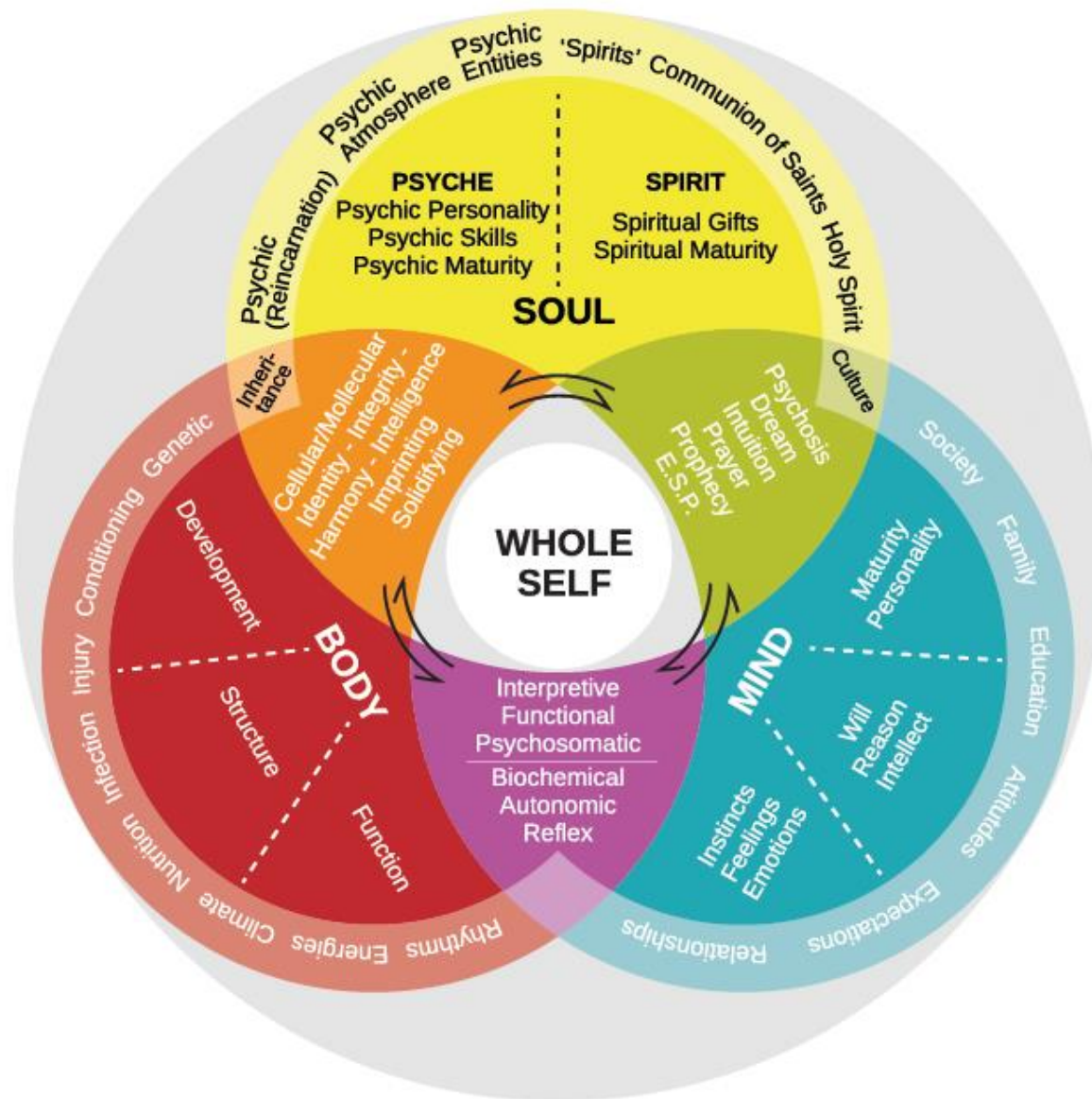
Dr Andrew Tresidder

Somerset CCG Pastoral Care Clinical Lead for Front Line
Staff

Practitioner Health SW Clinical Lead

With Many thanks to Julian Barnard of Healing Herbs





Compassionate Care

- “attention in life and living to the giving of understanding, support, advice, care and reassurance that help foster health and wellbeing”
- Paul Gilbert, Compassion, 2009
- Flow of loving attention

Compassionate Care

- Awareness and resonance with the suffering of another (emotional empathy)
- Correct perspective towards this person (cognitive empathy)
- Distress tolerance (an aspect of resilience, can manage the emotional situation safely)
- Motivation to act and relieve suffering
- Dr Paquita De Zulueta Compassionate Leadership in Healthcare

Compassionate Care

- Own needs must be attended to
- Care of others is underpinned by self-care
- Many studies show burnout in carers
- Early self-care (before running out of fuel) helps avoid burnout



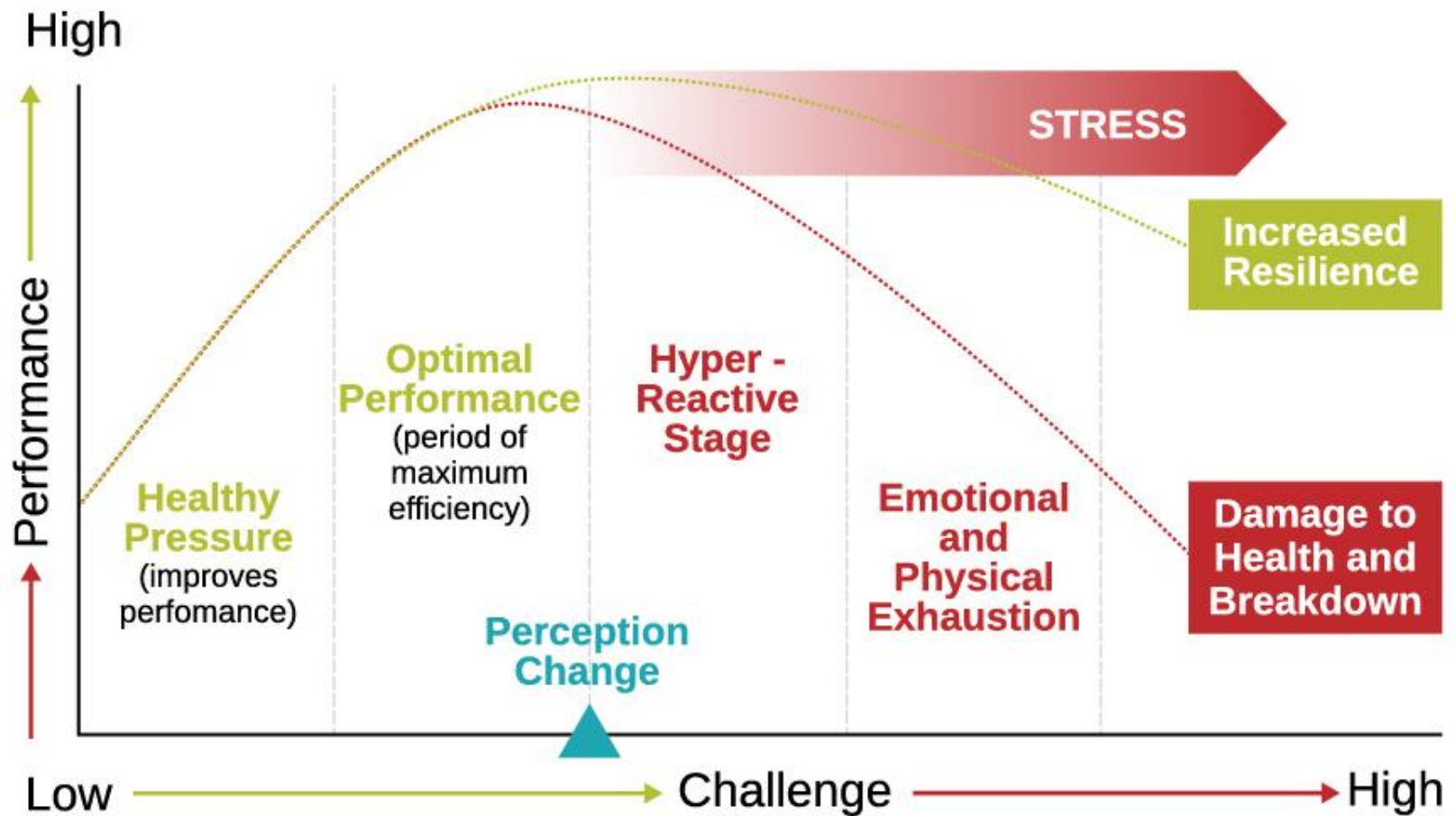
Burnout

Christina Maslach

1. Overwhelming exhaustion
 2. Feelings of cynicism and detachment from job
 3. Sense of ineffectiveness and lack of accomplishment
- Can result from being on the right hand side downward slope of stress-performance curve for too long

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4911781/>

Useful resource: Stop Physician Burnout, Dr Dike Drummond www.thehappymd.com



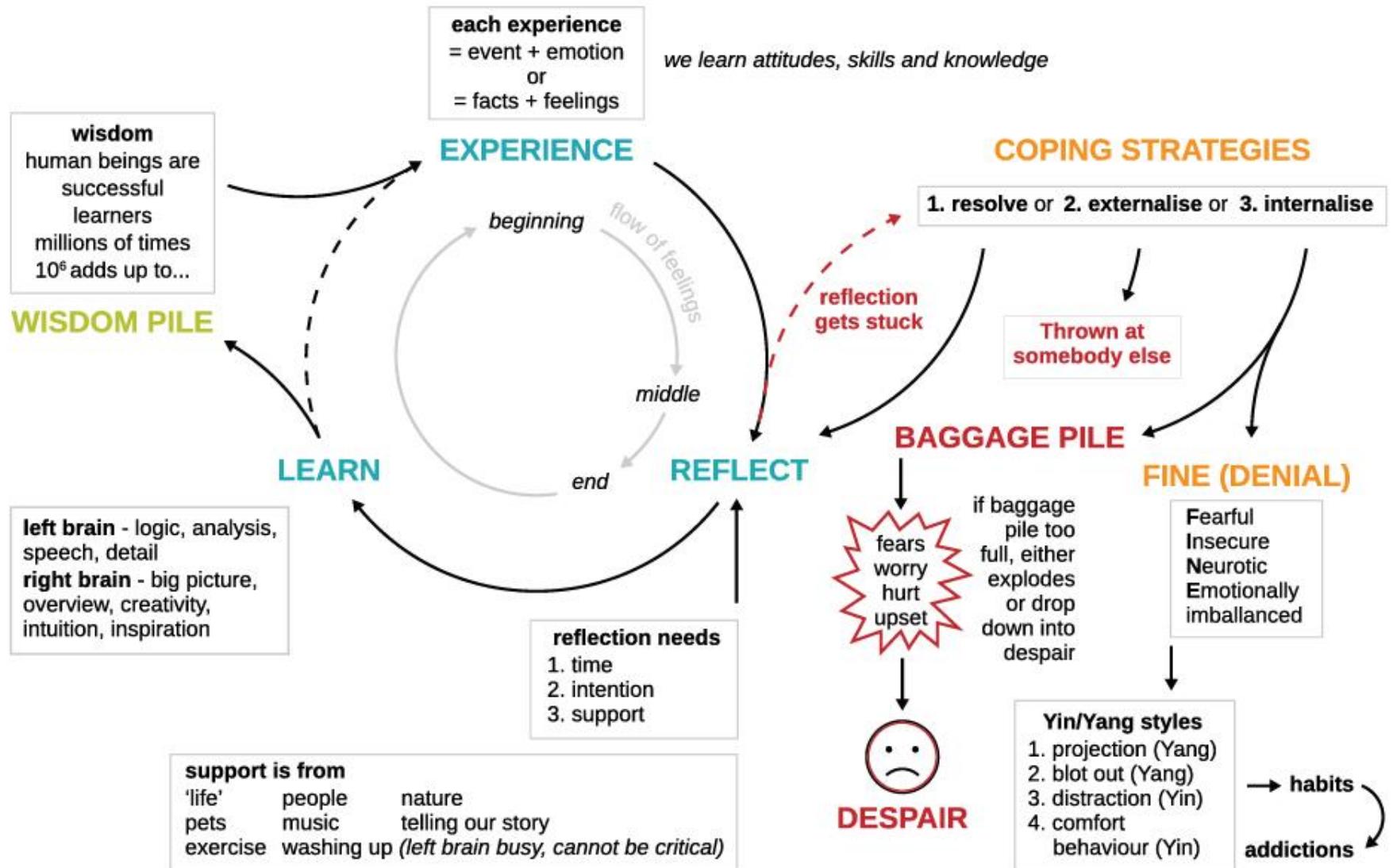
Health for Carers

RECEIVE as well as GIVE

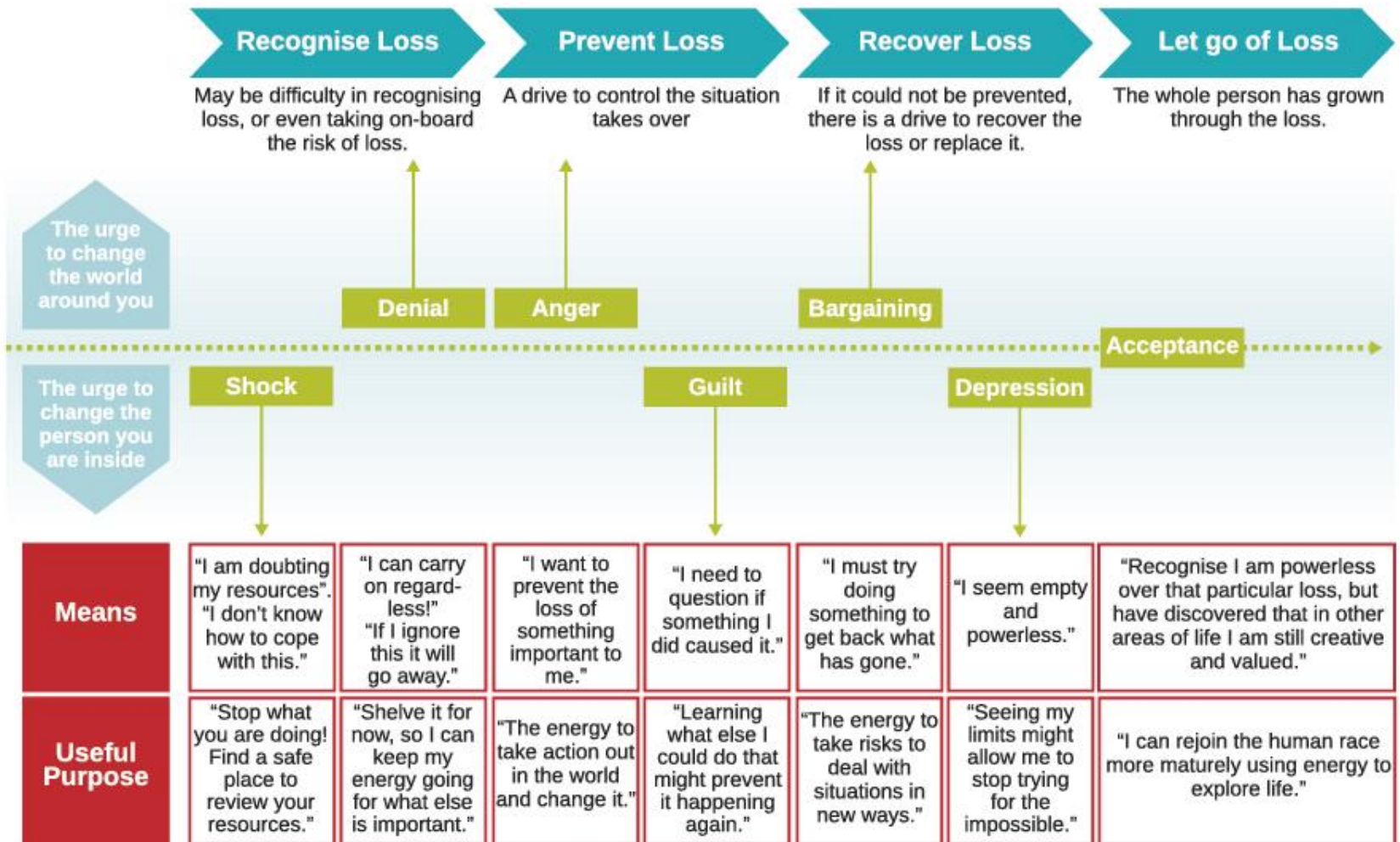
- Own oxygen mask first
- Strengthen self
- Retune self when out of balance
- Repair and heal wounds
- Get the environment right
- Receive whilst you give

- Self-care is NOT selfish

Life is a Journey of Learning



Turning Points as you Adjust to Change



Growth cycle - repeatedly revisiting Bargaining and Acceptance

Health and Self-Care, Thanks to Alex Aylward with Acknowledgment to Emotional Logic Centre"



The Bucketful of Stresses – we can only cope with so much





Compassionate Self-Care

- Inner stillness
- Attending to own needs
- Connecting to others and to Life
- Being grateful for small things
- Understanding empathy as a tool – and a vulnerability
- ‘I did my best’



Exercise of inner stillness – The Bank of Health

- Diaphragmatic breath
- Spine comfortable, feet flat on floor
- Three relaxed breaths
- From inner stillness comes effective action...

Carer's Worries

- I didn't do enough
- I wasn't there when I should have been
- I could have done....
- If Only I had...
- What If we...
- If Only they...
- Carer's Guilt



Work time, Home time

- Separation is important
- Ritual of journey home – ‘leave work behind’
- Changing clothes – ‘leave work behind’
- Taking off the role – ‘leave work behind’
- Putting work ‘in a box’ – ‘leave work behind’
- Embracing home time – ‘leave work behind’
- Finding sanctuary ‘own safe place’
- Refresh and renew

House Keeping- Avoiding Burnout 1

- Sleep well
- Eat well, especially some fresh foods
- Drink water through the day
- Avoid excessive caffeine
- Ensure down time at some point
- Exercise (burns off stress hormones)

High Quality Sleep

- Possibly one of the best – and cheapest – remedies
- Ritual before bed
- Avoid stimulants / alcohol
- Avoid blue light /screens
- Dark quiet bedroom
- Switch off all unnecessary devices

House Keeping- Avoiding Burnout 2

- Cultivate inner stillness frequently
- Smile
- Be grateful for even little things
- Pay attention to your breath, work on Inner Calm
- Connect with others during or after work
- Find peer support
- Ensure contact with nature, music or something you love – even if only in pictures

House Keeping- Avoiding Burnout 3

- Smile, connect with others
- Treasure you close relationships and keep in contact
- Be grateful for even little things
- Be kind to others – recognise that their distress may come across as aggression
- Your inner calm may infect others
- Kindness is actually a selfish act, because it floods our bodies with positive neurochemicals
- Exercise to burn off emotion
- Have specific worry time – and keep it to just that time only



House Keeping for Empathic Carers

Observe always, absorbing is a choice

- Sponges absorb – and need squeezing
- Breath in harmony of the NOW, let go discord of the past
- Breath in harmony of the NOW, let go worry about the future
- Sinks and Drains
- Retuning with nature



NHS Resources for all carers

- Your line manager and colleague support groups
- Your Employer's Assistance Programme
- www.people.nhs.uk/help
- Voluntary sector: MIND, local county branches eg www.mindinsomerset.org
- Samaritans jo@samaritans.org tel 116123

Resources

- 5 steps to mental wellbeing <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/> Of course, advice needs modifying to take account of Social Distancing
- Your employer will have specific resources
- BMA web resources <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/work-life-support/your-wellbeing>
- NHS Practitioner Health (Doctors and Dentists in England) <https://www.practitionerhealth.nhs.uk/covid-19-workforce-wellbeing>
- www.healthandself.care Book free download as resource
- RCPsych Leaflet Looking after Yourself: https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/docs/default-source/members/supporting-you/pss/pss-15-looking-after-yourself.pdf?sfvrsn=1058bfbf_3

Compassionate Self-Care

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- Attending to own needs
- Connecting to others and to Life
- Being grateful for small things
- Understanding empathy as a tool – and a vulnerability
- www.healthandself.care (free book of resources)

