

Self-Care  
By: Dr. Kristen DeVall

The term “self-care” has been used by scholars and practitioners across many disciplines (e.g., social work, psychology, nursing, education, etc.) as an identified strategy for bolstering health, well-being, and resiliency among members of their respective workforces. Despite this and the increasing discussion of self-care within the larger society, minimal consideration has been paid to the role of self-care in providing these same benefits to practitioners within the criminal justice system and specifically treatment courts. This is an obvious oversight and an area in need of empirical focus given the nature of work performed by criminal justice system and specifically treatment court practitioners.

According to Lee & Miller (2013) “Self-care has been described as a process, an ability, but most often as engagement in particular behaviors that are suggested to promote specific outcomes such as a ‘sense of subjective well-being’, a healthy lifestyle, stress relief, and resiliency for the prevention of empathy fatigue” (97). They go on to describe two distinct, but inherently connected dimensions of self-care; personal and professional. Personal self-care focuses on holistic health and well-being of oneself, where as professional self-care “is understood as the process of purposeful engagement in practices that promote effective and appropriate use of the self in the professional role within the context of sustaining holistic health and well-being” (98). Lee & Miller argue that *both* dimensions of self-care must be cultivated in order to develop and maintain a healthy and resilient workforce.

So, what is needed in order to fully develop personal and professional self-care? What specific areas of one’s personal and professional life should be considered and supported? Lee & Miller (2013) identified several areas within both dimensions which are outlined in Table 1 below. A specific discussion of each area of attention and support is provided in the journal article. Go check it out!

Table 1: Dimensions of Self-Care and Areas of Attention & Support

<b>Self-Care Dimensions</b>	<b>Areas of Attention &amp; Support</b>
<b>Personal</b>	Physical
	Psychological & emotional
	Social
	Leisure
	Spiritual
<b>Professional</b>	Workload & time management
	Attention to professional role
	Attention to reactions to work
	Professional social support & self-advocacy
	Professional development
	Revitalization & generation of energy

Self-care plans should be individualized and include practices and strategies that are relevant/important to you! What works for one person may not work for another. What worked for you last year may not work this year or next. Revise your self-care plans, practices, and strategies as needed.

We encourage you to listen to the latest episode of the Justice to Healing podcast *The Whys of Self-Care in Treatment Courts* with guest Dr. Sally MacKain, Clinical Psychologist & Professor of Psychology.

We also hope you will join us on NDCRC's *Beyond the Field* discussion board <https://discussion.ndcrc.org> for dialogue about self-care in general and we would love to hear about the self-care strategies you've identified for yourself, questions you have, etc.

Referenced article:

Lee, J.J. & Miller, SE. (2013). A Self-Care Framework for Social Workers: Building a Strong Foundation for Practice. *Families in Society*. 94(2):96-103. doi:[10.1606/1044-3894.4289](https://doi.org/10.1606/1044-3894.4289)

Click here for a copy of the article <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1606/1044-3894.4289>

Upcoming Training:

SAMHA's GAINS Center

*Self-Care for Criminal Justice Professionals Across the Sequential Intercept Model: Considerations for Intercepts 3-5*

Date: January 28, 2021, 2:00–3:30 p.m. ET

Register for the webinar here:

[https://praincevents.webex.com/mw3300/mywebex/default.do?nomenu=true&siteurl=praincevents&service=6&rnd=0.9438970679769733&main\\_url=https%3A%2F%2Fpraincevents.webex.com%2Fec3300%2Feventcenter%2Fevent%2FeventAction.do%3FtheAction%3Ddetail%26%26%26EMK%3D4832534b00000004c20b5890d73573014b2744107a5f4ec34d0a560414313859852000046d417827%26siteurl%3Dpraincevents%26confViewID%3D180976378280180874%26encryptTicket%3DSDJTSwAAAARv7eqbyzMhGtfhIvcmkviknAhvmmFoRwX8eX27f9WJ9Q2%26](https://praincevents.webex.com/mw3300/mywebex/default.do?nomenu=true&siteurl=praincevents&service=6&rnd=0.9438970679769733&main_url=https%3A%2F%2Fpraincevents.webex.com%2Fec3300%2Feventcenter%2Fevent%2FeventAction.do%3FtheAction%3Ddetail%26%26%26EMK%3D4832534b00000004c20b5890d73573014b2744107a5f4ec34d0a560414313859852000046d417827%26siteurl%3Dpraincevents%26confViewID%3D180976378280180874%26encryptTicket%3DSDJTSwAAAARv7eqbyzMhGtfhIvcmkviknAhvmmFoRwX8eX27f9WJ9Q2%26)