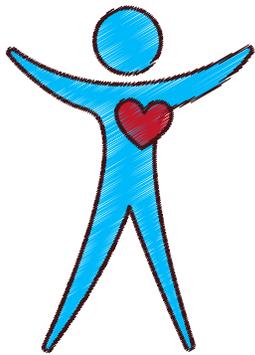


HEALTHCARE WORKERS NEED COMPASSION, NOW MORE THAN EVER.



1 COMPASSION AND BURNOUT, IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK.

“When health care providers take the time to make human connections that help end suffering, patient outcomes improve and medical costs decrease. Among other benefits, compassion reduces pain, improves healing, lowers blood pressure and helps alleviate depression and anxiety” (Ritchie, 2019). As we know, even before the pandemic, about 50% of providers showed some sign of burnout. In FMRI, engaging in compassionate care lit up the reward and positive emotion centers in the brain. Those who impart compassion benefit more than those who don't. According to Mazzarelli (2019), less than one minute of compassion (a mean of 40 seconds!) reaps rewards. He posits, “compassion can be the wonder drug of the 21st century.”



2 BEGIN WITH SELF-COMPASSION

This all sounds great, right? But it has to start with self-compassion. The Dalai Lama is famous for saying, “If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion.” It's not as hard as may sound. There are simple, effective steps you can take to cultivate it. Ackerman (2020) compiles a list exercises to improve self-compassion and increase overall compassion. For example, when navigating challenges, how would you apply the advice you are giving yourself, to someone you cared about? She gives suggestions on increasing mindfulness through self-compassion breaks, explorative writing prompts, meditation and getting to the heart of what we really want. The article with PDF's can be found here: <https://positivepsychology.com/self-compassion-exercises-worksheets/>.



5 RESILIENCE AND ADAPTABILITY ARE KEY

New routines, while initially stressful, offer new areas for insight and growth. Resilience is choosing what's right while moving forward in tough times. Routinely check in with peers to promote health care workers inherent resilient nature. Additionally, you can increase meditation, exercise, sleep, hydration, engage in news-fasts, and confide in someone you trust. Silver Hill's COVID-19 Resiliency Campaign (CRC) provides Town Hall Forums on COVID-19, as well as tips on coping and resilience.

References: Ackerman, C. (2020). 9 Self-compassion exercises & worksheets for increasing compassion. Positive Psychology. Retrieved from <https://positivepsychology.com/self-compassion-exercises-worksheets/> | Mazzarelli, A. (2019). Compassion helps save lives. CNN. Retrieved from <https://www.cnn.com/videos/tv/2019/04/27/book-compassion-helps-save-lives.cnn> | Ritchie, L. (2019). Does taking time for compassion make doctors better at their jobs? NPR. Retrieved from <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2019/04/26/717272708/does-taking-time-for-compassion-make-doctors-better-at-their-job> | Trzeciak, S., Roberts, B. W., & Mazzarelli, A. J. (2017). Compassionomics: Hypothesis and experimental approach. Medical Hypotheses, 107, 92-97. doi: 10.1016/j.mehy.2017.08.015

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