

Developing Your Before, During, and After Strategies

Most people seem to believe that self-care happens outside of work hours, a belief reflected by 78 percent of respondents from a survey we conducted for our book, *Self-Care Transformed*. Interestingly, however, a similar number (75 percent of respondents) stated that their ability to influence change in the lives of those they support contributed most to their wellness. We often link our work to our definition of wellness itself. So it only makes sense that we actively engage with our wellness along with our work roles to truly and meaningfully stay well.

This activity is intended for counsellors, therapists, nurses, teachers, social workers, and other helping professionals. It will help you consider what steps you could take within your actual workday, and perhaps within the work itself, that can be part of your self-care. This is a way to become more proactive with your self-care, rather than only responding after you feel the impacts of stress.

Use the following chart to generate some meaningful strategies that fit your own particular rhythm and flow while you're helping others.

BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lean into and prepare for the challenge• Practice grounding and centering rituals <p>What small, realistic steps could you build into a regular routine?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Process emotional intensity as you go• Internally acknowledge what you're feeling throughout the day <p>What small, realistic steps could you build into a regular routine?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice empathy maintenance• Empty out or release what you are carrying• Do something active to reset engagement <p>What small, realistic steps could you build into a regular routine?</p>