SELF-CARE FOR 
TELEThERAPY PRACTICE 

An Inspiration List for Psychotherapists during the Pandemic

How are you attending to yourself during the pandemic? Caring for ourselves in times of personal, professional, and global stress is essential, especially as we continue to offer healing to others. We recognize the increased risk for burn-out and secondary traumatic stress, and - conversely - the opportunity present in our work to find a familiar rhythm, and a way to feel helpful instead of powerless.

We encourage continued attention towards self-care that is inclusive of our body, our mind, our heart, and the support of our community.

Use this list however you are inspired to. But be clear that this is not a checklist. You already are doing enough! We suggest you approach this as a gentle inquiry and an opportunity to be supportive of your whole self. Pay attention to what arises naturally. You are your own best guide.

Body
- Release muscle tension throughout the day (stretching, baths, yoga, etc)
- Wear clothes that are comfortable
- Pace your hours to give your eyes (and the rest of you) breaks from screen time
- Care for your eyes: vary the height of your screen and look in the distance when you can
- Support your back and limbs if you are practicing from a new chair
- Have a blanket, sweater, fan, favorite beverage, or scented lotion handy

Mind
- Reflect on how your work brings you purpose and fulfillment in a challenging time
- Linger in awareness of the healing you witness, offer, and experience
- Affirm a mantra or two that reassure or guide you
- Use practices that help you stay present (e.g., meditation, prayer, yoga, music)
- Limit exposure to news or additional traumatic material

Heart
- Play or create (doodle, cook, sing, dance; pets and children can help a lot now!)
- Place art or a token in your work area that is a meaningful touchstone
- Practice compassion, self-compassion, and gratitude
- Use soothing self-touch (hand on heart, rub your own shoulders, havening)
- Consume media that entertains, soothes, or distracts you

Community
- Reach out to a colleague to whom you can talk openly about the impact of your work on you
- Seek phone or on-line consultation if you are struggling or need inspiration
- Share with others about the joys of your work or ways you are being creative with tele-therapy!