

Embracing Self-Care for Effective Public Service

For a workplace to more effectively serve beyond itself, individual employees intentionally need to care for themselves to better serve (care for) others.

KEY THEMES

- Stress, anxiety and burnout are real — and they impact both individuals and organizations.
- Self-care is not selfish. Caring for yourself allows you to better care for others.
- Trust and psychological safety are foundational to engagement and belonging.
- The way we speak to ourselves matters.
- Healthy workplace cultures require intentional effort and leadership involvement.
- It's OK to not be OK... BUT... it's NOT OK to not ask for help.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. How do I personally recognize stress in my life?
2. Am I simply functioning or am I truly engaged (active/invested in my workplace)?
3. What contributes to my own “Sunday Scaries”?
4. How do I speak to myself when I make mistakes?
5. Do others feel psychologically safe around me?
6. What intentional steps can I take to “breathe” and recharge?
7. How can I better look beyond self and support others?

POTENTIAL SELF-CARE STRATEGIES

- Pause and breathe intentionally during stressful moments.
- Create transition routines between work life and home life.
- Step away briefly to reset mentally and emotionally.
- Talk to trusted friends, coworkers, family, or professionals.
- Practice positive self-talk and self-compassion.
- Recognize others genuinely and specifically.
- Find healthy outlets for decompression and creativity.
- Take Intentional Moments to Engage (TIME) with yourself and others.

POWERFUL REMINDERS

- *“Culture is how employees’ hearts and stomachs feel about Monday morning on Sunday night.” – Bill Marklein*
- *“If you stop taking care of yourself, your mind and body will eventually stop taking care of you.” – Calm App*
- *“Self-care means taking the time to do things that help you live well and improve both your physical health and mental health.” – National Institute of Mental Health*
- *“A psychologically safe workplace begins with a feeling of belonging.” – Center for Creative Leadership*

Remember: Public service is about serving beyond self, but it is more difficult to pour into others if your own well-being is running empty. Take intentional moments to recharge, reconnect, and remind yourself that YOU matter, YOU make a difference, and YOU ARE the difference to others.