Recap:
Best Practices for Emotional Acknowledgement

1. Notice when you start to feel overwhelmed.
2. Take a few deep breaths.
3. Name the emotions that are under the surface of your anxiety.
4. Focus on the emotion itself and where it shows up in your body.
5. Take a deep breath and give yourself permission to feel it on the inside without judgement.
6. Tell yourself something supportive like “It’s ok to have this feeling.” “I am not my emotions and have the power to feel them and let them go.”
7. Take another deep breath and picture the emotion lifting and letting go of its hold on you.
Recap:
Best Practices for Ability to Self-Calm

1. Be aware of your stress response and actively work to recover in the moment.
2. Recognize fight, flight or freeze and how it’s impacting on your body.
3. Calm down from big and little stressors.
4. Stay connected to your breath and to yourself to regulate your nervous system.
5. Close the lid to help the instinctive and rational part of the brain connect and communicate.
6. Regulate your nervous system before you try to help regulate others.
7. Remember you cannot prevent stressful things from happening in your life, but you can bring yourself back from stress reactions and do your best to recover in the moment.
Recap:
Best Practices for Self-care

1. Choose behaviors that are safe, fun and rejuvenating to balance the effects of emotional and physical stressors.
2. Emotional self-care varies greatly from person to person
   • Watching TV, reading a book
   • Talking with friends
   • Drinking a cup of coffee in peace
3. There are 3 key areas of physical self-care: exercise, sleep and nutrition
4. Give yourself permission to do whatever it is you need to do. Create a nurturing relationship with yourself that allows for a sense of caring and warmth.
5. It is impossible to do self-care perfectly. Focus on activities that are accessible for your life.
## Recap: Best Practices for Hardiness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commitment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>People who are high in commitment work hard and give their best effort. They have a curiosity about what is happening to them versus feelings of alienation from people or the environment.</strong></td>
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<th>Control</th>
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<td><strong>People feel that they can influence life events and their surroundings. They have a strong sense that they can make things happen and do not feel like victims of circumstance</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>People see difficult situations in life as a challenge rather than a disaster. They see these challenges as an opportunity to learn, grow and become a better person.</strong></td>
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Recap: Best Practices for the Ability to Self-Replenish

1. Self-replenishment includes the things you do to **restore your energy and sense of well-being** when life feels draining.

2. Every person is different: strategies for self-replenishment should speak to your interests, values and needs.
   
   Identify a variety of activities that you can do in different situations or environments

3. Positive interactions are an easy way to get more replenishment.
   
   Using positive interactions to bounce back from challenging emotions is a great way to jump start self-calming

4. This choice to fill or deplete our buckets in an important one that profoundly influences our relationships, productivity, health and happiness.
1. Recognize when you are being overly harsh or critical with yourself and others
2. Change your thought patterns and self-talk to be more positive and growth focused
3. Let go of perfectionism
4. Be aware of your inner critic (judgmental thoughts)
5. To have more control over your inner critic, you must be able to see it as separate from yourself.
6. Work to name your critic and call it out.
7. Understand that these thought patterns were created in the past. You are in control and can make room for more positive and supportive self-talk.
8. Use the “Flip-it” exercise as a strategy to create more supportive self-talk

Recap:
Best Practices for Non-judgement and self-supporting thoughts
Recap: Best Practices for Hope and Optimism

1. Optimism is believing a situation will improve with the right time, resources, effort, or support.
2. Optimism does not come easy. Your brain is wired to notice what is unsafe, missing, or going wrong, and it does this as a protective mechanism.
3. A gratitude practice is an effective way to rewire your brain to remember the positives.
4. Hope is the backbone of optimism. It provides the plan and motivation to achieve desired outcomes.
5. Hopeful people have willpower, waypower and follow-through to achieve their goals.
Recap:
Best Practices for Sense of Coherence

1. The belief that life is:
   • **Meaningful**- Life is a gift and how I respond to life matters. Emotional component that serves as the motivation to search for order and assistance.
   • **Manageable**- There are resources out there to help me meet the demands of life.
   • **Comprehensible**- Even though the life feels crazy and chaotic, you can seek consistent experiences and find ways to make my world more orderly and understandable

2. To strengthen sense of coherence, you must believe your efforts make a difference.

3. Action eases despair

4. Requires awareness of your core values and what inspires you to keep going, even in the dark or difficult times.
   • It’s about figuring out your “WHY,” so you can figure out the “HOW”
What do you think a social support network is? What do you value in yours?

• A social support network is made up of friends, family, coworkers, and peers who support you in good AND bad times.

• Social support systems need to be diverse. One or two people cannot be our everything in life.

• For social support systems to function effectively, they need an abundance of reciprocity between the supporter.
Creating a Support System

One person cannot be your everything.

Your support system should consist of a broader support network where you can try to build relationships with people who are different from you.

Who are your key supporters? These people should be:

- Nonjudgmental, compassionate, trustworthy and good listeners.

Support should go both ways! You must be a good supporter if you expect others to be there for you.
Strengthening Your Support Network:

• The skill of active listening helps everyone be a better supporter:
  • Active listening is listening attentively without trying to plan your response. The core value is trying to understand other people and their perceptions.
  • A good follow up to active listening is reflecting on one what someone has shared and making a note to remember key details to follow up on with friends/family.
  • Using open-ended questions in supportive conversations encourages open dialogue and trust among supporters.

• Stay in touch: call friends, answer emails, texts, and calls

• Spend time and invest in relationships with people who are equally supportive

• Challenge yourself by looking for ways you can improve and be more enjoyable to be around

• Show constant appreciation for your friends and family

• Be proactive and contact people who share your interests. Do not be afraid to be the first one to reach out and invite someone to do something.
### Dumping

**Before you even enter the room of supporter**
1. You have not done anything to self-calm.
2. You have not done anything for emotional expression to name the emotion and let yourself feel it on the inside.
3. You ignore any signs that this might not be the best time to ask for a listening ear.

**Once in the same room with supporter**
1. You do not check in with your supporter or ask how they are doing.
2. You do not ask permission and ask if it is an okay time to discuss your issues.
3. If they say, “Well, actually...,” you would not wait, and you would start talking anyway.
4. You dump all your emotions and emotional energy on them without acknowledging how it is up to you to feel your own feelings and figure things out.
5. You do not tell them how helpful it was to talk or tell them you are also there for them when they need someone to listen.

### Sharing

**Before you even enter the room of supporter**
1. You do something to self-calm (e.g., grounding, breathing, and getting water).
2. You do some internal emotional expression by naming the emotions underneath your stress and feeling them on the inside.
3. You look for any signs that this might not be the best time to ask for a listening ear.

**Once in the same room with supporter**
1. You check in with your supporter and ask how they are and if it’s an OK time to chat.
2. You ask permission. “I could really use someone to listen. Is this an okay time or would you prefer we pick another time?”
3. You are okay with “No,” and can talk to someone else or wait for them to have time to talk.
4. If the supporter can talk, you reassure them during the conversation that it’s on you to feel your feelings and to figure things out. It’s not on them.
5. You tell them how helpful it has been to talk and then bring an idea/suggestion for how you can improve the situation or admit you will keep thinking about it.
6. You let them know you are there for them, too.
Helping Others: Compassion vs. Empathy

**Compassion:** is feeling concern for another’s suffering and having the desire to help and act. The motivation is to help from a place of strength and resources without taking on the other person’s pain, suffering, or emotions.

If someone fell in a hole, the compassionate response would be to stay up top to make sure your ability to help does not get compromised. You would then do your best to help from a place of strength and resources.

**Empathy:** is sharing in or trying to experience the suffering or emotions of another person. The motivation is to try and understand what it is like to be in their situation.

If someone fell in a hole, the empathetic response would be to jump down in the hole to try and understand what it’s like to be them and to let them know they are not alone in their suffering. You try to experience the emotions of the other person.
Setting Boundaries

• Are there relationships that are extra draining for you?
  • It’s important to give yourself permission to set boundaries.
  • Don’t always pick up the phone.
  • It’s ok to let some relationships fizzle out.

• Have there been times when you are at a threshold where you can't reach out/respond to certain people?
  • Emotional expression, self-calming, self-replenishment play a huge part in your ability to provide social support.

• Things to be aware of...
  • Are there toxic people in your life (unhealthy behaviors, strings attached?)
  • Would you say most of your relationships are two-way?
  • Do you receive as well as give?
Discussion Questions

When you think of a strong social support network, what types of people come to mind?

What skills, characteristics or behaviors do you need from your supporter?

What are the challenges and victories you’ve experienced connecting with your support network during the pandemic?

Being a friend/supporter:
• What do you do to encourage and maintain your support?
• How can you improve your bond with friends and family?
• How do you show appreciation for your friend and family?