



## Lifespan Respite Grantee and Partner Learning Collaborative State Lifespan Roles for Implementing the Respite Actions in the National Strategy to Support Family Caregivers

Meeting Notes  
August 8, 2024

[Meeting Recordings and Resources Link](#)

### Announcements

- **AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP** funding priority is for supporting older adults and their caregivers through caregiver respite, support groups, system navigation, care coordination, and resources for custodial grandparents. Deadline to apply is September 18, 2024.
  - Schedule for Information/Technical Assistance Calls: <https://americorps.gov/funding-opportunity/fiscal-year-fy-2025-ameri-corps-seniors-rsvp-opportunity#TTASchedule>
  - Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO): <https://americorps.gov/funding-opportunity/fiscal-year-fy-2025-ameri-corps-seniors-rsvp-opportunity>
- **NASHP Webinar:** National Respite Care Provider Training Webinar: Lessons from the States is Wednesday, August 28 at 3 PM ET.  
Register: [https://nashp-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_t4maxd5NSBC2RGgueTxLDA](https://nashp-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_t4maxd5NSBC2RGgueTxLDA)  
The Replication Toolkit: <https://archrespite.org/library/national-respite-care-provider-training-and-replication-toolkit>
- **Innovative and Exemplary Respite Services** National Call for Applications will open by September 1, 2024. Read more about the initiative, the selection process and how to apply: <https://archrespite.org/provider-resources/innovative-and-exemplary-respite-services>
- **2025 National Lifespan Respite Conference, RAISE & ENGAGE:** Launch Respite Now, is April 1-3, 2025, in Huntsville, Alabama. The Conference Website is found at <https://archrespite.org/2025-national-lifespan-respite-conference/>. Deadline to submit a proposal is October 1, 2024.
- **2024 National Lifespan Respite Conference,** Raise the Bar for Respite, has posted presentations of Keynote Speakers at: <https://archrespite.org/2024-nlrc-keynote-speakers/>. Breakout Session presentation slides are available at: [https://archrespite.org/conference\\_program\\_2024/#PPTSlides](https://archrespite.org/conference_program_2024/#PPTSlides)

## National Strategy LC Feedback Survey

Deadline is August 16<sup>th</sup> for a short 10-question feedback survey about this learning collaborative - to help us learn how well ARCH has met participants' needs and interests in the work of implementing the National Strategy. Responses and feedback are anonymous, as part of a report to the Administration on Community Living (ACL) on our activities.

## Principle of Leadership: Personal Ecology

The idea of personal ecology is creating a long-term environment for your life that helps you be resilient during challenges. This can involve finding a balance through trial and error that prepares you for sustainable leadership.

In life, we learn and practice self-care and people skills that maintain health and wellbeing. At work, we learn how to stay grounded, effective, and grateful even in times of great stress and difficulty. In leadership, we learn and apply key skills for development as community leaders in organizations and movements.

Leaders tell themselves "If I am not well, we are not well. If I am not well, I cannot take care of my organization, community, or family."

"Staying grounded" is a phrase that describes a state of being confident, calm, and in control of oneself and one's emotions during times of uncertainty. It can also refer to having a balanced and sensible outlook on life. Grounded people are often present-focused, self-aware, and have a powerful sense of purpose and self-worth. They also exhibit emotional resilience, clarity of thought, and a sense of inner peace.

## Social Circles

Part of our Personal Ecology is our Social Circles and the community connections we have.

What provides a buffer between you and the chaos of life? People, specifically people to whom you are close. What tears apart our social safety net? We know how social circles look for caregivers when caregiving takes away more & more time for self, time with family & friends, time for enjoyable activities that refresh & revive them.

People who do not have strong social support mechanisms – think "trusted friends and family members" – persistently experience poorer outcomes. In times of uncertainty, we are more likely to crave the reassurance of connection.

As you nurture a healthy network of friendships, socializing becomes an investment in your own happiness, health, and success. You become surrounded by people who are excited to help you solve problems, address challenges, and celebrate life.

Virtual relationships can only go so far when the goal is to achieve true companionship and strong social bonds. Deeper connections are found when you can spend time with others in person.

Life circumstances can make friendships difficult. It may be that our other responsibilities have caused us to push our relationships on the back burner. We need to fight against that trend.

Sometimes losing a friend cannot be helped. Factors over which neither of you have any control can make it difficult to remain friends. If losing friends is a given, you always need to be building relationships.

### Building Resilience

Resilience is the ability to become strong again after something bad happens.

Resilience is the ability to move through and grow from tough times - a skill you develop over time from the lessons and experiences you absorb as you grow up and face challenges.

Resilience means being able to cope with tough events. When something bad happens, you still feel anger, grief, and pain. But you are able to keep going, both physically and psychologically.

If you lack resilience, you might get stuck on problems or feel like a victim. You might feel burdened or turn to ways to cope that are not healthy, such as drug or alcohol use, eating disorders, or risky behaviors.

Resilience will not make your problems go away. But resilience can help you see past them, find ways to enjoy life and better handle stress.

Resilience can help protect you from mental health conditions, such as depression and anxiety. If you have a mental health condition, being resilient can help you cope better.

Resilient people are aware of their emotions and can regulate them during stressful times, which helps them maintain optimism and understand that difficult emotions will not last forever. They can also act rather than react, and process what their bodies and brains are telling them so they can make informed choices.

**Competence** is the ability to do something successfully or efficiently. It also means you are prepared for, and capable of handling, demanding situations. You have the skills needed to face challenges effectively and apply your experience and knowledge when a problem arises so you can face challenges head-on.

**Confidence** is a feeling of self-assurance arising from one's appreciation of one's own abilities or qualities – that sense of self-worth that means you trust your own judgment and abilities, even in tough times. Confidence does not mean you will not ever feel unsure or scared, but when these feelings come, you believe you can overcome them.

**Connection** is having strong, positive relationships with people with whom one has social or professional contact or to whom one is related, especially those with influence and who can offer one help. Connections with family, friends, and colleagues can help provide support and advice when you need it. They can bring comfort and guidance when things get tough, reminding you “you're not alone.”

**Character** is the mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual. Resilience in character is about knowing who you are and staying true to your values and principles, even under pressure.

**Contribution** refers to the part played by a person in bringing about a result or helping something to advance, like your efforts to promote the National Strategy. Making a positive impact on the world around you can significantly boost your resilience. Contributing to others, whether it is volunteering, donating money, or simply being kind, can help you feel more connected and purposeful. A sense of contribution to making things better can be empowering during tough times.

**Coping** is to deal effectively with something difficult, having healthy ways to deal with stress and hardship. Coping strategies might include activities like exercise, meditation, talking to a friend, or engaging in a hobby – strategies that can help you manage emotions and stay grounded during challenging times.

**Control** is the power to influence or direct people’s behavior or the course of events. Understanding the aspects of your life that you can influence—and accepting those you can’t—allows you to focus on what you can change and let go of things beyond your control. This can reduce feelings of helplessness while empowering you to take positive actions where you can.

How can you be resilient at work?

- Build strong relationships with colleagues to provide support and collaboration.
- Maintain a healthy work-life balance to ensure you are taking care of your overall wellbeing.
- Set realistic goals to avoid unnecessary stress.
- Develop your critical thinking skills and adaptability to manage workplace challenges effectively. You might do this through professional development courses or collaborating with a mentor.
- Practice stress management techniques, like taking short breaks or deep breathing, to stay calm and focused.

Robert Frost said “The only way out is through. Keep moving, keep trying. Have faith.”

*Polling Question 1 Results:* Which Areas of Resilience would you give yourself 5-Stars for?  
(Multiple Choice)

1. Competence: having the skills to manage challenges – 80%
2. Confidence: believing in your own abilities – 63%
3. Connection: having strong relationships – 63%
4. Character: knowing and staying true to your values – 91%
5. Contribution: making a positive impact in the world – 80%
6. Coping: having strategies to deal with stress – 45%
7. Control: understanding what you can change and accepting what you cannot – 63%

## Breakout Group Discussions

Participants in the breakout discussions covered the following questions:

1. Identify a relatively recent change in your life. What new opportunities or learning experiences has it brought you? Did it change your resiliency in any area? What did you do about that?
2. Think of how you have coped with troubles in the past. When something goes wrong, do you tend to bounce back or fall apart? What has helped you get through tough times?
3. How do you maintain a sense of success and purpose every day?
4. What might become possible with your time when you put your phone in airplane mode?

Resilience is built just by being new to the field and fully embarking on a process, mission, or service that helps family caregivers. It is an empowering place to be. Surrounded by strong people who have been in the trenches helps you not feel alone and overwhelmed. It is important to tap into existing relationships and build connections in this pursuit. At times, work in this field has required being able to pivot to a new focus and employ greater flexibility on how to get out and serve family caregivers. The focus on helping people is what drives us – to make a real difference in someone’s life. Even those not in direct contact with family caregivers have benefited from their interactions with others in the network who do. A constant refrain is the important need to “focus on the mission.”

If the results of changes in administration or focus require efforts in different directions, it can become stressful in a hurry, and knock the best of us off our feet. We need to remember to treat others and ourselves as kindly as we would treat the caregivers we serve. Reverse the golden rule to “do unto self as you would do unto others.” Resilience is a work in progress. When days are stressful, we need to remind ourselves to ground ourselves and give ourselves permission to be the best version of ourselves as we can be in the moment.

Personal experience with any changes in the demands of caregiving or with the health challenges of self or others can take a toll. There was no way to prepare for the impact these changes would bring. Whether individuals fell apart or were able to bounce back, allow for grieving and pain to be felt in the moment. Sitting in a space of reflection and contemplation is important, too. Taking time to get away, letting go, and allowing your mind to rest when your brain is overloaded is immensely helpful – and allows you to come back refreshed and ready to move forward.

Even when you have experience, knowledge, support, and resources, big life transitions are hard. All the pieces that may need to come together can make it a huge undertaking. We may experience “anticipatory grief” when we do not know what to do or what comes next. Others may question our decisions, we may question ourselves over past decisions, and coping with that criticism or backlash makes it hard to make good decisions now. We may carry sadness around with us, a “free-floating anxiety” or depression that we need to give voice to – even if we seem okay. We can cope better after a good conversation with a friend or colleague who is experiencing something similar to what we are dealing with. We can find a “well of happiness” amidst everything we find challenging now. It is freeing to have supportive people around us so we do not have to pretend and can put our energy in the tasks before us.

Since the lessons learned during the COVID pandemic, individuals have focused on “what matters most” and what it will take to make it through tough times together. Priorities shifted to health and the value of family – things too often taken for granted. With a new perspective on life, individuals are “making time” to spend with family and be together. Like COVID, unpredictable weather, earthquakes, and tornados all create scenarios that test our resilience and force us to build greater resilience. “Be Ready” is to be confident in your preparations.

Frustratingly, leaders have depended on the same group of people to help with the cause, proving the 80/20 rule that 20% of the people will do 80% of the work. Even in trying to implement the National Strategy with dozens of members, only the same group are actively engaged in the effort. It is difficult to break this trend. Too few people can be depended upon when a big grant comes through. People are happy to complain that not enough is being done, but when invited to join, they get remarkably busy, noticeably quiet. Roping in new partners is slow-going.

Life lessons come from job changes. Some changes come with a big tradeoff, a reset of priorities, which one might never do without realizing that the average health span is shorter than the average lifespan. Self-care includes making a bucket list of places and things you want to do. Also, be careful in your judgement of others. An individual you once supervised might end up as your new supervisor. Be careful about how you treat people.

## Self-Discipline

Self-discipline is the ability to control your thoughts, emotions, or actions to achieve a goal, even when faced with temptation. It is also known as self-control, willpower, restraint, persistence, and determination. Willpower, which is more like a sudden burst of energy/concentrated effort, in the moment, is more tangible and seems more powerful. The reality is that the power of self-discipline dwarfs that of willpower.

If your goal were to lose twenty pounds, willpower would help you walk past that plate of donuts. Self-discipline would have you walking past them every single time. Willpower would have you get to the gym at 5:00 a.m. on January 2 after you have made your New Year's Resolutions. Self-discipline would have you getting up for the gym every day that follows.

Self-discipline is found in many areas of life, including personal, social, and professional. For example, you might practice self-discipline by sticking to a diet and exercise plan or being polite to someone who has upset you or managing your time better at work.

Self-discipline is the ability to push yourself forward, stay motivated, and act, regardless of how you are feeling, physically or emotionally.

Self-discipline does not mean you have to be rigid or inflexible. It is more about making conscious choices that align with your long-term aspirations. That could mean saying no to instant gratification and focusing on the bigger picture.

Self-discipline is not about being perfect but making progress, even in small steps. It is a journey of continuous growth and self-mastery, where you learn from setbacks so you can keep moving forward.

Self-discipline becomes immensely powerful when combined with goal setting, passion, and planning.

Struggling with discipline is a challenge that many people face, and there are several reasons why you might struggle with self-discipline. It could be because your goals are not clear enough, there is a lack of motivation, your time management skills need work, you have fallen into unhealthy habits, or you have underlying mental health concerns.

It is also possible you might be trying to change too many things at once. Self-discipline becomes a painful process – taking more time than you have the strength to move through without a reward to give you momentum.

Seeing through the pain only happens when you shift your perspective of the reward. Because it is the reward that creates a desire to continue regardless of how much pain you feel. The problem is you have attached a destination to the reward. You have made the reward a place - a destination which takes time to reach. Leaving you good at starting but terrible at finishing.

## THE SECRET TO SELF-DISCIPLINE IS THE REWARD YOU CHOOSE

If you want to practice successful self-discipline, you must stop chasing a reward and work to feel it. Give yourself permission to stop doing the things you hate and step into the things you enjoy. Doing things you enjoy always increases momentum, increasing energy and desire, increasing self-discipline.

What things are you forcing yourself into that you hate? Stop doing them and then uncover a new way to go about it. Find a method that you enjoy.

If it is not something you desire or if it is not something that feels achievable, you will not stick with it, no matter how much self-discipline you have. But shifting the reward to something that gives you what you are longing for, with little waiting, will be the catalyst to allow you to reach the goals you have set.

It is time to put to rest the old definition of self-discipline. A definition that believes self-denial is the only way. Remember, self-denial one hundred percent of the time leads to self-indulgence, emotional dysfunction, and self-destruction.

Instead, the secret of self-discipline is self-knowledge and enjoyment. Doing things you enjoy always increases momentum, increasing energy and desire, increasing self-discipline.

Motivate yourself to work by thinking about how you will feel when you accomplish everything you want to do.

Start by identifying the things that make you procrastinate and find ways to overcome them. Break down large tasks into smaller steps, set realistic goals, and reward yourself for your progress. Self-discipline is not about being perfect. It is about making consistent effort and gradually building momentum.

Know what you like and do not like — and understand that your actions always produce a feeling. What fuels you? Doing more of these brings a life with more ease and less pain, not because the pain does not exist, but you view it in a new way.

Change your perspective from a destination to a feeling. What you want more than anything is to feel a different way. Learn how to control that by daily action.

Act and pay attention to the feeling. Once you start to experience the feeling, you will want more of it. Do not dismiss how you feel but use it to create self-discipline.

The truth is you will experience failure. But do not look at failure as backward motion but forward growth. If you are moving, you are growing. Keep going.

Learning how to improve self-discipline allows you to achieve your goals. It also means getting to them faster.



You are capable of so much more than you give yourself credit. You are capable of so much more than you have energy for at this moment. It is not you that is the problem. It is your belief about what it takes that is the only thing standing in your way.

When you are on the path to achieving your goals, you feel happier because you are making progress. Improving self-discipline is a major contributor to this. You're less likely to feel anxious. You will be able to accomplish tasks on time and get more done. This makes you more resilient as you navigate different circumstances. You will not be tempted to quit what you are working towards or slow down your progress.

When life is challenging, keep your end goal in mind without allowing yourself to forget where you started. Constantly remind yourself — especially when it gets hard — how and why you set this goal and what you will have achieved when you are done. Feel your progress from where you started.

### Work-Life Balance

Burnout is more than just a busy week at work—it is the long-term result of carrying continual stress, exhaustion, anxiety, or isolation. Practice is simply a habit that gives us energy and reminds us of what matters most. Choose a practice that replenishes you and commit to doing it daily for a month. This can help make it a habit.

Plan for breaks and what you will do during breaks. Make space in your schedule for extended silence and discernment. Take a few days off to remember what you love about your work and what makes you passionate about your cause. Taking the time to do these things can feel selfish, but addressing your own needs will make you a healthier, more effective agent for change—and give you the strength to continue your work for many years to come.

Include breaks when you plan your day. At the beginning of the day, consider those break times you will need. There might be times when you need a break and it is not “on the calendar,” so try and anticipate that wherever possible. Give yourself space around projects, tasks, and meetings that will wear you out, just in case you need it.

If you are taking a break from work, for obvious reasons, try not to spend that time *at* work. For times when you cannot leave the office, you can still “get away” for a bit. Take a “book break” where you sit somewhere away from your desk and read just a few pages of a book. Maybe you'll do a few exercises, listen to music, or do some meditation to help your mind rest.

Whatever you do, try not to use social media during your break. Social media is like junk food: it feels like it's filling you, but really, it's not.

Have you ever felt overwhelmed by a goal? Like “How can I do this? I want to do it, but I am just so overwhelmed.”

Just try 10-minute increments! A woman with chronic health problems only felt well enough to write for 10 minutes a day, every day — and she has written twenty-three books! So, think to yourself, “OK, if I feel overwhelmed, I can do something for 10 minutes.” You will see results, just by trying to do what you can for a short while. It makes a dramatic difference.

What is the overwhelming desire of your heart? And what can you do about it for just 10 minutes every day? Try not to do everything, but those 10-minute increments can start to add up. So, when you feel overwhelmed, consider what is causing that sense and find a straightforward way to make incremental progress in that area.

For more than a century, the national bicycle racing teams of Great Britain had been the laughingstock of the cycling world. Mired in mediocrity in the three-week long Tour de France where no British rider had prevailed – in 2003 a change occurred that would forever alter the trajectory of British cycling. Their new, markedly influential coach taught them, “If you broke down everything you could think of that goes into riding a bike, and then improved it by one percent, you will get a significant increase when you put those improvements all together.” This entailed implementing small improvements in everything. That meant constantly measuring key statistics and targeting specific weaknesses.

If you can get just one percent better at something each day, by the end of a year, you will be thirty-seven times better. Every effort to change that we make—no matter how tiny it seems to us— might just make the biggest difference in our lives.

What changes could you see in your life if you applied this same principle? You may find that using a 1% better strategy begins to give you more peace and calm in your daily life.

Have you ever been in “airplane mode”—not “having” to respond to anyone or anything? With your phone off, you cannot check for new emails or texts. You feel free, feel less anxiety, feel less stress, and even feel happier. What would life be like with your phone in airplane mode? Every morning you walk into the office, put your phone into airplane mode for the first two hours of the day, so you can fully focus and pay attention to whatever challenge or task you have in front of you. You will get more done, with less stress, and feel like you have had enough time to do everything you needed to accomplish.

When was the last time you intentionally turned off your phone for at least an hour? Constantly being “on” all the time can cause us to feel overwhelmed, stressed-out, and anxiety driven. We cannot change the world if we are burned out. Go into airplane mode for at least an hour a day. Try this practice for one hour every day for at least one week to notice what happens when your attention is free from your phone for one precious hour each day.

## Sense of Purpose

A sense of purpose is the feeling that your actions are meaningful and contribute to something you care about. People with a sense of purpose may feel like what they do and who they are matters, and they may have clear reasoning for what they want to do.

Having a sense of purpose in what you do at work provides a sense of lasting fulfillment and is the most significant enabler of your being at your best. A sense of purpose enables you to get through harder times and persevere through adversity. Having a sense of purpose significantly benefits your health, work performance and ultimately your levels of flourishing.

Seeing and understanding a clear organizational purpose linked to serving others also supports you as an individual.

Each one of us can bloom where we are planted. Whatever our personal goals and dreams are, there is a way to bloom and achieve them. Blooming where we are planted sometimes includes surviving challenging times. It might be necessary to make choices on how to modify our environment to succeed. Time, patience, determination, and other variables might need adjustment so we can bloom to our full potential and bring joy to life.

“Bloom where you are planted” is great if you are happy with your life. But this idea can be a struggle if you are unhappy with where you are in life.

Are there “weeds” choking you, or limited resources preventing you from blooming to your full potential? You are in a job that keeps you stuck. Or your social life is feeling more toxic than fun or interesting. It all comes down to choices.

If you do not like where you are, YOU get to decide if you want to uproot and move – and that can be figuratively or physically. In any given situation, you can always:

- Change it.
- Accept it.
- Or resist it – and resisting is what is going to make you stressed, anxious, and overwhelmed. Are you insisting on resisting?

Your environment gives you opportunities to grow, although sometimes those opportunities are not obvious. When things do not happen like you planned, a different perspective may be needed. Step back and look at the big picture.

Everything you go through is a step in your journey. Your personal perspective of your circumstances plays a key role in your mindset, and therefore your ability to see the possibilities. When you step back and look at the big picture from a more objective view, it gives you the opportunity to see how your desires and challenges have all moved you forward in your journey.

Each twist and turn in your journey can gift you with an experience that strengthens you. Setbacks and challenges can make your environment richer in “nutrients” for you to grow strong. Entertain the idea that a setback or challenge is the perfect opportunity to bloom where you are planted in the most unexpected way.

Getting creative can mean an entire range of things, and changing your mindset is a great first step.

- Believe in yourself.
- Have an attitude of gratitude.
- Be optimistic
- Overcome your fears.
- Focus on solutions (not the problems)
- Empower yourself.

If you are the type of person who leans toward the negative side, you will likely get more of the negative. The opposite is true with leaning toward the positive side of any given circumstance. Get creative and think about what you CAN do to improve yourself and make the best of your situation.

Surround yourself with positive people. The people you spend time together with influence your thoughts, actions, habits, choices and even what you dream of for your own life. There are real benefits of spending time with people who are confident and are authentically interested in both their own and your personal growth.

Think about the people you spend time with.

- Are they someone you would choose as a mentor?
- Do you have similar aspirations?
- Do you respect their character?
- Are they actively trying to better themselves?
- When together, are you doing fun, positive, healthy things that make you feel awesome?

Negative people are like weeds – their negative attitude grows fast and fiercely, and it can choke your work at growing a positive mindset. Would it help if you spent less time with someone in particular? Some people you cannot eliminate from your life, but you can recognize how they negatively influence you, and try to keep a healthy distance, if possible.

At times, you may feel like your dreams and goals are beyond your reach. In that moment, it can be hard to think about surviving, much less thriving. Trust that you are on a path that is taking

you to your dreams. No matter what your circumstances, take action to continue growing so you can be happy and strong.

## Self-Care Myths

“Self-care is any activity that we do deliberately in order to take care of our mental, emotional, and physical health.”

### Myth 1: Self-care is not for everybody.

Despite what social media, articles or even some forms of entertainment would suggest, self-care is not a practice bound to one specific group. Regardless of your gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, or ability, you not only should be practicing self-care, but you deserve to. We all have the right to practice self-care and make sure we are living a balanced, healthy life.

### Myth 2: Self-care is anything that soothes you.

What do you turn to find relief from the busyness and bustle of the world we live in? Do you come home to sit down on your couch and enjoy a few episodes of your favorite shows, or do you come home and just fix the largest bowl of ice cream you are capable of eating? While neither of these things are bad for you, is it really something that is going to improve your overall health and well-being? Just because something is soothing does not mean we should use it as our sole method of self-care.

Often alcohol, sweets, and other things are viewed as self-care. We need to be mindful of our intentions and be careful not to become dependent on the tools we use to practice self-care. We must not only practice self-care, but also self-control.

### Myth 3: Self-care is selfish.

Have you ever tried to take a day for yourself and received push back from the people in your life? For those of us who feel like we must always be there for someone when they need us, it is extremely hard to take time for ourselves. However, if you are not at your best, how then will you be able to help others, or even just enjoy yourself? Do not let anyone tell you that it is selfish for you to take time for yourself.

Learn to say “no.” Learning that simple two-lettered word is a big step, especially if that word is not readily in your vocabulary. If you do not take the time to set boundaries to take care of your own well-being, then you cannot take care of your loved ones, do the things you need to for work or even just enjoy a happy and healthy life.

### Myth 4: Self-care is always relaxing.

Far too often we see posts about bubble baths, face masks, mental health days, reading a book, crafting, and so many more things that people find relaxing. Self-care is far more than just the

relaxing things in life. Sometimes we may need to practice some self-exploration for us to grow and mature as a person. Self-care should impact all elements of our wellness.

For instance, we can improve our physical well-being by regularly exercising or making healthier food choices. When it comes to our financial well-being, we need to be preparing for the future and that may mean limiting our spending to set aside money for savings. We often think spending time with friends is an enjoyable and relaxing time, but there come times that we must set boundaries with those in our life to protect both them and us. We rarely hear about some of the difficult things we do for self-care.

#### Myth 5: Self-care is a reward.

We all love to be rewarded for all the hard work that we have done. However, there is a downside to rewards. Have we done something exceptional or deserving of recognition? Are we supposed to only take care of ourselves *after* a long week of work? Self-care is something that we all have the right to practice, and we need to practice it regularly. Engaging in self-care is the best way to prevent stress and burnout, so make it part of every day.

With proper self-care, you will be a little better equipped to handle all the different things that life may throw at you.

Self-care is anything you do for yourself to intentionally improve your emotional, mental, and physical health. Even though we know it is important to take care of ourselves, we tend to put it off or put other people's needs before ours. Practicing self-care is hard because it takes a lot of discipline. You are in charge of making your self-care happen.

If we were robots this would be fine. But we are not robots. We are humans. Humans need to recuperate to function at a high level. This is why when you are under a high amount of stress your energy, focus, and compassion go out the window. It is too much for your body and brain to handle.

You cannot manage stress if you are not practicing self-care. Self-care should be happening all the time, even when you are feeling good. Self-care is primarily about prevention. Self-care prevents stress from running your life.

Leaders often overlook their own well-being during times of high stress. You cannot expect to help others if you have not helped yourself first.

To be a great leader of others means to first take care of yourself. Your entire team looks to you to set the tone and show how to manage an entire organization.

As a leader, especially in enduring crises, you can model the importance of maintaining mental and physical health by committing to self-care strategies.

**Self-coaching** starts with setting your vision, the first important step to assessing where you are and where you would like to be. With practice, self-awareness can become a lifelong habit that becomes the foundation for high performance, productivity, and overall satisfaction.

**Boundaries** can be defined as the limits we set with other people in what we find acceptable and unacceptable in their behavior toward us. Setting boundaries is a form of self-care. It is an important process in which leaders recognize what they need and ask for it.

**Defining your limits** can help you manage stress, take care of your physical well-being, and create healthier relationships in both your professional and personal life.

Leaders with healthy routines and habits often model desired leadership behaviors with self-control, especially their ability to handle their temper.

When you are in a position of leadership, you might feel like you must solve everything immediately. In the process, you might create unrealistic expectations or timelines for yourself.

Taking more control over your schedule can be an essential strategy for managing your stress. Allow yourself time to reflect on how leadership is much more than taking on 100% of the burden, and putting so much pressure on yourself to be all things to all people. Make it a priority to carve out places in your busy schedule and find a quiet space where you can feel at peace and reflect.

Leaders help organizations when they are present and available for their employees, empowering them to think creatively and devise innovative solutions and execute them in the process.

Be sure to check in with your team to see how they are doing during any crisis. Ask your employees how they are faring and how their family is dealing with the current situation. Checking in with your team members also gives you insights on what employees need most in the workplace. When leaders feel run down, exhausted, or emotionally drained, they could unwittingly trigger the spread of dysfunctional workplace dynamics across an entire organization.

There are eight types of self-care:

## 8 types of self care



*Polling Question 2 Results:* Do you prioritize self-care in your life? Which area(s) should get more of your attention? (Multiple Choice)

1. Physical: Nutrition/Exercise/Sleep/See Doctor Regularly - 78%
2. Mental: Mindfulness/Affirmations/Self-Talk/Seek Therapy – 56%
3. Emotional: Gratitude/Know Own Triggers/Feelings & Thoughts – 56%
4. Spiritual: Meditate/Yoga/Nature/Prayer/Church – 22%
5. Intellectual: Reading/Seek Learning/Hobbies/Deep Study – 11%
6. Environment: Is it Clean/Safe/Protected? – 11%
7. Social: Keep Boundaries/Connections/Circle of Friends – 44%
8. Financial: Adequate Income/Budgeting/Saving/Debt Reduction – 33%

## Next Steps

**Next Meeting Topic.** The learning collaborative will meet next on **Thursday, September 5, 2024**, where we will be reviewing the final report on the Learning Collaborative and getting your feedback. We will be asking for your recommendations to improve respite care services, access and systems change based on lessons learned and the work of the Learning Collaborative. Please come prepared to share your thoughts. We will share a draft report for your review prior to the meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup>.

**LC Meeting Schedule.** Details on the framework and scheduled meetings of the learning collaborative are [available here](#). To view recordings and materials from previous meetings, please visit the [National Strategy LC webpage](#).

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