Practicing Self-care for Sustainability and Impact

At Move to End Violence, we are committed to sharing resources and tools to help everyone cultivate a practice of self-care for sustainability and impact.

The first step is to become aware of habits which sabotage self-care and establish new practices with intention.

Habit vs. Practice

Habit = unconscious, repetitive acts
Practice = repetitive acts done consciously for an explicit benefit

Our habits can conspire to eliminate spaciousness in our days and in our lives. Creating “spaciousness”—a breath, an interval, or a moment to consider or to reconsider—is another key element to self-care. It’s what allows us to stay in for the long haul, gain a wide perspective, unlock our creativity, and make a greater impact.

By attaching awareness to our habits, we can cultivate intentional practices which are repetitive acts that are consciously done for an explicit benefit and can be improved upon over time.

Take a look at your daily activities, what habits do you have that sabotage your self-care? Do you overbook your scheduled with meetings, stay rooted at your desk for lunch, or forget to drink enough water? By raising your awareness of these habits, you can identify easy self-care practices.

Here are some ways you can adopt a practice of your own:

- Think about your bad habits and come up with counter practices.
- Ask yourself, “What do I do to take care of myself? What do I do that could be damaging?”
- Consider what your organization does to take care of itself? What does it do to sabotage its self-care? Are there partners in your organization who you can work with to shift some of these organizational habits?
- Pay attention to your body.
- Practice breathing deeply, from below your belly button, rather than in your chest.
- Stay hydrated throughout the day.
- Take five minutes a day to do something that is restorative for you (meditate, drink a cup of tea, or take a short walk. It should not involve a screen!) until it becomes a practice and something that you crave.
- Create some “spaciousness” – a breath, an interval, or a moment to consider.
- Print out these four flyers available in English and Spanish and post them in your workplace to remind you of self-care practices.
  → Creating Spaciousness; Como Crear Amplitud
  → Power of Breathing; El Poder De La Respiracion
  → Rules of the Hand (for individuals); Cuidado Propio y la “Regla De La Mano” (individual)
  → Rules of the Hand (for organizations); Cuidado Propio y la “Regla De La Mano” (organizational).