



## **Video Transcript: Take Care: Self-Care Strategies for Youth-Serving Professionals**

**Katrina (00:00):** After facilitating group sessions every day, I was burnt out. During the reflection with my supervisor, we talked about how to build self-care activities into my routine, to keep myself healthy and show up at my best for the young people I serve.

**Speaker 1 (00:15):** Caring for Yourself and Your Participants: Techniques for Effective Group Facilitation video series.

**Katrina (00:22):** Take Care: Self-Care Strategies for Youth-Serving Professionals. Working with youth can be both rewarding and challenging. People may find it fulfilling and challenging for entirely different reasons. Facilitating group sessions isn't always easy, and it's common to prioritize participants' needs over your own. This video explores techniques that a facilitator can use to increase their sense of well-being and prevent burnout. This video is part of a series on caring for yourself and others as a group facilitator. Self-care is the practice of taking an active role in protecting your own health, well-being, and happiness. In particular, during periods of stress. Stress is the physical or mental response to an external cause. For example, having a lot of work responsibilities, financial problems, relationship issues, or media overload. A stressor may be a one time or short occurrence, or it might happen repeatedly over a long time. Stress can cause feelings of unease, anxiety, frustration, nervousness, fearfulness, or helplessness. When stressed, you may notice changes in your sleep, appetite, or energy level. Burnout is the long-term reaction to work-related stress. Burnout is particularly common among helping professionals. People who provide health and education services. Signs of burnout include: feeling emotionally exhausted or overextended by your work, questioning the value of your work, experiencing a change in energy level or motivation, feeling removed from your work and the people you work with, changing sleep habits, or experiencing physical issues like headaches or stomach aches with no known cause.

**Katrina (02:22):** Practicing self-care is essential for maintaining your well-being and effectiveness in supporting young people. Here are a few tips for routine self-care. Set and uphold boundaries with your coworkers, partners, and the youth you serve. Establish clear boundaries between your work and personal life. Prioritize work tasks based on importance and urgency. Schedule regular breaks during long training sessions. Avoid working through lunch or breaks. Identify any topics or values that might arise when facilitating and plan ahead for what self-disclosure is appropriate to share and when. Understand the limits of your program and when to refer youth to outside services. Learn to say no when necessary. Work with your supervisor to find less intensive work responsibilities that will help you recover after intensive periods of program implementation. Engage in self-reflection after each group session you facilitate or at the end of each day. Reflect on your experience facilitating that day and the emotions and thoughts that came up for you. This practice will help you identify your strengths and areas where you may need support from a co-facilitator or co-worker. Check your own biases and think about how they may be showing up in your facilitation. Reflect on your interactions with young people and how they impact your well-being. Use journaling, meditation, or mindfulness exercises to help increase self-awareness and identify areas for growth. Find a little joy every day through activities that promote relaxation, creativity, and happiness. These look different for everyone. A few examples include exercising, making art, playing or listening to music, spending time with loved ones, or enjoying nature. Finding time away from work to do activities you enjoy helps you become a well-rounded professional. Think about all of the connections you can make with young people who share your interests. Dedicating at least one hour per week to an activity that brings you happiness and fulfillment is a great start. Seek support and connection from colleagues, friends, or a professional counselor.

**Katrina (04:50):** Surround yourself with a supportive network that understands the challenges you face and can answer questions as they arise. Attend regular peer support groups or affinity groups. Participate in professional meetings and conferences to build your network. Seek out a mentor who can provide guidance and encouragement. Reach out for support when needed. Supportive connections also create space for ongoing learning. As facilitators of sexual and reproductive health education, we deal with a variety of topics that we might not know everything about. As we work toward equity, there are always things to learn and relearn. Connecting with knowledgeable people who have diverse perspectives is an important part of this learning.

**Katrina (05:40):** Take care to: incorporate self-care practices into your daily routine, prioritize self-care just like any other aspect of your job, monitor your stress and adjust your self-care activities accordingly, and be patient with yourself and allow time for rest and recovery following intense group facilitation. Remember, practicing self-care is not a luxury, it's a necessity. By prioritizing your well-being, you'll be better equipped to support and empower the young people you serve. Stay well, stay resilient, and take care of yourself. You deserve it! Developed by the Reproductive Health National Training Center, RHNTC, and Fact Forward.