**Are You Taking Good Care of Yourself?**

Practitioners and graduate students who do not practice appropriate self-care increase their risk for occupational stress and distress, which may eventually lead to impairment. To aid the process of self-care, the APA Board of Professional Affairs’ Advisory Committee on Colleague Assistance offers the following recommendations:

* Make personal and professional self-care a priority
* Honestly assess your emotional, psychological and spiritual health on a regular basis.
* Take occupational risks seriously, and be aware of the particular risks facing practicing psychologists. You may find it helpful to educate yourself more fully about topics such as professional burnout, vicarious traumatization, compassion fatigue, and colleague assistance.
* Make appropriate accommodations or adjustments—such as limiting your caseload or consulting with peers and experts—in light of professional stressors and risks that you are experiencing.
* Identify sources of support and use them. Avoid isolation.
* Make and maintain professional connections that include the opportunity to discuss the specific nature and stressors of your work.
* Pay attention to the need for balance in work, rest and play. Take regular vacations or other appropriate breaks from work. The therapist is the fundamental “tool” of psychotherapy, and you need to keep yourself sharp.
* Develop realistic and reasonable expectations about workload and your capabilities at any given time.
* Monitor carefully the substances and/or processes you use for relaxation or entertainment.
* Challenge assumptions that stigmatize or disparage psychologists who acknowledge experiences of pain distress, or impairment.
* Seek consultation when professionally or personally challenged.

For assistance for yourself or a colleague you are concerned about regarding distress or impairment, please contact NCPA’s Colleague Assistance Committee**:**

* Leave a message on our Peer Consultation Line: (919) 785-3969
* Send us an email message at NCPA.CAC@gmail.com, or
* Call the NCPA office during regular office hours: (919) 872-1005

 **A Committee Member will be in contact with you within 24 hours.**