

Welcome

- Thank you for joining this series: **Self-care for frontline practitioners: Challenges and Strategies** hosted by Prosper Canada on behalf of the ABLE Steering Committee.
- The presentation will begin shortly. (Audio will begin when the presentation starts)

Technology Details:

For technical assistance, please call GoToWebinar support line **1-855-352-9002**.

Participants should connect using VOIP. Please check that the volume is turned up on your computer.

If dial in option is required, please dial in as follows:

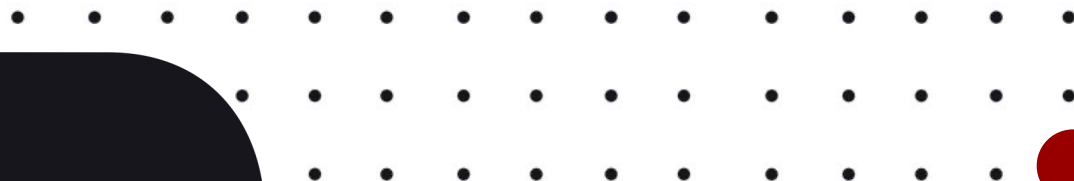
Tel (Canada): **+1 (647) 497-9386**

Access Code: **885-851-047 (attendees are muted)**

Toll free option not available

Webinar logistics

- **Audience members have all been put on “mute”** for this webinar
- Presenters will be joining via **audio only** to conserve bandwidth
- Please find **handouts** available for download in the control panel at the side of your screen
- Please **share any questions you have using the “Question box”**
- **We will share webinar slides with all participants and post a recording** of the session within a few days.





Land acknowledgement

2021 ABLE virtual series

Recover and Rebuild: Helping Canadians build financial security during the pandemic and beyond

The **2021 ABLE Financial Empowerment (FE) virtual series** is a collection of online financial empowerment events designed to provide financial empowerment stakeholders with knowledge, tools, resources and insights on financial topics to help struggling Canadians build financial resilience through the pandemic and recovery.

- **Spring series** – designed for practitioners, interactive
- **Fall series** – designed for all FE stakeholders

The 2021 ABLE virtual series is hosted by Prosper Canada on behalf of the ABLE Steering Committee.



Prosper Canada



About us

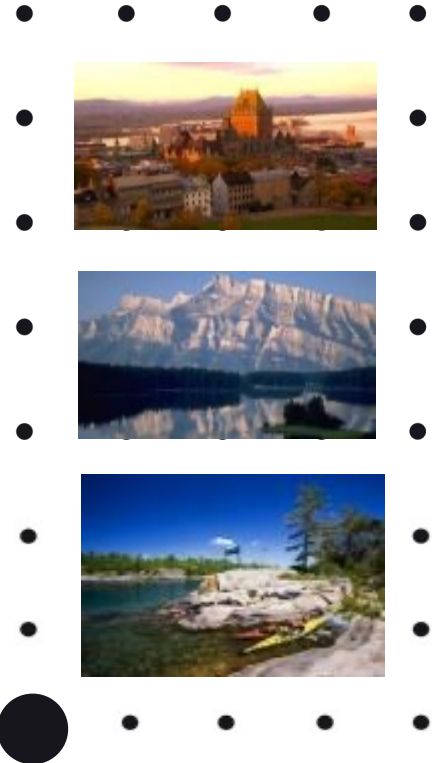
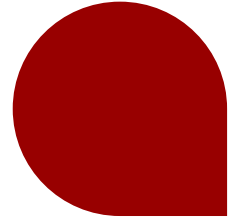


ABLE is a cross-sector community of practice working to reduce poverty through financial empowerment.



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Prosper Canada is a national charity dedicated to expanding economic opportunity for Canadians living in poverty through program and policy innovation.



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Self-Care: Challenges and Strategies

Rebecca Higgins, Mental Health Educator

www.mentalhealthworkshopstoronto.com

Introduction and welcome



Who am I?

- pronouns: she/her
- MSW background, specializing in mental health education for the last decade
- training independently and on behalf of CMHA Toronto since 2013
- author of *The Colours of Birds* (2018) (short stories)

Suggested materials

Pen or pencil

Notebook or
paper





What makes self-care challenging?

*Please type your ideas into the
questions box.*

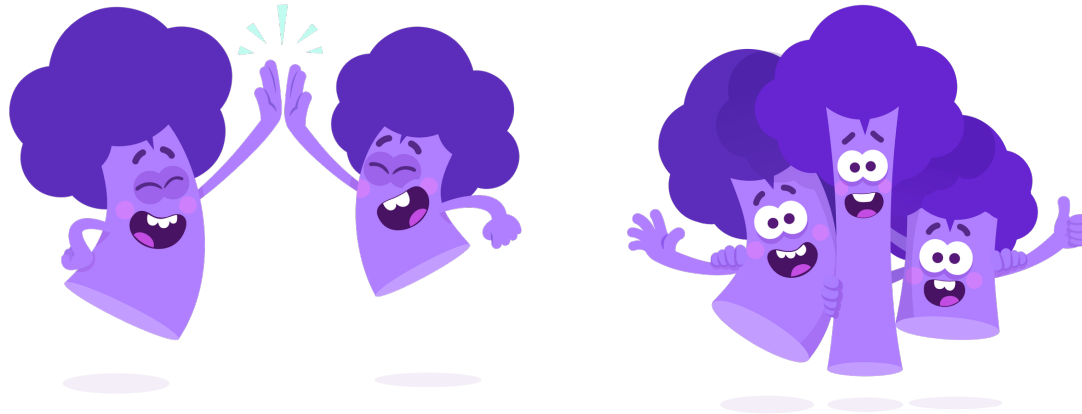
Examples of challenges

- lack of support for self-care
- time constraints
- boundaries
- juggling multiple responsibilities
- compassion fatigue and overwhelm
- inequitable access to resources
- expectations (other people's; societal; our own)
- disconnection and isolation



Self-care needs support!

Self-care must be supported and integrated by our teams, groups, families, communities and institutions.



Team strategies that support self-care and resilience

- regular check-ins
- normalizing compassion fatigue, space for hard feelings
- additional supports (EAP, external)
- connection opportunities (formal and informal)
- supportive supervision options
- support for staff autonomy
- recognizing and validating staff experiences

Institutional strategies that support self-care and resilience

- Normalizing vicarious trauma reactions
- Manageable workloads
- Safety
- Adequate workspace
- Atmosphere of respect for both staff and customers
- Maintaining open communication
- Debriefing
- Support from colleagues is available and encouraged
- Adequate opportunities for effective supervision and consultation
- Support for continuing education

Challenge:
Time constraints

Time constraints

- Some moments have more space in them than others
- Let's reframe how self-care gets talked about – what makes sense for you?
- Self-care can be more about philosophy than a to-do list – more about letting go than adding on



Reframing self-care

“Whatever we can do right now to create a more holistic and integrated approach to our work is a worthwhile effort. Consider your particular work environment and daily routine. What moments can you reclaim to attend to your inner well-being? Three minutes between meetings?...Any one of these may be an opportunity to regroup and center yourself....”

Never underestimate what you can weave into your shift, work or career to make it a healthier place for you to be. Decide that being a martyr in the workplace is a thing of the past.”

- Laura Van Dernoot Lipsky

Van Dernoot Lipsky L, Burk C. *Trauma Stewardship: An Everyday Guide to Caring for Self While Caring for Others*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2009

Reframe what self-care means



Finding your breath



Returning to your 5 senses



Stepping away for a moment



Writing things down



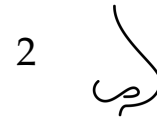
Getting a kick out of little things



Creating small moments to look forward to



Practice: Grounding Exercise



Challenge:
Experiencing overwhelm



It's okay to be not okay

- It's okay to feel upset
- All *feelings* are valid but not all *behaviours/expressions of feelings* are okay
- Honour your own needs
- Know your limit, play within it

Break big things down into smaller pieces

Do

one

thing

at

a

time.

Put aside perfectionism

Give yourself
permission
to not be perfect.

Good enough is good enough.



just keep swimming



Talk to someone you trust

Consider:

- a trusted friend or colleague
- a counsellor or other professional support
- an anonymous call or text option

In my experience, saying the scary or difficult thing out loud takes away some of its power.



Practice:
Grounding in a Chair

ABCs of self-care

Awareness

Balance

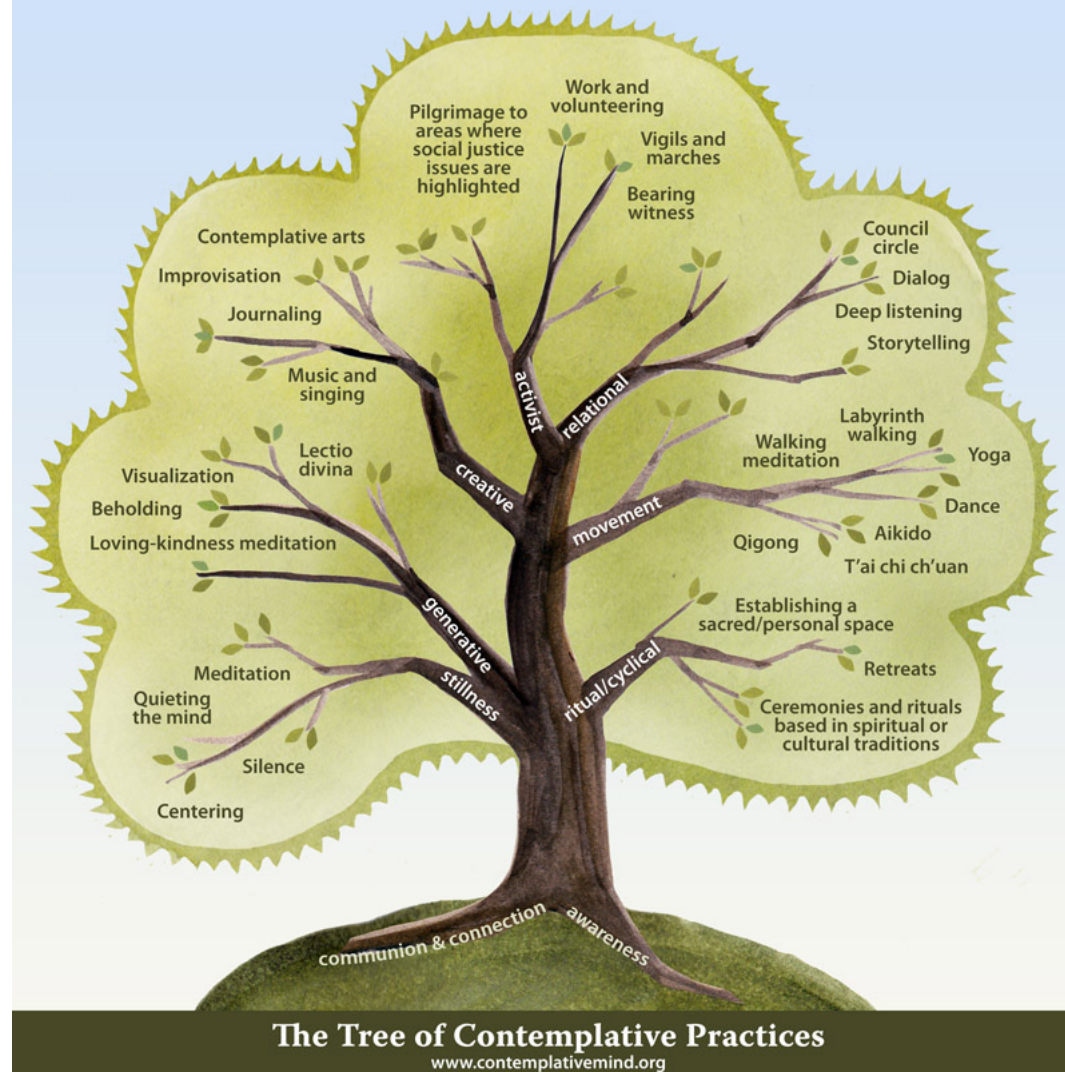
Connection

ABC: Awareness

- paying attention to the present moment on purpose (mindfulness)
- being conscious of small, beautiful moments
- noticing moments of distress as we experience them, and being aware of our distress in a kind and supportive way (rather than judging or shoulding all over ourselves)

Contemplative practices

CMind. (2014). The Tree of Contemplative Practices [Illustration]. The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society. <http://www.contemplativemind.org/practices/tree>



ABC: Balance

“Coming full circle into the west, we call upon the strength and introspection of the air element. By striving to achieve balance in our lives, moving energy through, and reminding ourselves of all we are grateful for, we attend to needs as basic as the air we breathe. We celebrate the strength we receive by connecting to our inner self through our breath. The air is seen as universal power in traditional cultures; when we honor the changing winds, we see the impermanence of everything and understand the beauty of being away for the here and now.”

- Laura Van Dernoot Lipsky

Van Dernoot Lipsky L, Burk C. *Trauma Stewardship: An Everyday Guide to Caring for Self While Caring for Others*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2009 (p. 208)

Balance: movement and creativity



“You can’t use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have.”

-Maya Angelou

ABC: Connection

Think about someone you appreciate.

Consider a way to communicate or honour that appreciation this week.



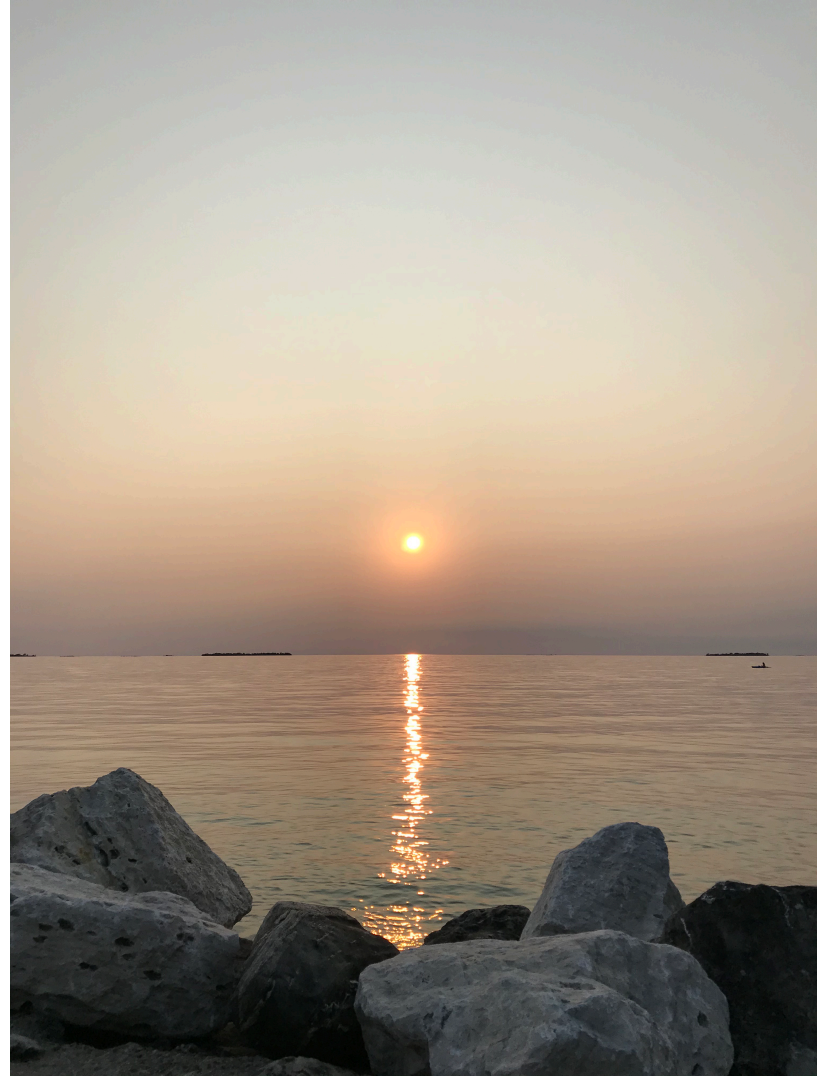
THANK YOU
FOR DELIVERING
TO US. IT'S
SO APPRECIATED!

Connection:

Be in or near nature

Go outside, or bring the outside in.

How are you connecting with nature these days?



Challenge:
Setting boundaries

Boundaries: easier said than done

- Boundaries are essentially making it clear what's okay for you and what's not okay for you
- A boundary is a limit defining you in relationship to someone or to something
- Boundary setting is influenced by context, culture, relationship, family upbringing, power dynamics, etc.

Boundaries reframed

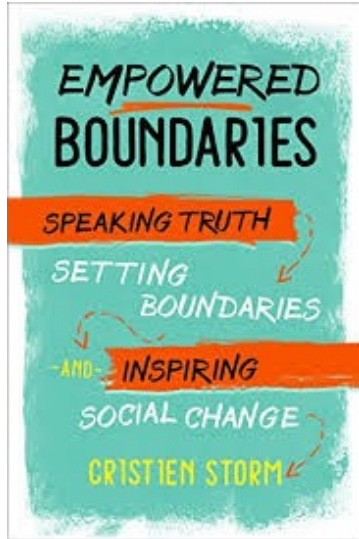
“People’s responses to a boundary are not necessarily a good gauge as to how well or how clearly a boundary was communicated. Sometimes a boundary is communicated beautifully, but the person does not want or like the boundary and so resists it...

...there are a myriad of ways that people set limits in very challenging situations. An important part of boundary work is identifying the ways we set limits in various contexts and how power informs our decisions...

...Sometimes...people set really badass boundaries that are crossed simply because other people have the power and ability to do so.”

Storm, C. (2018) *Empowered Boundaries: Speaking Truth, Setting Boundaries and Inspiring Social Change*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, p.75-77.

Resource on boundaries



“Stop asking yourself, why didn’t I do this or that? and instead replace it with, what did I do to survive?”

- Cristien Storm (p.78)

Practice: What's in your wellness toolbox?

- Who are your important people?
- What do you love to do?
- When do you feel most peaceful?
- What communities do you feel connected to?
- Where do you find purpose, hope and meaning?
- How do you like to move your body?
- What creative work do you enjoy?



Questions? Thank you for joining me today.



Rebecca Higgins
Mental Health Educator

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More resources

Cognitive Load Theory: Explaining our fight for focus (BBC, Nov 2020)

<https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20201103-cognitive-load-theory-explaining-our-fight-for-focus>

Ways to cope with pandemic fatigue (Sunnybrook, Oct 2020) <https://health.sunnybrook.ca/mental-health/ways-to-cope-with-covid-fatigue/>

Brain fog is a real thing (CBC, Feb 2021) <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/kitchener-waterloo/brain-fog-jennifer-moss-1.5920856>

Self Care for Social Workers (NASW) <https://www.socialworkers.org/Practice/Infectious-Diseases/Coronavirus/Self-Care-During-the-Coronavirus-Pandemic>

Self-Care: Resources for health care workers during COVID-19 (CAMH)

<https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/mental-health-and-covid-19/information-for-professionals/self-care>

There's a Name for the Blah You're Feeling (New York Times, March 2021)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/19/well/mind/covid-mental-health-languishing.html>

Thank you for joining us

Today's event is part of the **2021 ABLE virtual series**. Please visit ablefinancialempowerment.org to view a complete list of events.

The next event is on:

May 27, 2021 – 1:00 PM EDT

Connect and Share: Self-care strategies



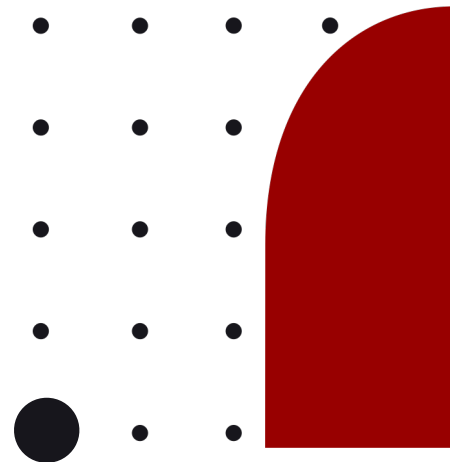
What's next

We will be sending you an email soon with:

- Slides from today's webinar
- Link to webinar recording
- Link to post webinar survey

We will also post the recorded webinar on our Learning Hub:

<https://learninghub.prospercanada.org/webinars/>





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