

THE CE-CERT MODEL

Components for Enhancing Career Experience and Reducing Trauma

Experiential
Engagement

Feeling the Feels

Parasympathetic
Recovery

**Reset &
Recover**

Decreasing
Rumination

**Stopping the
Spin**

**Intentional
Oversight**

Reducing
Emotional Labor

**Finding
Joy**

Conscious
Narrative

**Creating Your
Story**

- After-hours “self-care” is insufficient
- Risk for burnout and secondary traumatic stress can only be reduced through strategies for changing the way you go about your work
- These are acquirable skills
- Intentional oversight of yourself in the moment, throughout the day is necessary
- A long-term, energizing career is possible AND you must find joy in your work to sustain



Our goal is to open up to the full emotional experience of our work.

- Emotions can be experienced without damage
- Emotions are not traumatizing
- Trauma comes from belief that you are overwhelmed and helpless

Are you willing to open up to the full emotional experience of your work?

“ Our challenge each day is not to get dressed to face the world but to unglove ourselves so that the doorknob feels cold, and the car handle feels wet.”

-Mark Nepo

THE SKILLS

- Set the intention - I will notice what feelings I am experiencing during my day
- Enhance your willingness
- Attend and allow - I will pay attention to my feelings as they arise, intensify, and fade
- Non-reactivity - I can allow the natural course of an emotion without fighting it or reacting to it. I can observe my own emotions in real time

Decreasing Rumination

Stopping the Spin



Rumination: The mental process of reimagining past events and projecting future concerns and behaviors - often in the form of worry or dread.

**Emotions quickly arise and pass.
Thoughts can replay indefinitely.**

“Ruminating about the past will get you nowhere. So go ahead and learn from the past where you can, and then put it behind you. Remember, there is nothing you can do to change it, but you can use its lesson to improve your future.”

-Abraham Twerski

THE SKILLS

- Intention - Give yourself permission to let go. You are not problem solving
- Catch yourself - Notice when you are spinning out and label it
 - Short circuit the spin cycle in as little as 2 minutes
 - Fully engage in an activity - Get out of your head and focus on a concrete activity that holds your attention
 - Conversation- Engage socially, with coworkers, kids, friends, family. This forces you out of your thoughts
 - Planning - Set a concrete, actionable plan to address the stressor and then let it go (again, and again, and again)

This might look different for everyone!





We are all constantly creating a story to give meaning to our days' experiences. By taking control of the story, we acknowledge our competence, the ability to grow and we give our work meaning. This prevents burnout.

Do you believe that your work is enjoyable and meaningful, or that it is aversive and unsustainable? **Either way, you're right.**

Our narratives include what we tell ourselves:

- Before an experience (the antecedent narrative)
- During an experience (the concurrent narrative)
- After an experience (the consolidation narrative)

“Narrative is radical, creating us at the very moment it is being created”
-Toni Morrison

THE SKILLS

- Give value and personal meaning to your career and your day. Remind yourself regularly **WHY** you do this work
- Reflect back on your performance, asking yourself “What did I do well?” and “What did I learn from that?”
- Remind yourself of your growing competence
- Enhance your willingness to experience the full range of emotions that come from doing this work
- Practice accepting the limits of your control



Emotional Labor occurs when your true and displayed emotions don't match. Often when trying to present a professional desired image or avoid conflict.

What are sources of emotional labor?

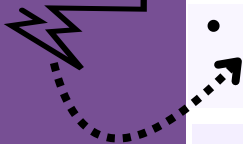
- Seeing others in judgmental terms
- Avoiding emotions
- Feeling ineffective
- Trying to fix everything

“I never set a single word down on paper with the thought of being paid for it. I have written because it fulfilled me. I did it for the pure joy of the things. And if you can do it for joy, you can do it forever.”
-Stephen King

THE SKILLS

- Set the intention to extend compassion to all those you encounter
- Acknowledge your own emotional reactions
- Pause and reset. Use behavioral strategies to step out of fight, flight, freeze
- Zoom out. Get curious about what's contributing to another person's perspective
- Discuss your genuine feelings in a productive manner
- Don't waste energy repeatedly questioning, "Should I or shouldn't I?"
- Commit to your chosen work wholeheartedly
 - Or after focused reflection, take steps to change
- Remind yourself, you are always learning and growing

Are you focusing on the snarl or the pain?





Paying attention throughout the day and responding in the moment to intentionally re-set your system as needed.

Ask yourself: “What are signs that you need to reset your system?”

“Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you.”

-Anne Lamott

THE SKILLS

- Don't wait until the end of the day!
- Use brief strategies or activities to reset
- Return to the story you are telling yourself about the day's stress
 - Find 20 minutes per day for a full system reset
- Professional social connectedness is more strongly correlated than job satisfaction

Social support plays a critical role in the well-being and effectiveness of professionals in the helping fields. It serves as a buffer against burnout by offering emotional relief and a space for shared experiences (Sabanciogullari & Dogan, 2015). Social support is positively associated with job satisfaction and retention (Gharakhani et al., 2023). In ethically complex situations, supportive organizational cultures can encourage reflection and lead to more sound decision-making (McFadden et al., 2019). These environments promote empathy, teamwork, and open communication—essential qualities in caring professions (Gharakhani et al., 2023). Lastly, social support helps reduce the stigma around mental health and encourages help-seeking behaviors among professionals who are often expected to prioritize the needs of others (Foster et al., 2022).