

### **3-Session Wellness Series for Arabic-speaking individuals**

**Session 1:** Stress Management and Self-Care

**Session 2:** Self-Compassion

**Session 3:** Self-Efficacy, Affirmations and Control

All sessions start off with reinforcing safe space ground rules, doing breathing/grounding exercises and movement.

This series has an accompanying booklet full of tips and activities to complement sessions.

## Wellness Session 1: Stress Management + Self-Care

### Slide 2: Intro

Today, we're here to talk about stress management and self-care, and of course, give you a safe space to share challenges you may be experiencing right now, so that we can suggest ways to help you manage stress and implement self-care into your lives. But first, we'll go over the group norms and do a quick poll to see how you're doing.

### Slide 3: Group Norms

- Inclusive, safe-space
- Respect for oneself and others
- Non-Judgmental Space
- Only talk when other person is done talking
- Confidentiality' what happens here stays here
- Avoid interrupting the translator
- Shared goals
- No pressure - participate at your own comfort level

### Slide 4: Poll 1: Check-in with Yourself: How Are You Feeling Today?

1. I am thriving and ready to help others thrive too!
2. I am feeling good and getting what I need
3. I look fine on the outside, but I'm feeling turbulent
4. I could use some extra care and support
5. I'm struggling with lots of problems and feeling overwhelmed
6. I'm burnt out!

Please select one option that represents your feelings most at this moment, and enter the number in the chat.

### Slide 5: Breathing Exercise (**ACTIVITY PACKET PAGE 2**)

- We do breathing exercises to feel grounded and relax in the moment. It can be a helpful tool in calming you down biologically, even if your mind is in an anxious state – ex. feeling overwhelmed/stressed
- Box breathing is a simple way to add breath work and meditation to your day. You can trace your finger around the box while following the arrows to inhale, exhale and hold.
- Follow along... Repeat until you feel relaxed.

### Slide 6: Terminology

- Stress: One way our bodies respond to the day-to-day struggles of life and demands of life. A little bit of stress can be healthy-it keeps us alert and productive. However, when we experience too much stress, it can result in serious physical, emotional, and behavioral symptoms.

- Discuss ways in which stress presents in our body (ex. Headaches, body pains, anger, grinding teeth)

### Slide 7: Discussion (**ACTIVITY PACKET** PAGE 7-8)

What are some factors that contribute to your stress? Identify some things that are draining your battery or making you feel tired. Open the floor to share

- Daily? Examples: traffic, chores, work problems, homework, lack of sleep, limited free time, arguments with family members
- Major Life Changes? Examples: birth of a child, separation/divorce, new job, death of a loved one, moving, major illness/injury
- Life Circumstances? Examples: poverty or financial problems, disability, chronic illness, conflictual relationships, values that conflict with culture, discrimination, job dissatisfaction, living somewhere unsafe
- There is a worksheet included in your packet that allows you to explore your stress

### Slide 8: What is Self-care?

- Activities you do intentionally to care for yourself
- Self-care means taking time to do things you enjoy
- Self-Care = strategies you use to keep mentally, emotionally and physically well and healthy, regardless of stressors in your life. Self-care is key to improving mood and reducing anxiety
- Everyone's self-care plan is going to look different, based on your personal needs
- Self-Care is not something you force yourself to do, or something you don't enjoy.
- Self-care is not a selfish act
- Proactive vs. reactive self-care – Easier to take care of ourselves when we are stressed when we already have self-care strategies implemented in our lives
- **You need to:**
  - Make self-care a priority
  - Create space and time for you
  - Set specific self-care goals
  - Make self-care a habit
  - Set boundaries to protect your self-care
- **Remember:**
  - A few minutes of self-care is better than no self-care
  - Unhealthy activities don't count as self-care
  - Keep up with self-care, even when you're feeling good
- Self-care is about knowing what you need to do in order to take care of yourself so that you are able to take care of others as well. If you don't take enough care of yourself, you won't be in a place to give to your loved ones either.
- What do I need? What works best for me? Incorporating elements you like!

### Slide 9: Discussion (**ACTIVITY PACKET** PAGE 7-8)

What are some factors that protect you against stress? Identify some things that are recharging your battery or energizing you. Open the floor to share

- Daily Uplifts? Examples: eating a good meal, spending time with family/friends, leisure activities, being in nature
- Healthy Coping Strategies? Examples: exercise, talking about problems, self-care, journaling, relaxation techniques
- Protective Factors? Examples: financial stability, good physical health, supportive family, motivation to succeed, education

### **Slide 10: Stress Management Techniques:**

Here are some more suggestions of techniques you can incorporate to manage or decrease your stress:

1. **Deep Breathing:** We did this earlier on – Like I mentioned before, this can be a helpful technique when overwhelmed or stressed, in creating relaxation and grounding.
2. **Mindfulness:** (**ACTIVITY PACKET PAGE 10**) Another technique is mindfulness. This is about being mindful and aware of yourself and your surroundings. This activity is a sensory based grounding exercise using prompts for 5-4-3-2-1. This activity is on pg. 10 in your packet. You can do this exercise anywhere – if you want variety, try doing it inside and outside. If you feel anxious when you are out and about, even doing just one of these can help you ground in different surroundings. Be aware of your space in the moment and observe the following:
  - 5 things you can see
  - 4 things you can feel
  - 3 things you can hear
  - 2 things you can smell
  - 1 thing you can taste

In a few minutes, I'm going to share a mindfulness resource we found that is available in Arabic! (Smiling Mind)

3. **Muscle Relaxation:** Another way to manage your stress is through muscle relaxation. Try this:
  - Hold tension for 5 seconds
  - Say "relax" as you release the muscle
  - Let that muscle relax for 10 seconds before you move on to the next muscle
4. **Find A Peaceful Place:** Find a place for you to retreat to - a peaceful place where you feel relaxed, safe and calm
5. **Tell Someone:** When you're stressed, it can also help you to talk to peers, friends and family. If you don't feel you have someone to turn to, it's okay to ask for professional help. You can also feel free to reach out to one of us and we'd be happy to chat! There are many more tips for managing your stress in your packet, if you need more ideas, refer to that.

### **Slide 11-15: Smiling Mind Mindfulness App**

#### **Slide 16: Discussion**

What are some self-care activities you already do?

What are some new self-care activities that you can implement in your life?

- Discuss and add ideas to the top of your battery! Open the floor to share

#### **Slide 17: Poll 2: Check-in with Yourself: How Are You Feeling Now?**

After participating in this session...

1. I am thriving and ready to help others thrive too!
2. I am feeling good and getting what I need
3. I look fine on the outside, but I'm feeling turbulent
4. I could use some extra care and support
5. I'm struggling with lots of problems and feeling overwhelmed
6. I'm burnt out!

Please select one option that represents your feelings most at this moment, and enter the number in the chat.

#### **Slide 18: Thank You**

Thank you for listening to us and also sharing your thoughts. Please be sure to use the packet we've provided – we hope it's useful to you!

## Wellness Session 1: Self-Compassion

### Slide 19: Intro

Today, we're here to talk about self-compassion, and of course, give you a safe space to share challenges you may be experiencing right now. But first, we'll go over the group norms and do a quick poll to see how you're doing.

### Slide 20: Group Norms

- Inclusive, safe-space
- Respect for oneself and others
- Non-Judgmental Space
- Only talk when other person is done talking
- Confidentiality' what happens here stays here
- Avoid interrupting the translator
- Shared goals
- No pressure - participate at your own comfort level

### Slide 21: Poll 1: Check-in with Yourself: How Are You Feeling Today?

1. I am thriving and ready to help others thrive too!
2. I am feeling good and getting what I need
3. I look fine on the outside, but I'm feeling turbulent
4. I could use some extra care and support
5. I'm struggling with lots of problems and feeling overwhelmed
6. I'm burnt out!

Please select one option that represents your feelings most at this moment, and enter the number in the chat.

### Slide 22: Breathing Exercise (**ACTIVITY PACKET PAGE 2**)

- We do breathing exercises to feel grounded and relax in the moment. It can be a helpful tool in calming you down biologically, even if your mind is in an anxious state – ex. feeling overwhelmed/stressed
- Box breathing is a simple way to add breath work and meditation to your day. You can trace your finger around the box while following the arrows to inhale, exhale and hold.
- Follow along... Repeat until you feel relaxed.

### Slide 23: Self-Compassion

- Having compassion for oneself is really no different than having compassion for others. Self-compassion involves responding in the same supportive and understanding way you would with a good friend when you have a difficult time, fail, or notice something you don't like about yourself.
- Self-compassion is the ability to observe and accept your mistakes with understanding and kindness. Particularly, it is accepting the less-than-awesome aspects of yourself in a nonjudgmental manner. By accepting and understanding who we presently are, we gain

knowledge. We become aware of both our strengths and our weaknesses. This broader perspective of ourselves helps us to function more effectively.

**Slide 24: 3 Components of Self-Compassion: (ACTIVITY PACKET PAGE 11)**

Self-compassion has 3 components: being as caring toward yourself as toward others, recognizing that suffering is a universal human experience and you're not alone, observe feelings without amplifying or suppressing/denying them. Think about it in terms of the pandemic right now...

- Mindfulness: Explore your own feelings, take a few deep breaths and **observe the feelings** that arise; there's no need to act on the feelings, just observe (e.g., I'm feeling down. I've been irritable today. This is stress)
- Self-Kindness: Validate your feelings, **offer gentleness and warmth**; "may I be kind to myself", "may I accept myself as I am"; place a hand on your heart
- Focus on Common Humanity: These feelings are normal responses to an abnormal situation; **I'm not alone**; this is a very challenging time; other people feel this way too
- ACTION: Compassionately and intentionally plan ways to take care of yourself; reach out for compassion and support from others.

**SCENARIO:** You're trying to get the house cleaned

- Mindfulness: overwhelmed, stressed
- Self-Kindness: Be gentle and kind to yourself, REFRAME: I've completed \_ tasks already
- Common Humanity: Everyone has to clean, and it can feel stressful and overwhelming for many people
- Action: Make a list, take it one step at a time, and give myself grace and patience, repeat reframed thought: I will do one thing at a time, and celebrate my small wins/accomplishments.

**Slide 25: "I DID IT LIST" image**

- Celebrate your wins/accomplishments

**Slide 26: Self-Compassion Activity (ACTIVITY PACKET PAGE 12)**

1. Think about a situation where someone you care about feels terrible or is suffering in some way. Think about how you would respond to that loved one (including how you would feel and what you would do/say).

**Slide 27:**

2. Now think about a time when you are feeling terrible or suffering in some way. How do you typically respond to yourself?

**Slide 28:**

3. Did you notice a difference? If so, what might contribute to that difference? What would happen if you responded to your own suffering in the way you respond to a dear loved one?

Myself                      Others

Many people are more comfortable and skilled at offering compassion toward others (especially loved ones, friends, family members, and children). Compassion for others is a

perfect starting point for turning compassion toward yourself and offering yourself the empathy, warmth, and support you deserve.

### **Other Ways to Boost Your Self-Compassion**

- WRITE YOURSELF A LETTER: This activity is included in your handout!
- WRITE DOWN YOUR SELF-TALK: If you are self-criticizing because you said or did the wrong thing in a situation, write down the self-critical words that come to mind, and then ask if you would ever say these words to a friend. What would a friend say?
- DEVELOP A SELF-COMPASSION MANTRA: Here is the self-compassion Neff developed for herself: "This is a moment of suffering. Suffering is part of life. May I be kind to myself in this moment; may I give myself the compassion that I need." You can turn to your self-compassion mantra, as a focus for your mind but also to provide yourself with emotional support, so you can deal with the situation with more grace.

### **MORE SCENARIOS**

Scenario 1: You've gotten a lower grade on your test than you hoped

- Mindfulness: I am disappointed, I feel stressed about the effects of this low grade.
- Self-Kindness: May I recognize that I tried my best, I will recognize that I am bettering myself by pursuing an education
- Common Humanity: School is stressful for students, and other people in my class are likely to experience this feeling too. It is a normal response.
- Action: I will celebrate the knowledge I did learn that I might not have known before, and I will create a plan to adapt my study strategy and find classmates to study with.

Scenario 2: You've broken a cherished item while carrying a lot in your hands.

- Mindfulness: I am sad, I am angry
- Self-Kindness: You may think "I am clumsy" "I always break things" but try to challenge your thinking. May I recognize that this was a mistake. May I recognize that I sometimes drop things when I am trying to carry too many items in my hands.
- Common Humanity: It is a normal reaction to be sad or angry about breaking something that you care about.
- Action: I will find an activity that often makes me feel happy. I will try to take more trips and carry less.

### **Slide 29: Discussion**

What are some things you can say/do to be more compassionate towards yourself? Especially in your role as an Early Childhood Educator.

### **Slide 30: Poll 2: Check-in with Yourself: How Are You Feeling Now?**

After participating in this session...

1. I am thriving and ready to help others thrive too!
2. I am feeling good and getting what I need
3. I look fine on the outside, but I'm feeling turbulent
4. I could use some extra care and support
5. I'm struggling with lots of problems and feeling overwhelmed



6. I'm burnt out!

Please select one option that represents your feelings most at this moment, and enter the number in the chat.

**Slide 31: Thank You**

Thank you for listening to us and also sharing your thoughts. Please be sure to use the self-compassion activity worksheet we've provided – hope it's useful to you!

## Wellness Session 3: Self-Efficacy, Affirmations and Control

### Slide 32: Intro

Today, we're here to talk about self-efficacy, affirmations and control, and of course, give you a safe space to share challenges you may be experiencing right now. But first, we'll go over the group norms and do a quick poll to see how you're doing.

### Slide 33: Group Norms

- Inclusive, safe-space
- Respect for oneself and others
- Non-Judgmental Space
- Only talk when other person is done talking
- Confidentiality' what happens here stays here
- Avoid interrupting the translator
- Shared goals
- No pressure - participate at your own comfort level

### Slide 34: Poll 1: Check-in with Yourself: How Are You Feeling Today?

1. I am thriving and ready to help others thrive too!
2. I am feeling good and getting what I need
3. I look fine on the outside, but I'm feeling turbulent
4. I could use some extra care and support
5. I'm struggling with lots of problems and feeling overwhelmed
6. I'm burnt out!

Please select one option that represents your feelings most at this moment, and enter the number in the chat.

### Slide 35: Breathing Exercise (**ACTIVITY PACKET PAGE 2**)

- We do breathing exercises to feel grounded and relax in the moment. It can be a helpful tool in calming you down biologically, even if your mind is in an anxious state – ex. feeling overwhelmed/stressed
- Box breathing is a simple way to add breath work and meditation to your day. You can trace your finger around the box while following the arrows to inhale, exhale and hold.
- Follow along... Repeat until you feel relaxed.

### Slide 36: Self-Efficacy:

- According to Albert Bandura, self-efficacy is "**the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations.**"
- Self-efficacy is a person's belief in their ability to succeed in a particular situation. Bandura described these beliefs as determinants of how people think, behave, and feel.
- Basically, if you believe that you will succeed, it will affect how you think, behave and feel. And this is why we want to share a new activity with you. Pg. 13 in your activity packet is where the affirmations worksheets start.

**Slide 37: Affirmations:**

- Last session when we met, we talked about self-compassion and how we can be kinder to ourselves. One way to be compassionate towards yourself is through affirmations. Affirmations help us be more positive
- Affirmations help us appreciate who we are
- Affirmations help us feel motivated and confident

**Slide 38: Why are affirmations important?**

- Nurture and affirm your authentic self
- When you repeat affirmations often, you believe in them!
- A positive word spoken to ourselves each day can make such a difference to our whole body, our mind and our heart.

**Slide 39: Write your Own Affirmation!**

During challenging times, it is common to feel a combination of hopefulness, anxiousness and excitement. Writing an affirmation statement can help you build confidence to address these challenges. Consider your moments of growth, your favorite attributes about yourself or things you are grateful for. You should aim to affirm the feeling of already having what you desire, rather than things you are trying to avoid. It helps to focus on your moments of growth, your favorite attributes about yourself or things you are grateful for. This does not have to be toxically positive, but instead can acknowledge your challenges and celebrate how far you have come.

Today's activity is to write your own affirmations! Please turn to page 13

I am... I know... I have... I love... I choose.. ...or any other affirmative statement

**Slide 40: Affirmation Examples:**

- I create a safe and secure space for myself wherever I am.
- I give myself permission to do what is right for me.
- I give myself space to grow and learn.
- I allow myself to be who I am without judgment.
- I listen to my intuition and trust my inner guide.
- I accept my emotions and let them serve their purpose.
- I give myself the care and attention that I deserve.
- My drive and ambition allow me to achieve my goals.
- I trust that I am on the right path.
- I am creatively inspired by the world around me.
- My mind is full of brilliant ideas.
- I put my energy into things that matter to me.
- I trust myself to make the right decision.
- I am becoming closer to my true self every day

### Slide 41: Discussion

What is an affirmation you can say to yourself? Especially in your role as a \_\_\_\_.

### Slide 42: Control

Holding on to what I can control / Letting go of what I can't control

Use these as examples



### Slide 43: Examples of Control

- Ex. Sport team uniform does not align with my beliefs and comfort level
  - o Can't Control: what uniforms the team uses
  - o Can control: Adding extra under garments to align with comfort/beliefs and still follow uniform rules.
- Ex. I don't feel comfortable without a mask yet
  - o Can't Control: if other people decide to wear a mask or not
  - o Can Control: make a decision to wear your own mask or not

### Slide 44: Poll 2: Check-in with Yourself: How Are You Feeling Now?

After participating in this session...

1. I am thriving and ready to help others thrive too!
2. I am feeling good and getting what I need
3. I look fine on the outside, but I'm feeling turbulent
4. I could use some extra care and support
5. I'm struggling with lots of problems and feeling overwhelmed
6. I'm burnt out!

Please select one option that represents your feelings most at this moment, and enter the number in the chat.

### Slide 46: Thank you

Thank you for listening to us and also sharing your thoughts. Please be sure to practice writing your own affirmations in your workbook – hope it's useful to you!