

Managing Compassion Fatigue

or

Put Your Oxygen Mask On First

The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet.

-Rachel Naomi Remen



A serene sunset scene over a calm ocean. The sun is a bright, glowing orb on the horizon, casting a warm orange and yellow light across the sky and reflecting on the water's surface. The sky transitions from a deep blue at the top to a lighter, hazy blue near the horizon. A few wispy clouds are scattered across the upper half of the sky. On the right side of the horizon, a dark silhouette of a lighthouse is visible. The ocean is dark blue with gentle waves, and the foreground shows a small patch of sandy beach.


Guilt can stop us from taking healthy
care of ourselves.

-Melody Beattie

Compassion Fatigue. What is it and isn't.

If I look at the mass, I will never act. If I look at one, I will.
-Mother Theresa

Who does it affect?

A full-page background image of a mountain landscape. In the foreground, a dense, lush green forest of deciduous and coniferous trees covers a hillside. Behind the forest, a series of steep, rugged mountains rise, their peaks and ridges partially covered in snow and patches of light-colored rock. The sky above is filled with soft, white clouds, suggesting a bright but slightly overcast day. The overall scene conveys a sense of natural grandeur and tranquility.

Never succumb to the temptation of bitterness.
-Martin Luther King, Jr.

How does it show up?

Cognitive

- Apathy
- Rigidity
- Confusion
- Perfectionism
- Trauma-imagery
- Self-doubt
- Spaciness

Emotional

- Powerlessness
- Survivor guilt
- Fear
- Sadness
- Numbness
- Shutdown
- Anger

Behavioral

- Nightmares
- Appetite changes
- Substance abuse
- Poor sleep
- Impatience
- Withdrawn
- Change reluctance

Spiritual

- Loss of purpose
- Anger at God
- Ennui
- Pervasive hopelessness
- Questioning beliefs

Interpersonal

- Envy
- Isolation
- Mistrust of friends
- Less intimacy
- Intolerance
- Impact on parenting

Physical

- Dizziness
- Aches and pains
- Impaired immune system
- Digestion issues
- Sweating

Each of us finds his unique vehicle for sharing with others his bits of wisdom.

-Ram Dass

Share an experience of CF.

How to Treat Compassion Fatigue:

Step 1:

After a storm comes a calm.

Step 2:

-Matthew Henry

Step 3:



How to Treat Compassion Fatigue:

Step 1: Recognize it

Step 2:

Step 3:

After a storm comes a calm.

-Matthew Henry



How to Treat Compassion Fatigue:

Step 1: Recognize it

Step 2: Accept it

Step 3:

After a storm comes a calm.

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How to Treat Compassion Fatigue:

Step 1: Recognize it


After a storm comes a calm.

-Matthew Henry

Step 2: Accept it

Step 3: Care for it

Sharing is accepting. You 2/3rds done!



The best preparation for good work
tomorrow is to do good work today.
-Elbert Hubbard

How to care for Compassion Fatigue?

Compassion for others begins with kindness to ourselves.
-Pema Chödrön

A detailed landscape painting of a mountain valley. In the foreground, a grassy slope leads down to a calm lake. Several cows are grazing on the grass in the lower right. The lake reflects the surrounding mountains and trees. In the background, majestic mountains rise under a clear blue sky. The overall scene is peaceful and serene.

Self-Compassion Promotes Self-Care

Self-Compassion is not:

- Self-Pity (isolating)
- Self-Esteem (judging)
- Self-Indulgence (harming)
- Self-Criticism (escalating)

With self-compassion you don't have to feel better than others to feel good about yourself.

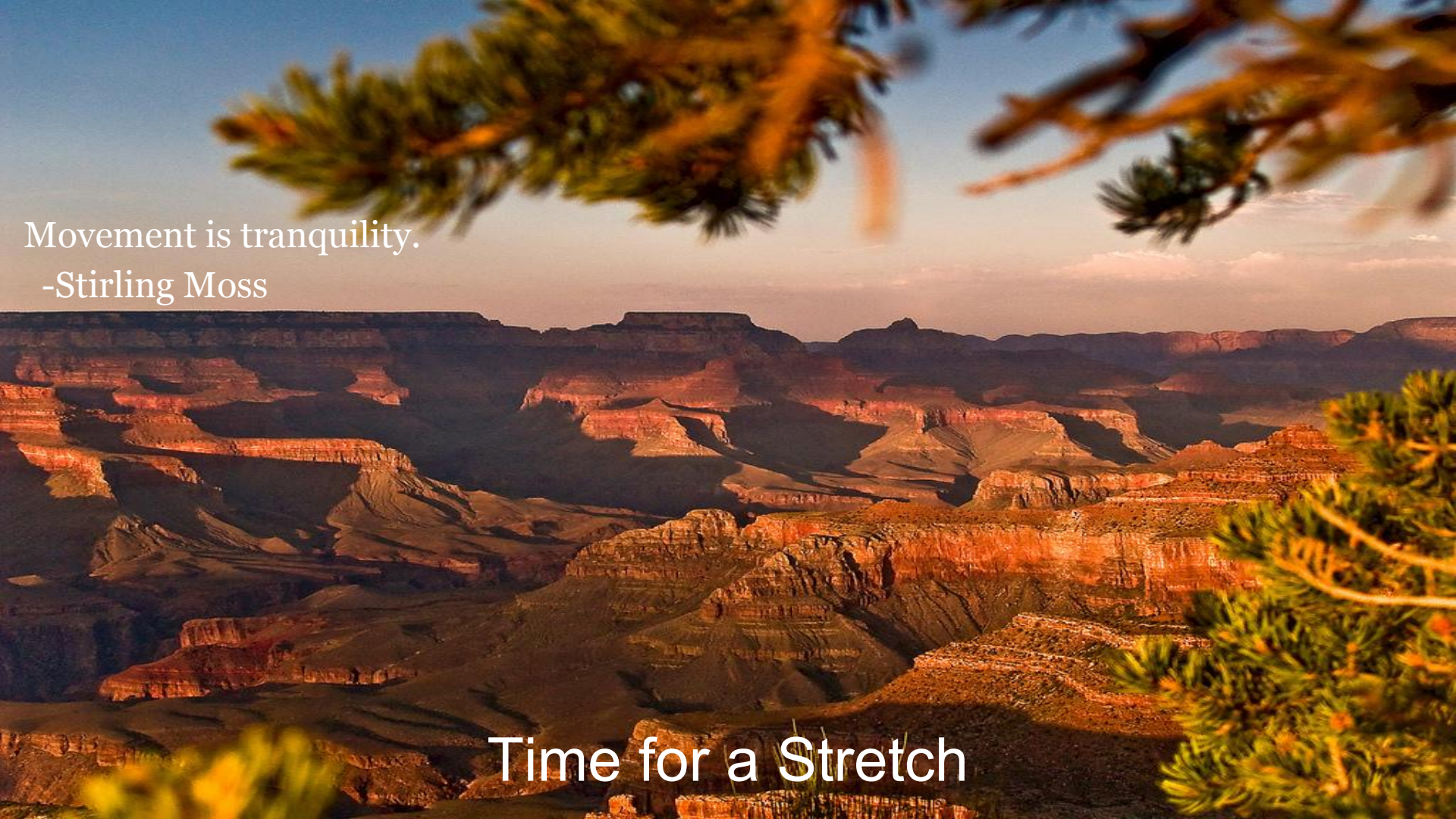
-Kristen Neff



Self-Compassion recipe (equal parts):

- Self-Kindness
- Common Humanity
- Mindfulness

Three components of Self-Compassion



Movement is tranquility.

-Stirling Moss

Time for a Stretch

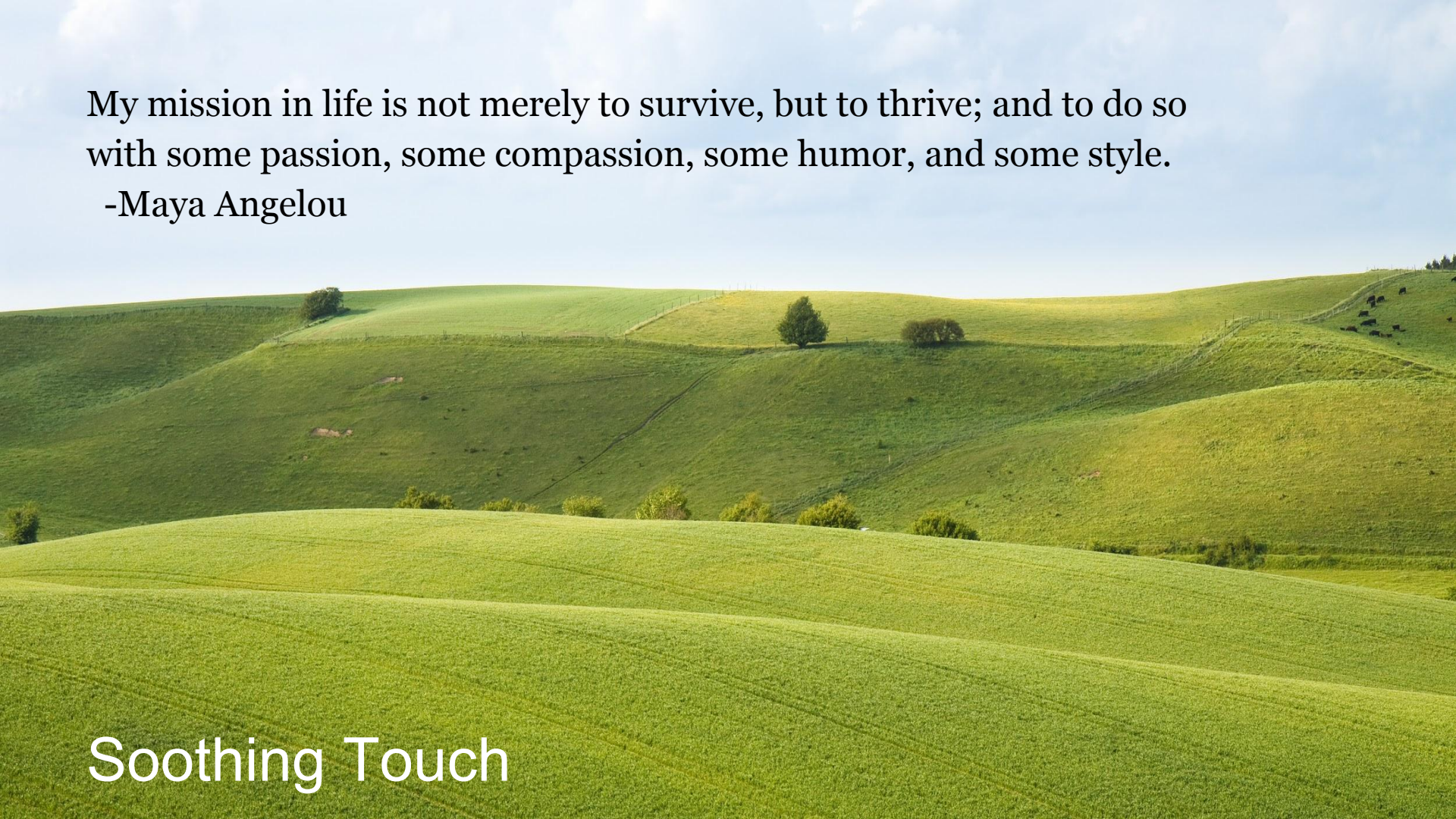


Dr. Kristin Neff on Self-Compassion

My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and some style.

-Maya Angelou

Soothing Touch



The more you know yourself, the more patience
you have for what you see in others.

-Erik Erikson

Send Goodwill to Others

Repeat in your mind:

May I be safe

May I be happy

May I be healthy

May I live with ease

The time is always right to
do what is right.


-Martin Luther King, Jr.

Self-Compassion Meditation

Mindfulness helps you go home to the present. And every time you go there and recognize a condition of happiness that you have, happiness comes.

-Thich Nhat Hanh

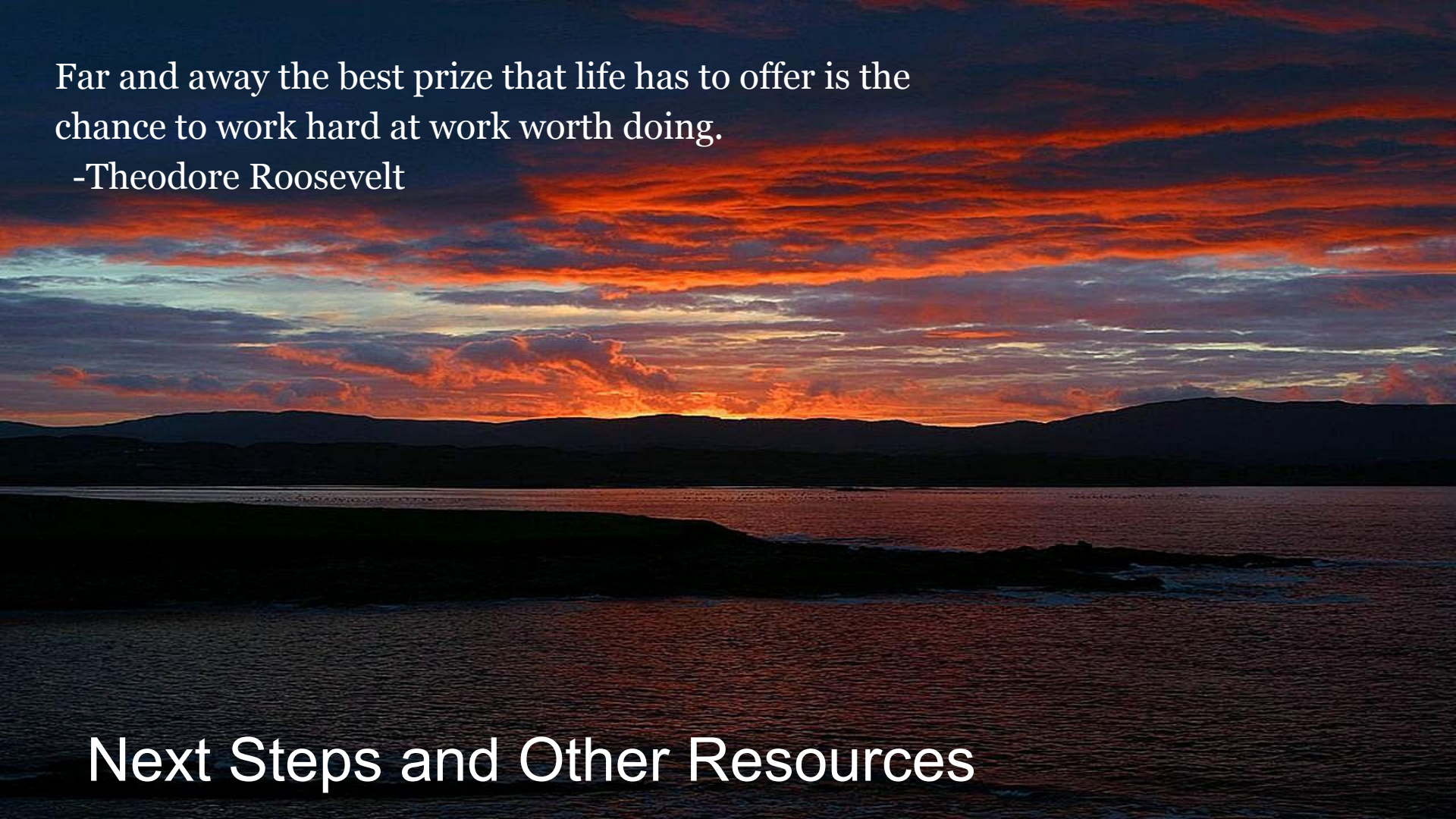
How was that?

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- Learn to say “No”
 - Take a break
 - Challenge your critical self-talk
 - Start a S.C. journal
 - 1 minute meditation
 - Write a letter to yourself

More Self-Compassion Opportunities

- Check-ins at start of meetings.
- How do you like to be appreciated?
- Respecting different coping styles.
- Honoring and discussing the struggle.
- Be real, be a human at work.

Self-Compassion at Work



Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is the
chance to work hard at work worth doing.

-Theodore Roosevelt

Next Steps and Other Resources

Online:

Kristin Neff's Self-Compassion site:

self-compassion.org

Compassion Fatigue Awareness Project:

compassionfatigue.org

Greater Good In Action Practices site:

ggia.berkeley.edu

Books:

“Man’s Search for Meaning”
by Viktor E. Frankl

“When Things Fall Apart”
by Pema Chödrön

“The Mindful Path to Self-
Compassion”
by Christopher Germer

Use Your Employee Assistance Program!

Your mind will answer most questions if you learn to relax and wait for the answer.

-William S. Burroughs

- What did you like from today?
- How can you be kind to yourself?
- What if you chose to do nothing?
- Any Questions?

Nothing will work unless you do.
-Maya Angelou