

**The BRAIN TRUST NETWORK [BTN]**  
**Meeting Notes**

**Tuesday, January 14, 2020**  
**4:30-5:30 pm**  
**UTEP Health Science Center and School of Nursing Building**  
**Room 384**

**Attending:**

Maria Carrillo, Sgt. Mayra Ramos, Enrique Mata, Manny Castruita, Dr. Beth Abbott, Kathy Revtyak, Olivia Narvaez, Valerie Barela, Dr. Krista Powell, Armando Ramirez, Guadalupe Quezada, Claudia Fuentes, Kenia Sawyer, Aida Gonzalez, Maria Martinez, Joanne Wieters, Dr. Amy Field, Juan Aguilera

**Welcome and Introductions:**

Ms. Maria Carrillo convened the meeting at 4:30 pm and called for brief introductions.

**Special Presentation - ""The importance of Self-care" Ms. Maria Carrillo, Behavioral Health Services Administrator at Centro de Salud Familiar La Fe** provided a presentation and several activities to reinforce the importance of self-care. Her closing activity was a self-care bingo exercise that allowed the group to reflect on how many self-care-oriented actions a person practices on any given week. Ms. Carrillo responded to numerous questions resulting in a lively discussion from the group. Presentation slides are included with these notes.

**Updates:**

Sergeant Mayra Ramos reported that the El Paso County Jail system now has a program called Project Chance. On January 14<sup>th</sup> the first 30 inmate participants graduated from the program. This effort started on September 30, 2019 and is intended to help reduce the likelihood of inmates recidivating back into the justice system after reentry into the community. The support classes range from MS Word to Mental Health First Aid and include health, housing and employment assessments.

Manny Castruita reported that El Paso Independent School District is working with El Paso Child Guidance Center to maximize the services available from Office of the Attorney General Violence Against Women funding. He added that the efforts to improve mental health support in schools, such as adding in the Social Emotional Learning programming is starting to see some barriers to implementation.

Dr. Krista Powell reported that the UTEP Counseling Center is planning for a mental health awareness week during the spring semester. For more information contact Krista Powell at [kgpowell@utep.edu](mailto:kgpowell@utep.edu).

Valerie Barela commented that the UTEP Collegiate Recovery Program is planning activities for Alcohol Awareness Week and a "Recovery Ally Training" this training is designed to help equip students, faculty, and staff with additional skills to interact with students in recovery or with a substance use disorder. The objectives of the training are to reduce stigma and to increase awareness about the millions of individuals living in healthy recovery across the country. For more information contact Valerie Barela at [vnbarela@utep.edu](mailto:vnbarela@utep.edu).

Olivia Narvaez commented that Region 19 has a new "Homeless Liaison," Manuel Adaluto. As a region they are working to collaborate on trainings for McKinney-Vento students. For more information, contact Olivia Narvaez at: [oanarvae@episd.org](mailto:oanarvae@episd.org).

**Next Meeting:**

The Brain Trust now has a standing meeting time of 4:30 pm every 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month.

**The Next Brain Trust Network meeting is scheduled for 4:30 pm, Tuesday, February 11<sup>th</sup> in room 384 at the UTEP Health Sciences Center and School of Nursing Building.**

# SELF-CARE BINGO

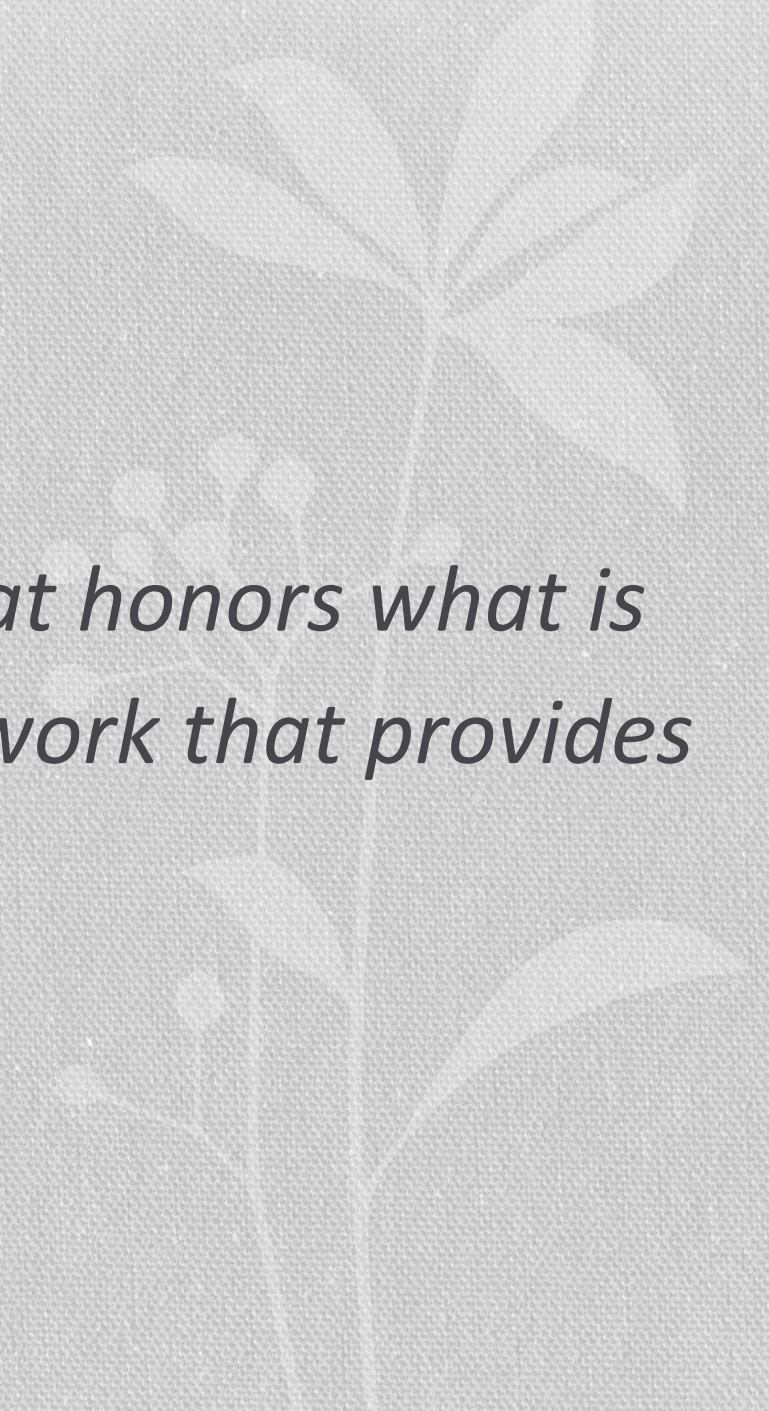
 TOOK A SHOWER	GOT DRESSED TODAY	 talked TO A friend	SAT WITH MY FEELINGS	 gave myself a compliment
MOVED MY BODY JOYFULLY	 ate food	LISTENED TO MY BODY	 CHALLENGED NEGATIVE THOUGHTS	HAD FUN
 WENT OUTSIDE	TRIED SOMETHING ≥NEW≤	STAYED ALIVE	practiced being mindful	 DID A HOBBY
used a coping skill	 LET MYSELF CRY	took a break	 ASKED FOR HELP	GOT SHIT DONE
 BRUSHED MY TEETH	practiced self compassion	 DRANK WATER	TREATED MYSELF	 got 7-9 hours of sleep



# **THE DISCIPLINE OF SELF CARE:**

**Deciding to take daily action and  
commitment**

COMMITMENT MEANS  
**STAYING LOYAL TO**  
WHAT YOU SAID YOU  
WERE GOING TO DO  
LONG **AFTER THE**  
**MOOD** YOU SAID IT IN  
HAS **LEFT YOU.**



*“Self-care is a discipline that honors what is sacred, including the hard work that provides meaning in our lives”.*

# What does the term self-care mean to you?

- Is it thinking of a treat, a spa day?
- Is it a luxury, you barely consider for yourself?



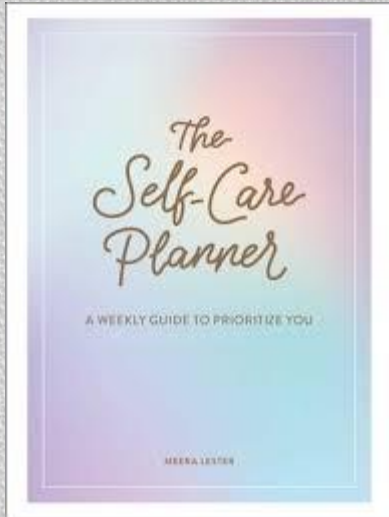
# And what about self-discipline?

- Does it instill great excitement in you – or dread and foreboding?

The Importance  
of  
Self-discipline

- Later
- Tomorrow
- Today
- NOW**

Whatever view we have of self-care and self-discipline, it is something that I believe we could all take more seriously.



We will explore and share the importance of self-care, a practical self-care plan and some greater detail of the components of health and well-being to include in your plan for completeness.



Health care systems are often more aligned with illness systems, than being focused on our health.

We reactively treat symptoms, rather than teaching people to create health and wellbeing. We go to seek help when we are sick.

While there is talk of people taking more responsibility for their health, many are unsure what that means, do not know what to do and relatively few are actively pursuing self-care methods on a routine basis.

*“The World Health Organization estimates that 80 percent of all heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes, as well as more than 40 percent of cancer, would be prevented if Americans would stop using tobacco, eat healthy, and exercise”. The authors actually challenge the figures and suggest that “very little Cancer today is genetic, maybe 10%, so let’s assume 90% of cancers is caused by diet, lifestyle & environmental factors”*

*(<https://mphprogramslist.com/chronic-disease-a-self-inflicted-pandemic/>). The authors talk of a “self inflicted pandemic”. It is time for us to turn that round. For us to make our wellbeing a priority.*

# So what can we do about it?

- Investing in ourselves, devoting time to reduce the busy-ness in our lives and prioritizing our health and wellbeing, looking at what brings us joy, vitality and nourishes our soul – surely this is worth pursuing to prevent us being the next health statistic.
- **It is about developing a disciplined self-care regime.**



Tami Forman in Forbes Magazine claims that *“It requires tough-mindedness, a deep and personal understanding of your priorities, and a respect for both yourself and the people you choose to spend your life with”*



It starts with awareness and that leads to you making a conscious choice.

What do you really want to improve in your own health and wellbeing?...

Want enough -that you will do something about it?



# Develop a Self-Care Plan

There are five core areas of health and wellbeing:

- physical
- mental
- emotional
- social
- spiritual



# The Discipline of Self Care: deciding to take daily action and commitment

- In each area pick ONE activity for this coming month and set yourself measurable targets to achieve (the best targets are realistic, yet stretch you a little bit, so that you feel really good when you achieve them).



	Activity Selected	Goal Set
Physical Health	Walking (along a site you like, or new park)	20 minutes 3 times a week
Mental Health	Learn something new	Watch 2 TED talks on a new topic of interest
Emotional Health	Gratitude Diary	Write out 3 things at the end of every day I am grateful for
Social Health	Connect with a friend	Schedule in a face to face meeting with a friend each week
Spiritual Health	Meditation	Set aside time to meditate for at least 10 minutes 3 times a week



# Ensure that you have clear measures and consider:

1. Including things that you really enjoy doing (don't make this a huge chore – build on things that make you smile and come alive)
2. How you will reward your disciplined action at the end of the month? What is a healthy reward that you can build on – a massage? A movie? Something that will motivate you when you don't feel like completing a task.
3. To whom will you make yourself accountable? This can be sharing your plan, so someone else checks in on how you are doing.

# Self Care Action Plan

My Signs of Burnout

My Stress Relievers

People I Can Reach Out To for Support

Helpful Reminders



Have fun and be creative with each area and each month change your plan to keep challenging yourself and keep moving yourself forward towards being your healthiest self.



# Physical Health

- This might include any number of physical activities such as Walking, Yoga, Swimming...take the stairs...get enough sleep...eat better, drink water



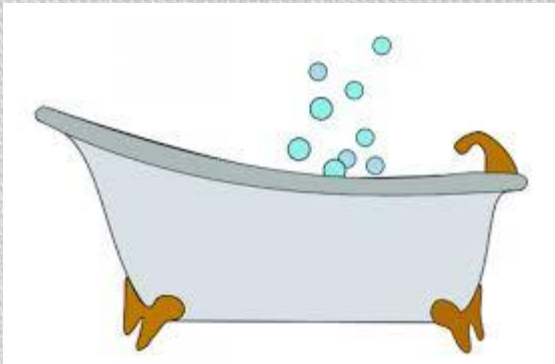
# Mental Health

- This is a wide area and may include: learning new things, having a gratitude practice, journaling, mindful coloring. Consciously working to ensure positive thoughts outweigh negative ones.
- Be mindful about what you focus on and give attention to. Finally, consider disconnecting from technology for a specified period of time to find stillness and quiet.



# Emotional Health

- There are an unlimited number of ways to enhance emotional health, some of my favorites include: meditation and relaxation techniques, learning to breathe well, soaking in a bath, exploring new mindfulness practices, going out in nature, music, laughter, doing something you love doing.
- Find simple pleasures that bring your focus on to positive emotions every day.



# Social Health

- As human beings we were made to live in community and we need to feel like we belong. So, find ways to really connect with others – and at least some of the time, pick happy people to connect with.
- Arrange to meet a friend. Join a club or group, find somewhere that you can ‘belong’.



# Spiritual Health

- Finally, spiritual health is all about doing work that is important to you.
- Finding that wider connection to others, to making a difference and reminding yourself that what you do matters.
- Look for signs of the impact you have in the world and spend time focusing on what is truly important to you.





**Health and wellbeing, in the main is a choice. We have to have an intention to deeply, and with discipline, care for ourselves and take action across all 5 areas of health to turn that into reality.**

