The Trauma Stewardship Institute’s MAP FOR MANAGING ONE’S LIFE

Day

Decision fatigue & cognitive overload can be debilitating. Simplify my surroundings & my routines. Be mindful of hydration + glucose levels. Track when my mental acuity is high and maximize those times.

Blood Pressure + Sympathetic Nervous System Activity

Immune System + Elevated Mood

6 days a week (unless medically advised against it), I’m getting my heart rate up and breaking a sweat. Thinking to myself: “Anything that has accumulated in my nervous system over the past 24 hours, may it be completely released so I can show up for this next 24 hours...”

Look outside, be outside. When I’m in a meeting, during a class, to work, to play, when I have a few mins for a break, if even for a moment or two, feel the unsailable power nature has on my health - on all levels.

When navigating a pandemic and systematic oppression and structural supremacy and the climate crisis and democracies in peril and my job/school and caretaking and my life in general...

< Reactivity • > Intentionality

In the spirit of striving to Do No Harm, I will pause and think before I speak/post/tweet/reply/engage.

Sleep = critical. What is my bedtime tonight? How can I sequence my evening so I can shut it down by then & not get into sleep-debt? Set a reminder: Give all my electronics and screens their own bed time, an hour before mine.

When and where possible, be around animals and take a moment to notice the reduction in stress hormones and how regenerating even a moment or two can be.

How’s my consumption? Need help with any of my addictions? Substances/screen time/caffeine/constantly criticizing/adrenaline/being over scheduled/shopping, etc?

Be mindful of my attempt to distance myself from my feelings.

Distance Be mindful of my attempt to distance myself from my feelings.

With news and social media, be deliberate and mindful if/when, both what I’m taking in and what I’m putting out.

Reminder: the degree to which I’m dedicated to social and environmental justice does not equal time spent digitally dialed in.

My brain feels broken!

What’s going well? What am I grateful for? What am I psyched about? Who can I thank? Repeat a-L-L day.

Have I done anything edifying for myself today? Actually connected with someone I care about? Taken a moment to laugh or find levity in a nourishing way? Be transported by art?

And if it’s been one of those days, I’ll remember Jeff Li’s mantra: “Forgive yourself every night, recommit every morning.”

Our systems & structures have a moral mandate & an ethical obligation to create sustainable environments within which we work, learn, and engage. When they do, let us pause, notice & give thanks. When that’s not the case, we can decide if/when/how to engage. While these choices may be fraught and complex, I hope refuge can be found in Howard Thurman’s offering: “Don’t ask yourself what the world needs. Ask yourself what makes you come alive and then go do that, because what the world needs, is people who have come alive.”

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