



Practical Strategies for Collective Care Workforce Briefing



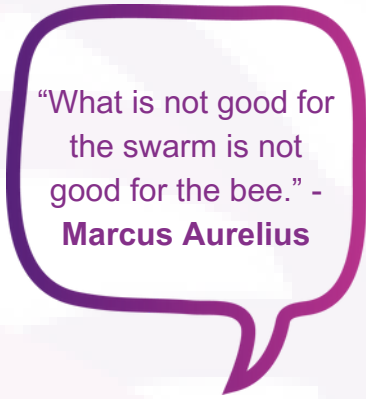
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Collective Care

What does Collective Care look like?

- This concept recognises that for us all to thrive, we need to think about every individual.
- Irrespective of our role, whether we have qualifications in mental health or not, every one of us is capable of contributing towards Collective Care.
- On a larger scale, this might include things like speaking up about injustices or advocating for organisational change when we know perhaps, we aren't hearing all the voices in our organisation.
- On a smaller yet equally important scale, Collective Care could be illustrated by stopping by a colleague's office to check on them or personally, doing something thoughtful to help a loved one.



“What is not good for the swarm is not good for the bee.” -
Marcus Aurelius

Collective Care can have positive impacts on self-care

Creating an organisational culture which champions Collective Care contributes to minimising the barriers that individuals may face in making time to practice self-care by:

- Integrating wellbeing into the daily functioning
- Resources and support are shared
- Prioritising wellbeing becomes a norm rather than a luxury

Principles of Collective Care

1. Empathetic understanding

- Everyone can listen to the feelings and needs of another person and receives the same in return.
- Empathy involves active listening, open-mindedness, and the willingness to see things from another person's perspective.

2. Respect

- A positive culture is driven by mutual respect irrespective of each individual's background, reducing the likelihood of conflicts.

3. Inclusion

- Diversity is celebrated on all levels e.g. all genders and sexual orientations, races and ethnicities, age groups, and abilities.

- Organisational policies and processes also promote diversity in every strand, providing equality of access to all.

4. Sharing responsibility

- Care and well-being for each other and ourselves is a mutual responsibility.
- This can be demonstrated through the fair sharing of work tasks or considering how our conduct impacts others, for example.

Strategies

Feedback mechanisms:

- Anonymous feedback will support in transparent, honest feedback which will support those who may otherwise be reluctant to express their views.
- feedback which can close the loop, reinforcing the fact that they will be part of the decision-making process and in turn, providing them with a sense of agency.

Regular Check-ins:

- Individual (if this is not practical then revert to groups) check-ins will support all organisation members to discuss their wellbeing and to review any adaptations/adjustments required. This ensures that they feel supported as well as valued.

Set up support systems/buddy groups:

- Support networks or buddy groups are another way of promoting collective wellbeing as peer support has been found consistently to be a protective factor.
- Individuals should be encouraged to discuss what they are comfortable with and line managers will recognise that our personal life can impact on our professional life and vice versa. Therefore, discussing personal challenges should be permitted.

Access to mental and physical wellbeing resources:

- As far as budgets will allow, there should be access to resources such as counselling, supervision, health education, lunchtime walking groups... there are plenty of other free but highly beneficial resources that could be provided.
- Regular training on how to practice self and collective care e.g. workshops, promotion of self-help apps etc.

Conclusion

Collective and self-care are fundamentals in everything organisational but especially those who support those who are experiencing the effects of trauma. For us to continue to do excellent work with children and young people, we must start to plan how we can look after ourselves and others.

Wider reading

Mitchell, P., and Burns, A. (2020). *Leading with Heart: Enacting Self-Care, Collective Care, and Justice*. Word and Deed Publishing Incorporated.

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