Self-care interview instructions

Conduct an interview with a classmate regarding stressors in her or his life and develop a self-care plan. Identify their behaviors (actions they are doing), thoughts (what they think about the stressor) and feelings (how they feel about the stressor). The stressors may be in area she or he: (1) is currently experiencing and/or (2) anticipates encountering this semester. Together, identify action steps to manage the stressors. Record the responses on the *Self-care interview* *form*. Submit the form to the Dropbox. Below are a few helpful hints on what to say to meet the objectives of the interview.

Greeting: “I’m \_\_\_\_\_ a student in an interviewing skills course at ETSU.”

Purpose: “The purpose of this interview is to develop a self-care plan. I’ll gather information from you that we’ll use to identify areas of stress in your life and together agree upon some ways you may manage and prevent stress.”

Induction: “I‘ll be asking you some questions and hope that you will share some information with me. How does that sound?”

Conditions of confidentiality: “I’ll be writing down some of the information we discuss. The course instructor will be reading it. Do not share any information that you are not comfortable sharing.”

Conducting the interview

* Explore both thoughts and feelings. Clients may not tell their feelings unless you ask.
* Avoid what and why questions (discourages the expression of feelings).

\*other ways to get information: “tell me about,” “sounds like,” “you feel,” “please

continue,” “as I understand it,” “you seem,” & “and that makes you feel?”

* Ask open-ended questions (those that don’t require a “yes” or “no” answer).
* Pay attention to non-verbal behaviors – eyes, posture, arms & legs, facial expressions.
* Feel free to use their own words in quotations i.e., he stated that he feels “betrayed.”
* Take notes you’ll need to complete the form while minimizing the impact on the interview.

Problem-solving: Determine the action steps in #2 together. Be sure the interviewee agrees to the action steps. Ask for their ideas i.e., (1) something that worked before when they were under stress, (2) something they’ve wanted to do or interests them that they think would be helpful/fun, (3) something that directly targets the stressor and/or

(4) choose from the list of *stress reducers*. Help the interviewee to consider and choose action steps that they will do for each stressor.

Action steps (objectives) need to be specific and measurable.

vague – get more exercise

rather – go to the CPA on Mondays and Wednesdays at 2:00 p.m. and do the treadmill for

½ an hour

not – study harder

rather – go to the library on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. for one hour

not – eat better

rather – have fruit and cereal/oatmeal/yogurt for breakfast Monday through Friday

not – spend more time with spouse

rather – cook a meal together every Saturday night

Self-care interview form - examples

Below are the two sections of the *Self-care interview form.* For each section, there is an example of how to complete the form. It is important to thoroughly answer the categories.

1. Identify and describe (behaviors, thoughts and feelings) 3 stressors (i.e., school,

family, work, finances, health, relationships, balancing responsibilities, time

management, social life) that she or he is experiencing or anticipates encountering this

semester.

a. stressor: Getting school work done. My partner is a single mother of a 9-year-old

daughter and an 11-year-old son. She is taking 15 credit-hours at ETSU. She works

part-time at a large home improvement store. My partner gets her children off to

school and then goes to school or work. By the time she gets home at night, she is

“wiped out.” She needs to get supper for the children, help with their homework,

“spend a little family time” and put them to bed. When this is through, she has little

energy to do her assignments. My partner stated “I sometimes dread having to figure

out how to get all my assignments done.” Readings, papers, forms, and tests are

already piling up. She worries that she will fall too far behind.

feelings about stressor: burdened, torn, smothered, “beat-up,” and stretched.

2. Action steps to manage stressors identified in #2:

a. activity: Regular study time built into weekly schedule.

frequency/duration: Each night, Monday through Thursday, for the next five weeks,

the family will meet from 7:00 to 8:00 for study hour. During this hour my partner

will: (1) help her children with their homework as needed and (2) organize and

prioritize her schoolwork to be done. She will then have family time and put the

children to bed by 9:30. She will study until 10:30.