

June 23, 2022

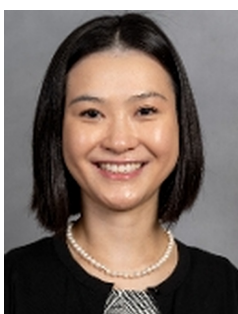
Checking in: Self-Care and Anti-Racist Work

Happy Thursday, Mount Sinai Community –

This week, we're discussing a topic that is critical to our anti-racist work, but too often overlooked: self care. Anti-racist change is not easy—and this hard but important work can take a toll on all of us, especially when combined with our professional and personal responsibilities and current events like the pandemic, increased racist attacks, and political upheaval that threatens fundamental rights.

First, we need to simply acknowledge the impacts this can have on all of us. To dig a little deeper, we spoke with **Scarlett S. Ho, PhD, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Director of Training at the Center for Stress, Resilience and Personal Growth**, to discuss what self care is, how we can incorporate it into our daily lives, and what Mount Sinai resources are available to support it.

According to the World Health Organization, “self care” is the ability of individuals, families, and communities to promote and maintain health, prevent disease, and to cope with illness and disability.



Scarlett told us that this ability lies within all of us:

“We are health care workers, but we are also human beings with ongoing personal and professional needs. We should think of self care as part of our competencies as humans—something that can be developed in a way that is unique to each of our idiosyncrasies and eccentricities, and fits our needs.”

Finding Micro-Moments

While self care is not one size fits all, Scarlett shared a few ways that each of us can find what she calls “micro-moments” in our day that promote self care. Examples include:

- **Try the "two feet, one breath" technique** – “before you walk into an examination room or meeting, consciously pause for an instant. During that instant, feel both of your feet on the floor, and then take one conscious breath, before you enter the room.”
- **Create a dedicated space to take care of yourself** – “not just a mental space, but a physical space that separates work from personal time, helping compartmentalize feelings and enabling your environment to match the moment.”

She also emphasized the importance of **community** in self care, telling us that:

“The challenge is seeing suffering and developing a compassion not only for others, but for ourselves. **You are not alone in your feelings, whether about the work of being a strong ally or from lived experience as a person of color in America.** It is so important to have people around who can share what you’re going through and be there for you as you process what’s going on.”



If you want to learn more, Mount Sinai’s **Center for Stress, Resilience, and Personal Growth (CSRPG)** provides confidential one-on-one behavioral health support, evidence-based, resilience-building workshops, on-site assistance, and a **Wellness Hub app** with a range of digital resources. To learn more, e-mail MS-CSRPG@mountsinai.org or call 212-659-5564.

Hopefully CSRPG and Mount Sinai's other **well-being resources** can support self care for all us of and, as Scarlett stated, further enrich our community’s vision of caring for one another.

MSHS Wellness Resources

Upcoming Events

Chats for Change: Deeper Dive Series | White Supremacy Culture

Characteristics: One Right Way — Join Chats for Change on **Tuesday, June 28, at noon** to discuss what happens in our work and learning environments when the belief in “one right way” of doing things is used to establish perfectionist standards based on values that obscure racist, classist, and gender-conforming hierarchies of power. [Register here](#).

[Road Map for Action](#)

[Past Bulletins](#)