



COVID-19 as a Grief Experience

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Tending to Self

We will be discussing challenging topics that can elicit uncomfortable feelings.

Please tend to yourself:

- Breathe in for a count of four and exhale for a count of six.
- Take a sip of ice water and trace the water down as you drink it.
- Look up from the screen and notice three things in your space.
- Stand up and stretch.

Why the Wendt Center?



“No one should have to
grieve alone.”

~ William “Bill” Wendt
Founder of Wendt Center
circa 1977

These are not normal times

YOU ARE NOT JUST
WORKING/PARENTING/CARING/
EXISTING. YOU ARE LIVING DURING
MULTIPLE CRISES TRYING TO WORK.

The Weight of it All



This is Grief



No opportunity to say good-bye



Triggering of past events

Pandemic Fatigue

Ambiguity

Exhaustion

Decision
fatigue

Desire to
return to what
was

Anxiety

Lack of
patience

“Sticky” Feelings in Grief

Guilt

- Journaling
- Radical transparency
- Voices of honest encouragement

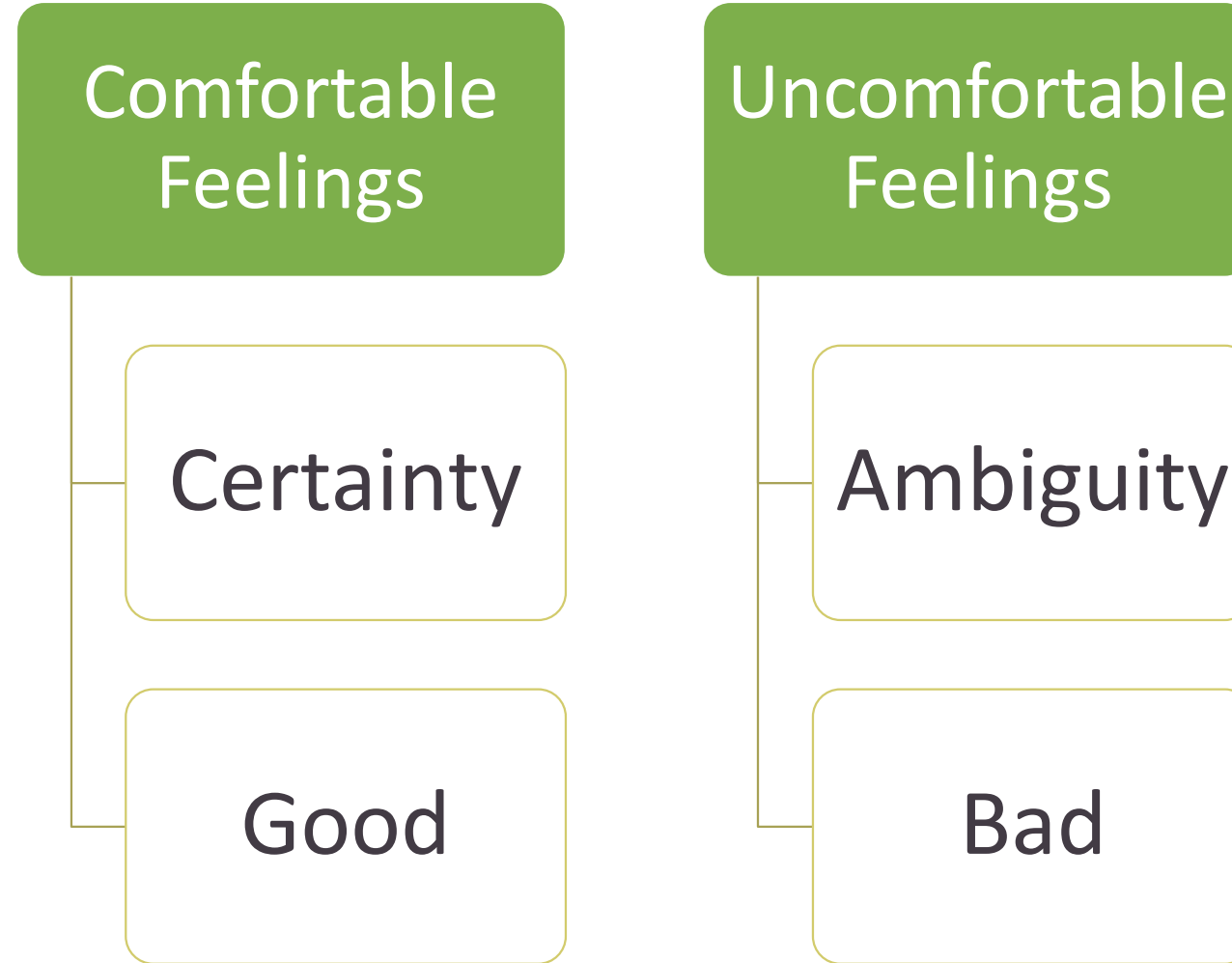
Anxiety

- Longer exhale
- Mantras
- Grounding techniques

Anger

- Safe ways to express and release anger
- Exercise or movement
- Advocacy or making tangible change

Increasing Tolerance



Burnout vs Vicarious Trauma

Burnout

Emotional exhaustion

Reduced professional efficacy

Feelings of negativity or cynicism related to your job

Energy depletion

Vicarious Trauma

State of tension

Preoccupation with stories/trauma experiences to which you are exposed

Lasting impact on our perceptions of the world

Can impact performance and result in errors



Automatic Thoughts



Where do I begin?

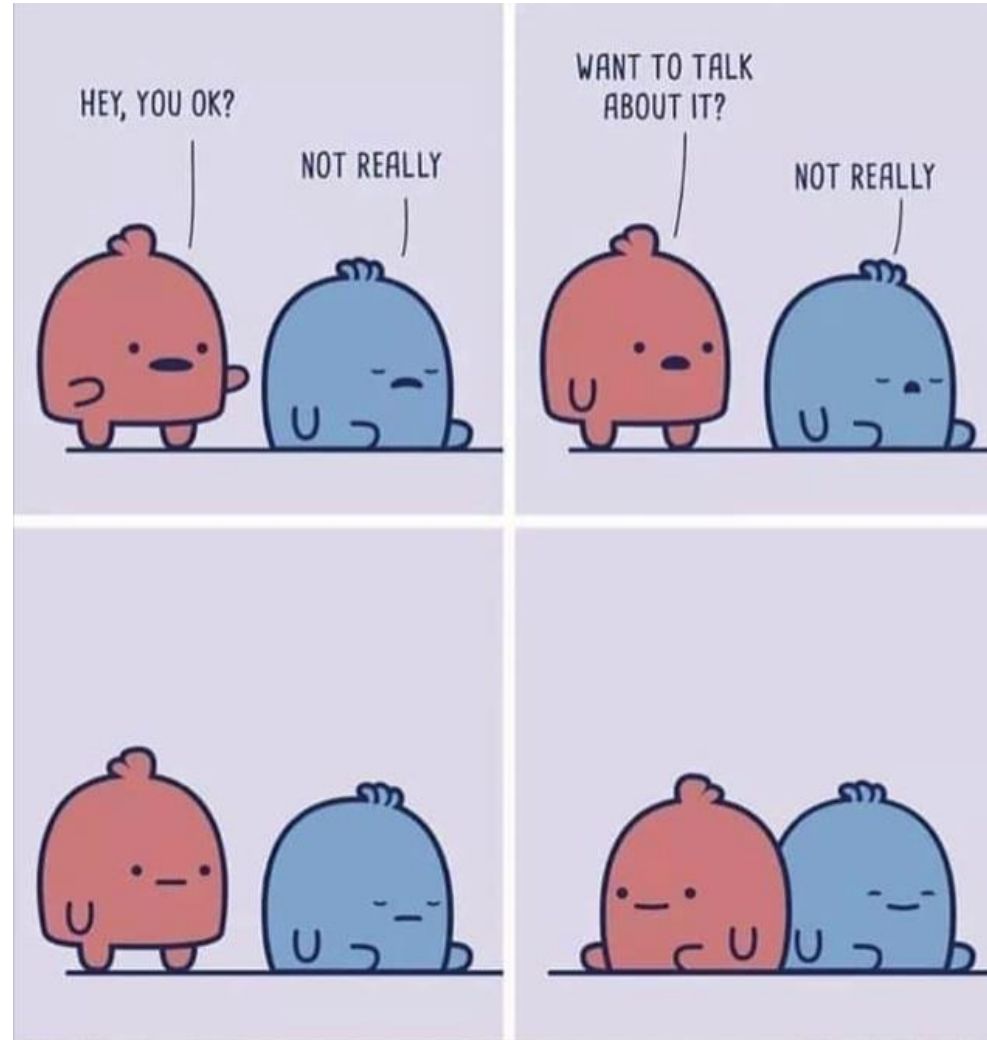


This is a moment of suffering
Suffering is a part of life
May I be kind to myself
May I give myself the compassion I need
-Kristin D. Neff

Compassion for Self



But What Do I Say?





Release



Restore

Take Micro-Breaks

Listen to a recorded meditation or breathing exercise.

Love on your pet or give yourself a hug.

Take a moment to breathe in a soothing scent.

List three things for which you are grateful.

Turn up your favorite song and sing in a loud voice.

Wash your hands mindfully.

Eat a mint when you feel anxiety rising.

Drink water regularly throughout the day.

Start meetings at five minutes after instead of the hour

Importance of Transition

Before COVID-19, transitions were automatic or built-in:

- Commuting home from work
- Leaving work items at the office
- Walking to your desk after a meeting
- Changing out of work clothes

Now, transitions must be more intentional:

- Safely getting outside
- Putting away your work
- Visually grounding after a meeting
- Giving yourself cues that work is over

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