



# The Ethics of Self Care

Basic needs to create a  
lifelong career as a  
therapist.

ASHLEY MCKENNA LPCC

**Dr Kristen Neff on Self Compassion**

**<https://self-compassion.org>**

### **Hand-on-Heart**

**When you notice you're under stress, take 2-3 deep, satisfying breaths.**

**Gently place your hand over your heart, feeling the gentle pressure and warmth of your hand. If you wish, place both hands on your chest, noticing the difference between one and two hands.**

**Feel the touch of you hand on your chest. If you wish, you could make small circles with your hand on your chest.**

**Feel the natural rising and falling of your chest as you breathe in and as you breathe out.**

**Linger with the feeling for as long as you like.**

**Some people feel uneasy putting a hand over the heart. Feel free to explore where on your body a gentle touch is actually soothing.**

# Self Care as an Ethical Issue

Without self-care, there's not good patient care," John C. Norcross PhD says.

“Integrating it into a routine becomes easier when you see it not as an additional burden but as part of your profession and craft.”

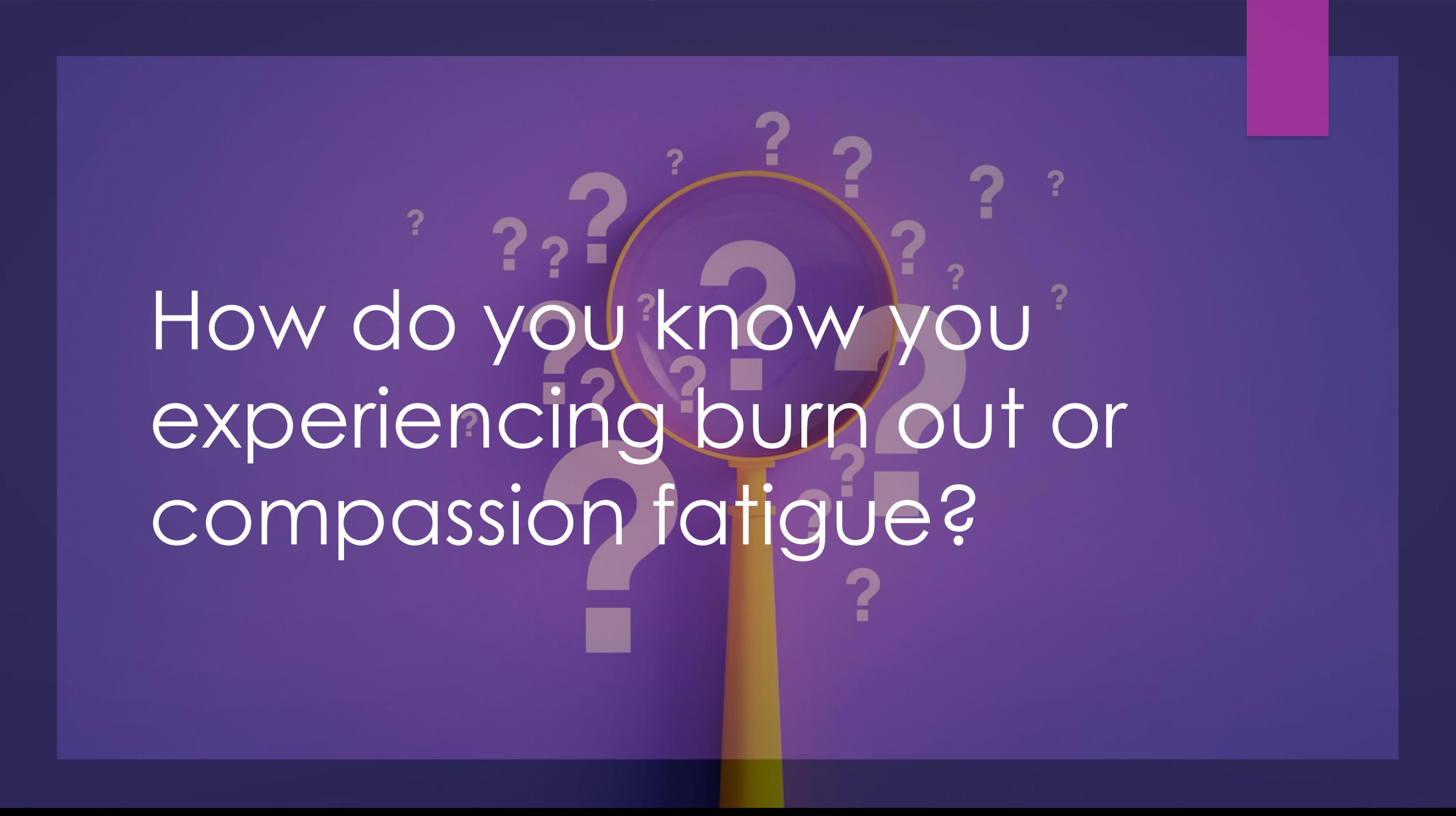


# What does your code of ethics say?

- ▶ **The 2014 ACA Code of Ethics includes the statement that “counselors engage in self-care activities to maintain and promote their own emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing to best meet their professional responsibilities” (Introduction to Section C, Professional Responsibilities)**
- ▶ **C.2.g. Impairment Counselors monitor themselves for signs of impairment from their own physical, mental, or emotional problems and refrain from offering or providing professional services when impaired. They seek assistance for problems that reach the level of professional impairment, and, if necessary, they limit, suspend, or terminate their professional responsibilities until it is determined that they may safely resume their work.**
- ▶ **Counselors assist colleagues or supervisors in recognizing their own professional impairment and provide consultation and assistance when warranted with colleagues or supervisors showing signs of impairment and intervene as appropriate.**



The self-care language in the NASW Code of Ethics is **aspirational and not prescriptive**. Adherence to professional self-care cannot be easily measured and is therefore seen more as a goal that social workers and organizations should STRIVE to uphold and achieve.



How do you know you  
experiencing burn out or  
compassion fatigue?

## Professional Quality of Life



Professional Quality of Life (proQOL) is intended for any helper - health care professionals, social service workers, teachers, attorneys, emergency response, etc. Understanding the positive and negative aspects of helping those who experience trauma and suffering can improve your ability to help them and your ability to keep your own balance.

# Measuring CS & CF: The Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL)

- ▶ **The ProQOL is free**
- ▶ **A 30 item self report measure of the positive and negative aspects of caring**
- ▶ **The ProQOL measures Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue**
- ▶ **Compassion Fatigue has two subscales**
  - ▶ **Burnout**
  - ▶ **Secondary Trauma**





# ProQOL Health

ProQOL Health was developed to serve healthcare workers improve their self-care and over all well-being by explaining key concepts.

[www.proqol.org](http://www.proqol.org)

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

## **PERCEIVED SUPPORT**

**PERCEIVED SUPPORT IS YOUR SENSE OF HAVING ACCESS TO EFFECTIVE ASSISTANCE WHEN YOU NEED IT.**

**SUPPORT CAN TAKE MANY FORMS INCLUDING CARRYING OUT TASKS FOR US WHEN OUR OWN CAPACITY IS OVERWHELMED,**



## COMPASSION SATISFACTION

**COMPASSION SATISFACTION IS THE PLEASURE YOU DERIVE FROM THE FEELING OF BEING EFFECTIVE IN YOUR WORK AS A HEALTH WORKER.**

**FOR EXAMPLE, YOU MAY FEEL LIKE IT IS A PLEASURE TO HELP OTHERS**

**THROUGH YOUR WORK. YOU MAY FEEL POSITIVELY ABOUT YOUR COLLEAGUES OR YOUR ABILITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE WORK SETTING OR THE GREATER GOOD OF SOCIETY.**

## **BURNOUT**

**BURNOUT REFERS TO FEELINGS OF HOPELESSNESS AND EXHAUSTION THAT MAKE IT DIFFICULT**

**TO BE EFFECTIVE AT WORK. THESE FEELINGS TYPICALLY START SLOWLY AND GET WORSE OVER TIME.**





## SECONDARY TRAUMATIC STRESS

Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS) is about your work-related, secondary exposure to traumatically stressful events such as witnessing terrible suffering, violence or death. STS often starts suddenly following particularly difficult experiences.



## **MORAL DISTRESS**

**Health workers are sometimes faced with difficult situations and choices. At times we are forced by circumstance, or instructed, to act in ways that conflict with our personal values, beliefs and morality.**

**It is these parts of our work that may result in lasting inner turmoil that can negatively affect our quality of life.**



# Resiliency Planning

## Individual, personally

- The ProQOL can help you plan where to put your energy to increase our resilience

## Organizational planning

- Can help organizations find ways to maximize the positive aspects and reduce the negative aspects of helping

## Supportive Supervision

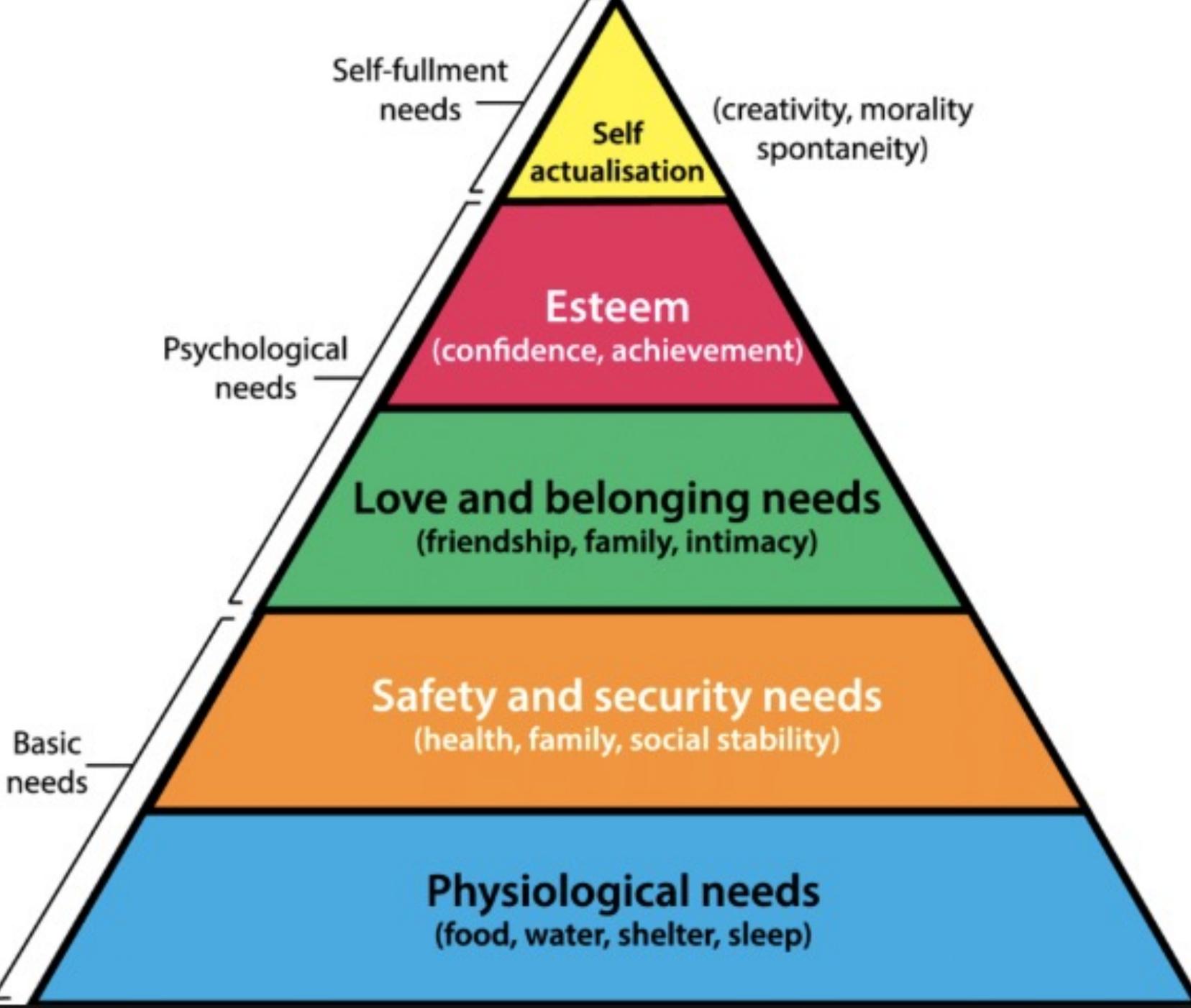
- The ProQOL can be used as information for discussions





# Survival is not Self Care

PUTTING YOUR MASK ON FIRST IS NOT SELF CARE. IT IS SURVIVAL MODE.



# Basic Needs of Being Human



# Moving from survival to self care

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Your basic needs to stay alive are sleep, food, water, breathing, bathing and connection. Engaging in these basic levels of functioning are not self care, they are survival.

Staying in a place of survival leaves people in a desperate place not allowing a reset from trauma or depression.



# Self Compassion Dr. Kristin Neff

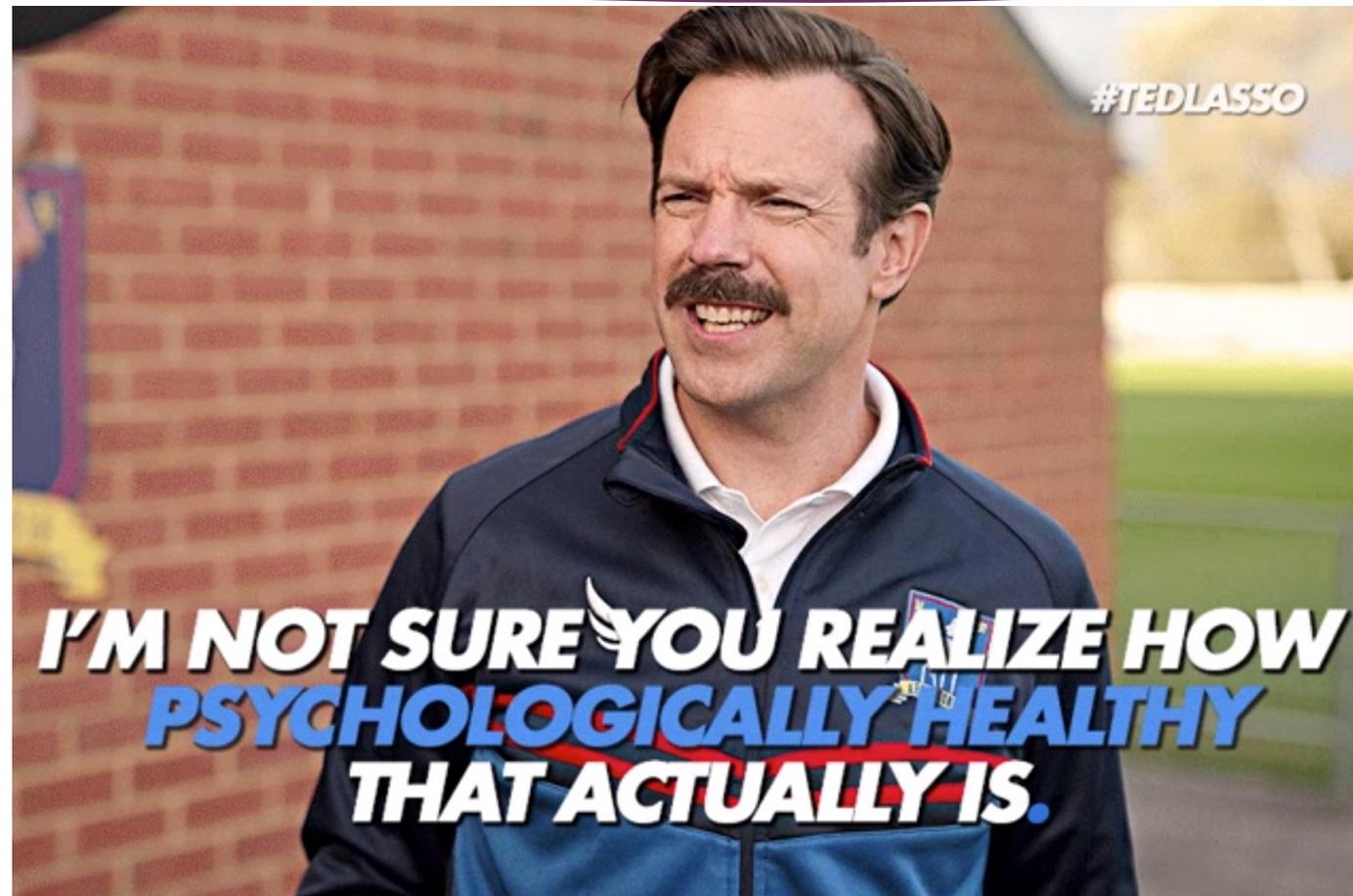
“When we hold negative thoughts and feelings in nonjudgmental awareness, we are able to pay attention to them without getting stuck like Velcro.

**With self-compassion, we give ourselves the same kindness and care we’d give to a good friend.**



**“The beauty of self-compassion is that instead of replacing negative feelings with positive ones, new positive emotions are generated by embracing the negative ones.**

# Being a Therapist is Sustainable!





*SCAN ME*