Self-Care: Leave Them at the Door

Keep this. It's the whole course in writing: the four chapters, the ideas that came up, and where they come from. The test is open-handout.

Quick thing before you start. Probably a good idea to check your own agency's ethics and boundaries first. Makes sense, right?

H.E.L.P. is a fictional agency and its people are made up. The crew's routines are teaching examples, not Ohio requirements. This course doesn't supply your agency's handoff, coverage, on-call or documentation policy. Your own agency's does.

How the hour is built

This handout, read through once	**15 min**
The video, four chapters with Cookie and the H.E.L.P. crew	**13 min**
Your call: three practice situations	**7 min**
The test: 15 questions, 12 to pass, open-handout	**15 min**
Course evaluation and certificate	**6 min**
Total designed time	**about 1 hour**

Designed time is the course read and done the way it's laid out. How fast you move through it is up to you.

What's required, and what's optional

Ohio's peer supporter ethics code includes conduct that supports your own recovery and resiliency, healthy behaviors, and participant confidentiality. The crew's routines and reflection questions are optional tools. There's no required hobby, leisure activity or three-part evening routine.

Chapter 1 · The pull

A conversation can be over while you're still having it in your head. Sometimes you're worried about somebody. Sometimes their story reminds you of something from your own recovery.

Notice what stays with you

An old memory doesn't, by itself, prove relapse. It also doesn't mean you should dismiss it. Is this passing through? Am I getting more distressed? Are cravings showing up or getting stronger? What support would help?

> If cravings or distress are increasing, reach out to appropriate recovery or professional support. You don't have to wait for a crisis. Being someone who offers support doesn't use up your turn to receive it.

Chapter 2 · Leave them at the door

Finish your work responsibilities first

Before going off duty:

- Follow the documentation and handoff process for your role.
- Confirm coverage as required.
- Resolve unclear responsibilities through your agency's process.
- Follow applicable on-call and safety procedures.

A transition routine adds to these responsibilities. It doesn't replace them.

Try a small transition cue

Putting away your work lanyard. Changing clothes. Playing a familiar song. Taking a short walk. Asking for a few quiet minutes when you get home. These may help mark a change. They don't have to remove every feeling.

Share how you feel, protect their story

You can say, "I had a hard day, and I'm feeling unsettled." You can ask for company, comfort or quiet without describing a participant's situation.

Leaving out a name may not protect identity. Other details can identify someone. Use appropriate confidential supervision or agency channels for work-specific discussion.

Chapter 3 · The blanket pile

Build a list that fits your life

Rest, enjoyment, connection, movement, solitude and recovery support may meet different needs. Cookie's check-in questions:

REST	ENJOY	CHANGE
Did I get some?	Am I enjoying this?	Would I like something different now?

Consider access, too: the time, money and energy you have. A useful option doesn't have to cost money or take a whole free weekend. The crew's meeting, fishing and television examples aren't a ranking or a required recovery pathway.

Chapter 4 · The routine

Three optional reflection questions

1. What helps me finish the workday?
2. What do I enjoy or look forward to?
3. What changes in myself might tell me I need some support?

There's no score. Changes might include sleeping differently, pulling away, irritability or checking work messages long after your shift. These are things to explore in context, not diagnoses.

Look at the work, too

A personal routine can't solve every workplace problem. Bring concrete concerns to supervision: "I'm staying late most days." "Coverage is unclear." "That conversation has been staying with me." Look at workload, breaks, coverage and available support together. Supervision can address work concerns. You may need additional recovery or professional support alongside it.

Which kind of guidance is this?

- **Ohio requirements.** The ethics code addresses your own recovery and resiliency, healthy behaviors, and participant privacy and confidentiality.
- **Professional principles.** Looking at workplace conditions, rest and organizational support is consistent with the U.S. Surgeon General's workplace well-being framework. It isn't presented here as a new Ohio certification requirement.
- **Suggested tools.** The transition cue, the lanyard, the activity list and the three reflection questions are teaching examples. They aren't validated screening tools or required practices.
- **Personal experience.** What helps a character is an example, not a prediction about what will help you.

Sources

1. Ohio Administrative Code, Rule 5122-29-15.1, paragraph (N)(4)(e) and (h), code of ethics.
2. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Surgeon General, Framework for Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being.

The sample conversations and wording in this course are original teaching examples, not quotations from these sources. The stories told by Cookie and Taco are fictional teaching examples. No CEU approval, credit-hour or certification claim is made here.