

-- Speaker 1 00:00:26 Welcome to a new episode of Dr. MCs self-care cabaret podcast. I'm your host, Theresa Melito-Conners a PhD level self-care expert in the greater Boston area with a passion for helping others recognize the importance of caring for themselves today. Before we dive into the interview, I'd like to chat with you about the 10 domains of self-care. When we talk about self-care, this is not bubble baths and mani/pedis. This research comes from Dr. Cook cotton, and I regularly reference this a lot, the different domains of self-care, but I realize I haven't talked about it on my podcast. So here we go. So the 10 domains, brief overview, and please don't let this be overwhelming to you. I'm not saying you have to do all these things every single day to hit every single domain. That's not realistic, but think about, you know, maybe where you have some areas of strength or where you have some areas of weakness.

Speaker 1 00:01:18 So the first domain is the nutrition and hydration domain. Generally speaking, we need to eat more and drink more water. We're chronically dehydrated. So here's where we can get into, you know, maybe mindful eating or intuitive eating and just setting ourself up for success in how we feed our body and hydrate and make sure that we are doing that from a place of love, honoring our body and not from a place of restriction. The next domain is the exercise domain. You have to move your body, but here's the good news. It should be joyful. So reconnect with movement in ways that feel good. Doesn't have to be excessive or extreme, maybe five minute dance parties are your thing. They're certainly mine. So see though, how you can invite more joyful movement into your life. Next is soothing strategies. So this is where deep breathing can be really great.

Speaker 1 00:02:13 And other ways that we can soothe ourselves maybe sounds or tactile sensations or doing something creative can be great in this domain. Next is self-awareness and mindfulness, where we really see how we can invite more of just being in the present moment into our lives and how we make sure we're taking care of ourselves. And we're aware of our thought our bodies, our body, and our actions, and the next domain is the rest domain. Did you know that you should feel rested and restored when you wake up in the morning? I know seven to nine hours a night, but also, you know, plan restful breaks, take breaks, take a day off, use your paid time off. The next domain is our relationship domain. This is what we wanna spend, time and time for people who are good to us, who believe in us, support us, sustain us, encourage us, respect us.

Speaker 1 00:03:06 Our next domain is physical medical, where we want to make sure that we are engaging in the care of our physical body. By going to the doctor, making sure we have medical professionals who are partners with us in our healthcare. We go to the dentist and all that good stuff. Any specialists that you have to see that you take the time to do that, to keep up with that next is our environmental domain. This is where we want to, you know, evaluate our environments. Are they cluttered and chaotic and disorganized, or how do you, what, what type of schedule do you maintain? And your, you know, do you prioritize what's important to you or the demands of others? So we look at that. The next domain is self-compassion. And this is really about how you talk to yourself and about yourself, that you're coming from a place of love, kindly honoring challenges and difficulties, and not engaging in critical, harsh, judgmental, negative self talk.

Speaker 1 00:04:06 And lastly, but certainly not least is the spiritual domain. And this is where you want to see meaning for yourself, that you set goals and kind of see the larger purpose in life. You may want to take out time to help someone else maybe volunteer at a soup kitchen or spend time in a spiritual place, whatever that means for you. So that's a really quick overview of the 10 domains of self care. And again, maybe you can already see where you have some strengths and where you have some weaknesses. And if you take one new coping strategy, just one little thing that you're going to start doing, maybe it's increasing your hydration or working on getting your seven to nine hours of sleep every night, whatever it is start small, but you must start reprioritizing yourself. So you're putting your needs first. So --

-- without further delay, I am so excited today to welcome Dr.

Speaker 1 00:04:59 Christopher Willard to the podcast, Dr. Willard is a clinical psychologist, author and consultant based in Massachusetts, he has been invited to more than two dozen countries to speak and has presented at two Ted X events. He is the author of 20 books, including alpha breaths, growing up, mindful in how we grow through what we go through. His thoughts on mental health have been featured in the New York times, the Washington post mindful.org, cnn.com and elsewhere. He also teaches at Harvard medical school. I have been following Dr. Willard's work for several years now, and I regularly reference his materials in my presentations as well. I'm a big fan of his alpha breaths and the breathing book. I'm so excited for you to hear our conversation. So thank you so much, Dr. Willard for joining me this afternoon on the Dr. MC self care cabaret podcast. I'm delighted to chat with you.

Speaker 2 00:06:07 It's awesome to be together like virtually, but still to be, to be connected. Dr. MC. It's awesome to be here.

Speaker 1 00:06:13 Yeah. Thank you. So I wanna dive right in. I am just question number one. How do you like to practice self care?

Speaker 2 00:06:22 Whew. You know, I think one thing for me is that it, it evolves a lot over time, kind of, depending on what's going on. Like, you know, sometimes it's sleep sometimes it's exercise often it's it's meditation, um, and mindfulness, but I think doing something for myself that just feels like it's, it's not something I'm com actually just talking about this with a client today, but like saying it's not competitive. That just gets me not thinking about all that other stuff in my life. Like this client today was talking about rock climbing, being sort of his outlet. And so I think, you know, it's, it's doing anything that really kind of just gets me, gets me outta my head, um, in some ways, and again, I think that's, that's different at different times in my life. And, um, you know, these days it's spending time with my kids, which has been absolutely awesome. Um, but then that can get exhausting too. So <laugh> sure big, big range of stuff. Yeah. Yeah. That's awesome. Creative activities, like making things, writing things like these are also feel like really, really important to me. Yeah,

Speaker 1 00:07:25 Absolutely. Well, I think you touched upon several domains there in your answer talking about, you know, moving your body, mindfulness, of course, meditation can be a part of it, but also having those creative outlets is really cool. And I love how you said that it evolves over time. Mm-hmm <affirmative> I think that that's really important because a lot of times we get stuck in kind of what this idea of perfection should be. Mm-hmm <affirmative> and that we feel like, well, we have, we have to do it this way. And this is how I, you know, I've been taught to do it, but it's okay if that evolves or maybe you no longer like doing something, so you wanna shift and do something else.

Speaker 2 00:08:00 Absolutely. I think like at times in my life it's been like traveling and other times it's been, you know, cooking, you know, then the pandemic, I just got really sick of cooking. <laugh> <laugh>

Speaker 1 00:08:10 It was a lot of cooking during the pandemic.

Speaker 2 00:08:12 Yeah. It keeps really shifting. Yeah, we got a lot, unfortunately we got sick of a lot of our favorite self care activity during the pandemic.

Speaker 1 00:08:18 Oh no. <laugh> but that probably forced you to maybe try some new ones.

Speaker 2 00:08:22 Well, that's true. Right. I mean, I think, I think one thing that was amazing about the pandemic is like really getting back into nature a lot more, which had been such an important thing for me when I was younger and then like having a chance to like go out with the kids and like take nature walks and do things like that, um, has been, you know, really wonderful to like reconnect with some of those things. Um, absolutely. You know, it's funny actually, a couple weeks ago we were driving out to the, you know, a nice place where we used to go walking a lot during the pandemic, um, great Meadows and um, my kids, like, where are we going? I like, oh, we're going, gonna nature walk. And my son's like, isn't that a pandemic thing? I was like, no, like, come on. Nature walks are awesome. Like, --

-- come on <laugh> oh gosh.

Speaker 1 00:09:01 Like that's funny. Um, yeah, I love that though. Definitely that reconnecting, I felt like early on in COVID was a lot about reconnecting maybe to things you had not previously found time to do, or just hadn't been able to, like, I found myself, you know, digging out old art supplies of things that I hadn't done in a long time and wanting to really just have that creative outlet and reconnecting with things that used to bring me joy that, you know, adult life gets in the way and I hadn't done in a while. And that was really cool. Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:09:30 Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:09:31 Nice. And I, I noticed on social media recently that you are actually hosting a self-care challenge coming up,

Speaker 2 00:09:38 Uhhuh <affirmative> that is like a theme I'm doing right now. Yeah, totally.

Speaker 1 00:09:42 So what, um, can you tell me, or give us a little sneak peek. I'm not sure what the timing is of that, but maybe some of the practices or things you'll be looking for folks to engage with you. Um, during that time. Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:09:53 Like I, I think, you know, there's so many different aspects of, of self care that sometimes, you know, I do like you, like, I do a lot of trainings for professionals and trainings for educators and people are like, okay, like shut up, stop telling me just to breathe. Like I need something more substantial or like, I don't have time for that or this, this is stupid. And I, and I get it right. It's like we are busier. And, and I think educators, parents, you know, clinicians, you know, everybody listening like needs, you know, like there's just so many bigger systemic issues right. Than just us as individuals doing, you know, some pieces of self care that also feels like who's got the time. But I think also, you know, one thing I've been doing these past few years is creating these little like month long challenges on Instagram and stuff where it's like, here's just like a little thing you can do today.

Speaker 2 00:10:38 Like just take a shower with all your senses. Like you don't have to spend a half an hour eating a raisin, but just take like the first three bites of your meal, a little more mindfully. Right? Like these kinds of things, you know, like get the takeout tonight, leave the dishes till tomorrow. Like even like the little silly stuff like that is like, just, just can, can make the difference or just something that just takes the pressure off of ourselves a little bit. Um, you know, look at beautiful artwork, like, you know, just put on a favorite song and don't do anything else. Like I was just laying in the hammock outside. It's like, wow, like fir finally, nice day, like I'm laying in the hammock. Right? Like these little things that we can do it doesn't have to be like, I'm gonna have a spa day.

Speaker 2 00:11:17 Like, yeah. I wish I had time for a spa day. Right. But I got kids, I've got a job. I've, you know, I'm like isolated with COVID. I mean, it's like just all this, you know, it's like, so how can we find these little moments of self-care that can start to add up? And that's, that's, what's been kind of fun about putting together this particular challenge, um, is thinking about like what those little, little things we can do and then self care's also like, you know, again, like I saw this like in a meme, but it's not me, but it's like, like I found this other powerful thing it's like, self-care is also, it's not just like bubble baths. It's also like, how do we set healthy boundaries with people? Yes. Right. Like that's actually a really huge part of self-care that we often absolutely.

Speaker 2 00:11:57 Like, it's not, you know, it's not indulging ourselves. And I think really trying to figure out like there's self-indulgence and there's self care. And I think in our society, it's like, oh, like taking time for myself is self-indulgent, but selfcare is like, you know, drinking too much or eating too much or shopping too much or retail therapy. It's like, no, like that actually is self-indulgence and, and it's not like one is bad and one is good, everything in moderation. But like, how do we find something that's sustainable self-care or something that's a bit more in the middle. I feel that's really important when we think about what's what's sustainable. Self-care like, cuz I can't go to the spa every day. I can even think about when I c --

-- an next go to the spa. Even if I could. Right. But's

Speaker 1 00:12:39 Hundred percent. I love so much of everything you just said. <laugh> like all of it.

Speaker 2 00:12:44 Cause

Speaker 1 00:12:45 It's really important. And I think we're even gonna call this episode sustainable self care because I try so much in my work to, to push to people that like, no, it's like interwoven into everything you do. And it's not just like, you know, that spa day that's great. But like that's a one and done, that's not self care. And like selfcare, isn't what we, we don't wait for, you know, summer vacation or April school break mm-hmm <affirmative> or you know, a holiday that's like, oh now now's my self care time. No like this is, and those little practices are so valuable.

Speaker 2 00:13:18 Yeah, yeah, yeah. And they add up, right. It's also like nothing fixes it, not even a day at the spa or a month at the spa means like we're suddenly like no more stress. Right. <laugh> right. It's like, everything adds up a little bit and it's, and we have to like tune in and I think this is where mindfulness comes in. How do I tune into myself to notice, okay. Like I am feeling a little bit better today. Like, or maybe not, but like that these little micro moments they do add up, none of them fixes it, but they're all additive in some way. And I think that's also really important. And that is where like having self-awareness is really important. Um, yeah,

Speaker 1 00:13:54 That is one of the domains of self-care for sure. And I love telling people, like in my workshops, I always give, like it's been described, um, that I kind of present like a self-care buffet, like so many ideas and different things. And then I always though have to point out I'm like, you know, everything we've talked about can be accessed for free mm-hmm <affirmative> and usually like, you know, you start to see like the light bulb go off and they're like, oh yeah. It's like, none of this. I'm not talking about expensive

Speaker 2 00:14:22 Things.

Speaker 1 00:14:23 Even things that take a long time. Mm-hmm <affirmative> it's like these can be little quick things, little quick mindfulness practices, a quick breathing exercise, a quick walk, a few minutes in the hammock. Mm-hmm <affirmative> a few minutes drawing or a five minute dance party or like these quick things have dramatic impact.

Speaker 2 00:14:42 Yeah. Yeah, absolutely.

Speaker 1 00:14:44 Awesome. I love that. I'm so glad we're on the same page with that. <laugh>

Speaker 2 00:14:48 <laugh>

Speaker 1 00:14:48 And I know, um, you know, I know you have a lot of experience working with children and teaching them mm-hmm <affirmative> breathing and mindfulness. I think I have, oh, I don't know. I have your ninja deck that you did with Dr. Abett and I'm blanking on the, the other gentleman's name that did the deck

Speaker 2 00:15:02 With you. Um, yeah, since a, since a koha. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:15:06 And um, I think I have your growing mindful deck with that you did with, I think you did that with Dr. A also yeah. A long time ago. And I used that regularly. I love that one and I have, um, alpha breaths and the breathing book. Oh, funny story about the breathing book. I <laugh>, I saw something you posted on Twitter. This was a long time ago. Whenever I think maybe when it first came out and I was like, oh wow, this looks awesome. And I purchased it. Not knowing that it was really like a book for kids. I thought it was <laugh> I thought it was like an adult book and I got it. And I was like, oh, I'm so keeping this, I like this. Oh, right.

Speaker 2 00:15:40 But I definitely view, like I got was someone wrote and was like, like someone, I don't know. Some children's book reviewer was like, because it came out right at the beginning of the pandemic. Yes. And she was like, you have no idea how much this book has, like helped me through this last month. Cause it came out like April or may of the pandemic. Yeah. Like, and I was like, that is so sweet. You're like 35 years old. Like, oh my God. Like that, like that's like the biggest compliment imaginable that, that book was like a really sweet companion for you as a

Speaker 1 00:16:05 Result. Absolutely. No. And it came out like, it just, I got it. And I was like, oh, I miss this. I didn't realize it was a little kid's book, but I'm into --

-- it. I'm here. I'm here to win it. <laugh>. So I'm wondering, I'm wondering if you have like, you know, maybe a favorite or maybe your top two favorite mindfulness or breathing practices that you like to do with kids?

Speaker 2 00:16:27 Yeah. I mean, it's, you know, I think it keeps like evolving all the time and um, my friend Daniel and I, we have a sequel coming out to alpha breaths, which we're super pumped for. I saw in September. Um, and I, I think what's been really fun with things like alpha breaths is that it lets like all, you know, just sort of going back to schools to do readings and it's like, I'll read one book and then I'll do some of the alpha breath stuff. And then I'll ask the kids to make up their own practices. Love it. And then they start having so much fun, making up their own breathing practices. And my daughter is like, you know, she's four right now. She's like hardcore unicorns and rainbows and stuff. <laugh> and like, you know, she's like dad, like a unicorn. Can we make a, like a unicorn alphabet bra, you know, like alpha breath, like, you know, like roll back your wings and like, you know, like push out with your horn. Like as you're breathing in and breathing out. I mean these little things, she also, I know were, you know, this is audio, but she also did that little, like make a heart with your hands thing. Yeah. You can't do it. But she was like, this is like the heart alpha breath, like breathe out and then breathe in, then make a little heart, like how cute

Speaker 1 00:17:29 Is, is that

Speaker 2 00:17:29 The best let's go. And like alpha breath three, if they ever let us write it. Oh

Speaker 1 00:17:33 My God, the next gen alpha breath. I love it. That's awesome.

Speaker 2 00:17:37 I, these books are writing themselves seriously.

Speaker 2 00:17:40 It's like it's so that's, that's been like so much, so much fun, um, with the little kids and with teenagers too, like, you know of them will like write their own. Actually, this, this kid I saw him yesterday. I've seen him for like 10 years. He's in college now. But like Amber, when he was in like seventh or eighth grade, like working with him around anxiety and he like wrote his own like visualization that he like shared with me. And I was like, dude, this is so awesome. Like, so letting teenagers, like, you know, are listening to music mindfully, like things like that I think are just so empowering as kids get older and into the teenagers where maybe a unicorn breath might not fly. Right. For right.

Speaker 1 00:18:20 For a high school, it might not be cool enough for a high school kid. Oh, I love it. That's beautiful. Actually, one of the things I have in the works, um, I won't reveal too much right now, but I am actually working on a program for high school students. Awesome. All centered around this program cuz you know, we, we are experiencing such, um, you know, a dramatic increase in mental health issues. And I mean every day there's a headline, that's just breaks your heart and yeah, my goodness. And um, you know, we gotta keep, we gotta keep fighting this fight and doing this work to, to help these kiddos. So I very much admire the work that you're doing with, with all of that. And I love, I love that and I love the idea of letting them create their own. I think that's so much fun and what great buy-in too.

Speaker 2 00:19:01 Right? Totally. I mean I think cuz that that's what started was this kid I worked with who started making up some of his own breaths. I was like, uh, and then he would do them cause he was like, oh doctor, I made this up with Dr. He put his book. I was like, yeah, like, so it's just, it's amazing. Just, just as like with adults, it's like, you know, like as a therapist, like, you know, I could tell someone what to do cuz I, you know, it's like stop drinking so much. Right. Or whatever <laugh> it's like, you know, it's like, if that worked, like I'd be out of a job and they wouldn't be drinking. Sure. It's like people have to come to that idea themselves. Right. And so part of being a therapist in some ways, it's almost like tricking people into thinking they came up with it themselves.

Speaker 2 00:19:39 And I think with kids too, it's like letting them invent their own practice, maybe nudging them along. It's like they have that ownership over it in a different way. Right. Even if it's like, I know that where this is going, I --

-- like it's still like, well they feel like they created it and then they're gonna do it. And I think that's, what's so key and they're gonna go home and say, mom and dad, I invented this, you know, like this cool breathing practice. Do you wanna check it out? I'm gonna share this with my friends. I'm gonna like, and then it's just a totally different thing than like, Hey, do this breath. Right, right. Or, Hey, do this visualization like then they really start to lock in, in such a totally different way.

Speaker 1 00:20:14 Oh, that's so beautiful. And I love that too, when they make the connection and then they start sharing it at home and, and they really start doing it. There was, uh, reminds me of a really cool story. My mom just retired last year after 32 years in the public school system. And um, she was a pretty cool high school art teacher, which art can sometimes lend itself to those, um, you know, therapeutic moments, maybe more than math class, Ken mm-hmm <affirmative>. And she, they were doing some sort of community, uh, community event. And she was actually teaching Reiki to her students and just like

Speaker 2 00:20:44 She,

Speaker 1 00:20:45 Yeah, she did like this little Reiki exercise and like told them about it. I think she brought in some SCED things and kind of set the stage for them and, and talked about Reiki cuz she had done some, she was actually Reiki one certified at the time I had done that with her. And so anyway, she brought it into her classroom and one of her students, the captain of the football team. So, you know, we can keep that stereotype in our, in our mind <laugh> and he went home and like set it up, took one of his like candles from his mom and like set up the whole thing and wanted to show her what he had learned in our class about Reiki and this whole like mindfulness thing and whatever. And the mom actually then sent my mom an email, like, you know, the next day and was like, I could not believe that my high school, senior son, captain, the football team just taught me Reiki. Like, could you be any cooler of a,

Speaker 2 00:21:34 A teacher?

Speaker 1 00:21:34 Love it. Yeah. No, it was, it was amazing. It was one, it was such a highlight for her too, cuz she was just like that, that, that he, it resonated with him so much. I mean that's the point. That's what we hope. Right. But um, it was just really beautiful. So that reminds me of what you were talking about too. Like really like getting that, that hook and then they want the ownership of it and they'll never forget that stuff.

Speaker 2 00:21:54 Right. Right. Absolutely.

Speaker 1 00:21:56 I love that. Yeah. So I'm wondering too, like, you know, you talk, we talked about kids, so what about, you know, parents and caregivers are struggling right now too and teachers and oh man. Everybody across the board. So what is there like, I don't know, a tip or a coping technique or strategy that you would recommend for folks right now?

Speaker 2 00:22:17 Yeah. I mean, I I've, you know, I think in this pandemic, like one thing that's been helpful is, is really just remembering that we're not alone. It's like, okay, no one else has been a teacher in a pandemic before. Like no one else has been a parent in a pandemic before. Like, and we're all muddling along. We're all screwing this up. We have all lost it with our kids. Like whether it's our students or our clients or our own children. And like none of us is perfect. Like I was just kind of, um, traveling and doing a bunch of workshops last week. And um, I for, and I was talking a lot about this. It's like just being kind to yourself, having self-compassion forgiving yourself, like it's important that we like model self-care also so that like when we are stressed out, like we're like, Hey, dad's super stressed out.

Speaker 2 00:23:08 I'm gonna take a few breaths. Do you wanna do that with me? Like we're in traffic. Like, you know, it's super stressful. Like let's notice like the birds around us chirping and not just the ugly cars in front of us. Like things like this are like, I, you know, I kind of got upset with my, my wife a few weeks ago and my email stopped working. It wasn't her fault, but I was just in a really bad mood and kinda snapped at her. And I was like, okay, I lost my temper in front of the kids. Like I'm gonna have to like apologize in front of the kids. Like, it just is like, that's fair --

-- enough how I modeled this and how I have to model it. And um, so I think, you know, like the, these kinds of things that when we practice our self care as adults, we can do that in front of the kids. And it's sending such an important powerful message to them. Um,

Speaker 1 00:23:51 Absolutely.

Speaker 2 00:23:52 And, and again, like the more we can keep ourselves regulated, the more the kids can be well regulated and, and still like, we still lose it. Like, and just being like, okay, how do I just move on or be like, yeah, dad lost it earlier or whatever. Um, and, and, and just know that we're all human. Like, you know, <laugh> a while ago I was like sharing about like, oh my gosh, like mindfulness is finally kicked in with my kids. Like, you know, I was like doing some visualizations with my kids before bedtime. And then there's this night a little bit ago where my, my, I was listening and my son was actually guiding his little sister in a meditation. I was like,

Speaker 1 00:24:28 Oh,

Speaker 2 00:24:29 So amazing. You know? And then like two days later, like my son's like holding one of my mindfulness books. It's like, oh, that's awesome. And then he like wax his sister over the head with like the mindfulness book that I wrote and I was like, okay. Yep. Okay. That's

Speaker 1 00:24:41 Right. Well, they're still good.

Speaker 2 00:24:42 It's like, we're all human. Okay. Like, that's just what it <laugh>. Oh my God. Like,

Speaker 1 00:24:48 So no, that's really beautiful though. And I think, I feel not the whacking, the system on the head with the book, but the, um, just the idea of, and, and I always, I say this too, I feel like we're like, we're so on the same page here. Um, I mean my whole dissertation study was actually on self-care renewal for leaders and teachers and not only practicing it, but how do you promote that for your staff? Because I do feel like there's a disconnect there. And when we think about even parents and children, sometimes it becomes like something that you don't, you do separate from them. Mm-hmm <affirmative> I, I'm not a parent myself. So I, you know, I'm not in that role, but I, I think that, you know, like you just said, bring them into it, like you're modeling for them. Like, it's totally, it's great. Let them see those moments like that moment of you, you know, you're human. So then you're gonna take ownership of that apologize and model the continue to model that behavior them. Right. But also like doing the mindfulness with them, teaching them how to do the breathing and all of that. But then also knowing that like, yeah, not every moment's gonna be perfect <laugh>

Speaker 2 00:25:53 Right, right, right. Absolutely.

Speaker 1 00:25:55 Absolutely. Yeah. I love that. And I have talked to other, you know, parents before and, and I love that, like when they're willing to kind of be vulnerable and bring that into how they parent and letting, but also letting their kids like do yoga with them, like throw on YouTube video, do it with, teach them. Don't make it, this like thing that mom does that you can't talk to her during or dad does. Right.

Speaker 2 00:26:18 Absolutely.

Speaker 1 00:26:19 Yeah. No, I love it. Beautiful. Awesome. So I know you have a, you have a lot of books out in the world. There's a lot of content there's courses I'm seeing on social media, you're throwing all kinds of things out there. It's amazing. I love every bit of it. Where would you recommend someone starts? Like if they're maybe not, um, super familiar with your work, like what's a good kind of place for them to start.

Speaker 2 00:26:41 Yeah, absolutely. I mean, like I wrote a, you know, sort of probably the kind of bigger book I wrote for grownups is called growing up mindful. And that's basically just like an overview about how to teach kids and teenagers, mindfulness, and how to practice yourself. Um, and that's a really fun one. Um, you know, and then I've, I've written a bunch of books for kids themselves. I think alpha best is a lot of fun and the breathing book and in between book are super fun. And then I do, I mean, like, you know, like we've like, you know, teach workshops all around Massachusetts and around the world. And so I'm often traveling for work and putting on workshops and trainings, and then it's been super fun to more recently I created, um, during the pandemic, just like a lo --

-- nger online training, um, that's 10 weeks.

Speaker 2 00:27:26 Um, and it's meets for a couple hours a week and it's been so fun because I've like, I've had a hundred people go through it now. And it's like, literally like preschool curriculum designers from Singapore and like, oh wow. Parents from Iran and like autism activists from Indonesia. And like, you know, a teacher from South Africa and Kenya and like, wow, all over south America and Australia, like, it's just, it's been like just really a cool mix of people. And I kind of feel like I do some teaching and lecturing and then I just sit back and it's like, just for me, it's like, oh, hearing about, oh, that's what you're doing. Like with mindfulness and, you know, I don't know, like Lebanon, like, that's so cool. Like it's just, it's been such a treat to meet people from around the world. I've always loved traveling. So, um, working with people across cultures has been fun and that's gonna be rolling out again for like a summer session in June. And I'm, I'm psyched to kind of bring another group of 25 or 30 people together for that. Um, and, uh, just have a lot of fun getting to know each other and learning from each other. So that's, that's been the big, fun thing I've been doing a lot more lately. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:28:33 Wow. That's awesome. And is that, so it's basically a, like a mindfulness, an online kind of mindfulness course, you said 10 hours.

Speaker 2 00:28:40 Absolutely. So it's, it's yeah, it's a, it's 10 weeks. Um, we meet live for an hour a week and then there's about an hour's worth of videos to watch every week, um, that people can kinda like watch on their own time, you know, listen to, or we'll run the subway or whatever in bed or between classes or something. <laugh> so, so I know we're all kinda sick of watching stuff on zoom. So I'm like, let me break this into smaller pieces, so sure. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:29:04 Oh, that's really great. And I'll make sure, you know, everything is linked in the episode notes for folks. And I think this episode will air before that June cohort starts, so oh, cool. Maybe if anybody wants to jump on that they can do. So. Um, would you mind telling us, like where folks can find you, your website, social media handles that sort of stuff?

Speaker 2 00:29:22 Absolutely. Yep. Dr. Christopher willard.com, Dr. Christopher willard.com. Um, and then at Dr. Chris Willard, um, same thing on it's the same for everything actually, I guess like Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter. Um, I haven't, I feel like I'm too old for TikTok. I don't know. I haven't figured it out, but I haven't done the entire thing either. That's way now's you can find me. Um,

Speaker 1 00:29:45 I don't think our audiences are on TikTok truthfully

Speaker 2 00:29:47 In the research I've done we're

Speaker 1 00:29:49 You are very active on the social media channels that I follow you on. So that's great. So folks should definitely, um, connect with you there. We'll make sure that is all linked. Um, in the episode notes, I'll link to some of your publications as well. Some of my faves and I do recommend any age can by the breathing book in alpha breaths. Uh, I think it's a lot of fun and I'll certainly, um, you know, check out those other ones, but I wanna thank you again, um, so much for your time. This was a fabulous conversation. And I just feel like we have a lot of, um, shared passions and the work that we're doing aligns very much. And, um, absolutely. You know, I wish you well in all your endeavors,

Speaker 2 00:30:26 Thank you. Have a good spring into summer. Hope you get a little, little time to relax this summer and

Speaker 1 00:30:30 Yeah, I don't work

Speaker 2 00:30:31 That summer longer. Just moments of self care a little more than

Speaker 1 00:30:34 That. Yeah. I actually don't work all summer so well, I don't work my full-time job. I work on my doctor MC stuff, so <laugh> awesome. So I'll be able to dive in dive into that. So very cool. But anyway, thank you so much for your time.

Speaker 2 00:30:47 You bet. Good to see you take care.

Speaker 1 00:30:49 Bye.

Speaker 1 00:30:58 Amazing. Yes. To everything Dr. Willard had to share today. I love how aligned our work is with each other. So many of his suggestions are exactly the same things that I have been preaching in my work. This is real friends. Self-ca --

-- re is not a luxury sustainable self care is really what we're striving for. We need to get to the root of what makes you, you and the practices that you engage in have to be sustainable and realistic. Otherwise you're not going to stick with it. So engage in the practices that support you start small start today. This is really, really valuable. And I love the idea of creating your own breath. Maybe you can design your own breath as adults. This doesn't have to just be something for kids. I think it would be kind of fun. I'd probably have a breath that had something to do with dancing.

Speaker 1 00:31:47 I'm gonna have to think about that, but teaching future generations, these skills, again, very important and powerful and giving them ownership over these practices is amazing, but you need to take ownership over your own self-care as well. Remember, self-care is a choice. And if you do design your own breath, be sure to send it to me. I would love to see what you come up with and what you create. And speaking of sending me things or reaching out and working with me, uh, just a friendly reminder that I offer lots of professional development workshops and presentations to schools, businesses, and organizations, anywhere from one to 10 hours on topics related to self care, building resilience, avoiding burnout, trauma, sensitive classrooms, growth mindset, and more. I also have a special program in the works launching later this year for youth all centered around self-care that I'm really, really excited about.

Speaker 1 00:32:42 So be sure to be on the lookout for that, but thanks for listening to this episode and remember to subscribe and rate this podcast on your preferred player, the ratings really do help us grow and share the message of self-care. And if you ever have comments or suggestions or questions, reach out to me directly by emailing podcast at Dr. MC selfcare.com. That's Dr. MC selfcare.com and come join the cast party at Dr. MCs self care cabaret, very active on Facebook and Instagram at Dr. MC self care, or of course my website, Dr. MC selfcare.com. Be sure to like subscribe and love me across all my social media platforms for the most up to date information on self care. See you next time. Stay well and do good.

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