

HOW YOU DOIN'?



HONESTLY, HOW ARE YOU?

Who are we?

Crystal Fuqua, M.Ed.

Crystal is a Lubbock native and graduate of Lubbock Christian University (but a lifelong Tech fan).

She taught in elementary

schools for several years, and worked in the non-profit sector, before working with Student Disability Services at Texas Tech.

Crystal is married with 2 fur-babies and in her spare time she enjoys singing at her church or in her band, games with family and friends and traveling.



Abbi May, M.Ed.

Abbi is also a Lubbock native and graduate of Lubbock Christian University and Texas Tech University.

She taught in elementary schools, and was teaching teammates with Crystal, before working with Student Disability Services at Texas Tech.

Abbi is an avid reader and enjoys long, luxurious naps and spending time with her family and friends. She also has 2 sweet fur-babies.



Quizizz





Student Affairs professionals are on the front lines of supporting students in all areas. As we care for students facing a myriad of challenges ranging from personal tragedy to physical and mental health concerns, it is imperative to also care for ourselves and our colleagues.

How can we switch from a culture of chaos to a culture of care?



Our goal for today is that you will...

- ★ **Understand how toxic positivity relates to a culture of chaos and how critical hope can help us build cultures of care.**
- ★ **Recognize the role we play in the shift from toxic positivity to critical hope to help raise morale and prevent burnout.**
- ★ **Understand the need for self care while caring for others.**



What challenges do we face when we work with and care for our students?

caring too much

we have to solve it all

PARENTS

**getting them to do
their part**

**no follow-up from the
student**



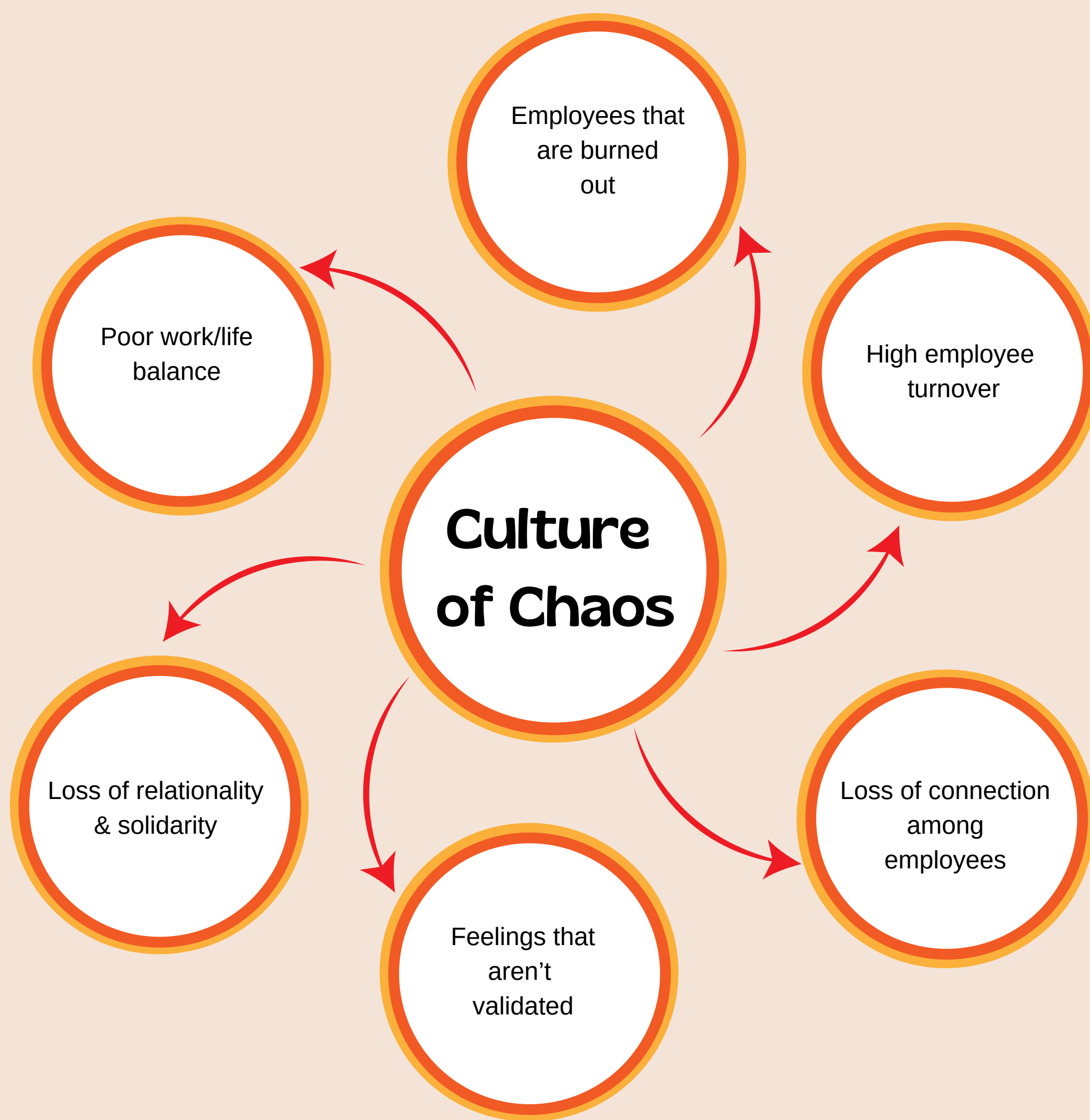
**finding innovative ways to
help students**

getting documentation

**feeling responsible
for them**

**students receiving incorrect
info from other places**

lack of communication



Employees that
are burned
out

High employee
turnover

**Culture
of Chaos**

Loss of connection
among
employees

Feelings that
aren't
validated

Poor work/life
balance

Loss of relationality
& solidarity

What is Toxic Positivity?

Toxic positivity is the insistence that a positive outlook must prevail among everyone, no matter what. There's no room for negative emotions, nor any excuse for feeling disappointed, sad, or angry. In the direst cases, there's a refusal to acknowledge failure or a need for change. This can lead to a sense of lost connectedness, relationality & solidarity with others.

To be clear, toxic positivity is not the same thing as optimism. Optimism is about having hope for and confidence in a positive outcome.

4 classic examples:

“You’re bringing everybody down.”

...just because you’re asking the hard questions doesn’t mean you’re a downer.

“Try not to think about it.”

...but you’ll never get the answers to your questions if you don’t THINK.

“Look on the bright side!”

...sometimes we have to examine the negative in order to create the positive.

“Just try to be happy.”

...your thoughts and feelings are valid but it’s hard to see that when there’s no empathy.



How Toxic Is Your Office Attitude?

Optimism

Hope and confidence in a good outcome

Pessimism

Belief that nothing good will ever happen

Toxic Positivity

Insistence that everyone must be happy



This will never work!

Let's talk about your concerns.

Good vibes only!

What's the point?

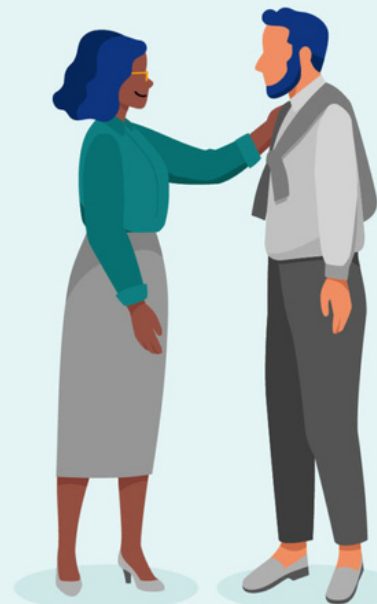
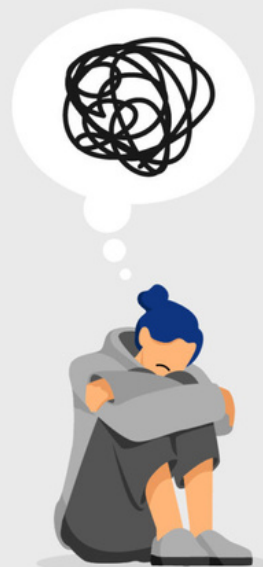
We can do this if we work together.

Don't worry about that!

Whatever. I don't care anyway.

You are not alone.

You'll get over it.



How does your work attitude relate to this graphic?

How does your office relate to this graphic?

How does this affect our students?

**More importantly, how
does it affect us?**



What is Critical Hope?

Critical hope is a realistic assessment of your environment/realities, but importantly, it also includes a lens of equity and justice as we work toward a more resilient future.

(Dugan, 2017; Duncan Andrade, 2009).

An act of ethical and political responsibility that has the potential to recover a lost sense of connectedness, relationality, and solidarity with others.

Rinsum, 2013

How do we make a change to move from

Toxic Positivity

to


Critical Hope

in our professional environments?

How can we be the catalyst for change?

Critical hope understands complexity and discomfort as a necessary process of transformation, and holds spaces for candid and uncomfortable conversations as a way forward, without judgement or repercussion.

Riddell, 2020, UAAU



How do we put this into practice in our work environment to create a culture of care?

1. Building safe relationships.

2. Providing a safe space to speak.

- **Staff meetings for everyone to share their successes and struggles.**

3. Allowing voices to be heard.

- **Grace and empathy is shown toward employees when they share concerns.**

4. Transparency in decision making.

- **It's okay if the answer is no but, help me understand the "why".**

Other ideas to develop a culture of care:

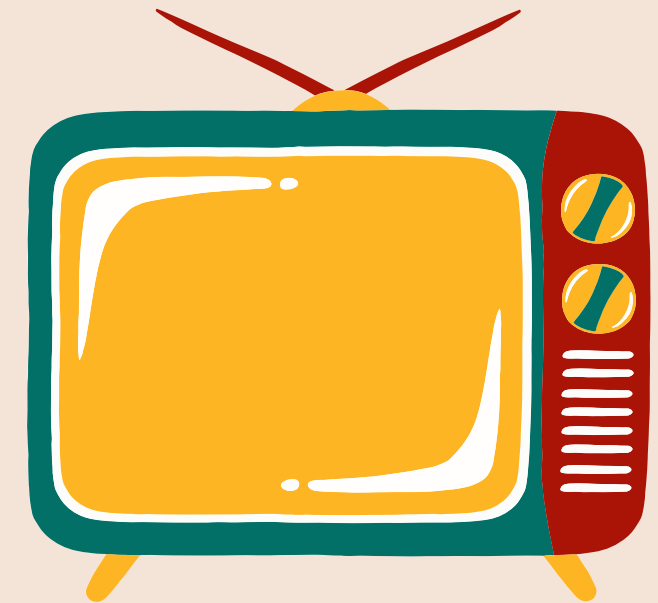
- **Monthly staff breakfast - connect & participate in staff development**
- **Birthday, Graduation, Success celebrations & Showers**
- **Sparck Assessment**
- **Holiday celebrations**
- **Team Building activities**
- **Opportunities to connect outside of work**
- **Dress Up Days, Office Olympics, Potlucks**

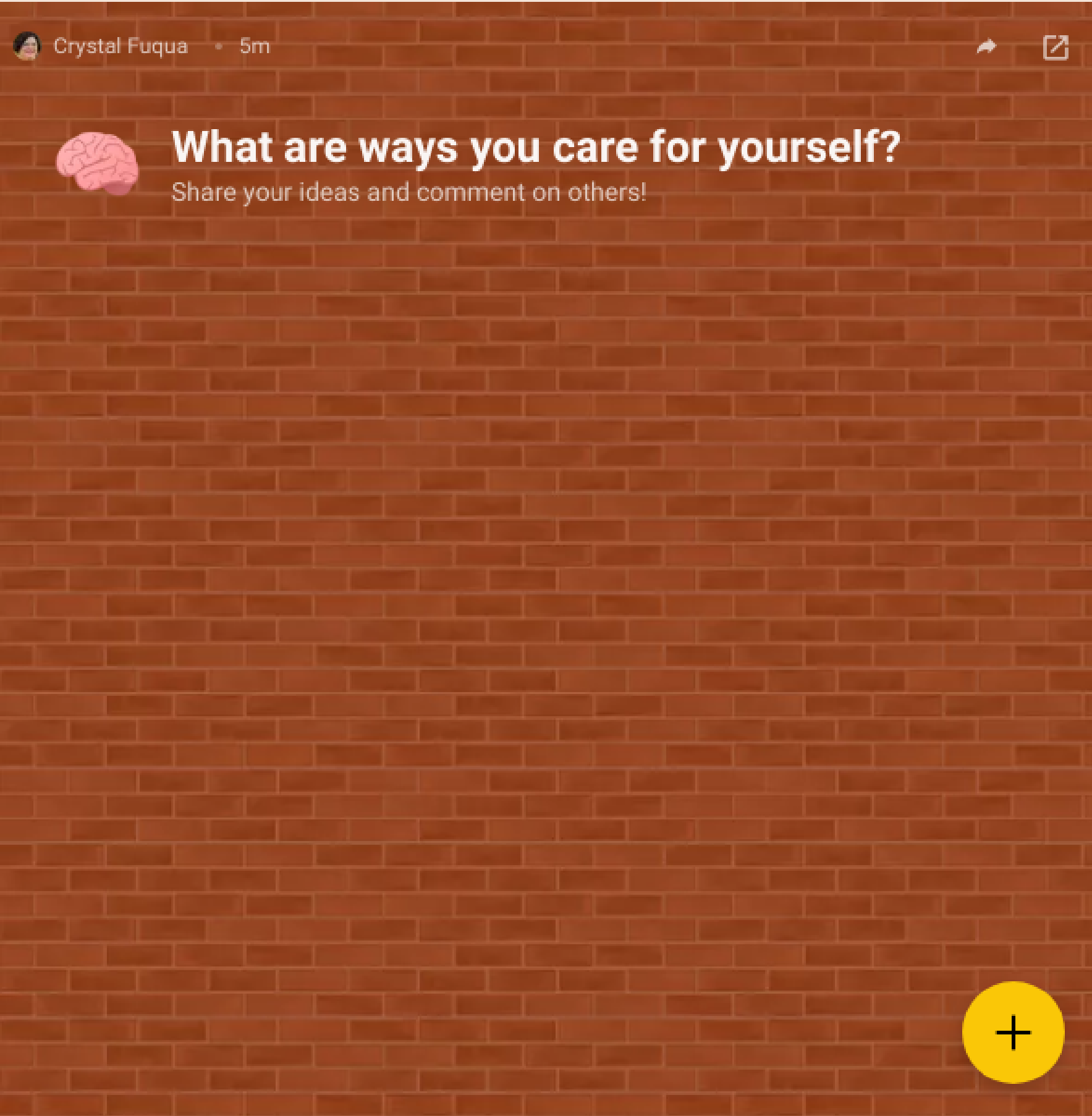
**You can't pour from
an empty cup...**





WHAT DOES SELF CARE LOOK LIKE TO YOU?





Scan to share!



**Sometimes, we may not see ourselves
as “caregivers” but..**

- **we care for our students and their
well-being**
- **we care for our families and our
friends**
- **we care for our homes and pets**

There is a tendency of many caregivers to put the needs of everyone else before their own. This may work in the short-term, but in the long haul it can lead to illness, frustration, resentment, depression, and/or burnout. You have to take care of yourself.

Washington State DSHS

Remember:

- **Toxic Positivity is not the same thing as optimism.**
- **Your students' challenges are not your own.**
- **You have to maintain a positive work/life balance.**
- **You are changing lives! Keep it up!**

Q&A