

4LessBurnout

SELF-CARE TOOLKIT



A self-care toolkit and resilience guide
to help social professionals manage job
demands, stress, and burnout
symptoms.

01

G L O S S A R Y

01



Glossary

Burnout – Burnout is a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed. It is characterized by three dimensions: 1) feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion; 2) increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job; and 3) a sense of ineffectiveness and lack of accomplishment (WHO, 2022).

Compassion fatigue - Compassion fatigue is a term that describes the physical, emotional, and psychological impact of helping others — often through experiences of [stress](#) or trauma. Compassion fatigue is often mistaken for burnout, which is a cumulative sense of fatigue or dissatisfaction (<https://www.webmd.com/mental-health/signs-compassion-fatigue> , 2022)

Coping – Coping involves cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage or adapt to stressful situations and the emotional distress they cause. Commonly, coping strategies are categorized into those that focus on confronting and addressing the problem directly and those that aim to reduce tension by avoiding direct engagement with the issue (Sies et al., 2007).

Depersonalization or Cynicism: This is one of the dimensions of burnout and is related to interpersonal interaction. The depersonalization/cynicism dimension is characterized as a response of detachment, indifference and lack of concern in relation to the work performed and/or the people/colleagues with whom one interacts professionally. This is reflected in negative or inappropriate attitudes and behaviors, irritability, loss of idealism and avoidance of social interactions, generally in relation to colleagues, employees and customers (Edú-Valsania et al., 2022).

Emotional Dissonance: refers to the structural discrepancy between felt emotions, on the one hand, and the emotional display that is necessary and appropriate in the work context, on the other (Zapf, 2002).

Emotional Exhaustion: It is characterized by the manifestation of sensations and feelings of exhaustion that result from the psychological efforts expended in the work environment. These sensations appear in the form of tiredness, fatigue and weakness, and people who experience them find it difficult to adapt to the work context, as they experience a decrease in the emotional energy necessary to deal with their professional activities (Edú-Valsania et al., 2022).

Mindfulness – Mindfulness is the awareness of one's inner experiences and external environment. It helps individuals break free from destructive or automatic habits and reactions by encouraging them to observe their thoughts, emotions, and present experiences without judgment or immediate response.



Occupational Stress – Work-related stress arises when individuals face demands and pressures at work that exceed their knowledge and abilities, challenging their capacity to cope. Stress can occur in various work environments, but it is often exacerbated when employees feel unsupported by supervisors and colleagues or have limited control over their work processes. It's important to distinguish between pressure or challenge and stress, as this distinction is sometimes blurred, leading to poor management practices being overlooked or excused.

Protective Factor – A well-defined behavior or characteristic—whether genetic, psychological, environmental, or otherwise—that is linked to a lower likelihood of developing a specific disease or disorder, that lessens the severity of an existing condition, or that helps buffer the effects of stress. For instance, regular exercise can act as a protective factor by reducing the risk or severity of coronary heart disease, hypertension, and depression. Similarly, supportive social networks and positive coping skills are protective factors that diminish the impact of stressful life events and promote mental health (APA).

Reduced Personal Achievement: characterized by an unfavourable professional self-evaluation and uncertainty about the ability to perform the job effectively, as well as a greater propensity to negatively evaluate the work results obtained. It also manifests itself, in some people, as a decrease in productivity and skills, low morale and a reduced capacity to respond to work (Edú-Valsania et al., 2022).

Risk Factor – A trait, condition, or behaviour that raises the risk of developing a disease or sustaining an injury. In work related stress a risk factor is any aspect of work that associates with an unbalance of the mental well-being of the individual causing him psychological, physical or psychiatric strain or injury (Berlanda et al., 2020).

Role ambiguity: refers to the uncertainty in the definition, expectation, responsibility and task of the role itself, and therefore workers do not know what type of behavior they should have when faced with a specific situation (Onyemah, 2008).

Self-esteem: refers to the way in which an individual tends to see themselves positively, that is, it refers to the value that each person attributes to themselves. The lower the value attributed and/or the individual observes themselves in a less positive way, the lower their self-esteem becomes (Ellis & Ratnasingam, 2018).

Social Work – Social work is both a practice-driven profession and an academic field focused on promoting social change, development, cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of individuals. It is guided by principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility, and respect for diversity. Grounded in theories from social work, social sciences, humanities, and indigenous knowledge, social work actively engages with individuals and systems to tackle life challenges and improve overall wellbeing. This definition can be further refined to reflect specific national or regional contexts (International Federation of Social Workers, 2014).

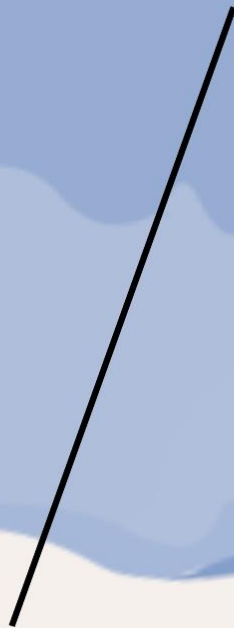


Stressor – Any event, force, or condition that results in physical or emotional stress. Stressors may be internal or external forces that require adjustment or coping strategies on the part of the affected individual (APA).

02



I N T R O D U C T I O N



02

Short Introduction about the 4LessBurnout Project

Description

The 4LessBurnout project seeks to develop appropriate means and tools to identify and assess the level of stress and burnout of professionals who work daily with vulnerable social groups, such as, teachers and trainers, researchers, experts in occupational health, psychologists, psychiatrists, human resource managers and social workers. The aim is to support and empower them so that they can adequately cope with their professional role while stimulating their mental and emotional health. The project includes the development of tools and the implementation of actions that will contribute to dealing with the professional burnout of these professionals, improving the quality of the services they offer but also contributing to their personal and professional well-being.

The 4LessBurnout project is a 30-month European project, funded by the Erasmus+ Programme and it is implemented in five European countries, by the following organizations:

- Afeji (France) – Project Coordinator,
- Approximar (Portugal),
- Universidade da Beira Interior (Portugal),
- Redial (Ireland),
- European Association for Social Innovation (EaSI) (Romania),
- Asociația Centrul de Cercetare și Formare a Universității de Nord Baia Mare (CCF) (Romania) and
- Athens Lifelong Learning Institute (Greece).

For more information on the project, please visit: <https://www.4lessburnout-euproject.org/>

Key Results

A Self-Assessment Tool on Burnout and on the Stress Factors Contributing to Burnout have been developed by project partners. The open digital tools aim to map the current situation regarding burnout among social professionals and indicate how they perceive their own level of burnout and the factors that are most likely to cause them stress and burnout.

A blended learning training program for social practitioners on diagnosing and addressing factors that contribute to high levels of burnout. This result involves the development of learning materials that allow delivering a blended learning course for social practitioners, in order to help them develop their coping skills, reduce the stress caused by the working environment and improve the quality of the interaction with their beneficiaries. Therefore, the main purpose of this result is to tackle the needs of the social professionals so they can be more effective in their work, learn new self-care strategies and make use of proactive and emotionally positive self-care strategies, such as reducing workload, receiving supervision, socializing with colleagues.

An online Toolkit which includes activities, tools, articles and studies to deal with burnout and occupational stress. The Self-care Toolkit and Resiliency guides professionals to cope with job requirements and the symptoms of stress and burnout. It covers the previous results and it contains practical information on how to use the self-assessment tools and the training program to better cope with job requirements and the symptoms of stress and burnout.

Key project activities

- ✓ Primary and secondary research on the diagnosis and treatment of burnout, for professionals who offer support services to vulnerable social groups.
- ✓ Development and pilot application of the online self-assessment tool in groups of psychologists, social workers, trainers, etc. for the assessment of their burnout levels and of the factors contributing to them.
- ✓ Development of educational curriculum and content and its application in pilot blended learning training activities for two groups of 15 people each, in each national setting.
- ✓ Research and development of an online toolkit with activities and tools for the early diagnosis and treatment of occupational stress and burnout.
- ✓ Validation workshops with groups of social practitioners prior to the finalization of each result, in order to develop materials, tools and activities which are relevant for the specific professional group.
- ✓ Dissemination activities for the promotion of all project results, at local, national and European level.

03



PILOTS KEY
HIGHLIGHTS

03

Key Highlights from the Project's Pilots

Introduction

All project partners, during the project lifetime, organized and implemented pilot blended training courses for social practitioners on burnout. The courses included the following elements:

- online asynchronous learning on the educational platform hosted by Aproximar
- face to face synchronous learning including training sessions with trainers (either in person or via the zoom platform).

Both elements of learning targeted the development of skills and competences on specific issues related to burnout, and included the following Modules:

- Module 1. Burnout in depth
- Module 2. Factors intrinsic to the job
- Module 3. Role in the Organization
- Module 4. Career Development
- Module 5. Relationships at work
- Module 6. Organizational Structure and Climate

The duration of the pilot training courses in each partner country varied, while more than 150 social practitioners from Ireland, Portugal, Greece, Romania and France participated in them, also providing their feedback and evaluation on different aspects of the courses, such as educational materials, training content and delivery, trainers, duration, online and face to face learning activities, etc.

Based on the feedback received by project partners, some key highlights and recommendations have been collected in order to be included in this Toolkit. Based on the design and structure of the project, the training course can be considered as a tool to prevent, understand and address burnout for the specific professional group of social practitioners. It is therefore important to include these recommendations so that other organizations and professionals can replicate and take advantage of the training course materials, in case they choose to implement the project's training intervention as a tool to educate professionals on burnout, on the factors that can cause it and on the ways to avoid, prevent and/or address it.

The findings and recommendations are presented in the following section of this Toolkit chapter per participating country, while some conclusions are included in the final section of this chapter, to provide an overview of all recommendations, across Europe.

Country- specific highlights and recommendations

France

To structure the recommendations for the toolkit after piloting training sessions in France as part of the 4lessBurnout project, here are the key points:

- ✓ Train all professionals within the organization involved: Ensure the training is a replicable tool that becomes a central resource for HR and Quality of Work Life departments.
- ✓ Include local or national resources: Incorporate slides with relevant helplines, as well as country-specific contacts and resources, to guide employees towards available support, which can vary across regions / countries.
- ✓ Organize regular workshops and additional interventions: Offer shorter, regular sessions such as sophrology workshops or similar initiatives to maintain ongoing support for professionals.
- ✓ Provide targeted training for upper management in addition to training field professionals: Ensure that leadership receives specific training so that prevention measures are understood and implemented at all levels of the organization.
- ✓ Global organization-wide workshops: Establish workshops across the organization to embed prevention measures into the institution's culture, ensuring long-term sustainability and widespread application.

Portugal

In Portugal, a set of considerations were obtained, collected through the satisfaction questionnaire and the results of the assessment of knowledge and skills, as well as observation and feedback from Aproximar and UBI trainers during material validation sessions held at both institutions:

Pros:

- Highly relevant course on an area with demand and especially challenging in the Social Sector.
- Engaging course with a multitude of learning methodology and formats – active, interrogative, and expositive methods – and face to face and in e-learning format. This promoted a complete experience and received praises from all participants.
- The e-learning part is complete, and it offers an avenue for trainees to further explore the topics.
- Results showcased a significant improvement of participants in terms of skills and knowledge.
- Results showcased high satisfaction levels by participants.
- The course, alongside the self-assessment tools, provide participating organizations with practical resources and learning experiences to improve the organization and workers capability of managing and mitigating Burnout.

- Some participants that had a lot of previously knowledge and experience about Burnout mentioned that the course still brought novelty since it focuses in an organizational and personal perspective on how to manage and mitigate burnout.
- The fact that the way the course is presented promotes the possibility of being adapted to other target audiences, namely teachers, educators, psychologists, doctors, nurses, lawyers and other professionals

Challenges:

- In the 2 editions we encountered participants that had gone through burnout syndrome. This sensible topic needs to be lectured by trainers that completely understand the topic and with experience in training.
- Burnout may be misused as an umbrella term for an array of bad feelings and/or stress. The trainer should be careful and always start the course by building a common basis of understanding about burnout and related topics.
- Some users want easy answers to hard questions, namely when discussing the topic of Burnout diagnosis. It is of utmost importance that the trainer refrains from offering easy answers and highlights the importance of professional and clinical expertise.
- The course sometimes presents some information that must be clarified and explained by the trainer using language appropriate to the target audience, as some technical terms may not be accessible and understood by all course participants

Limitations:

- Although the content is well referenced and results from previous research and focus group with social workers and specialists in the field of Burnout, improvements can be made in terms of clinical knowledge and content (i.e., how and why does our brain produce stress at a chemical level).

Greece

As an overall evaluation of the courses as implemented in Greece, the following need to be highlighted:

What worked:

- The blended learning format: Participants appreciated the division of learning into synchronous and asynchronous sessions and got involved in both styles of learning.
- The duration and the frequency of the synchronous sessions: The sessions took place once a week for four weeks, while each session lasted for four hours.
- The profile, skills and knowledge of the trainers: All trainers were highly evaluated by participants, while some of them pointed out that among the main reasons for participating in the courses were the skills, knowledge and expertise of the trainers. The participants were impressed by the trainers, fostering a sense of connection through engaging discussions and the open exchange of personal experiences. This created a supportive environment where participants felt understood and heard.

- The learning materials and activities: Trainers used the materials developed by project partners as a basis to elaborate further on the concepts discussed during the courses. The flexibility of the materials was highly appreciated.
- The main concept of burnout: Ever since the application process, it was obvious that many professionals (mainly social workers, teachers and social practitioners) were highly interested in burnout, as a common and alarming phenomenon in the sector. They were keen on learning more about the symptoms and the ways to assess and overcome burnout. Moreover, it was obvious that burnout is very relevant not only for social practitioners, but also for other professionals who do not necessarily work for the support of vulnerable social groups.

Challenges and limitations:

Given the complexity of burnout, participants emphasized the desire for further education. They expressed a strong preference for a program with a longer duration to delve deeper into preventive strategies and coping mechanisms. It is expected that this further learning will be covered once participants access and study the online asynchronous course developed by project partners.

- The timing of the delivery of the course was a challenge for some participants. Some of them attended the course while they were still working at their organization. This fact made their participation challenging, since they could not use their camera or microphone. Maybe the courses for these professionals should start later in the day, when they have finished their work.

Finally, some **recommendations** specifically on the tools to be included in the toolkit are as follows:

- The more tools, activities and resources, the better. It was clear that different people experience burnout in different ways, and this calls for a variety of methods and tools to prevent, address and combat burnout.
- The tools and activities should be relevant to the specific professional group of social practitioners. Their professional profile and their existing knowledge on support mechanisms for others calls for more specific tools for the specific group.
- Tools and activities need to be in the native language of the participants. Especially the videos or other resources which involve the implementation of specific steps to achieve something (for example relaxation techniques) need to be fully understood by participants. Therefore, the language should be simple and easy to understand.

- Tools, activities and resources need to be fit for use both individually and in teams. It is common that colleagues from the same organization face similar symptoms, so it is important that tools have the option to be used in different modes.

Ireland

Recommendations from piloting:

- ✓ The Self-Assessment tool is really useful to revisit and check in, as resilience and burn out are changeable according to a variety of factors
- ✓ Workplaces should facilitate regular awareness raising sessions about burnout using the 4LESSBURNOUT methodology
- ✓ A Peer Mentoring programme, workplace buddy method would really compliment the project methodology
- ✓ Socratic methods are beneficial, open dialogue and sharing points of view promote inclusion and open mindedness
- ✓ Engaging whole organizations and individuals about burnout is essential to influencing a workplace culture and personal resilience.

Romania

Overall Evaluation of the pilot learning course

- The main challenge for the facilitators was to give uniformity to the learning content and activities, which during the 6 modules are sometimes repetitive and become confusing and demotivating for the learners. Here we can include a discrepancy between theoretical content and activities for some of the modules. Therefore, the solution was to reformulate and adapt some of the activities to the group of learners, because it was essential to respond to their learning needs with coherence and quality.
- We also recognize the effectiveness of face-to-face sessions to the detriment of online session, online options for activities and methods of participation do not necessarily actively involve learners.
- Regarding the online platform, where the course materials were made available in multimedia format, these were supplemented with materials and resources in English and Romanian, we can conclude that participants who were not familiar with e-learning platforms encountered difficulties in accessing the course. The team of facilitators responded immediately to this problem and explained in steps the process of logging in and accessing the course, however, it depends on the time and motivation of the registered persons to complete the course.

Key highlights from the project's pilots

- ✓ It is recommended that the self-assessment tool be used by managers who lead teams of social professionals and apply it at organizational level, as a screening tool and to make the professionals more aware of burnout symptoms and the importance of combating them for keeping their general well-being.

- ✓ It's essential to customize and to integrate the modules on the of the learning program the training of the young professionals, in order to support them as are often exposed to a higher risk of burnout.
- ✓ It is also important for the course modules to be included in the ongoing training for experienced professionals to ensure continuous development and support, as the participants in the training sessions have appreciated

04



IDENTITY OF
THE TOOLKIT

04

Identity of the Toolkit

Identity

The self-care toolkit and resiliency that will guide social practitioners to cope with job requirements and the symptoms of stress and burnout (the Toolkit) is the third results of the European project titled “4LessBurnout – Social Practitioners' Stress Relief”, which is implemented in five European countries (France, Portugal, Ireland, Romania and Greece), funded by the Erasmus+ Programme.

This Toolkit covers the previous results and piloting results, and it contains practical information on how to use the assessment tool (Project Result 1) and training program (Project Result 2) to better cope with job requirements and the symptoms of stress and burnout. Moreover, the Toolkit can be used independently by social practitioners who want to know different approaches, activities and tools to avoid, prevent, address and/or deal with occupational stress and burnout.

Target groups of the Toolkit

The toolkit primarily targets social practitioners, especially those who work with members of vulnerable, underprivileged and marginalized social groups. These professionals could be teachers and trainers, social workers, psychologists, people working in care institutions and refugee camps, counselors and therapists, case managers, advocates, health workers, researchers, experts in occupational health, psychologists, psychiatrists, human resource managers, etc. They can be either self-employed or working in an organization providing supporting services to vulnerable groups. Examples of these groups are the following:

- children
- people with special needs and limitations
- refugees and migrants
- unaccompanied minors
- (ex) inmates and their families
- ethnic and racial minorities,
- LGBTQIA+ individuals
- people with economic disadvantages
- people who suffer from trauma
- Roma
- people who face increased risks, limited access to resources and opportunities

These groups need supporting services by different types of social practitioners, in order to be able to access more opportunities and enjoy their rights. Social work

involves prevention, assessment, intervention with individuals, groups, families and communities in their social environments, advocacy, development and implementation of social policy to promote biopsychosocial spiritual functioning. Social work is an occupation vulnerable to high stress levels due to the work nature, the complexity of social problems, the organizational structure's dynamics, culture, and climate. Therefore, in many cases professionals who deal with these issues and with vulnerable groups feel higher stress levels and anxiety, in their effort to attend to the needs of these target groups. These professionals run higher risks to suffer from burnout.

Finally, even though the Toolkit is mainly for individual use, it can also be used by HR managers and/or Heads of relevant departments in organizations for their employees as a group.

Structure of the Toolkit

The Toolkit is structured as follows: after the first introductory sections (Identity of the Toolkit, The 4LessBurnout project and the Glossary of Terms), the Toolkit comprises findings and recommendations from the project's training activities, in case users wish to attend the online course on burnout. The following Toolkit sections are dedicated to tools, activities and resources, divided in the following broad categories:

- methods to cope with stress and burnout
- self-awareness exercises
- the self-care wheel
- maintain life balance
- stay motivated and think positively

The Toolkit finishes with specific case studies of people who suffered from burnout and on the different ways they managed to address it and overcome it. These case studies can be used for self-reflection by the Toolkit users, so that they draw lessons and conclusions related to their own case.

How to use the Toolkit

Users can go through all different sections of the Toolkit to get acquainted with its contents and its structure. However, this is not a prerequisite. Depending on the area of each user's interest, or need, they can navigate to any separate Toolkit section they wish and find out the tools and activities included in that particular section. Some examples of resources included in each separate section of the Toolkit are videos, audio files, articles, self-reflection activities, serious games, templates for activities for the reduction of stress, reports, etc.

The tools and activities have been collected by project partners and selected in order to support the scope and the objectives of the project. Most of them are in English, and they have been translated to partners' languages (French, Romanian,

Portuguese and Greek). Some tools however are exclusively in partners' languages. Users can use the "selection" button to choose their preferred language, the type of tool and the section they would like to focus on.

05



T O O L S

05

Tools

5.1. Methods to Cope with Stress

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)
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<p>This is an article on the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program, which is a technique developed by Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn in 1979. Although initially developed for stress management, it has evolved to encompass the treatment of a variety of health related disorders, including stress and anxiety. This article assesses the usefulness and applications of MBSR programs in the treatment of chronic diseases. In these training programs participants learn to become aware of thoughts and feelings and are taught to observe them through the repeated practice of intentionally returning attention to something specific (e.g., the breath or body sensations). The MBSR program consists of guided mindfulness meditation and informal daily exercises both aiming to cultivate an accepting, nonjudgmental attitude to what one experiences in each moment. Whereas mindfulness programs like MBSR span over 8 weeks and involve regular group-training sessions with a mindfulness trainer, the activities/exercises can be implemented as a self-training approach, spanned over 2 weeks (10 working days) and focused on some key mindfulness practices that are relatively brief and could be readily integrated into participants' daily (work-) life. Some examples of exercises include the BodyScan, the Three-Minute Breathing Space, the Daily Routine Activities, and the Raisin Exercise.</p>
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<p>https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3336928/</p>
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<p>Grossman, P., Niemann, L., Schmidt, S., & Walach, H. (2004). Mindfulness-based stress reduction and health benefits: A meta-analysis. <i>Journal of psychosomatic research</i>, 57(1), 35-43.</p>
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<p>Keywords: stress, mindfulness, body</p>

<p>Type of tool: article, training program</p>

Online Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

This is an online MBSR training course that is 100% free, created by a fully certified MBSR instructor, and is based on the program founded by Jon Kabat-Zinn at the [University of Massachusetts Medical School](https://www.massgeneral.org/education/center-for-mindfulness). It is a complete MBSR course, designed for people who are not able to take a live MBSR course for financial or logistical reasons. All of the materials used in the live courses including guided meditations, articles and videos, are freely available here.

The training course starts with an Introduction, designed to give a sense of mindfulness and an idea of how this course is structured. For each of the eight weeks, videos, readings and practices help participants and users build a base of both knowledge and experience.

<https://palousemindfulness.com/>

Keywords: stress, mindfulness, body

Type of tool: training program, videos, readings, practices

Proactive Burnout Prevention (Otto, et al, 2019; Otto, et al., 2020)

This is an article titled “The Development of a Proactive Burnout Prevention Inventory: How Employees Can Contribute to Reduce Burnout Risks”. Proactive Burnout Prevention, as outlined by Otto et al. (2019, 2020), involves taking preemptive measures to mitigate the risk of burnout before it manifests. This approach emphasizes early intervention and the cultivation of resilience to buffer against stressors in various domains of life, including work, personal relationships, and self-care. Strategies include fostering a supportive work environment, promoting work-life balance, implementing stress management techniques (ex: breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation, exercises, mediation, etc.) and prioritizing self-care activities. As a result of proactively addressing potential stressors and bolstering resilience, professionals can better navigate challenges and sustain well-being over a longer period of time.

The article contributes to the scientific knowledge on proactive behaviors and the prevention of burnout. In addition, it enables further investigation of the antecedents, outcomes, and boundary conditions of proactive burnout prevention.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7084396/>

Keywords: proactive, prevention, balance, self-care, stressors, well-being

Type of tool: article

Building the habit of good enough

Psychologists have found that people's approaches to decision-making tend to fit into one of two categories: you are either a maximiser - a person who strives to make a choice that will give them the maximum benefit later on - or a satisficer, whose choices are determined by more modest criteria and nothing more. This article titled "Maximizers vs Satisficers: Who Makes Better Decisions?" explains how making choices and taking decisions following each approach can affect our lives, our well-being and our levels of anxiety, stress and burnout.

<https://www.psychologistworld.com/cognitive/maximizers-satisficers-decision-making>

Keywords: habit, consistency, routine, decision making

Type of tool: article

Solution Focused Guided Imagery

This is a booklet on solution-focused guided imagery which uses guided imagery techniques to lead participants (or users) through a 13-step solution-focused "journey" to help them address a recurring problem. Most of the steps require visualization in response to a prompt, in three of the steps participants use a rating scale, and in one step participants write a brief message about what they discovered as a result of the activity.

Solution-Focused Guided Imagery Solution-focused therapy (De Shazer, et al., 2021) emphasizes people's strengths and their application to the change process. Solution-focused counselors assume that clients have the resources to resolve their issues (Miller, et al., 1995). Clients know themselves and their strengths better than anyone else. Recognizing clients' expertise is an essential process during interventions. In this tool, users/ clients rely on their strengths to solve a problem they are encountering. This tool enables clients to connect with their strengths to cope with a problem they are facing. This tool was tested in a study by Sklare, Sabella, and Petrosko (2003). Data from participant self-ratings showed that relative to the beginning of the activity, participants moved significantly closer to a solution by the middle and then again by the end of the intervention.

The tool can be used as a group activity with a facilitator or individually.

https://resources.corwin.com/sites/default/files/appendix_c_1.pdf

Keywords: therapy, strengths, problem solving

Type of tool: booklet

The Coping Wheel and other strategies for coping

This article focuses on the Coping Wheel, which represents coping strategies which, according to much research, can fit under 12 mutually exclusive coping families.

The Coping Wheel is a visual tool designed to help individuals prevent burnout by offering a comprehensive array of coping strategies. This wheel typically consists of various sections, each representing different categories of coping mechanisms. These categories may include self-care activities, stress management techniques, social support networks, relaxation methods, and professional development strategies. Utilizing the Coping Strategy Wheel, professionals can identify and implement a diverse range of coping techniques tailored to their unique needs and preferences. This holistic approach to burnout prevention and management encourages professionals to proactively and actively manage stressors and maintain overall balance/well-being in both personal and professional domains.

Apart from the Coping Wheel, this article also includes further strategies and steps for coping with stress.

<https://positivepsychology.com/coping-strategies-skills/>

Keywords: prevention, proactive, balance, coping

Type of tool: article

Anti-stress cards

These cards are included in a kit of visual tools designed to help individuals deal with everyday stress. The general objective is to allow individuals to carry out small exercises and activities that help reduce stress and increase the perception of well-being. Therefore, this set of small cards that can be printed, cut out and transported easily, promote the implementation of some relaxation techniques, remind individuals of the need to stop and breathe, drink water, do small motor activities that help to relax the body and mind, identifying the ways in which stress affects their physical functioning, among other tasks. Thus, it is intended that these exercises function as adaptive coping strategies to deal with stress and that in the long term they can function as protective strategies against stress.

<https://shorturl.at/iEs0L>

Keywords: stress, mindfulness, body

Type of tool: cards, activities

Tips to cope with stress

This Tipsheet includes 12 simple tips on how social practitioners can deal with stress and reduce high stress levels.

It can be used as a reminder to carry out (or refrain from) certain activities that can support wellbeing and reduce burnout levels.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oHjchtniAzRuORDxZXKP3m0UU8geWBH4/edit>

Keywords: prevention, coping, stress, wellbeing

Type of tool: Tipsheet

5.2 Self-Awareness Exercises

Card game

Effective methods for avoiding burnout involve regularly posing pertinent questions regarding how one spends energy at work. This approach facilitates self-assessment and occasionally challenges the existing taboo. Allocating time for contemplation and open communication enables individuals to modify their habits, a crucial element often overlooked during periods of heightened stress.

This tool is a card game which can be used individually or in a group, during work breaks, for example, promoting self-reflection and sharing of thoughts, as a means to change patterns of thoughts and behaviors.

[Jeu de cartes - Prévenir le burn-out, le temps d'une pause - Noburnout](#)

Keywords: self-awareness, stress, prevention

Type of tool: cards, activity

Core Values Exercise

The Core Values Exercise is designed to allow participants an opportunity to explore their personal values on a profound level. By examining a list of values participants will engage in serious self-reflection and evaluation. By the end of the activity, participants will have a chart of core values that define them. These values will support them and guide them to live more purposefully, acknowledging elements that can lead them to stress and burnout and providing them with alternatives on how to respond to everyday situations.

<http://webmedia.jcu.edu/advising/files/2016/02/Core-Values-Exercise.pdf>

Keywords: self-reflection, explore, values, evaluation

Type of tool: activity

Mindfulness meditation

Derived from Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, created by Jon Kabat-Zinn, mindfulness is an awareness that arises through paying attention to the present moment, in a non-judgmental manner.

In mindfulness meditation, people learn to focus on the present moment in the same way. Harvard researchers studied mindfulness and found that it seemed to change the brain in depressed patients. Studies have also shown some significant benefits of mind-body practices, such as lower blood pressure in hypersensitive patients after relaxation-response training.

This article explains the meaning of mindfulness meditation and its contribution to avoid burnout, while providing simple guidance on how to meditate mindfully.

<https://www.projectxfactor.com/post/combat-burnout-with-mindfulness>

Keywords: mindfulness, body, meditation

Type of tool: article, activity

Ikigai

Ikigai combines two Japanese concepts, iki (life) and gai (worth or value). It is loosely translated as the “reason for being” (or raison d’être, in French). Ikigai is a state of well-being that arises from devotion to activities that bring joy and meaning to life. Japanese culture places great emphasis on the mind-body connection. As such, Ikigai is considered one of the key ingredients to longevity and a healthy and happy life. While broadly applicable in all aspects of life, applying the concept to evaluate our careers and opportunities can reduce burnout and improve the longevity of careers.

This article explains how Ikigai can reduce burnout and compassion fatigue levels.

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/377965929 Burnout and compassion fatigue How do Ikigai and Zen mindfulness work for them](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/377965929_Burnout_and_compassion_fatigue_How_do_Ikigai_and_Zen_mindfulness_work_for_them)

Keywords: well-being, happiness, longevity, evaluation, self-reflection

Type of tool: article, activity

Journaling

Reflecting occasionally in writing about ambiguous and emotionally charged situations helps in many ways: It facilitates clarification and problem-solving, and makes one more spontaneous and present in social situations, more in tune with others and available to interact. People begin to interact differently with others and see themselves in a new light after writing about an emotional subject.

This article explains how the use of the expressive writing (or journaling) increases the employ of the adaptive coping strategies (social support, active participating, problem - orientation) and reduces the maladaptive coping strategies (avoidance) and how it reduces stress and the burnout risk.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6357597/>

Keywords: emotion, self-reflection, explore

Type of tool: article

Tips to promote self- awareness

This Tipsheet includes 12 simple tips on how people can cultivate a deeper understanding of themselves.

It can be used as a reminder to carry out certain activities that can support wellbeing, promote self-awareness and reduce burnout levels.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kvj7926HGfG5ac7maXvyW5IJZEknYkmv/edit>

Keywords: prevention, coping, stress, wellbeing, self- awareness

Type of tool: Tipsheet

5.3 The Self-care wheel



The Self-Care Wheel for Social Practitioners

The Self-Care Wheel is a powerful tool designed to help social practitioners prioritize their well-being and prevent burnout. It offers a comprehensive approach to self-care, encompassing six key dimensions: physical health, mental health, personal needs, professional needs, emotional well-being, and spirituality.

How to Use the Self-Care Wheel:

1. Reflect: Take some time to reflect on each dimension of the wheel and assess your current level of satisfaction in each area. Consider using a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 indicates low satisfaction, and 10 indicates high satisfaction.
2. Identify Priorities: Identify the areas where you scored lowest and prioritize them for immediate attention. You may need to invest more time and energy to improve your well-being in these areas.

3. Explore Strategies: Review each dimension's coping strategies and additional considerations. Select strategies that resonate with you and that you can realistically incorporate into your daily or weekly routine.
4. Create a Self-Care Plan: Develop a personalized self-care plan that includes specific actions you will take to address your priority areas. Be sure to set realistic goals and timelines for yourself.
5. Implement and Adapt: Begin implementing your self-care plan and monitor your progress regularly. Don't be afraid to adapt your plan to suit your evolving needs and circumstances.

Additional Tips:

1. Consistency is Key: Make self-care a part of your daily routine rather than an afterthought.
2. Variety Matters: Experiment with coping strategies to find what works best for you.
3. Be Kind to Yourself: Self-compassion is essential. Don't judge yourself if you slip up or have a bad day.
4. Seek Support: Don't hesitate to contact a trusted friend, colleague, or mental health professional if you need additional support.
5. Remember: Self-care is not a luxury; it's a necessity for sustained well-being and professional effectiveness.

1. Physical Health

Maintaining physical health is crucial for social practitioners who dedicate their careers to supporting vulnerable populations. A strong body and healthy body weight provide the foundation for emotional resilience, mental clarity, and the energy needed to navigate the demanding nature of social work. Studies have shown that prioritizing physical health can significantly reduce the risk of burnout and improve overall well-being.

"Taking care of your physical health is an act of self-compassion, allowing you to serve others better." – Dr Gabor Maté, renowned physician and author.

Social practitioners can cultivate a strong foundation for personal and professional well-being by prioritising physical health. This will ultimately allow them to serve their communities better and reduce the risk of burnout.

1. PHYSICAL HEALTH – Coping Strategies

Regular Exercise: Engaging in regular physical activity, even a short walk, bicycle ride or yoga session, can boost mood, reduce stress, and improve sleep.

Keywords: physical activity, fitness, workout

Link: [EU Physical Activity Guidelines - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/health/physical-activity/physical-activity-guidelines_en)

Healthy Eating: A balanced diet rich in water, fruits, vegetables, and whole grains provides the nutrients needed for optimal physical and mental function.

Keywords: hydration, nutrition, balanced diet, meal planning

Link: [The European Food Information Council : Food facts for healthy choices | Eufic](https://www.eufic.eu/)

Quality Sleep: Aim for 7-8 hours of quality sleep each night to allow your body and mind to rest and recharge

Keywords: sleep hygiene, insomnia, rest

Links: European Sleep Research Society: <https://esrs.eu/>

[Understanding the mechanics of sleep | DNCSS Project | Results in brief | H2020 |](#)
[CORDIS | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

Regular Check-ups: Schedule routine checkups with your doctor to monitor your health and address any concerns early on.

Keywords: preventive care, health screenings, choosing wisely, quality.

Links: [Health systems coordination - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/health/systems-coordination_en)

[General health check-ups: To check or not to check? A question of choosing wisely - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#)

Mindful Movement: Incorporate and cultivate mindful movement and breathing practices like tai chi or yoga to reduce stress, improve flexibility, and promote relaxation.

Key Words: yoga, tai chi, breathing, stretching

Links: [Nutrition and physical activity - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition-physical-activity_en)

Additional Considerations

1. Regular exercise:

- Workplace Wellness Programs: Inquire about or advocate for workplace initiatives that promote physical activity, such as discounted gym memberships, walking groups, or on-site exercise classes.
- Active Transportation: Choose walking or cycling for short commutes or errands whenever possible.
- Fitness Trackers: Utilise wearable fitness trackers or smartphone apps to monitor your activity levels and set goals.

- Online Workouts: Explore free online workout videos and platforms like YouTube or Fitness Blender.

2. Healthy eating

- Meal Prepping: Dedicate time each week to prepare healthy meals and snacks in advance to avoid unhealthy impulse choices.
- Healthy Snacking: Ensure nutritious snacks like fruits, vegetables, or nuts are available at your workplace.
- Mindful Eating: Practice mindful eating by paying attention to your body's hunger and fullness cues and savouring the flavours and textures of your food.
- Nutrition Apps: Utilize apps like MyFitnessPal or Lifesum to track your food intake and learn about the nutritional value of different foods.

3. Quality sleep

- Consistent Sleep Schedule: Establish a regular sleep schedule by going to bed and waking up at the same time each day, even on weekends.
- Relaxing Bedtime Routine: Create a relaxing bedtime routine that signals to your body that it's time to wind down, such as reading, taking a warm bath, or listening to calming music.
- Sleep-Friendly Environment: Ensure your bedroom is dark, quiet, and cool to promote optimal sleep conditions.
- Limit Screen Time: Avoid screens (phones, tablets, computers) for at least an hour before bed, as the blue light emitted can interfere with sleep.

4. Regular check-ups

- Health Insurance: Familiarize yourself with your health insurance coverage and utilise preventive care services, such as screenings and vaccinations.
- Family History: Be aware of your family's health history and discuss potential risks with your doctor.
- Health Records: Keep a personal health record to track your medical history, medications, and test results.
- Open Communication: Be open and honest with your doctor about any health concerns or symptoms you may be experiencing.

5. Mindful movement

- Workplace Breaks: Incorporate short mindful movement breaks into your workday, such as stretching or taking a few minutes to practice deep breathing.
- Guided Meditations: Explore guided meditation apps or videos to promote relaxation and reduce stress.
- Community Classes: Look for local classes or workshops offering tai chi, yoga, or other mindful movement practices.
- Nature Walks: Spend time in nature, whether walking in the park or hiking in the woods, to connect with your surroundings and promote relaxation.

2. Mental Health

Maintaining mental well-being is essential for social practitioners to effectively manage stress, build resilience, and provide compassionate care. Prioritising mental health can enhance decision-making skills, improve focus, and foster a positive outlook, ultimately contributing to better client outcomes and a more fulfilling career.

"Mental health is not a destination, but a process. It's about how you drive, not where you're going." – Noam Shpancer, Ph.D., psychologist and author.

By investing in mental health, social practitioners can cultivate resilience, enhance their emotional well-being, and ultimately thrive in their demanding yet rewarding profession.

MENTAL HEATH – Coping Strategies
<p>Mindfulness Meditation: Regularly practicing mindfulness meditation can help reduce anxiety, improve focus, and cultivate a sense of inner calm.</p> <p>Keywords: mindfulness, meditation, relaxation</p> <p>Link: Mindfulness Meditation: A Popular way to help people manage their stress and their mental health EPALE (europa.eu)</p>
<p>Therapy/Counseling: Seeking professional support from a therapist or counsellor can provide a safe space to explore emotions, develop coping mechanisms, and address underlying mental health concerns.</p> <p>Keywords: mental health professional, psychotherapy</p> <p>Link: European Association for Psychotherapy EAP Welcome (europsyche.org)</p>
<p>Stress Management Techniques: Learning and practising stress management techniques such as deep breathing exercises or progressive muscle relaxation, can help regulate emotions and alleviate the physical symptoms of stress.</p> <p>Keywords: deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, stress reduction</p> <p>Link: Policy recommendations to prevent and manage work-related stress Knowledge Platform for the European Union (europa.eu)</p>
<p>Creative Outlets: Engaging in creative activities like journaling, painting, or playing an instrument can provide a healthy outlet for emotions, promote self-expression, and reduce stress.</p> <p>Keywords: art therapy, journaling, music</p> <p>Link: ECArTE European Consortium of Arts Therapies Education</p>
<p>Cognitive Restructuring: Challenging negative thought patterns and reframing them in a more positive or realistic light can improve mood and reduce anxiety.</p> <p>Keywords: cognitive behavioral therapy, thought patterns</p> <p>Link: Home - EABCT</p>

Additional Considerations

Mindfulness Meditation:

- Apps: Explore meditation apps like Calm or Headspace, which offer guided meditations and mindfulness exercises.

- Online Resources: Access free mindfulness resources and guided meditations on websites like UCLA Health or Mindful.org.
- Community Classes: Look for local mindfulness meditation classes or workshops at community centres or studios.

Therapy/Counselling:

- Referrals: Ask your doctor or trusted colleagues for referrals to mental health professionals in your area.
- Online Therapy: Consider online platforms like BetterHelp or Talkspace for convenient and accessible mental health support.
- Employee Assistance Programs (EAP): If your workplace offers an EAP, utilise it for confidential counselling services.

Stress Management Techniques:

- Books and Workbooks: Read self-help books or workbooks on stress management techniques to learn new strategies and find resources.
- Workplace Workshops: Inquire about stress management workshops or training sessions offered by your employer or professional organisations.
- Relaxation Apps: Use relaxation apps like Breathe2Relax or Pacifica to practice deep breathing and relaxation exercises on the go.

Cognitive Restructuring:

- Therapy: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is a practical approach to learning and practising cognitive restructuring techniques.
- Online Resources: Access free CBT resources and worksheets on websites like getselfhelp.co.uk.
- Self-Help Books: Read books on CBT to learn more about challenging negative thoughts and developing healthier thinking patterns.

Creative Outlets:

- Community Centres: Explore art classes, writing groups, or music lessons offered by community centres or local organisations.
- Online Courses: Take online courses or tutorials on creative skills that interest you, such as drawing, painting, or playing an instrument.
- Personal Expression: Allow yourself time for creative expression in your daily life, whether through journaling, doodling, or simply listening to music.

3. Personal Needs

Attending to personal needs is essential for social practitioners to maintain a healthy work-life balance, recharge their emotional batteries, and prevent burnout. Engaging

in activities that bring joy, fostering meaningful relationships, and setting boundaries can contribute to overall well-being and resilience.

"Self-care is not selfish. You cannot serve from an empty vessel." – Eleanor Brownn, author.

Social practitioners can cultivate a more balanced and fulfilling life by acknowledging and fulfilling their personal needs.

PERSONAL NEEDS – Coping strategies
Hobbies and Interests: Make time for activities you enjoy outside work, whether reading, painting, hiking, or playing sports. Keywords: leisure activities, passion projects, hobbies Link: Link: The Healing Power of Hobbies and Interests in Self-Care (birdswave.com)
Time in Nature: Being outdoors, surrounded by nature, can reduce stress, improve mood, and boost creativity. Keywords: ecotherapy, nature connection, green spaces Link: Home - EUROPARC Federation
Social Connection: Nurture meaningful relationships with friends and family, engage in social activities, and build a strong support network. Keywords: friendships, support network, community Link: Mental Health Europe: Advocacy & Support for Well-being
Personal Boundaries: Learn to say no to additional tasks or commitments when necessary and prioritise your own needs and well-being. Keywords: saying no, assertiveness, time management Link: European Association for Transactional Analysis: (https://www.eatanews.org/)
Self-Compassion: Practice self-compassion by treating yourself with kindness, understanding, and forgiveness, especially during challenging times. Keywords: self-kindness, inner critic, self-acceptance Link: SELF-CARE AND PREVENTION RECOMMENDATIONS - European Health Parliament

Additional considerations

Hobbies and Interests:

- o Time Management: Schedule dedicated time for hobbies and interests in your weekly calendar.

- o Explore New Activities: Try new activities or revisit hobbies you once enjoyed.

- o Join Clubs or Groups: Connect with others who share your interests through clubs, classes, or online communities.

Time in Nature:

- o Local Parks: Visit parks or green spaces in your neighborhood for a quick nature escape.

- o Weekend Getaways: Plan weekend trips to explore nature reserves, forests, or mountains in your region.

- o Gardening: If you can access a garden or balcony, plant flowers or vegetables to connect with nature at home.

Social Connection:

- o Regular Communication: Make time for regular phone calls, video chats, or in-person visits with friends and family.

- o Shared Activities: Plan social outings or activities you enjoy together, such as going to the movies, having dinner, or attending events.

- o Volunteer Work: Engage in volunteer work to connect with your community and make a positive impact.

Personal Boundaries:

- o Communication: Communicate your boundaries to colleagues, friends, and family.

- o Prioritize: Learn to prioritize tasks and delegate responsibilities when possible.

- o Schedule Downtime: Schedule regular breaks and downtime into your daily and weekly routine.

Self-Compassion:

- o Mindfulness: Practice mindfulness to become more aware of your thoughts and feelings without judgment.

- o Self-Care Rituals: Develop self-care rituals, such as taking a relaxing bath, journaling, or practicing meditation, to nurture yourself.

- o Therapy: If you struggle with self-criticism or negative self-talk, consider seeking professional support from a therapist.

4. Professional Needs

Nurturing professional needs is crucial for social practitioners to maintain a sense of competence, engagement, and satisfaction in their work. Investing in professional development, building a supportive network, and advocating for healthy workplace practices can mitigate burnout and enhance career longevity.

"Invest in your professional growth. It's an investment in yourself, your clients, and the future of your profession." – Unknown

By actively tending to their professional needs, social practitioners can foster a fulfilling and sustainable career that allows them to make a lasting impact on the lives of others.

PROFESSIONAL NEEDS – Coping Strategies
<p>Mentorship/Supervision: Seek guidance and support from experienced colleagues or supervisors to gain new perspectives, develop skills, and navigate professional challenges.</p> <p>Keywords: professional guidance, career development, mentoring</p> <p>Link: Home - EMCC Global</p>
<p>Continuing Education: Participate in workshops, conferences, or online courses to stay up-to-date with your field's latest research and best practices.</p> <p>Keywords: professional development, training, workshops</p> <p>Link: European Social Network Home (esn-eu.org)</p>
<p>Networking: Connect with other professionals to build relationships, share knowledge, and access potential job opportunities.</p> <p>Keywords: professional connections, conferences, associations</p> <p>Link: IFSW Europe – International Federation of Social Workers:</p>
<p>Workplace Advocacy: Advocate for healthy workplace practices, such as reasonable workloads, supportive supervision, and opportunities for professional development.</p> <p>Keywords: workplace culture, work-life balance, employee rights</p> <p>Link: Eurocadres Trade Union voice of professionals and managers</p>
<p>Delegation and Collaboration: Recognize your limits and delegate tasks or collaborate with colleagues to share responsibilities and avoid overload.</p> <p>Keywords: teamwork, sharing responsibilities, asking for help</p> <p>Link: Homepage EPSU</p>

Additional Considerations

Mentorship/Supervision:

- **Formal Programs:** Inquire about formal mentorship or supervision programs offered by your employer or professional organisations.
- **Peer Support Groups:** Participate in peer support groups to connect with colleagues facing similar challenges and share experiences.
- **Online Communities:** Join online forums or social media groups for social practitioners to network and exchange ideas.

Continuing Education:

- **Professional Organizations:** Explore professional development opportunities from organisations relevant to your field, such as the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) or the European Association of Social Workers (EASW).
- **Online Learning Platforms:** Access online courses and resources on platforms like Coursera, Udemy, or edX.
- **Local Universities:** Check if universities in your area offer continuing education programs or workshops for social practitioners.

Networking:

- **Conferences and Events:** Attend conferences, workshops, or seminars related to your field to meet new people and learn about emerging trends.
- **LinkedIn:** Utilize LinkedIn to connect with professionals in your field, join relevant groups, and participate in discussions.
- **Professional Associations:** Join professional associations to network with colleagues, access resources, and stay informed about industry news.

Workplace Advocacy:

- **Union Representation:** If applicable, join or become active in your workplace union to advocate for better working conditions and employee rights.
- **Employee Surveys:** Participate in employee surveys to voice your opinions and concerns about workplace practices.
- **Open Communication:** Speak with your supervisor or HR department about any challenges you face or suggestions for improvement.

Delegation and Collaboration:

- **Team Meetings:** Utilize team meetings to discuss workloads, distribute tasks, and collaborate on projects.
- **Communication Tools:** Use project management tools or communication platforms to streamline collaboration and ensure everyone is on the same page.
- **Peer Support:** Don't hesitate to ask colleagues for help or offer assistance when needed.

5. Emotional Well-being

Nurturing emotional well-being is paramount for social practitioners as it enables them to connect with clients empathetically, manage stress effectively, and maintain a positive outlook. Prioritising emotional health allows social workers to cultivate resilience, compassion, and self-awareness, ultimately leading to a more sustainable and rewarding career.

"Emotional well-being is the cornerstone of a fulfilling life, personally and professionally." – Unknown.

By prioritising emotional well-being, social practitioners can foster a healthier relationship with their emotions, build resilience, and enhance their overall quality of life.

Emotional Well-Being - Coping Strategies:
Emotional Expression: Allow yourself to feel and express a full range of emotions, whether through journaling, talking to a trusted friend, or engaging in creative outlets. Keywords: emotional expression, journaling, talking, creative expression Link: European Federation for Psychosynthesis Psychotherapy: Home EFPP Psychosynthesis
Gratitude Practice: Regularly reflect on and express gratitude for the positive aspects of your life, big and small. Keywords: gratitude journal, thankfulness, appreciation Link: 14 Benefits of Practicing Gratitude (Incl. Journaling) (positivepsychology.com)
Humour and Laughter: Find humour in everyday situations, watch funny movies, or engage in playful activities to boost mood and reduce stress. Keywords: comedy, funny movies, playful activities Link: Association for Applied and Therapeutic Humour: (https://www.aath.org/)
Emotional Regulation Skills: Develop skills to manage intense emotions, such as mindfulness, deep breathing exercises, or grounding techniques. Keywords: mindfulness, deep breathing, grounding techniques Link: European Association for Body Psychotherapy: (https://www.eabp.org/)
Seeking Support: When you feel overwhelmed or struggle with difficult emotions, don't hesitate to seek support from a therapist, support group, or trusted friend. Keywords: therapy, support groups, trusted friends Link: Mental Health Europe: (https://www.mhe-sme.org/)

Additional Considerations

Emotional Expression:

- **Journaling Prompts:** Use journaling prompts to explore your emotions and gain insights into your thoughts and feelings.
- **Expressive Arts Therapy:** Consider participating in expressive arts therapy to express emotions through creative outlets like art, music, or dance.
- **Emotional Support Groups:** Find support groups online or in your community to

Gratitude Practice:

- **Gratitude Journal:** Start a gratitude journal and write down three things you're grateful for each day.
- **Gratitude Apps:** Use gratitude apps like Gratitude or Happier to cultivate a daily gratitude practice.
- **Gratitude Letters:** Write letters of gratitude to people who have positively impacted your life.

Humour and Laughter:

- **Comedy Shows:** Watch stand-up comedy shows, funny movies, or sitcoms to lift your spirits.
- **Playful Activities:** Engage in playful activities with friends or family, such as board games, sports, or simply goofing around.
- **Laughter Yoga:** Try laughter yoga, a unique practice that combines laughter exercises with yogic breathing to promote joy and reduce stress.

Emotional Regulation Skills:

- **Mindfulness Exercises:** Practice mindfulness exercises like body scan meditation or mindful walking to become more aware of your emotions and bodily sensations.
- **Relaxation Techniques:** Learn relaxation techniques like progressive muscle relaxation or guided imagery to reduce stress and promote calm.
- **Therapy:** If you struggle with emotional regulation, seek guidance from a therapist who can teach you coping skills and strategies.

Seeking Support:

- **Therapy:** Consider individual or group therapy to address emotional challenges and develop healthy coping mechanisms.
- **Support Groups:** Find support groups online or in your community for people facing similar emotional difficulties.
- **Trusted Friends:** Reach out to trusted friends or family members for emotional support and encouragement.

6. Spirituality

Nurturing spirituality can offer social practitioners a profound source of meaning, purpose, and inner peace. Engaging in spiritual practices can help them connect with their values, cultivate compassion, and find solace in the face of adversity, ultimately leading to a more resilient and fulfilling life.

"Spirituality is not about religion. It's about a sense of connection to something bigger than ourselves. It typically involves a search for meaning in life." – Christina Puchalski, M.D., Director of the George Washington Institute for Spirituality and Health.

By nurturing their spirituality, social practitioners can cultivate a more profound sense of meaning, purpose, and resilience, allowing them to navigate the challenges of their profession with grace and compassion.

Coping strategies
<p>Meditation/Prayer: Regular meditation or prayer can quiet the mind, reduce stress, and foster a deeper connection to oneself and a higher power (if applicable).</p> <p>Keywords: mindfulness, spiritual connection, reflection</p> <p>Link: European Network for Mindfulness Teachers: European Associations For Mindfulness support exchange</p>
<p>Time in Nature: Spending time in nature, whether a walk in the park or a hike in the mountains, can evoke a sense of awe and wonder, promoting feelings of peace and connection to the natural world.</p> <p>Keywords: ecotherapy, nature connection, spiritual practices</p> <p>Link: The European Nature Network: Home - The European Nature Trust</p>
<p>Community Involvement: Participating in spiritual or religious communities can provide a sense of belonging, support, and shared values.</p> <p>Keywords: volunteering, service, faith-based organisations</p> <p>Link: Churches in Europe: 35 Famous And Beautiful Churches In Europe (delveintoeurope.com)</p>
<p>Reading Inspirational Texts: Reading spiritual or philosophical texts, poetry, or religious scriptures can offer guidance, comfort, and inspiration.</p> <p>Keywords: spiritual literature, self-help books, poetry</p> <p>Link: European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism: (http://www.esswe.org/)</p>
<p>Creative Expression: Engaging in creative activities like painting, music, or dance can be a spiritual practice that fosters self-expression, connection to emotions, and a sense of flow.</p> <p>Keywords: art, music, dance</p> <p>Link: Res Artis - Worldwide Network of Artist Residencies: (https://www.resartis.org/en/)</p>

Additional considerations

Meditation/Prayer:

- Guided Meditations: Explore guided meditations or prayer resources online or through apps.

- **Spiritual Retreats:** Consider attending a spiritual retreat to deepen your practice and connect with others.
- **Spiritual Groups:** Join a meditation or prayer group in your community or online.

Time in Nature:

- **Nature Walks:** Make time for regular walks in nature, paying attention to the sights, sounds, and smells around you.
- **Nature Photography:** Capture the beauty of nature through photography to appreciate its intricacies.
- **Gardening:** Cultivate a garden or care for houseplants to connect with the natural world at home.

Community Involvement:

- **Volunteer Work:** Volunteer your time or skills to a cause that aligns with your values and beliefs.
- **Faith-Based Organizations:** If you are religious, participate in your faith community's activities or services.
- **Interfaith Dialogue:** Engage in interfaith dialogue to learn about different spiritual perspectives and build bridges of understanding.

Reading Inspirational Texts:

- **Book Clubs:** Join a book club focused on spiritual or philosophical literature to share insights and discuss ideas with others.
- **Online Resources:** Explore online libraries or websites that offer access to spiritual texts and resources.
- **Personal Reflection:** Reflect on the meaning and message of the texts you read, journaling about your thoughts and insights.

Creative Expression:

- **Art Classes:** Take an art class or workshop to explore different mediums and express yourself creatively.
- **Music Therapy:** Consider music therapy to utilise music for relaxation, emotional expression, and healing.
- **Dance Classes:** Participate in dance classes to move your body, connect with your emotions, and express yourself through movement.

5.4. Maintain Life Balance

Dixit Cards

Dixit cards can be utilized for burnout prevention and management as a creative and engaging tool to facilitate relaxation, stress reduction, and emotional expression. Professionals can use the cards in various ways, such as during mindfulness exercises, group discussions, or individual reflection sessions. Through selecting cards that resonate with their emotions or experiences, professionals can gain insights into their feelings, enhance self-awareness, and develop coping strategies. Additionally, using Dixit cards in a supportive environment can foster a sense of connection and camaraderie among participants, promoting social support and resilience-building. Overall, incorporating Dixit cards into burnout prevention and management strategies can provide a therapeutic outlet for professionals to navigate stressors.

https://cdn.svc.asmodee.net/production-libellud/uploads/2022/03/DIXIT_OVERVIEW.pdf

Keywords: emotion, self-reflection, connection, self-awareness, coping strategies

Type of tool: card game, activity

Six dice game

Using a six dice game for burnout prevention and management can be an interactive and engaging way to promote stress relief, relaxation, and social connection.

Here's how it can be implemented:

Mindfulness and Stress Relief: Participants can roll the dice and perform a corresponding relaxation or mindfulness activity based on the number rolled. For example, rolling a one might prompt a deep breathing exercise, rolling a two could involve progressive muscle relaxation, rolling a three might initiate a guided visualization, and so on. This allows individuals to engage in different stress-reducing techniques in a fun and randomized manner.

Group Discussion and Support: After each participant takes their turn rolling the dice and completing an activity, the group can engage in a discussion about their experiences, insights, and feelings. This provides an opportunity for individuals to share their stressors, coping strategies, and sources of support with one another, fostering a sense of camaraderie and understanding.

Variety and Flexibility: The six dice game offers a wide range of activities and prompts, allowing participants to tailor their experience based on their preferences and needs. Additionally, the game can be adapted to include activities specific to burnout prevention and management, such as setting boundaries, practicing self-care, expressing gratitude, or engaging in creative outlets. In conclusion, using a six dice game for burnout prevention and management can promote stress relief, social connection, and holistic well-being in a playful and interactive way.

Keywords: mindfulness, exercise, body, self-care, stress relief, wellbeing

Type of tool: activity

Points of View Cards

Points of View cards, images, and stories can be highly useful tools for burnout prevention and management, offering a multifaceted approach to addressing stress and promoting well-being.

They are beneficial because:

- a. **Perspective Shift:** Points of View cards, images, and stories provide professionals with different perspectives and viewpoints on various aspects of life and work. As a result of exposing professionals to diverse experiences and narratives, these tools encourage a shift in perspective, helping professionals see their challenges and stressors from new angles. This can be particularly valuable for combating burnout, as it allows professionals to reframe their thoughts and perceptions, fostering resilience and adaptability in the face of adversity.
- b. **Emotional Engagement:** Images and stories have the power to evoke strong emotions and feelings in professionals. Through engaging with compelling narratives and visual representations, professionals can connect on a deeper level with their own emotions and experiences. This emotional engagement facilitates self-reflection and introspection, enabling professionals to identify and process their feelings of stress, burnout, and overwhelm more effectively. Additionally, sharing stories and discussing images in a supportive group setting can foster a sense of empathy and camaraderie, reducing feelings of isolation and promoting social connection.
- c. **Creative Expression and Self-Discovery:** Points of View cards, images, and stories offer professionals a creative outlet for self-expression and self-discovery. Through storytelling, professionals can articulate their thoughts, feelings, and experiences in a unique and personal way, facilitating a deeper understanding of themselves and their needs. Similarly, interpreting images and engaging with visual prompts allows professionals to explore their subconscious thoughts and beliefs, uncovering hidden insights and motivations. This process of creative expression and self-discovery can be empowering for professionals struggling with burnout, helping them reconnect with their inner strengths and resources for coping and resilience.

Link: (as an example) <https://pointsofyoucanada.ca/the-coaching-game/>

Keywords: self-reflection, connection, exploration, resilience, empathy, coping strategies

Type of tool: activity, card game

The Body Scan

The body scan exercise is like giving your body a thorough check-up. Just like a doctor examines different parts of your body, you systematically focus your attention on each body part, starting from your toes and working your way up to your head. Through paying attention to these sensations without judgment, you become more aware of any signs of stress or tension lurking in your body. This awareness helps you catch early signs of burnout, like tight muscles or fatigue, before they spiral out of control. Moreover, the body scan helps you unwind and relax by encouraging you to let go of any tension you might be holding onto. Practicing the body scan regularly can help you stay in tune with your body, unwind from stress, and maintain your overall well-being, making it a powerful, inexpensive tool for preventing and managing burnout.

This article provides a step-by-step guide (with written and audio instructions) on how to implement the body scan meditation.

<https://www.mindful.org/beginners-body-scan-meditation/>

Keywords: calm, body, exercise, awareness, mindfulness, wellbeing

Type of tool: activity, meditation

The Raisin Exercise

The raisin exercise is a mindfulness practice often used for burnout prevention and management. Participants are given a single raisin and instructed to engage all their senses in the experience of eating it. They observe the raisin's texture, color, and shape, listen to the sound it makes when touched, smell its aroma, and finally taste it slowly, noticing the flavors and sensations as they chew and swallow. This exercise encourages participants to bring their full attention to the present moment, promoting mindfulness and stress reduction. Focusing on the sensory experience of eating the raisin, professionals can cultivate greater awareness and appreciation for simple pleasures.

The tool provides a step-by-step guide on how to proceed with this practice.

https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/raisin_meditation

Keywords: mindfulness, antistress, explore

Type of tool: activity

Job Crafting

Using the template for the Job Crafting Activity, users should analyze their work, following the indications in the template, and then propose 2-3 changes in each dimension that they can make to their work (cognitive, task and relational). The users are then asked to share some examples and their justification - on a voluntary basis. The trainer (facilitator) or manager should take advantage of this sharing to question the choices. It's normal for people to have difficulties with job crafting when they first try it. The reflection part alone is especially important for analyzing the work. Job Crafting has been proven as an effective methodology for stressors related to time management and work motivation.

The article explains the meaning of job crafting, the benefits for the employees and the organizations they work in, also providing different job crafting models and examples.

Link:<https://positivepsychology.com/job-crafting/>

Keywords: Job Crafting; Time Management; Task allocation; Work Motivation; engagement

Type of tool: activity

Job Demand and Resources Matrix

Using the JDR Analysis from 4LessBurnout, the user should analyze a case study or their own example in the light of the job demand-resource model: first identifying the stressors present in the case or in their work and life; and then identifying for each quadrant what resources and demands would be present for each specific situations. The aim is to understand, through a real case, and put into practice the job-demand model.

The tool consists of a video explaining the Job Demands Resource Model of Organizational Performance, an article titled "Applying the Job Demands-Resources model: A 'how to' guide to measuring and tackling work engagement and burnout" and a template to be used for the Matrix.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1OJ-bly9MTo>
<https://www.wilmarschaufeli.nl/publications/Schaufeli/476.pdf>

Keywords: Job Demand and Resources model; Burnout prevention; Stress Management

5.5. Stay Motivated and Think Positive

Your positive emotions portfolio

This tool encourages users to explore positive emotions such as joy, happiness, contentment, inspiration, serenity by documenting experiences, feelings and memories.

The tool consists of a step-by step guide on how to develop the portfolio and a set of instructions for different types of portfolios.

Links:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XCeKCEpyoG7p5wAXDn_2NwLAV2ExN7uQ/view?usp=sharing
https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/1965179/Positivity_Portfolio_-_Increasing_Positive_Emotions.pdf

Keywords: self-awareness, positivity, emotion, positive emotions

Type of tool: activity

Mental wellbeing audio guides

This is a resource that gathers 5 audio materials, in which there are explanations and tips delivered by an expert on Self-help for low mood and depression, how to cope with anxiety - a relaxation technique, sleep problems, low confidence and assertiveness, unhelpful thinking.

Link: <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/mental-wellbeing-audio-guides/>

Keywords: calm, mindfulness, mental health, coping strategies

Type of tool: audio file

Antistress coloring

Coloring is a healthy way to relieve stress. It calms the brain and helps the body relax. Coloring is not an activity exclusively for children, adults can enjoy some color and a bit of art through patterns of flowers, artwork, mandalas or animals. Thus, there are patterns available that can be coloured both digitally and printed and coloured using pencils. The tool consists of patterns which can be colored, in order to relieve stress and anxiety.

<https://www.mombooks.com/mom/online-activities/>

<https://coloringbook.pics/antistress-coloring-pages/mandala/>

Keywords: antistress, calm, color

Body Scan Meditation

One of the techniques to relieve stress is body scan meditation. This is a type of meditation that focuses the attention on different parts of the body, making the muscles relax and concentrating on how each part of the body feels, without classifying sensations into good and bad. An audio guide is provided on how to practice this meditation exercise.

<https://www.helpguide.org/meditations/body-scan-meditation.htm>

Keywords: meditation, body, exercise

Type of tool: activity

The Happiness Lab with Dr. Laurie Santos

As a resource used for passive learning, simply deploying our listening skills and not consuming much of our intense personal and professional lives is Dr. Psychologist Laurie Santos' podcast, The Happiness Lab. In this series of episodes she covers a variety of topics related to mental health, well-being, happiness, and human interactions. The focus episodes on stress and burnout are "Helping the helpers", "Help others to help yourself", "Couch yourself through a crisis", etc.

<https://www.pushkin.fm/podcasts/the-happiness-lab-with-dr-laurie-santos>

Keywords: podcast, happiness, stress

Type of tool: audio file

Talks for when you feel totally burned out

A useful resource from the area of mental health and burnout management is the series of 10 TedTalks with a duration between 3 and 20 minutes that inspire and motivate how to make our stress our friend, how happiness is the source of our productivity, etc.

https://www.ted.com/playlists/245/talks_for_when_you_feel_totall

Keywords: mental health, podcast, inspiration

Type of tool: video files

5 daily positive affirmations to help you break negative self-talk

To sustain a habit of positive self-talk, key phrases are needed as milestones to unlock from negative states. This tool contains 5 everyday phrases to help break away from negative self-talk.

<https://www.stress.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/MENTAL-health-awerness-week-10-16-May-2021-2.pdf>

Keywords: positivity, mental health, self-awareness

Tips to stay motivated and think positive

This Tipsheet includes 12 simple tips on how social practitioners can stay motivated and think positive, despite hardships and trouble.

It can be used as a reminder to carry out (or refrain from) certain activities that can support wellbeing and reduce burnout levels.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Nmh5d9U8-l8r4mfwuV2DgyRANKm2eTb8/edit>

Keywords: prevention, coping, stress, wellbeing

Type of tool: Tipsheet

06

C A S E
S T U D I E S

06

CASE STUDY 1 (ALLI)

1.	Title of the case study	Susan: from total success to total burnout
2.	Short description/ summary of the case study	This case study describes the story of Susan, who, after much success at her work as a Business Development Manager, ended up with high levels of burnout: she lost the sense of herself.
3.	Description of the case study	<p>Susan was working as a Business Development Manager in a charity supporting people with disabilities. Initially, things were great. She was working with an interactive, intelligent and motivated team, and there was a real buzz about making things happen.</p> <p>The majority of her work was tendering for new government contracts, which was an intensive process. Because they mostly won the contracts, this then meant another intensive process of interviews, presenting to governmental panels and operationalizing within around 8 weeks.</p> <p>The successful award of the contracts made it worthwhile and increased her self-confidence. Working outside her comfort zone was exhilarating when it had positive results but led to more and more consistent feelings of stress. Nevertheless, at that time she enjoyed the work and felt like she was dealing with the challenges.</p> <p>She had no administrative or personal support during this time, despite asking for it repeatedly.</p> <p>Over time, she found it difficult to concentrate for any length of time – she just did not have the energy. Her mental and physical reserves seemed to be eroding and she was not recharging them.</p> <p>She sometimes went back to her office and would just put her head in her hands, unable to start work on anything. Her symptoms, which could come at any time, were cold/hot sweats, ‘jangling’, extreme fatigue and an inability to maintain her focus. She was going through the menopause at the time, as well.</p> <p>She just wanted to lie down and go to sleep. She lost the sense of herself – her personality, her sense of humor. She felt disconnected from everything and everyone.</p> <p>After 18 months she was so tired she went to see the doctor.</p>

4.	Conclusions and Lessons learnt from the case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be mindful of the stress that you might experience, despite any success. • Being successful does not mean being immune to stress and burnout. • Administrative or personal support can reduce burnout levels. • Stress and depression are not an event that just happens one day - it is a process that gradually builds until, without intervention, the person crashes and burns. • Going to the doctor when experiencing burnout symptoms is always a good idea.
5.	Self-reflective questions on the case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which are the symptoms? Is it a case of burnout? • Why do you think she went to the doctor after 18 months and not earlier? • How could Susan prevent the burnout she experienced? • What would you advice/ recommend to Susan?
6.	References	
7.	Key words	# burnout # burnout symptoms # professional help to deal with burnout # maintain life balance

CASE STUDY 2 (CCF)

1.	Title of the case study	John, addressing professional burnout in correctional officers
2.	Short description/ summary of the case study	A junior prison officer experiences professional burnout, leading to a critical error. A coordinated effort among senior personnel and mentors is undertaken to address and resolve the situation.
3.	Description of the case study	John Doe, a junior prison officer, has been feeling increasingly overwhelmed due to the demanding nature of the job. Recently, John has been working extended hours and dealing with heightened security threats, which have taken a toll on his mental and emotional well-being.

		<p>This stress culminated in a serious incident where John missed a critical detail during a security check, resulting in a temporary security breach.</p> <p>Jim, a mentor prison officer, noticed signs of burnout in Jordan over the past few weeks, such as irritability, fatigue, and decreased performance. Despite these observations, Jordan did not seek help, fearing it might be seen as a weakness. The security breach brought Jordan's condition to the forefront, prompting an immediate response from Casey, the mentor coordinator, and Roland, the senior prison warden.</p> <p>The team quickly gathered to assess the situation and ensure John's safety. Casey and Roland provided a safe space for John to express his feelings and concerns without fear of retribution. They listened empathetically as John described the overwhelming workload, lack of rest, and emotional exhaustion.</p> <p>Recognizing the severity of the situation, the team implemented a comprehensive support plan. This included temporarily reducing Jordan's workload, arranging regular check-ins with Jim, providing access to mental health resources, and offering additional training to boost confidence and competence. Roland also initiated a review of staff workloads and introduced measures to prevent similar incidents, ensuring a balanced distribution of tasks and regular mental health check-ins for all</p>
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		<p>personnel. Regular follow-up meetings were scheduled to monitor John's progress and the effectiveness of the support measures.</p> <p>These meetings provided an opportunity to make adjustments and ensure that John felt supported throughout the recovery process.</p> <p>Through this coordinated effort, John began to recover from burnout. The open communication, empathetic support, and practical adjustments helped him regain his confidence and well-being. The case underscored the importance of recognizing signs of burnout early and the value of a supportive and responsive work environment.</p>
4.	Conclusions and Lessons learnt from the case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early recognition and intervention are crucial in addressing professional burnout. • Providing a safe and supportive environment for open communication is essential. • Practical adjustments, such as workload reduction and regular check-ins, can significantly alleviate stress. • Mental health resources and training opportunities are vital components of a comprehensive support plan. • A proactive approach to staff well-being can prevent burnout and enhance overall job performance.

5.	Self-reflective questions on the case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What signs of burnout can be identified in yourself or colleagues, and how can they be addressed early? • How can a supportive work environment be fostered to encourage open communication about stress and burnout? • What practical measures can be implemented in your workplace to help prevent and manage burnout? • How can regular follow-ups and adjustments be integrated into a support plan for those experiencing burnout?
7.	Key words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Burnout • Correctional Officers • Mentorship • Mental Health • Support Systems • Workload Management • Crisis Intervention • Employee Well-being

CASE STUDY 3 (EaSI)

1.	Title of the case study	From exhaustion to finding balance
2.	Short description/ summary of the case study	This case study highlights the early potential signs of burnout such as extreme fatigue, difficulty concentrating, fear of public speaking, and later physical symptoms such as headaches and dizziness. It also points out some actions to consider when realizing it is burnout.

3.	Description of the case study (<i>half-one page</i>)	<p>Carmen has been working in the NGO and social sector for 6 years and has experienced several burnout episodes in the past.</p> <p>The first signs appeared after about 3 years of work, but it took some time to realize that it could be burnout. Of course, even now she can't say for sure that it was burnout, because she didn't receive this "diagnosis" from a specialist. In the beginning she felt very tired, Carmen couldn't concentrate and had the feeling that no matter how hard she tried to deal with certain situations she couldn't cope. She also had a fear of public speaking in front of large groups of people, and knowing this, she forced herself to attend more and more events to overcome this fear, which was an additional stress factor. Later on, she also had physical symptoms, headaches, dizziness and found it increasingly difficult to stay motivated to continue her work.</p> <p>When Carmen realized it might actually be burnout, she was relieved. She loved her job and realizing she had a problem made it easier to find a solution. She couldn't be as efficient, she needed more time to do certain activities and so her whole schedule would get messed up. Then she realized that she was procrastinating doing some things and more and more things were accumulating. There were moments, conflicting discussions, lots of traveling and professional meetings that increased her exhaustion.</p> <p>Carmen started to research and better understand what she was dealing with. It was not very easy because the internet is full of information and then it is more difficult to select what suits you. She also brought this topic up in therapy where she discussed some of her fears about burnout and what she could do to get through it. Some of the strategies she put into practice were to manage her schedule better, to ask for feedback more often from her superiors and those she works directly with, and especially to ask for help when she has too many tasks to solve in a very short time.</p> <p>She has learned that if you want to be good at what you do you must always put yourself first. It may sound selfish, or at least that's what he thought for a while, but then he realized that if</p>
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		<p>you feel good about yourself it will reflect on those around you, whether they are colleagues, friends, family.</p> <p>Carmen knows now when to say stop, when to take breaks and when to focus on her needs. At the same time, she try to have a balance between work hours and personal activity. That's not to say that there aren't times when she doesn't put work first, but there are other times when she puts family or friends first. It's all about balance.</p>
4.	<p>Conclusions and Lessons learnt from the case study</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The realization that balance between work, personal life, and self-care is crucial to maintaining long-term well-being is a core takeaway. So, an essential lesson learnt is to establish boundaries and ensure work doesn't overshadow personal priorities. • Asking for feedback and help when overwhelmed is crucial. The lesson drawn is not to hesitate to seek support from colleagues, superiors, or professionals. • Prioritizing ourselves is not selfish but essential. Taking care of our well-being ensures we perform better and benefit those around us. • It is important to note that what works for one person may not work for another. It's essential to research and personalize stress-management techniques.
5.	<p>Self-reflective questions on the case study</p>	<p>How do I react when I realize I'm not performing efficiently or procrastinating tasks?</p> <p>(Asking yourself this question can help you pinpoint when burnout is affecting your productivity.)</p> <p>Am I balancing my personal needs and work commitments, or do I let work take priority too often?</p> <p>(Reflecting on this balance in your life can help prevent chronic stress and exhaustion.)</p> <p>Am I pushing myself too hard to overcome certain fears or insecurities, like Carmen did with public speaking?</p> <p>(Reflect on whether you are adding unnecessary stress by not addressing underlying fears in a healthier way.)</p> <p>Do I ask for help when necessary, or do I try to handle everything on my own?</p>

		(Self-reflect on whether you seek help early or try to shoulder everything alone.)
6.	References	<p>The data for the case study were sourced from a professional working in the social and NGO sector, a pseudonym was used to protect the confidentiality of this person.</p> <p>The following questions were used to collect and formulate the content for the case study:</p> <p>Were there any specific events or periods that intensified your exhaustion?</p> <p>What were the first signs of burnout/burnout you experienced?</p> <p>How did burnout affect your daily life and routine?</p> <p>What worried you most when you realized it was burnout?</p> <p>What steps have you taken to manage burnout?</p> <p>What have you learned about you from this experience?</p> <p>What self-care strategies do you currently use to prevent experiencing a new chronic stress point?</p>
7.	Key words	proactive, balance, self-awareness, self-reflection, mental health

CASE STUDY 4 (UBI)

1.	Title of the case study	From Dedication to Despair: The Transformation of a Social Worker
2.	Short description/ summary of the case study	This case study describes the story of Maria a social worker who, due to various work situations, went from a professional life of enormous dedication and love for her work to total despair and no desire to continue practicing the profession she loved so much

3.	Description of the case study	<p>Maria is 36 years old, married, without children. She is a social worker and has been working in a residential care home for children and young people for about 10 years.</p> <p>In the beginning, when she joined the institution, Maria loved her job. She often even went there on weekends because she missed the children.</p> <p>About 3 years later, the administration of the house changed, and with this change, all the rules were altered. Maria began to receive indications that her work was not directly with the children.</p> <p>Maria began to miss the children, the administrative work without contact with the children was affecting her a lot and she felt that it was even putting her good professional performance at risk.</p> <p>In the past 2 years, Maria has been feeling “sick.” She has consulted several doctors, has been on sick leave several times, but has not been diagnosed with any physical or mental illness.</p> <p>Maria thought her illness was related to work. These new rules left her physically and emotionally tired. No, he didn't feel like going to work, he didn't want to work and he didn't have patience for his co-workers. I just thought about changing careers.</p> <p>Her husband tried to dissuade Maria, as he knew she liked those children and that profession, he convinced her to seek help from a health professional.</p>
4.	Conclusions and Lessons learnt from the case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize and Accept Burnout • Seek Professional Help • Set Boundaries • Delegate Tasks • Practice Relaxation Techniques • Take Regular Breaks • Take Care of Physical Health • Reevaluate Priorities • Seek Social Support • Evaluate the Work Situation • Make Time for Enjoyable Activities

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be Grateful and Practice Self-Compassion
5.	Self-reflective questions on the case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which are the symptoms? Is it a case of burnout? • If you were going through a similar situation to Maria, what would you do? • How could Maria prevent the burnout she experienced? • If you know someone who is going through a similar situation, what would you advise them to do?
6.	References	<p>The case was created based on a real situation, it was not taken from any bibliographic reference</p> <p>https://www.canva.com/design/DAGGPt5iysE/gNO6HIdjnkxorxFQ6LD3cA/edit?utm_content=DAGGPt5iysE&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton</p>
7.	Key words	<p># burnout</p> <p># burnout symptoms</p> <p># maintain life balance</p> <p># Self-care</p> <p># Mindfulness</p> <p># Methods to Cope with Stress</p>

CASE STUDY 5 (REDIAL)

1.	Title of the case study	From Burnout to Expert by Experience
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2.	Short description/ summary of the case study	Clodagh is an experienced health care professional supporting vulnerable individuals. The pressures of work and major life events led to burnout. Burnout led to more insight and lived experience to educate and support others.
3.	Description of the case study	<p>Clodagh’s professional life has been dedicated to healthcare, a qualified nurse to more recent years, working as an art therapist, engaging the most vulnerable members of society. Clodagh has lived all over the world including Australia, she returned to Ireland after the breakdown of her marriage.</p> <p>Clodagh found herself in a financial predicament, needing to work long hours to earn money to pay for her house and other household bills. Clodagh noticed a significant decline in her physical and mental wellbeing, a distinct lack of sleep, poor eating habits and finding herself withdrawing from any social interaction.</p> <p>Clodagh is very proud of the work she does, and has extremely high standards, she became very critical of herself and soon realized she didn’t have any source of joy in her life. Clodagh really struggled to feel comfortable supporting vulnerable people, when she felt out of control of her own life. Attending work became more of a struggle, she would feel nauseous at the sheer thought of going into work.</p> <p>Clodagh took control back of the situation and self-diagnosed burn out, she decided for her own wellbeing to take time out of work to prioritize her mental and physical health, undertake some self-care, gain some medical advice and spend time with people who love and respect her.</p> <p>Clodagh after taking time out and sourcing treatment through various means, returned to work. Her insight and personal experience led her to become an ambassador of burn out and develop workshops in her place of working using the 4LESSBURNOUT methodology, sharing with senior managers, staff and volunteers to raise awareness of burnout in the workplace.</p>

4.	Conclusions and Lessons learnt from the case study (4-5 bullet points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-awareness is intrinsic to recognizing burnout and when to access help and support • A holistic approach is beneficial, multiple sources of support, no one size fits all • Understanding when it is time to pause for reflection, accept help and invest in our own personal well being • Personal experiences can lead to a greater insight to then inform, raise awareness and support others
5.	Self-reflective questions on the case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are 3 signs Clodagh was showing of burnout? • What are the ways in which Clodagh addressed burnout? • What are the positives that came from Clodagh's situation?
6.	References	This case study was generated from an interview with Clodagh
7.	Key words	#burnout #selfassessment #resilience #recovery #holistic #physicalwellbeing #emotionalwellbeing #mentalhealth #expertbyexperience #peersupport #mentalhealth #selfcarewheel

CASE STUDY 6 (AFEJI)

1.	Title of the case study	The Strain of Change: An Educator's Struggle in a Domestic Violence Support Structure
2.	Short description/ summary of the case study	An experienced educator in a domestic violence support structure faces escalating stress due to understaffing and the implementation of a time-consuming administrative software, leading to a breaking point with her superior.
3.	Description of the case study	Marie, an experienced specialized educator, works in an establishment supporting women who have been victims of domestic violence. Recently, the center has faced significant internal difficulties, with multiple colleagues on leave and not all positions being replaced. The remaining team is stretched thin,

		<p>striving to provide the necessary support to their beneficiaries while also struggling to manage their increased workload.</p> <p>On top of these challenges, the establishment’s management has introduced a new administrative software meant to streamline task tracking and reporting. However, this new system is complex, requiring substantial time for training and adaptation. Despite the promise of future time savings, the immediate impact is an additional burden on the already overstretched staff.</p> <p>Marie and her colleagues find themselves working late into the evening to complete these new tasks. The pressure mounts, leading to increased frustration and tension within the team and with management. The management, unable to fully empathize with the team’s struggles, emphasizes the long-term benefits of the software without addressing the immediate strain it causes.</p> <p>After several weeks, Marie, feeling exhausted and overwhelmed, is about to leave for the day when her supervisor comments on her failure to update the software in the last few days. Overcome by emotion, Marie snaps, responding aggressively. The confrontation escalates, culminating in Marie storming out, declaring she can no longer cope and intends to leave her job.</p>
4.	Conclusions and Lessons learnt from the case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of Understaffing: The absence of adequate staffing exacerbates stress and workload for remaining employees, leading to burnout. • Challenges of Implementing New Technology: New systems, while potentially beneficial in the long run, can initially add significant stress and require thoughtful implementation. • Importance of Empathy in Management: Effective leadership must understand and address the immediate challenges faced by their team, not just focus on long-term benefits. • Early Communication and Support: Proactive communication and support mechanisms can prevent frustration from escalating to breaking points.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balancing Workload and Well-being: Maintaining a balance between workload and employees' well-being is crucial for sustainable performance and job satisfaction.
5.	Self-reflective questions on the case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What specific factors contributed to Marie's increased stress levels, and how might these have been mitigated? • How could Marie have addressed her frustrations before reaching her breaking point? • In what ways could the management have better handled the introduction of the new administrative software to support their staff? • Reflect on a situation where you felt overwhelmed at work. How did you handle it, and what might you do differently now?
6.	References	Smith, J. (2019). <i>Managing Workplace Stress in Nonprofit Organizations</i> . <i>Journal of Social Work</i> , 15(3), 45-60.
7.	Key words	<p>Understaffing</p> <p>Burnout</p> <p>Administrative Software</p> <p>Empathy</p> <p>Workload Management</p> <p>Workplace Stress</p> <p>Nonprofit Organizations</p>

07



B I B L I O G R A P H Y



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PROJECT PARTNERS



Project Number: 2021-1-FR01-KA220-ADU-000035393

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the content, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein