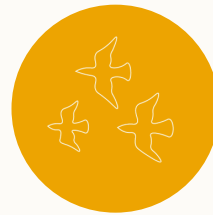
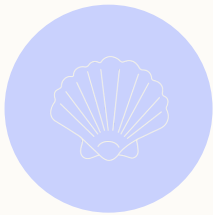


# The ABCs of Buffering Burnout: Self-Care without Additional Burden

## ABCs OF BURNOUT PROTECTION

Self-care can't wait for your next vacation or take more of your precious time. Fortunately, it can occur meaningfully in small moment-to-moment ways you attend to yourself kindly. Follow our ABCs to help support yourself in a difficult time.



# A

### ACKNOWLEDGE + AFFIRM

Acknowledging that burnout is happening is the first step to shifting it.

Try this: Remind yourself often of this truth: *Burnout is not my fault.*

*And yet there are steps I can take to support myself.*

# B

### BOUNDARIES

Try to limit ruminating on or replaying the stress of work outside of work.

Try this: Completing the stress cycle in your body with a walk, dancing,

or shaking can really help the mind calm. *Calm body, calm mind.*

# C

### COMPASSION

Compassion (a wish for suffering to ease) is protective for us as helpers.

Try this: When you feel overwhelmed by empathizing with another person's feelings, tell yourself: *May their suffering ease.*

# S

### SMALL SHIFTS

Self-care does not need to be grand, it needs to only be consistent and tailored to what works for you.

Try this: a deep breath here, an affirming thought there.

## BURNOUT IS NOT YOUR FAULT

Burnout is largely caused by systemic issues - when demands on an individual outpace the resources offered to meet those demands. Burnout does not result from inadequate self-care, being weak, or lacking resilience.

Unfortunately, systems often reinforce the problematic message that burnout is the responsibility of the individuals alone.

## HOW YOU EXPERIENCE BURNOUT IS UNIQUE

Life circumstances and experiences of privilege or oppression matter.

Further, pay attention to how you, individually, experience burnout.

### EMOTIONAL OVERWHELM

anxiety, stress, irritability  
feeling shut-down

### CYNICISM

lack of creativity  
hopelessness, helplessness

### DISCONNECTION

caring less  
avoidance

## MORE ON HOW THE ABCs HELP

A few tips on putting them into action

# A

### **Ask yourself often - *How am I doing? How is this stress impacting me?***

Simply naming how you feel can calm the mind and it can help you recognize what you need now. And while acknowledging how you feel, make sure that you're affirming that it's not your fault and that you, too, are worthy of care.

# B

### **Set a boundary by debriefing to dump the stress at work.**

Take a few minutes to journal or share with a colleague your reflections to these four questions (the first three designed by psychologist, Jackie Burke): 1) *What is impacting me?* 2) *How is it impacting me?* 3) *What do I need now to be okay?* 4) *What is a meaningful moment I want to savor?*

# C

### **Cultivate compassion - for yourself, too.**

Compassion is a protective mindset with others, but it's also for you. Once you've acknowledged and affirmed what you need, offer yourself kind thoughts ("it's only human to feel this way") or tender gestures of care. It's also OK to fiercely stand up to advocate with others for what you need.

# S

### **Focus on small shifts.**

Notice today what helps you feel a bit more balanced.  
Do what you can, when you can.