

The Workforce Wellbeing Exchange

Tuesday 2nd June 2026

9.30am- 12pm

The Edge, Hull



Humber Teaching
NHS Foundation Trust



Workshops include:

Corporate burnout

Working with neurodiversity in the workplace

Multigenerational working



Part of

H Humber
Business
Week

>>

How to beat burnout

(i'll have to whisper this one: it's not just about self-care)

//KATI RODRIGUES-CHAMBERS



>>

Hi, I'm Kati



>> Agenda

1. the language of burnout: how uk media approach burnout and productivity
2. what the WHO says about burnout (and why it's not just about "being tired")
3. what research reveals about burnout (and how it sneaks into every corner of our lives).
4. how many people are affected and the primary causes of burnout in the uk
5. the 5 stages of burnout
6. physical, behavioral and emotional symptoms of burnout
7. how to beat burnout without moving to a cabin in the woods : what works for us, our teams and our workplace according to research



>> dissertation

the language of burnout

how the UK media
approach burnout
and productivity



//HOW TO BEAT BURNOUT

Caring, Learning
& Growing Together

>> my dissertation findings

the language of burnout: main themes

1. productivity as a measure of worth.
2. burnout is framed as an individual problem.
3. studies show that burnout is a systemic problem.
4. burnout disrupts identity and can lead to depression.
5. the way we speak about it matters.





what is burnout?

// KATI RODRIGUES-CHAMBERS



Illustration Izhar
Cohen



what is burnout?

the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) defines burnout as an "occupational phenomenon" resulting from chronic, unmanaged workplace stress.



Illustration Izhar
Cohen



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what is burnout?

but this is not the full
picture



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Illustration Izhar
Cohen



what is burnout?

Burnout happens when work stress, combined with additional life pressures, overwhelms our capacity to cope, leading to physical and mental distress.



>> burnout is not limited to the workplace

- parental burnout
- social media comparison
- “do it all” “have it all” cultural imperatives.
- personality traits
- digital burnout
- stress when **resources** feel insufficient

//HOW TO BEAT BURNOUT





>>

too drained
to work,
too guilty
to rest



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the combination of **ADHD** and
menopause creates the perfect recipe
for burnout.

estrogen drops - dopamine dysregulates
focus and memory worsen
brain fog
emotional ups and downs
deep fatigue
coping strategies stop working

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>>

burnout and extreme stress
affect  **in 10** people
across the UK.



Mental health UK - The burnout report
2025/2026

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>>

burnout and extreme stress
affect **9 in 10** people
across the UK.

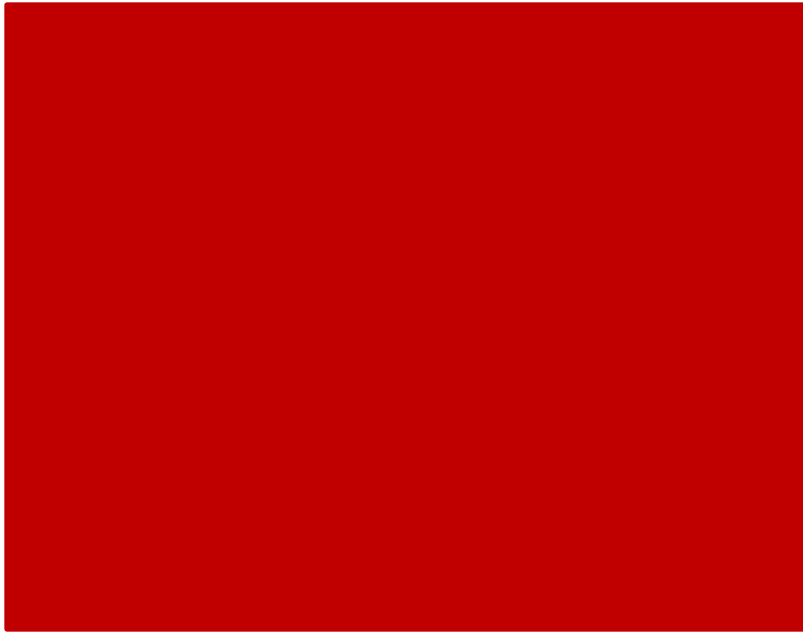


Mental health UK - The burnout report
2025/2026

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>> **primary causes of
burnout in the UK:**



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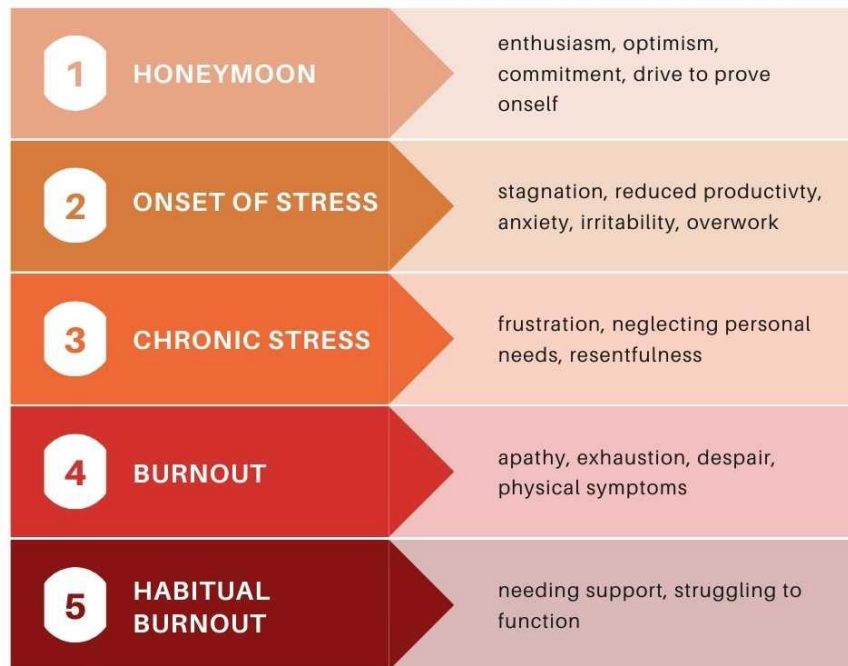
>> **primary causes of burnout in the UK:**

- excessive workload and long hours
- lack of control and autonomy
- poor management and support
- toxic workplace culture
- work-life imbalance
- job insecurity and change
- external pressures





5 stages of burnout



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physical symptoms of burnout

feeling tired or exhausted most of the time
insomnia, broken sleep, or sleep disturbances
frequent headaches

other physical signs

muscle or joint pain
gastrointestinal problems (nausea, reduced appetite)
frequent illness (lowered immunity)
high blood pressure
breathing issues



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behavioural symptoms

procrastination / taking longer to complete tasks
difficulty concentrating
decreased output and productivity
withdrawing from people and responsibilities

other behavioural signs

reliance on food, drugs, or alcohol to cope
irritable, short-tempered, more likely to have outbursts
increased lateness or absenteeism





Common changes in thinking patterns

jumping to conclusions without considering the facts.

minimising success due to focus on challenges.

maximising problems, making them feel bigger than they are.

automatically jumping to the worst-case scenario.

holding yourself responsible for negative outcomes.

turning a positive into a negative.

Source: NHS





emotional symptoms

feeling overwhelmed
feeling demotivated; more cynical or negative
feeling helpless, trapped, and/or defeated
anxiety, dread, persistent worry

other emotional signs

self-doubt; feelings of failure or worthlessness
feeling detached or alone
reduced sense of satisfaction or achievement
loss of interest and enjoyment





the boiling frog metaphor



Boiling Frog (Photo credit: DonkeyHotey)



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Protective factors

When people feel that their work benefits others and has a positive impact (Grant & Campbell, 2006)

Creating more opportunities for staff to make a positive contribution (Grant & Campbell, 2006)

>> Grant, A. M. & Campbell, E. M. (2006). Doing good, doing harm, being well and burning out: The interactions of perceived prosocial and antisocial impacts in service work

positive impact

Protective attitudes (not taking things personally and compassionately)

Protective practices (getting enough sleep, managing time and stress)

>> O'Connor et al. 2020 (high doctors)

>> O'Connor et al. 2020 (The Relationship Between Psychology)

Individual traits - grit (perseverance), resilience (ability to regain energy from stressors), self-compassion (ability to be kind to yourself), psychological flexibility (the ability to stay present, adapt, and keep moving toward what matters, even when things are difficult) (O'neil et al., 2024)

Social support from family, friends and work

Healthy habits - regular physical activity can reduce exhaustion and depersonalization

Experience - experience nurses tend to score lower in emotional exhaustion suggesting habituation to work might be protective

Melatonin supplementation - can be effective due to its effects on sleep and cognitive impairment (please speak with your doctor first)

(Unger et al., 2024)

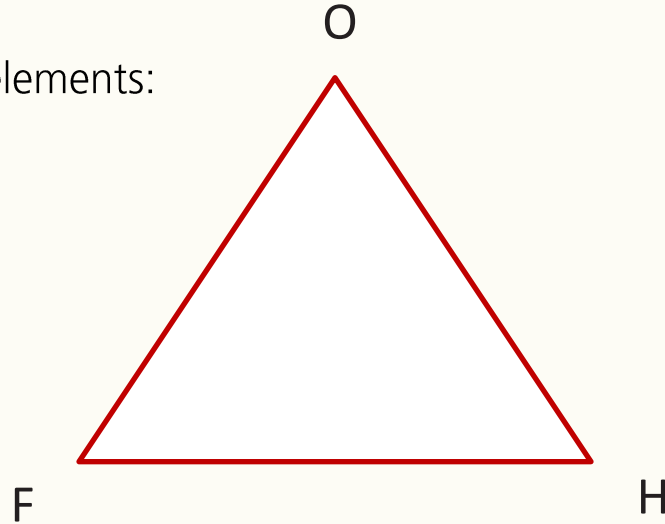
how to beat burnout without moving to a cabin in the woods

//HOW TO BEAT BURNOUT



how to beat burnout

fire needs three elements:



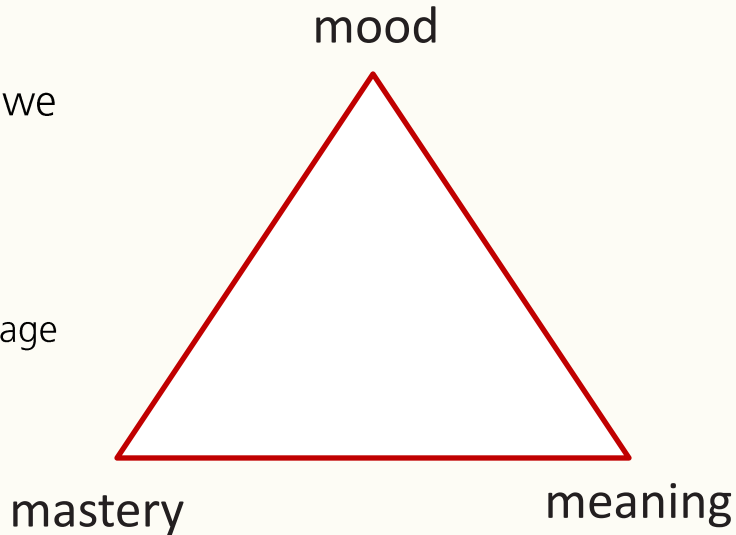
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how to beat burnout

to prevent burnout, we
will need these
3 elements too:

- Oxygen – Mood (manage your emotional culture)
- Fuel - Mastery
- Heat - Meaning





big ideas for teams and organisations

1. Cultivating safety - by asking: what are we worried about today?
2. Facilitate workflow and offer opportunities for staff to do meaningful work (and feel that what they do matters and benefits others).
3. Social support (High supportive climate, perceived by the team, contributes to lower levels of burnout (Ortiz-Bonnin et. al. 2016)
4. Encourage mutual support (Ortiz-Bonnin et al. 2016)
5. Cultivate trust by setting a clear direction, giving people what they need to see it through, and then trust them enough to step back.
6. Team-building activities can encourage a highly supportive climate.
7. Mentor programs: Establishing mentor programs can provide new employees with support and guidance, clarify expectations, and offer a space to alleviate exhaustion through listening. Ortiz-Bonnin et al. (2026)

big ideas for teams and organisations

manage your **emotional culture**

positive emotions (e.g.: pride, compassion, joy) are consistently associated with better performance, quality and customer service. **negative emotions** (e.g.: anger, sadness, fear) lead to reduced performance and high turnover.



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big ideas to support your own wellbeing



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big idea # 1 - strategic pause

**for 30 seconds, let your
mind go anywhere it
wants to go.**

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Protective factors

People who feel that their work benefits others and has a positive impact (Chen & Campbell, 2009)

Creating more opportunities for staff to make a positive contribution (Green & Campbell, 2009)

Journal: A. M. S. Campbell, E. M. (2009). *Doing good, feeling better: how altruistic actions counter negative emotions and promote well-being*. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 96, 1014-1025.

Ideas for individual interventions

Self-compassion practices

The self-compassion letter - Write a letter to yourself about your struggles
Cognitive behavioural strategies (CBT)
Mindfulness-based interventions (McFarland & Hinton)

Cultivate healing connections - power social support mechanisms

McFarland & Hinton, 2017. *Therapeutic Strategies to Foster Healing*

Find your why - connect with the underlying parts of yourself

Cultivate a positive frame of mind

Practice self-care

(Unger et al., 2024)

Social support from family, friends and work

Healthy habits - regular physical activity can reduce exhaustion and depersonalization - great stress coping mechanism

Experiences - experience nurses tend to score lower in emotional exhaustion suggesting institutional fit may be protective

Melatonin supplementation - can be effective due to its effects on sleep and cognitive impairment (please speak with your doctor first)

(Unger et al., 2024)

big idea # 2 – create space for daydreaming and give yourself permission to be playful

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Protective factors

Meaningful work → people feel that their work benefits others and has a positive impact (Grant & Dutton, 2012)

Creating more opportunities for staff to make a positive contribution (Grant & Dutton, 2012)

→ Grant, A. M & Campbell, E.M. (2006). Doing good, doing harm, being well: ideas for individual interventions

Self-compassion practices

The self-compassion letter → Write a letter to yourself about this aspect of your cognitive-behavioural strategies (CBT) / mindfulness-based interventions (McFarland & Hlubocky, 2021)

Cultivate healing connections (power scroll) let your feet inside or outside work → McFarland & Hlubocky, 2021. Therapeutic Strategies to tackle burnout and

Find your why → connect with the rewarding parts of your work

Cultivate a positive frame of mind
Practice self-care

(Unger et al., 2024)

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// HOW TO BEAT BURNOUT



Meaningful work

Encouragement and support by?



Protective factors

→ People feel that their work benefits others and has a positive impact (C

→ Creating more opportunities for staff to make a positive contribution (Grant &

→ Grant, A. M & Campbell, E.M. (2006). Doing good, doing harm, being well: **Ideas for individual interventions**

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Experience → experience nurses tend to score lower in emotional exhaustion

Melatonin supplementation → can be effective due to its effects on sleep and

(Unger et al., 2024)

>> WHAT'S YOUR PLAY PERSONALITY?

the collector



screenshots everything just in case
owns three versions of the same thing
can't throw anything away
buys the limited edition

Wise work

Encouragement and support by?



Protective factors

→ People feel that their work benefits others and has a positive impact

→ Creating more opportunities for staff to make a positive contribution (Grant

→ Grant, A., M. & Campbell, E.M. (2006). Doing good, doing harm, being good: Ideas for individual interventions

Self-compassion practices

→ The self-compassion letter → Write a letter to yourself about this aspect of cognitive-behavioural strategies (CBT), mindfulness-based interventions (McFarland & Hlubocky, 2021)

→ Cultivate healing connections (power soul) let your soul inside or outside of

→ Find your why → connect with the rewarding parts of your work

→ Cultivate a positive frame of mind

→ Practice self-care

→ (Unger et al., 2024)

→ Social support from family, friends and work

→ Healthy habits → regular physical activity can reduce exhaustion and help

→ Experience → experience nurses tend to score lower in emotional exhaustion

→ Melatonin supplementation → can be effective due to its effects on sleep

→ (Unger et al., 2024)

>> WHAT'S YOUR PLAY PERSONALITY?



thinks better when **moving**
learns by doing
builds, **makes**, fixes things
enjoys sports, dance, movement

→ voice work

→ encouragement and support w/ it



Protective factors

→ People feel that their work benefits others and has a positive impact

→ Creating more opportunities for staff to make a positive contribution (Grant)

→ Grant, A. M & Campbell, E.M. (2006) Doing good, doing harm, being wise: Ideas for individual interventions

Self-compassion practices

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→ McFarland & Hlubocky, 2021. Therapeutic Strategies to tackle burnout

Find your why → connect with the rewarding parts of your work

Cultivate a positive frame of mind

Practice self-care

→ Ungar et al., 2024

Social support from family, friends and work

Healthy habits → regular physical activity can reduce exhaustion and depression

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Melatonin supplementation → can be effective due to its effects on sleep

→ Ungar et al., 2024

// HOW TO BEAT BURNOUT

>> WHAT'S YOUR PLAY PERSONALITY?

THE ARTIST



has seventeen unfinished projects
can't walk past a stationery shop
makes the presentation look too good
doodles during every phone call
enjoys pottery, woodworking, knitting, gardening



Protective factors

Meaningful work → people feel that their work benefits others and has a positive impact (Grant)

Creating more opportunities for staff to make a positive contribution (Grant & Cameron)

→ Grant, A. M. & Campbell, E.M. (2006). Doing good, doing harm, being well and ideas for individual interventions

Self-compassion practices

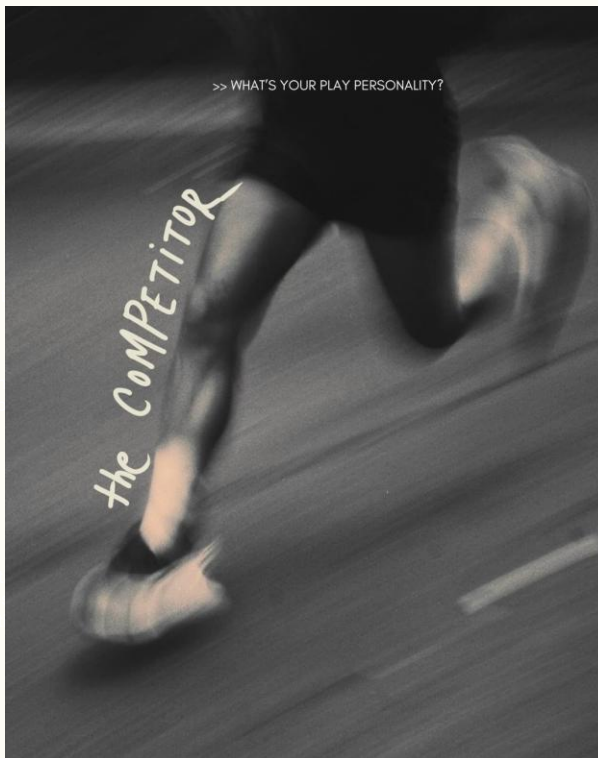
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(Unger et al., 2024)

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(Unger et al., 2024)



How work

Encouragement and support by?

//HOW TO BEAT BURNOUT



Protective factors

People feel that their work benefits others and has a positive impact (Gardner)

Creating more opportunities for staff to make a positive contribution (Grant &

Crant, A. M. & Campbell, E.M. (2006). Doing good, doing harm, being well: Ideas for individual interventions

Self-compassion practices

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Cultivate healing comparisons (power scroll at your best inside or outside work) (McFarland & Hlubocky, 2021). Therapeutic Strategies to tackle burnout at work
Find your why – connect with the rewarding parts of your work

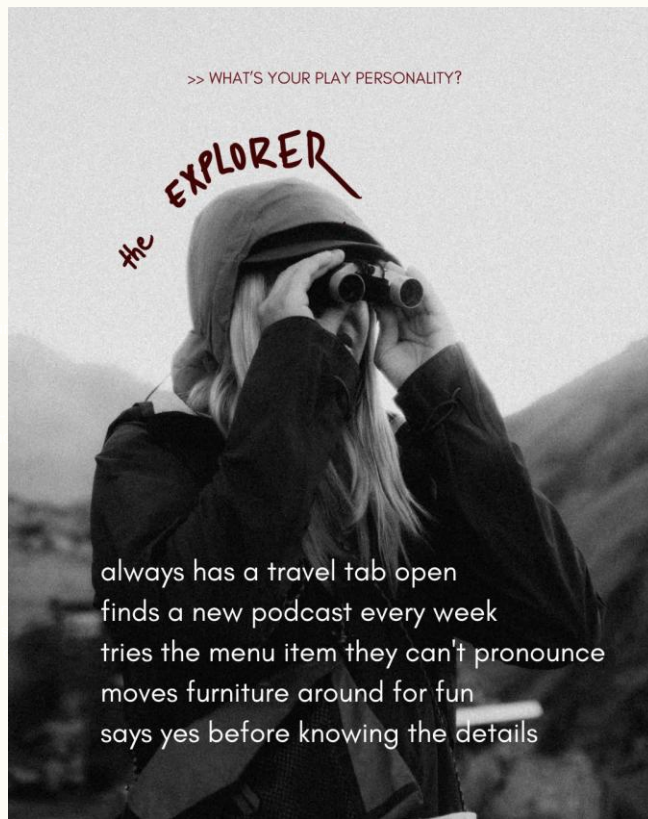
Cultivate a positive frame of mind
Practice self-care

(Unger et al., 2024)

Social support from family, friends and work
Healthy habits – regular physical activity can reduce exhaustion and depersonalisation
Experiences – experience nurses tend to score lower in emotional exhaustion
Melatonin supplementation – can be effective due to its effects on sleep and circadian rhythm

(Drape et al., 2024)

//HOW TO BEAT BURNOUT





Protective factors

People feel that their work benefits others and has a positive impact (C)

Creating more opportunities for staff to make a positive contribution (Grant &

>> Grant, A., M. & Campbell, E.M. (2006). Doing good, doing harm, being well: Ideas for individual interventions.

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Find your why – connect with the rewarding parts of your work.

Cultivate a positive frame of mind

Practice self-care

(Unger et al., 2024)

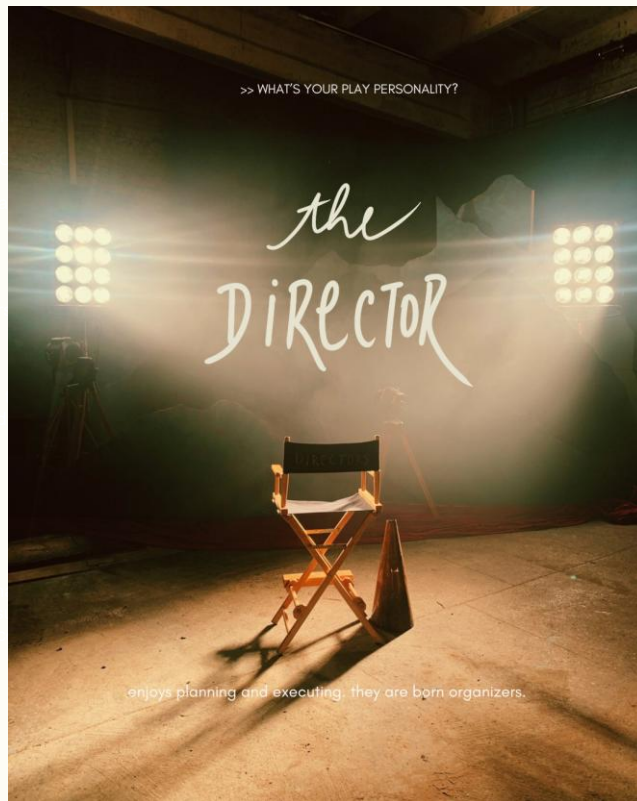
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(Unger et al., 2024)



wise work

encourages and supports us?

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Protective factors

Meaningful work → people feel that their work benefits others and has a positive impact (Grant & Dutton, 2012)

Creating more opportunities for staff to make a positive contribution (Grant & Dutton, 2012)

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→ McFarland & Hubbock, 2021, Therapeutic Strategies to tackle burnout at work

Find your why → connect with the rewarding parts of your work

Cultivate a positive frame of mind

Practice self-care

(Unger et al., 2024)

Social support from family, friends and work

Healthy habits → regular physical activity can reduce exhaustion and depersonalisation

Experience → experience nurses tend to score lower in emotional exhaustion

Melatonin supplementation → can be effective due to its effects on sleep and circadian rhythm

(Unger et al., 2024)

>> WHAT'S YOUR PLAY PERSONALITY?

THE JOKER



"Tired Jester" by Mehdi Aghazadeh

playful sharp fearless
irreverent mischievous

//HOW TO BEAT BURNOUT



Protective factors

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Cultivate healing connections (power soul) let your soul shine inside or outside work
→ McFarland & Hlubocky, 2021: Therapeutic Strategies to tackle burnout and stress

Find your why → connect with the rewarding parts of your work

Cultivate a positive frame of mind

Practice self-care

→ Ungar et al., 2024

Social support from family, friends and work

Healthy habits → regular physical activity can reduce exhaustion and depression

Experience → experience nurses tend to score lower in emotional exhaustion and burnout

Melatonin supplementation → can be effective due to its effects on sleep and mood

→ Ungar et al., 2024

>> WHAT'S YOUR PLAY PERSONALITY?



novelists, playwrights, lecturers

//HOW TO BEAT BURNOUT



Protective factors

→ people feel that their work has meaning

→ Creating more opportunities for social support

→ Grant, A. M. & Campbell, E.M. (2018).
Ideas for individual intervention

Self-compassion practices

The self-compassion letter – Writing
and using behavioral strategies for
mindfulness-based interventions (MBSR)

Cultivate healing compassion (p. 10)

→ McFarland & Hlubocky, 2021. Therapeutic Strategies to Reduce Burnout and Emotional Exhaustion in Working Medical Staff. Narrative Review

Find your why – connect with the purpose of your profession

Cultivate a positive frame of mind

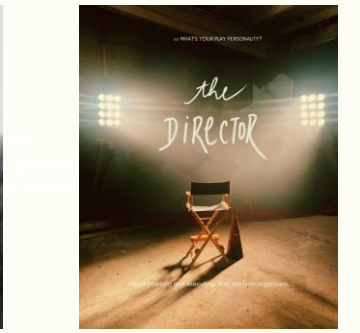
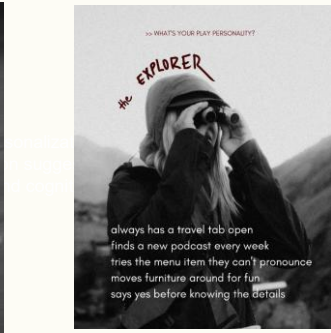
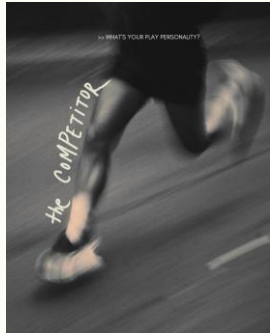
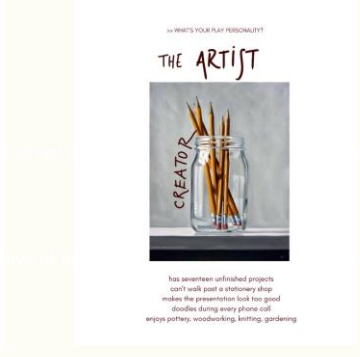
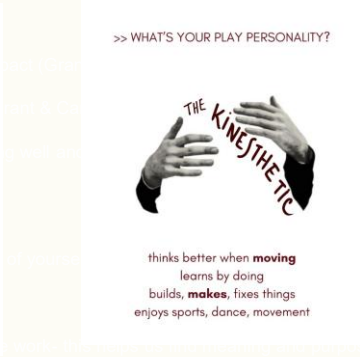
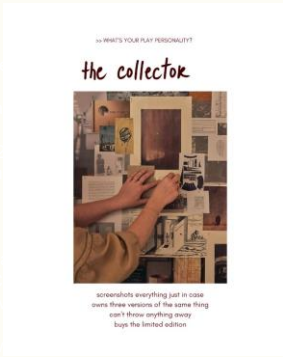
Practice self-care

(Wright et al., 2024)

Social support from family, friends and
healthy habits – regular physical activity

Experiences – experience nurses (and
Metformin supplementation – can be an
option)

(Dwyer et al., 2024)



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Protective factors

People who feel that their work benefits others and has a positive impact (Chen & Tomlinson, 2009)

Creating more opportunities for staff to make a positive contribution (Green & Campbell, 2016)

Wright & Masten (2005) - 5 protective factors

Ideas for individual interventions

Self-compassion practices

The self-compassion letter - Write a letter to yourself about your struggles

Cognitive behavioural strategies (CBT)

Mindfulness-based interventions (McFarland & Hildbeck, 2017)

Cultivate healing connections - power social support networks

McFarland & Hildbeck, 2017 - Therapeutic Strategies to Foster Healing Connections

Find your why - connect with the rewarding parts of your work

Cultivate a positive frame of mind

Practice self-care

Unger et al., 2024

Social support from family, friends and work

Healthy habits - regular physical activity can reduce exhaustion and depersonalization - great stress coping mechanism

Experiences - experience nurses tend to score lower in emotional exhaustion suggesting satisfaction at work might be protective

Melatonin supplementation - can be effective due to its effects on sleep and cognitive impairment (please speak with your doctor first)

Unger et al., 2024

big idea # 3 – a day off with zero expectations and low stimulation activities.

//HOW TO BEAT BURNOUT



Protective factors

People who feel that their work benefits others and has a positive impact (Grant & Campbell, 2009)

Creating more opportunities for staff to make a positive contribution (Grant & Campbell, 2009)

© Grant, A., & Campbell, E.M. (2009). Doing good to the good.

Ideas for individual interventions

Self-compassion practices

The self-compassion letter – Write a letter to yourself about the

cognitive-behavioural strategies (CBT)

mindfulness-based interventions (McFarland & Hlubocky, 2021)

Cultivate healing expectations – power actualize your real medicine – take more time to rest and recharge

© McFarland & Hlubocky, 2021. Therapeutic Strategies to Tackle Burnout and Emotional Exhaustion

Find your why – connect with the rewarding parts of your work

Cultivate a positive frame of mind

Practice self-care

Unger et al., 2024

Social support from family, friends and work

Healthy habits – regular physical activity can reduce exhaustion and depersonalization – great stress coping mechanism

Experiences – experience nurses tend to score lower in emotional exhaustion suggesting that a history of work might be protective

Melatonin supplementation – can be effective due to its effects on sleep and cognitive impairment (please speak with your doctor first)

Unger et al., 2024

big idea # 4 – check-in with yourself before starting a new task.

//HOW TO BEAT BURNOUT



Protective factors

People who feel that their work benefits others and has a positive impact (Chen & Campbell, 2009)

Creating more opportunities for staff to make a positive contribution (Green & Campbell, 2009)

Journal: A. M. S. Campbell, E. M. (2009). *Doing good to feel good: The benefits of volunteerism for mental health*

Ideas for individual interventions

Self-compassion practices

The self-compassion letter – Write a letter to yourself about your struggles

Cognitive behavioural strategies (CBT)

mindfulness-based interventions (McFarland & Huppert, 2017)

Cultivate healing connections (power social support, meaning, purpose)

McFarland & Huppert, 2017. *Therapeutic Strategies to Foster Resilience*

Find your why – connect with the underlying parts of yourself

Cultivate a positive frame of mind

Practice self-care

Unger et al., 2024

Social support from family, friends and work

Healthy habits – regular physical activity can reduce exhaustion and depersonalization – great stress coping mechanism

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Melatonin supplementation – can be effective due to its effects on sleep and cognitive impairment (please speak with your doctor first)

Unger et al., 2024

big idea # 5 – use supervision and reflective practice to explore how you feel and if support is needed.



big idea # 6 the self-compassion letter

write a letter to yourself about an aspect of yourself (that you dislike) from the perspective of a kind friend. how does this friend encourage and support you?



big idea # 7

cultivate healing connections (power source)
inside or outside work- this helps us find
meaning and purpose.

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>>

big idea # 8

practice mindfulness
(or go on a wonder walk)



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big idea # 9

cultivate a positive frame of mind
(and practice self-care)



big idea # 9.1

learn to say *no*

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big idea # 10

find your 'why' - connect with the rewarding parts of your work (and life)



//HOW TO BEAT BURNOUT



“we want to see with other eyes, to
imagine with other imaginations, to feel
with other hearts as well as with our
own. we demand windows” C.S. Lewis



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key takeaways



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& Growing Together



key takeaways

1. Burnout is a systemic issue (how can we work together to prevent it?)
2. Do I and my team have the resources we need to do our jobs today?
3. What's the emotional culture of my company today? Which emotions will help my organisation and team thrive?



>>

ethical questions

what do we **want** to do about it?

what **must** we do about it?

what **can** we do about it?



// KATI RODRIGUES-CHAMBERS

Caring, Learning
& Growing Together





risk of burnout questionnaire



[Worried you may be burning out?](#)





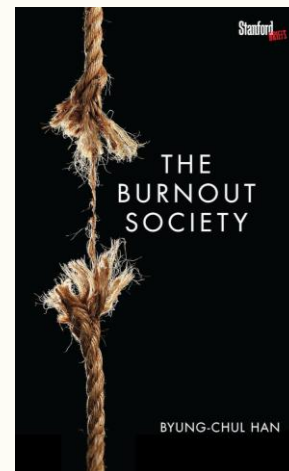
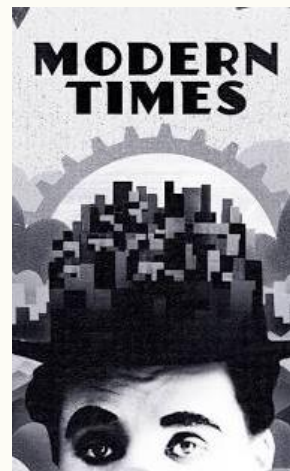
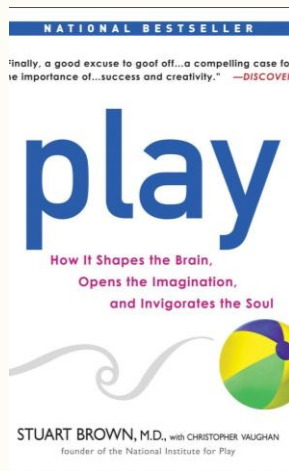
help and support for mental health in the workplace

If you need practical advice about challenges in the workplace, some of the links below might be helpful:

- [ACAS: workplace stress](#)
- [Mind: Advice for staff, managers and business owners](#)
- [GOV.UK: access to work](#)
- [GOV.UK: help with moving from benefits to work](#)
- [Mind: being mentally healthy at work](#)
- [HSE: Working Minds](#)

For further support, the [NHS mental health hub](#) has information and advice to help you. Plus, check our [urgent support page](#) if you need help now.





// food for thought: a few things worth reading and watching



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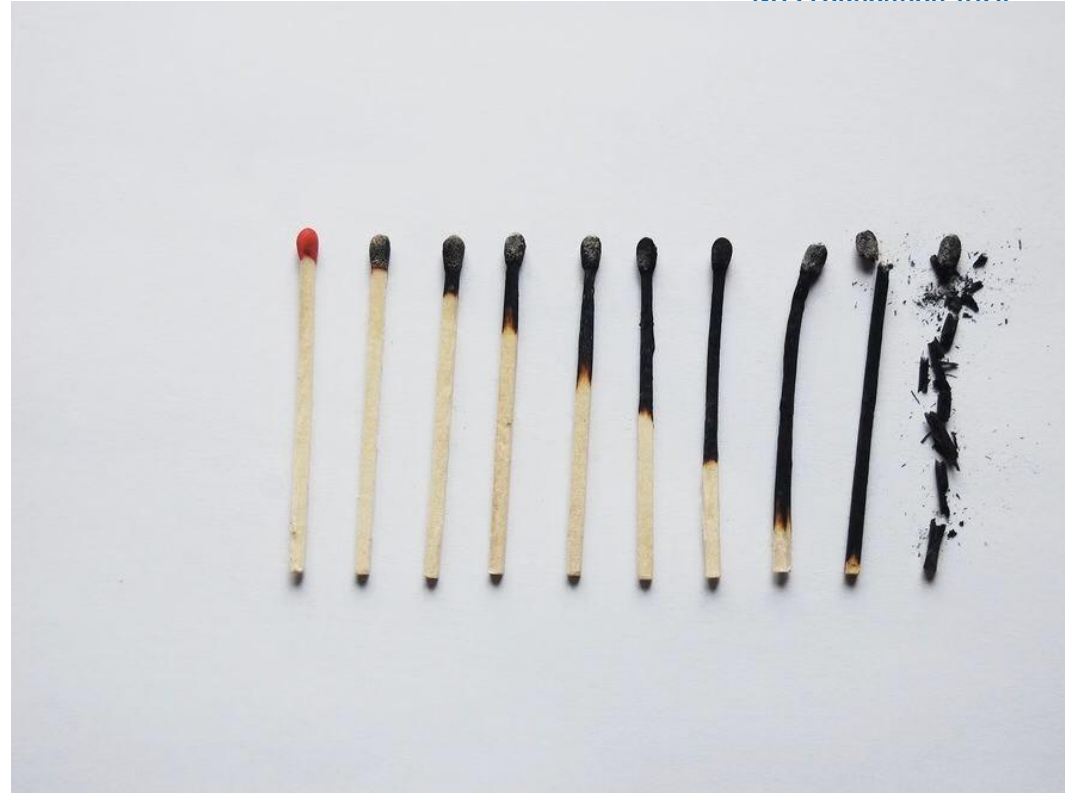
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