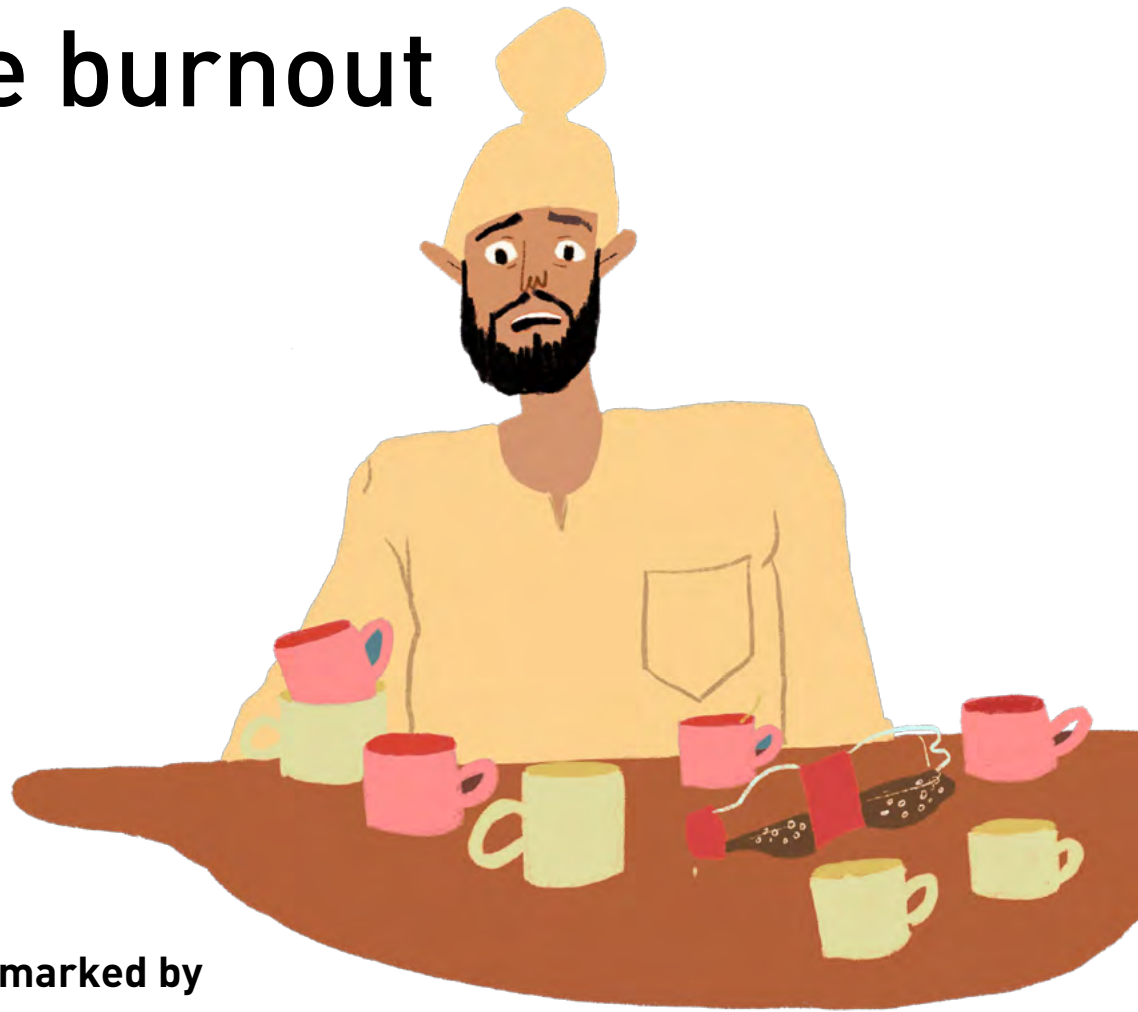


Understand and manage burnout



Burnout is a state marked by exhaustion, lack of enthusiasm and inability to cope because of stress.

During these times stress can come from work, personal life, consumption of media or a combination of these things. The constant state of stress that leads to burnout is associated with higher blood pressure and less motivation to exercise, which can lead to weight gain and related health problems.

Feelings of burnout are quite common in these times as we are:

- Focusing on others' needs - often neglecting our own.
- Have long work hours.
- Inability to plan holidays and breaks.
- Lack of immediate feedback or receiving negative

feedback or not feeling appreciated at work.

- Having to work without usual support systems like childcare, househelp, etc.
- Additional tasks arising out COVID-19 related needs.

An issue faced by those in the helping profession is compassion fatigue. This is the experience of symptoms coming from tension about clients' needs or from being witness to distressing stories. Since one must utilize empathy and emotional energy to listen, connect and guide someone who is under duress, it could result in physical, emotional and intellectual exhaustion. Compassion fatigue is considered a common work hazard among helpers.



Here are a few ways to overcome burnout and compassion fatigue:

Planning

Having a plan for the day ahead is critical to help you be productive and work well. You can find a planner online or make your own.

This will help you:

- List down all your tasks
- Prioritize tasks
- Break down bigger tasks into smaller ones
- Plan breaks (at least 3 in a workday)
- Block time for each task
- Note down what you are grateful for
- Take 15 minutes at the end of the week to plan for the next week.

Considering the current circumstances, especially if you are taking care of someone with physical or emotional distress (including yourself!) it is completely valid and justified to feel burnt out right now. Do not blame yourself for feeling like this but acknowledge all the factors out of your control.

You can do the following exercise:

1. Write down what is bothering you.
2. Write down what about this event/stressor is under your control.
3. Plan how you will engage in those actions that you can control.
4. Work on your plan.

Stretch

A technique to relieve the pressure you are feeling by visualizations.

- Massage each of your fingers with your other hand while thinking about each of the emotions attached to it
- Example: Think about events that bring up anxiety while massaging your thumb to release the tension from them
- Follow the process for each finger
- Rub your palm in a circular motion to release the pressure you may be feeling.