

## ***Nurturing Resilience: Tips for Preventing Burnout***

To sustain the dedication and passion of faculty and staff in the pursuit of excellence, it is crucial to address burnout—a pervasive challenge characterized by emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced effectiveness in the workplace. Here are some evidence-based tips to prevent burnout and foster holistic well-being across our community.

### **1. Embrace Self-Compassion:**

Resilience is a skill that can be honed with practice. Cultivating self-compassion by acknowledging limitations, setting realistic expectations, and celebrating accomplishments helps. (Neff, 2003, p. 85-101)

- Example: When faced with a missed deadline, instead of self-criticism, acknowledge the challenge, set realistic expectations for improvement, and celebrate small achievements along the way.

### **2. Set Boundaries:**

Establishing clear work-life boundaries prevents burnout by preserving mental and emotional well-being by. (Derks et al., 2014, p. 74-84)

- Example: Designate specific hours for work-related tasks and set your device to "Do Not Disturb" during personal time to ensure a clear distinction between professional responsibilities and personal life.

### **3. Practice Mindfulness:**

Incorporating mindfulness practices, such as meditation and yoga, into daily routines reduces stress and builds resilience by focusing acknowledgment on what can and cannot be controlled in the moment. (Shapiro et al., 2005, p. 164-176).

- Example: During stressful moments, stay grounded in the present by using techniques such as deep-breathing exercises, or focusing on a feeling like the soles of your feet on the floor.

### **4. Foster Supportive Relationships:**

Seeking emotional support from colleagues, friends, and mentors works to combat burnout by building a sense of camaraderie and emotional connections crucial for navigating challenges. (Maslach & Leiter, 2016, p. 387-394).

- Example: You have a ton of competing priorities and want to plan your approach before bringing your stress to your supervisor. Reaching out to a peer or colleague who has "been there, done that" in a similar position can build new or deeper relationships and offer helpful perspectives. An appointment with your Ombudsperson is also a great option!

### **5. Pursue Meaningful Work:**

Connecting with the intrinsic value of your work by aligning it with core values boosts motivation and satisfaction by recognizing the impact of your daily work and contributions (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001, p. 179-201).

- Example: Reflect on the positive impact of your work on students' lives or the community and make a list of how that work connects with your personal values.

## **6. Prioritize Joy and Gratitude:**

Cultivating joy and gratitude through exercises and activities that bring happiness elevates overall well-being by training your brain to notice the positive first. (Emmons & McCullough, 2003, p. 377-389).

- Example: Incorporate moments of joy into your routine, such as taking a brief walk around campus, engaging in a hobby after work or during breaks, and express gratitude for small achievements or positive interactions with colleagues.

As we implement these evidence-based strategies, we can create a resilient academic community that values well-being, supports its members, and empowers individuals to reach their full potential.

## **References:**

Neff, K. D. (2003). Self-compassion: An alternative conceptualization of a healthy attitude toward oneself. *Self and Identity*, 2(2), 85-101.

Derks, D., van Mierlo, H., & Schmitz, E. B. (2014). A diary study on work-related smartphone use, psychological detachment, and exhaustion: Examining the role of the perceived segmentation norm. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 19(1), 74-84.

Shapiro, S. L., Astin, J. A., Bishop, S. R., & Cordova, M. (2005). Mindfulness-based stress reduction for health care professionals: Results from a randomized trial. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 12(2), 164-176.

Maslach, C., & Leiter, M. P. (2016). Understanding the burnout experience: 1976-2016. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 31(4), 387-394.

Wrzesniewski, A., & Dutton, J. E. (2001). Crafting a job: Revisioning employees as active crafters of their work. *Academy of Management Review*, 26(2), 179-201.

Emmons, R. A., & McCullough, M. E. (2003). Counting blessings versus burdens: An experimental investigation of gratitude and subjective well-being in daily life. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84(2), 377-389.