

Educator Mental Health

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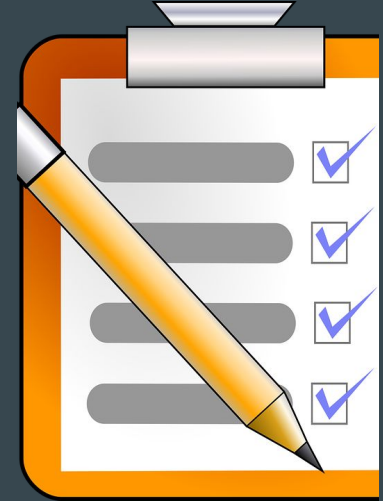
Taking care of YOU.



THE ENRICHMENT CENTER

Today we will...

- Discuss how being an Educator can affect your mental health.
 - Including details on Compassion Fatigue and STS
- Discuss a 4-Stage Framework for assessing your own burnout
- Define Good Mental Health
- Highlight simple strategies that can improve your mental health



We all know these things

About being a teacher...

- Your job is HARD.
 - You wear too many hats.
 - Your to-do list is long.
 - You often feel like you spend more time doing busy work than actually teaching.
 - To some, the profession is hardly recognizable compared to what it used to be.
 - The stress of being ALL THE THINGS is more than you can handle most days.
 - You are an educator because you have a heart for children.
-

But do we remember these things?

About being an educator...

- You have one of the strongest peer support systems in any professional field
- Your mental health impacts all the children you care so much about.
- You have tons of people who know how hard your job is and are eager to help you.

Image of an educator (as seen in the wild):



Statistics

- 77 percent of teachers said their job was frequently stressful
- 68 percent said it was overwhelming
- Similarly large numbers pointed to the lasting negative impact of the pandemic on student academic achievement, as well as student behavior and emotional well-being.
- Overall, only 48 percent of teachers said they were somewhat satisfied with their job, with just 33 percent saying they were extremely or very satisfied—significantly lower than the 51 percent for the average U.S. worker.

Source: nea.org/nea_today

Article: [What Teachers Want The Public to Know](#)

What Teachers Want The Public To Know

When asked about what parts of their job they find most satisfying, teachers overwhelmingly chose their relationship with their fellow educators.

A little more than half said they were very satisfied with their relationship with administrators.

Less than half of teachers were very satisfied with the resources provided for them to do their jobs, their relationships with parents and the available opportunities to develop their professional skills.

Running Out of Time

Teachers should have enough time in the school day for lesson planning, collaborating with colleagues, and grading. According to the Pew survey, however, 84 percent of respondents said there is not enough time during regular work hours to perform these tasks. The reason? Their workloads are too heavy, said most of those experiencing a time crunch.

“We work extremely hard in an ever increasingly difficult situation. The number of students who come in with trauma has skyrocketed, but the resources haven’t matched the need.”

— High School Teacher, Pew Research Center Survey

“Teachers serve multiple roles other than being responsible for teaching curriculum. We are counselors, behavioral specialists, and parents for students who need us to fill those roles. We sacrifice a lot to give all of ourselves to the role as teacher.”

— Elementary School Teacher, Pew Research Center Survey

"IF WE DON'T TAKE CARE OF OUR KIDS' MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS FIRST,
YOU CAN FORGET ABOUT TEACHING THEM IN THE CLASSROOM."

- MCS TEACHER

"If we don't take care of our teachers' mental health
first, we can forget about having a classroom.

What makes YOUR mental health unique?

CONS:

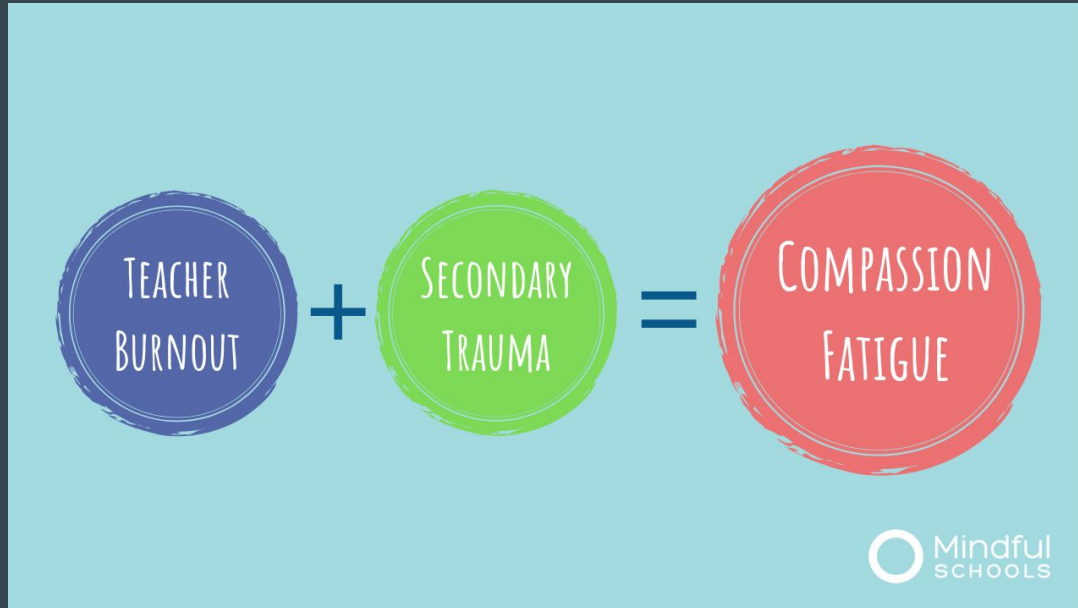
- Being an educator means that your job requires you to pour into others all day long
- The nature of your profession means you don't get breaks during the day to recharge
- Poor teacher mental health has negative impacts on the learning environment and student performance
- You feel pressured to worry more about the mental health of your students than your own mental health.

PROS:

- Everyone you work with understands the weight you carry.
- Though not much has changed YET, more awareness is being brought to taking care of educators.
- The district you work in provides an EAP for mental health support.
- Your school has a robust mental health support system for the students, so you don't have to wear that hat all the time.

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

Signs of Compassion Fatigue:

- Mood swings
- Experiencing Detachment
- Addiction
- Feeling symptoms of Anxiety or Depression
- Trouble being productive
- Insomnia
- Physical Symptoms such as:
 - Exhaustion, Fatigue, Changes in Appetite, Digestive Issues, Headaches

Personal Solutions:

- Self-Care
- Professional Help

Educator-Specific Solutions:

- Don't Use Language Detours
- Celebrate Teacher Well-being
- Normalize the language around Compassion Fatigue and Healing

Measuring Teacher Burnout

A four-stage framework can help teachers understand the burnout process—and what they can do to protect their well-being and career.

1 2 3 4



*How Burned Out Are You? A Scale for Teachers | By Kevin Leichtman for Edutopia

Level 1: Passionate but Overwhelmed

Passion can lead to burnout.

Signs:

- Low feelings of self-efficacy
- Negative coping strategies
- Limited pursuit of passions and hobbies outside of work

What Can I do?

1. Employ positive, proactive coping mechanisms
2. Remain reflective
3. Take deliberate and purposeful breaks from work

Level 2: Overwhelmed and Becoming Cynical

This may be the first point where you actually feel exhausted.

Signs:

- High levels of stress
- Quick to become irritated
- Bringing work home and not completing it
- Feeling like there is never time for friends and family
- Guilt from not doing enough for students

What Can I do?

1. Find a strong mentor
2. Work to manage responsibilities and priorities
3. Lean into family, friends, and colleagues
4. Check your boundaries

Level 3: Cynical and Approaching Exhaustion

You may feel like it is impossible to be a good teacher.

Signs:

- Isolation
- Feelings of paranoia
- A constant feeling that school goals and your goals will not be met
- A refusal to engage in professional development

What Can I do?

1. Consider ways to reduce your roles
2. Seek mental health support outside of the workplace
3. Continue utilizing positive coping strategies
4. Have honest conversations with your friends and family about how you feel.

Level 4: Complete Exhaustion & Breakdown

Pure survival mode.

Signs:

- Feelings of exhaustion every day
- Drastic increase in sick days and mental health days
- Lack of optimism
- Unusually frequent physical symptoms.

What Can I do?

1. Remember that **hope is not lost** .
2. Seek mental health support right away.
3. Prioritize and seek purpose
4. Be kind to yourself

What is GOOD Mental Health?

- Sense of contentment
- Ability to cope with the stresses of daily life
- Ability to work productively/meet reasonable goals
- Positive self talk
- Ability to build and maintain relationships
- A sense of self worth
- Taking care of your physical health (eat, sleep, and exercise)

**Real teacher self-care is rooted in self-love
and self-preservation.**



TAKE CARE OF YOU.

"SOMETIMES THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN A WHOLE DAY IS THE
REST WE TAKE BETWEEN TWO DEEP BREATHS. "

— ETTY HILLESUM

What might be affecting your mental health, that you can control?

Saying YES too often / Not setting boundaries

Taking work home with you every night.

Forgetting to eat lunch.

Not getting enough sleep.

Not getting fresh air.

Spending too much time focusing on the negative.

Forgetting your purpose.

What is Self-Care?

- It is ongoing.
- It is not once a week or occasionally.
- Self care is rooted in daily awareness of your needs and well-being.

Journey to Mental Wellness:
"self-care"

TYPES OF SELF-CARE

Physical -Exercise -Nutrition -Sleep	Emotional -Mindfulness -Journaling -Therapy	
Social -Connection -Boundaries -Community	Mental -Hobbies -Learning -Digital Detox	Spiritual -Gratitude -Meditation -Nature



MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH | #MHAM | 

Self Care in the Workplace - Teachers

- Eating Lunch & Drinking Water
- Boundaries
- Setting achievable goals
- Positive Conversations with colleagues
- Asking for help AND accepting help
- Maintaining realistic expectations
- Expanding your Window of Tolerance
- Identifying stress triggers in the classroom BEFORE they happen
- Having hobbies and interests outside of being a teacher
- Making time for personal connections with friends and family

BOUNDARIES

*You don't have to do all the
things*

or be all the things.

It's ok to say no sometimes.

What might this look like for teachers?

- Educate students and parents about tutoring programs that they can use at home.
- Learn how to say, I don't have time to help you with that right now. Have you asked _____ ?
- Do not incorporate more than 1 - 2 new practices into your classroom this year. Be careful about what you choose - make sure it serves the students AND you.
- Make a list (BEFORE the students arrive) of things that trigger stress for you. Make plans to eliminate as many of those situations as possible.

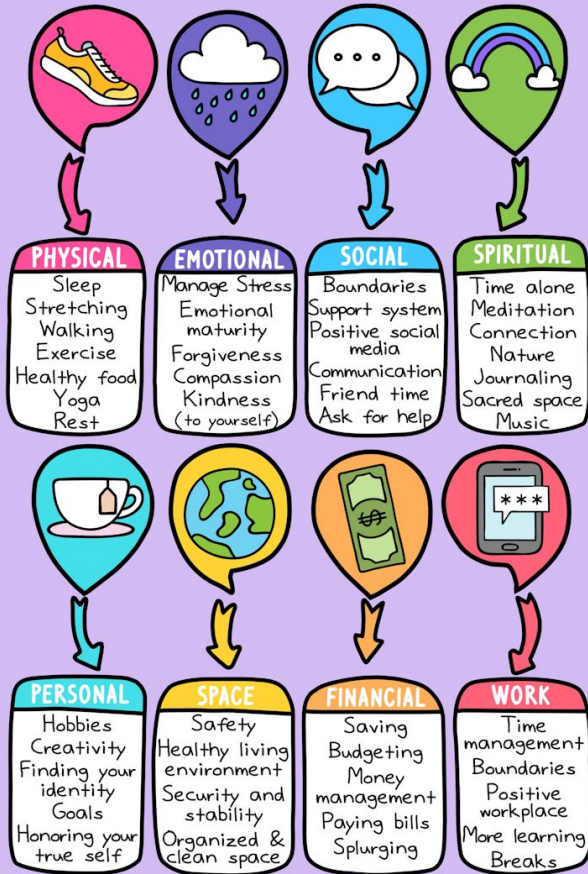
Achievable Goals & Realistic Expectations

It's ok to not be the most creative, most inventive, most interesting teacher every day.

Goals give us something to work toward, but make sure the ones you set are something you can celebrate soon.

- **This will look different for every teacher.**
- **Have an accountability partner**
 - Choose a co-worker you already talk to regularly
 - Make sure you're both on the same page about the type of goals and expectations you plan to hold yourselves to
 - Check in weekly during one of your regular chats. Don't make this formal or fancy

TYPES OF SELF-CARE



BlessingManifesting

Quick Tips:

1. Breathe. Studies show that adults don't breathe enough.
2. Spend intentional time outside at least once a week.
3. Find a hobby that is not related to teaching.
4. Do one thing to make your classroom a calm space for YOU.
5. Connect with a loved one weekly.

Tools for Self Care - Stress Index

- Do an occasional “check in” with your stress
- We can forget that certain things add stress to our lives.
- When your score is high, lean in to your Self-Care Plan

Life Change Index Scale (The Stress Test)

Event	Impact Score	My Score
Death of spouse	100	
Divorce	73	
Marital Separation	65	
Jail Term	63	
Death of close family member	63	
Personal injury or illness	53	
Marriage	50	
Fired at work	47	
Marital reconciliation	45	
Retirement	45	
Change in health of family member	44	
Pregnancy	40	
Sex difficulties	39	
Gain of a new family member	39	
Business readjustment	39	
Change in financial state	38	
Death of a close friend	37	
Change to a different line of work	36	
Change in number of arguments with spouse	35	
Mortgage over \$20,000	31	
Foreclosure of mortgage or loan	30	
Change in responsibilities at work	29	
Son or daughter leaving home	29	
Trouble with in laws	29	
Outstanding personal achievement	28	
Spouse begins or stop work	26	
Begin or end school	26	
Change in living conditions	25	
Revisions of personal habits	24	
Trouble with boss	23	
Change in work hours or conditions	20	
Change in residence	20	
Change in schools	20	
Change in recreations	19	
Change in church activities	19	
Change in social activities	19	
Mortgage or loan less than \$20,000	17	
Change in sleeping habits	16	
Change in number of family get-togethers	15	
Change in eating habits	15	
Vacation	13	
Christmas approaching	12	
Minor violation of the law	11	
Total		

Directions If an event mentioned above has occurred in the past year, or is expected in the near future, copy the number in the score column. If the event has occurred or is expected to occur more than once, multiply this number by the frequency of the event.

Self Care Checklist - Make Your Own

- Keep it simple
- Start with 3-5 items
- Give yourself grace

Canva Template →

self-care checklist

	week						
task activity	s	m	t	w	t	f	s
start your day with a glass of water	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
take a 10-minute walk outside	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
practice deep breathing for 5 minutes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
write down three things you're grateful for	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
have a healthy snack	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
stretch for 5 minutes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
turn off screens an hour before bed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
enjoy a relaxing bath or shower	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
meditation before sleep	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
notes				goals			

Resources

- [WebMD: Signs of Compassion Fatigue](#)
- [EdWeek: Compassion Fatigue is Overwhelming Teachers](#)
- [How Burned Out Are You?](#)
- [Restoring the Joy in Teaching](#)
- [Educators: You Have Permission to Take Care of Yourself, Right Now](#)
- [How Can You Prevent Teacher Burnout and Stress?](#)
- [FuelEd: Why Self-Care for Teachers is Crucial](#)
- [Remembering More Than Your 'Why'](#)

The Enrichment Center | www.theenrichmentcenter.org

- Resources → Teacher Resources

Thank you

For making our schools a better place.



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