

# Resource Sheet: Breaking up with Burnout

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*Ideally, we want to focus on preventing stress from happening in the first place. **Reducing** stressors in your life is one way to approach this. For those inevitable real-life situations in which we can't avoid the actual stressor(s), we turn our attention to **managing** the resulting stress using healthy coping skills.*

## Creating a “Positive No”

*“You cannot truly say yes until you can truly say no.”*

Saying no is hard because it pits power against relationships. The following model helps:

A **Yes!** to yourself and protecting what is important to you.  
 “I need to prioritize my work commitments right now.”

Then, a matter-of-fact **No**.  
 “I will not be taking on an officer role in this club for the next six months.”

Then, a **Yes?** as an invitation to the other to reach an agreement that respects the needs of both.  
 “I will continue to attend meetings as an active member and would be willing to meet with new officers every few weeks to help answer their questions and train them.”

Why this model works:

- The first yes is internally focused – an affirmation of your interests and commitments
- The matter-of-fact no is an affirmation that you have heard the specific request and can't meet it exactly the way it has been proposed
- The second yes is externally focused – an affirmation of your relationship, along with an invitation to the other to come to an agreement that satisfies both of your interests
- The ability to deliver a “positive no” is the ability to take responsibility – for what you want, for meeting shared deadlines, for shared goals, for the relationships that build a high performing team
- This is the key to an effective team and a strategic focus

## Putting Rocks in before Pebbles and Sand

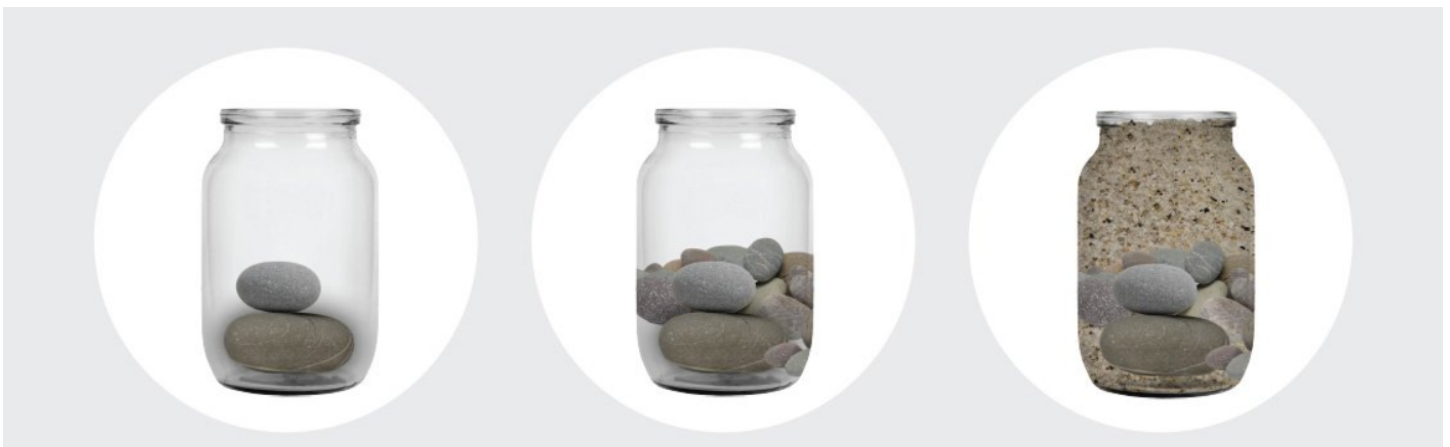
- o **A concept by Stephen Covey in 7 Habits of Highly Effective People**  
 and applied in Steph Crowder's 15 Minute Planner Method (<http://courageandclarity.com/plan>)

*“The key is not to prioritize what’s on your schedule, but to schedule your priorities.”*

**Rocks** – Big Commitments

**Pebbles** – Growth-Based Actions

**Sand** – Baseline Tasks



**Example of a Morning / Evening Routine – read, write, stretch, breathe, breakfast**

**Try one or more of the following when you need to “re-set” or “re-focus:”**

Deep Breathing  
Count to 10 in your mind

Go outside or get some natural light  
Drink a glass of water

Positive self-talk  
Move your body

**Coping Strategies (offered by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI))**

*Developing a personalized approach can help you manage your mental health and improve your quality of life.*

Some tried and true coping strategies include:

- **Accept your needs.** Recognize what your triggers are. What situations make you feel physically and mentally agitated? Once you know this, you can avoid them when it's reasonable to, and to cope when you can't.
  - **Manage your time.** Prioritizing your activities can help you use your time well. Set aside time for yourself to do something that makes you feel good.
  - **Practice relaxation.** Deep breathing, meditation and progressive muscle relaxation are good ways to calm yourself. Taking a break to refocus can have benefits beyond the immediate moment.
  - **Exercise daily.** Schedule time to walk outside, bike or join a dance class. Whatever you do, make sure it's fun. Daily exercise naturally produces stress-relieving hormones in your body and improves your physical health.
  - **Eat well.** Eating unprocessed foods, like whole grains, vegetables, and fresh fruit is the foundation for a healthy body and mind. Eating well can also help stabilize your mood.
  - **Get enough sleep.** Sleep is a basic need and helps our bodies and minds restore. Symptoms of some mental health conditions can be triggered by getting too little sleep.
  - **Avoid alcohol and drugs.** They don't actually reduce stress: in fact, they often worsen it. If you're struggling with substance abuse, educate yourself and get help.
  - **Talk to someone.** Whether to friends, family, a counselor or a support group, airing out and talking can help. Consider attending a support group, in-person or virtually.
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### ***Intrigued, but want personalized suggestions to better cope?***

Check out this interactive tool from The Greater Good Science Center (2 minutes). Upon completion, you'll receive tips on preventing and managing stress based on your responses! [https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/quizzes/take\\_quiz/stress\\_and\\_anxiety](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/quizzes/take_quiz/stress_and_anxiety)

You can also access a self care self assessment from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services here: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/crs/self-care-assessment.pdf>. The modified version that was offered during the workshop can be found here: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1FA4Mcf4Q732FUf-7IVYaO7WOX3gLd9Uzy7b6WwftJyo/copy>.

**Need a Digital Detox?** Digital distractions are often prime suspects when it comes to stress.

Here's a challenge ... choose a couple of the following and get started today!

- Keep your phone out of your visual field and not touching your body (suggested alternatives: in a bag, in a drawer, in a designated container on your desk). If you are worried about missing calls, either turn the ringer up or set up call forwarding to your office.
- Turn off non-vital notifications, especially those from games or other apps with addictive design traits.
- Have a particular person you want to be sure you take calls from? Change the ringtone for that person so that you instantly know when they are calling and can prioritize their call.

- o Set boundaries on your time in terms of when you check email and/or answer your phone (for example, no email or phone use between 9 pm and 6 am except for true emergencies).
- o Doing it for the gram? Spend one day in which you do not take any pictures. For extra credit, pause and appreciate something beautiful or interesting and take a mental picture of it.
- o Need to write or develop an idea? Find a quiet space free from distracting sounds or coworkers and dedicate a block of time to the task. In a pinch, noise canceling headphones can work as well.
- o Spend a few minutes with a pad of paper and a pen pre-writing for the project that you are working before you sit down to type.
- o Unsubscribe from email lists which are not serving you.
- o Set emails to automatically be sent to a folder or tagged if you cannot unsubscribe, but do not need to look at the information except as a reference.
- o Set a timer for 15 minutes and only write and respond to emails for that length of time. After 15 minutes is up, get up from your desk and either do physical tasks, run an errand, refill your glass of water, or do something else that will help create a real break from email mode.
- o Tempted to check your phone during meetings? Do not bring your phone or put the phone in a drawer or your bag out of reach.
- o Set Outlook to offline mode to catch up on email without being distracted by new messages coming in.
- o Use folders to quickly sort email by how you need to respond to it (examples: Reply Needed, Waiting On, Call, Reference) and then tackle one batch at a time.
- o Take a digital break for at least 60 minutes at least once during the day (examples: work out, in person meeting with a colleague, lunch with a book or a friend, attending a workshop or public meeting).
- o Get an alarm clock so that you can keep your phone out of the bedroom.
- o If you are really struggling to break an addiction to a website or app or otherwise eliminate online distractions, consider paying for a service like FocusMe to block apps for you.
- o Do you spend time online doing research or searching for information on a topic? Set up a Google Alert instead and the content will come to you either daily or weekly.
- o Delete the app on your phone that is a source of wasted time and is not serving you. (i.e.: Facebook, Twitter, Angry Birds, a News app). Not ready to hit delete? Move the app away from the home screen.
- o Set an out of office message on your email for one day whether or not you are out.
- o Read on your tablet? Check out a physical book from the library and add reading the book to your morning or evening routine.

## How to Make a Self-Care Emergency Kit

Open up a google doc and label it "Self Care Emergency Kit" and respond to the following prompts:

- Write a short pep talk for yourself
- Make a list of hype people you can reach out to
- Find emails/texts from them that encourage/inspire you
- Make a list of who and what to avoid when you are having a hard time
- Make a list of quick self-care activities you can do at work/while you work
- Make a list of links to online videos/TV episodes that make you laugh
- Find photos of family/friends that make you smile and add into the doc
- Make a list of songs that are guaranteed to put you in a good mood
- Make a list of things you are most grateful for/appreciative of in your life

- Make a list of professional accomplishments you are most proud of

## Additional Resources

### Books:

- o Essentialism: The Disciplined Pursuit of Less by Greg McKeown
- o The Power of a Positive No by William Ury
- o The Upside of Stress by Kelly McGonigal

### Podcast Episodes:

- o Courage & Clarity, Episode #16: Adrienne Dorison - A Clear & Simple Process for Getting More Done in Less Time
- o Note to Self's Bored and Brilliant Boot Camp - <https://www.wnycstudios.org/story/bored-and-brilliant-boot-camp/>
- o Story Brand, Episode #90: Michael Hyatt - Redefining Productivity to Focus on What Actually Matters
- o Work Life with Adam Grant - "When Work Takes Over Your Life"
- o The Dirtbag Diaries - "The Great Indoors"
- o LifeKit: How to Work Less and De-Stress
- o We can do Hard Things with Glennon Doyle- "[Boundaries](#)"

### Articles:

- o Harvard Business Review <https://hbr.org/2015/06/conquering-digital-distraction>
- o National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI) <https://www.nami.org/Your-Journey/Individuals-with-Mental-Illness/Taking-Care-of-Your-Body/Managing-Stress>
- o Greater Good Science Center [https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how\\_to\\_give\\_to\\_others\\_without\\_burning\\_out](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_to_give_to_others_without_burning_out)
- o Harvard Business Review <https://hbr.org/2016/11/beating-burnout>

### Videos:

- o Good Boundaries Free You by Sarri Gilman, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rtsHUeKnkC8&feature=youtu.be>
- o How to Make Stress Your Friend by Kelly McGonigal, [https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly\\_mcgonigal\\_how\\_to\\_make\\_stress\\_your\\_friend](https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend)
- o Stress Management Techniques, Healthy Coping Strategies, Breathing Exercise (SAMHSA) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqpCCnmwNVY>

### Apps and Websites:



- o Task Management - <https://asana.com/> - Asana
- o Mindfulness Meditation/Wellness
  - <https://insighttimer.com/> - Insight Timer
  - <https://www.headspace.com> - Headspace
  - <https://www.tenpercent.com/> - Ten Percent Happier
  - <https://centerformsc.org/practice-msc/guided-meditations-and-exercises/> - Center for MSC