

***This is a draft version of the workbook
and is subject to further change.
Please do not circulate beyond your
team.***



Compassionate Employers

CHAPTER 2- Worksheet: individual reflection

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Worksheet: individual reflection

Discussing burnout with our manager: discussion guide

These conversations can feel daunting but remember you do not need to share more than you are comfortable with¹.

However, when everyone is working together and is open to different perspectives and solutions, you can find ways of better supporting your wellbeing.

This conversation guide aims to support you when having conversations with your manager about the risks of burnout you may be experiencing. By making notes ahead of time, you can feel prepared in the conversation.

Important note!

Individual reflection guidance

- You do not need to answer any questions that feel too personal, unsafe or difficult.
- Pause at any point.
- If this content brings up distress, speak to someone you trust and access your organisation's support routes, such as your manager, supervision, occupational health, Employee Assistance Programme, HR, GP or urgent support if needed.

Be kind to yourself. These questions can feel challenging so take your time and take breaks as needed.

1. About you

- **Confidentiality:** at the start of the discussion make expectations around confidentiality clear.
- **Impact:** what is the impact that the current situation is having on you and the risk/experience of burnout?
- **Contributing factors:** what personal and professional factors are contributing to how you are feeling (e.g. financial worries, bereavement, mental health, physical health)? How are they impacting you and your work?
- **Further guidance:** what further personal guidance would you find helpful to support the contributing factors? For example, medical advice, financial advice, mental health support.

While you may not feel comfortable in sharing specific details, context can help your manager in understanding the impact on your personal and professional life and understand where they can take action.



Individual reflection: Make a note on each point to help you stay on track in the conversation. This can include any questions you may want to ask.

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Topic areas for this worksheet have been adapted from Mental Health UK ¹ and Maslach²

2. Workload

- **Specific tasks:** What specific tasks do you have and what are the challenges you are encountering?
- **Potential solutions:** Do you have any ideas as to how your workload can be reprioritised?
- **Job description:** Review your job description. Often our work changes over time without it changing our role formally.

Speaking about your specific workload with your manager can help them to problem-solve areas or support you in reprioritising tasks.

Individual reflection: Make a note on each point to help you stay on track in the conversation. This can include a list of your tasks and the challenges you are experiencing.

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3. Control

- **Autonomy:** Are there areas where you want to take the lead? Do you have ideas about how you can have more autonomy in your work?
- **Wider picture:** Do you have a full understanding of your workplace's wider picture? Can you ask your manager for clarity on this and where your work fits?

If we feel like our work is out of our control it can impact on how valued we feel. Equally we may have identified tasks where we know we can take the initiative and want to take that step.

Individual reflection: Are there any areas where you would like more autonomy?

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4. Community

- **One to one support:** Do you have regular check-ins with your manager? Can you ask for this? Can what you discuss in this meeting be reviewed at a later date?
- **Team support:** Do you know what wellbeing support your organisation offers? Do you have access to supervision/group reflection? How can your manager support you in prioritising the accessing of that support?

Team support is vital in us coping well at work, however, group support sessions and supervision often fall to the bottom of the to-do list. There may be further wellbeing support options such as an Employee Assistance Programme (Employee Assistance Programme) to which you may have access.

Individual reflection: Is there any specific support that you would find helpful?

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5. Fairness

- **Rights and policies:** Are you familiar with your organisational policies e.g. Inclusion and Diversity, Complaints Procedures, Sickness Absence? Do you know where these are located?

If you feel you are not being treated fairly, it is important you fully understand your rights. Your HR team can help you in understanding your organisation's policies.

Knowing the policies can help support you in knowing what adjustments you may be able to access.

Individual reflection: From looking at your organisation's policies, what (if any) adjustments would you find helpful? Do you have any questions about the policies?

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6. Values

- **Team values:** Do you have a set of values for your team? How do they fit with your work values? How are values upheld in your team?
- **Team cultures:** Have you noticed any attitudes/behaviours that are impacting team dynamics? How are these dynamics impacting you?

Culture can be something that feels challenging to talk about let alone change. However, by having these conversations our managers can be more aware of workplace dynamics.

Remain open-minded when communicating any challenges with your manager.

Individual reflection: Do you have any observations about team dynamics? If so, how can you communicate in balanced and open ways?

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7. Reward

- **Positive feedback:** How is good work or good practice recognised in your organisation? Is positive feedback given, if so in what way?
- **Celebrations:** Do you share and celebrate successes in your team? Do you have any ideas how this can be improved?

Often, we don't have conversations about how we like to receive feedback. However, this can be instrumental in whether we feel our work is recognised.

Individual reflection: How do you like to receive feedback? How can you share these preferences with your manager?

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References

1. Mental Health UK. *Downloadable resources*. [online] 2024. Mental Health UK. Available at: <https://mentalhealth-uk.org/help-and-information/downloadable-resources/>
2. Maslach C. A multidimensional theory of burnout. *In*: Cooper CL. Theories of organizational stress. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 1998.

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