

Burnout

A Reflection for Clinicians

As clinicians, we spend a lot of our working lives noticing other people. We notice shifts in tone, body language and energy. We wonder what someone might need, what helps them feel safe and who they can turn to for support.

This reflection is an invitation to turn some of that same curiosity towards ourselves. This isn't another self-care task to get right, or a checklist for preventing burnout. It's simply a little space to notice how your work feels, where your energy is going, and what helps you feel supported in it.

How does my work feel?

We can spend so much time thinking about what we need to do at work that we don't always notice how it actually feels to be "doing the work". Think about the ordinary parts of your working day: being in a session, writing a report, talking with a colleague, driving between appointments, preparing for the day or finishing work.

Reflection Questions

- How do I want my work to feel?
- What does my work actually feel like at the moment?
- Where am I noticing a difference between the two?

Where am I efforting?

Sometimes the work itself isn't the only thing taking energy. There can also be energy going into trying to be the clinician or professional we think we're supposed to be. Staying available. Appearing regulated. Pushing through. Saying yes. Moving straight from one thing to the next. We can become very practised at overriding ourselves without really noticing we're doing it.

Reflection Questions

- Where might I be efforting more than I need to?
- What am I noticing in myself that I might usually override?
- What might I want to protect a little more?

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Where can I receive care?

Much of the language around clinician wellbeing focuses on what **we need to do**. Take a break. Set better boundaries. Exercise. Meditate. Fill your cup. Those things may be useful, but care doesn't always have to be an individual project. Sometimes we need somewhere to put things down, we need someone else to notice us, we need to be the person receiving care. We explore questions like these with our clients all the time, but what might it be like to turn those questions towards yourself?

Reflection Questions

- Who or what helps me feel supported?
- Where do I feel understood, safe or able to put things down?
- Where am I able to receive care, rather than always being the person providing it?

Think broadly

It might be a friend, family member, colleague, supervisor, community, animal, professional support, familiar place or simply someone with whom you don't have to explain quite so much. If some of those spaces feel a little empty, they don't need to be filled immediately. Sometimes noticing what's missing is useful in itself.

Before you finish...

You don't need to leave this reflection with a wellbeing plan.

You don't need to optimise anything. Perhaps just notice which question stayed with you.

That might be enough for now.



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