

Cultivating Resilience:

Tools for Personal Well-Being & Effective Communication

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Arriving Activity: Gratitude



Objectives

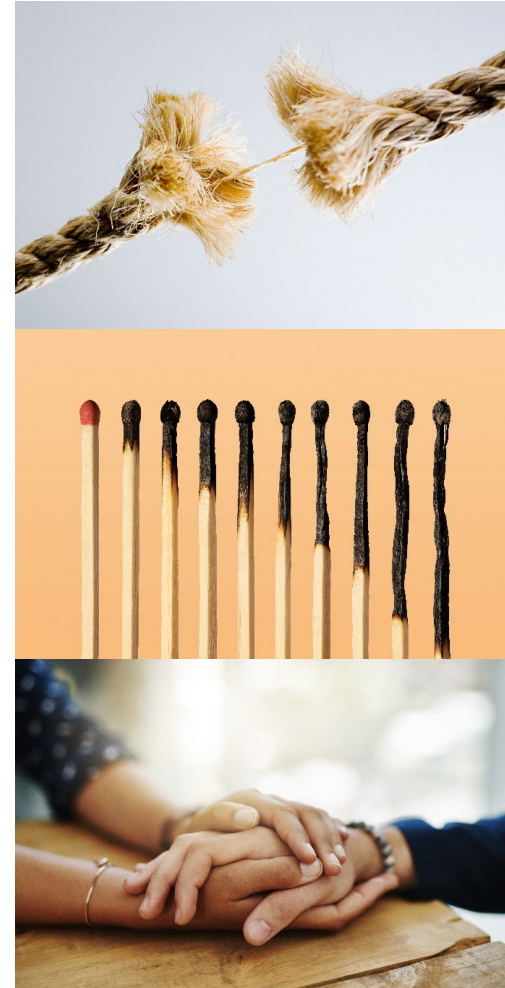
1. Learn practical tools to address burnout, improve self-regulation, and manage conflicts effectively.
2. Explore and practice powerful tools in the session, including techniques to cultivate positive thinking, mindfulness practices, and a communication strategy to strengthen relationships and manage conflicts.
3. Feel inspired and equipped to incorporate at least one tool into your daily life to promote long-term well-being.

Burnout

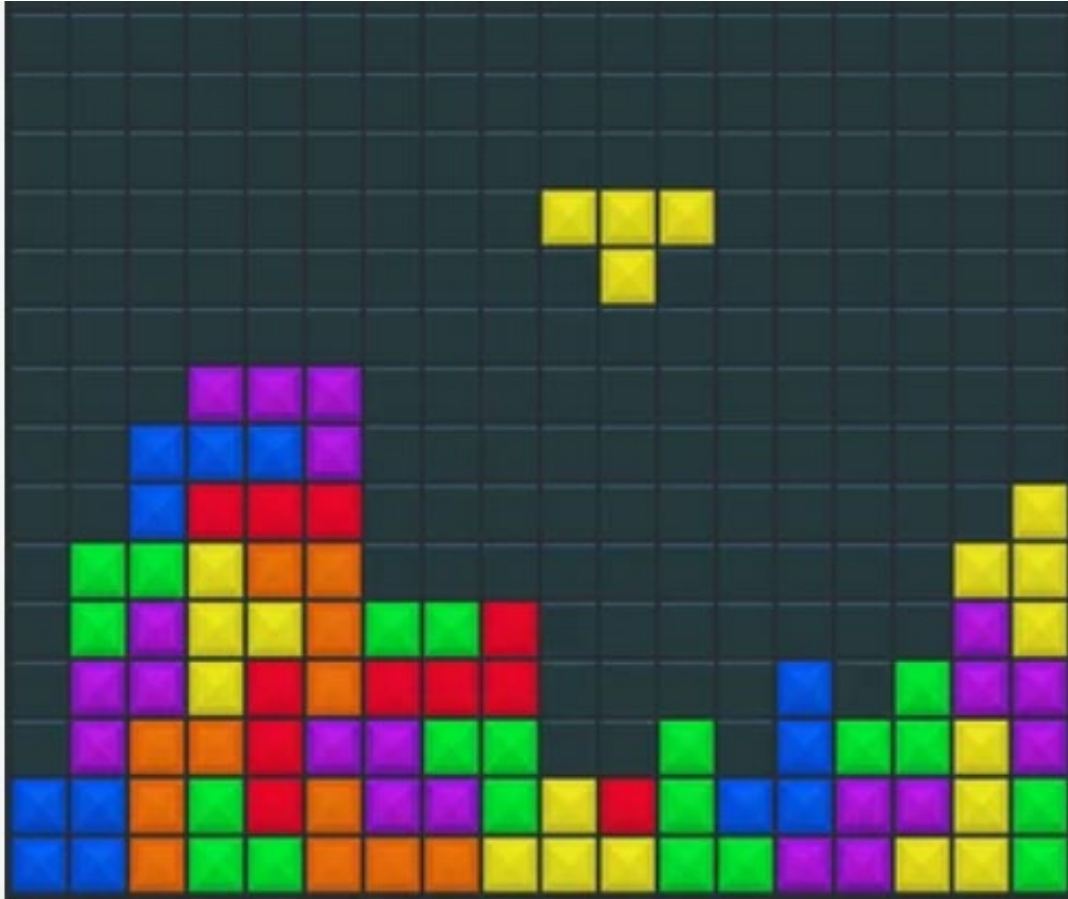


What is burnout?

- **Stress** - physiological & psychological response to a perceived threat/challenge
- **Burnout** - chronic physical & emotional exhaustion often with feelings of cynicism & detachment from work
- **Compassion Fatigue** - emotional & physical exhaustion that can occur when exposed to suffering & trauma of others over time



Tetris Effect



What is it?

Intense focus on a repetitive activity (like playing Tetris) leads the brain to recognize and prioritize similar patterns in unrelated areas of life

Daily Practice

Gratitude

- Guided journaling—write three things you're grateful for at work and why they matter.

"What we see depends mainly on what we look for." — John Lubbock



Thoughts are like sunglasses. What lenses do you wear the most?

Cognitive distortions are irrational or exaggerated thought patterns that reinforce negative thinking or emotions.

These thoughts are often:

- Automatic and habitual
- Shape how we perceive ourselves, others, and situations.



Challenging Cognitive Distortions

Remember ABCD

Activating Event

Belief

Consequence

Dispute

(A) Activating Event: What happened

(B) Recognize your Belief: What thoughts or beliefs

(C) Observe the Consequence: Notice how this belief makes you feel or effects your behavior

(D) Dispute the Belief: Actively explore the negative thought by asking yourself questions like:

- What's the evidence? For? Against?
- Are there alternative explanations for the situation?
- What would a supportive friend say in this situation?

What is the new thought based on the evidence?

Challenging Cognitive Distortions Example

Activating
Event

Belief

Consequence

Dispute

A – Activating Event: Your manager gives you feedback about an area you need to improve.

B – Belief: “I’m terrible at my job. I’ll never get better at this.”

C – Consequence: You feel anxious, discouraged, and demotivated. You start doubting your abilities.

D – Disputation (Challenging the belief):

“One piece of feedback doesn’t define my entire ability. I’ve received positive feedback in the past. I can learn from this and improve.”

“Everyone makes mistakes; this is just a chance to grow.”

“I’ve faced challenges before and overcome them. I can handle this too.”

“I’ve received positive feedback recently from my boss. It was....”

New thought? I’m good at my job and I can learn from this too.

Activity

A – Activating Event

B – Belief

C – Consequence (how you feel)

D – Disputation (Challenging the belief)

- What's the evidence? For?
Against?
- Are there alternative explanations for the situation?
- What would a supportive friend say in this situation?



In breakouts (8 mins)



Work together as a group to provide support and insight for disputing each belief scenario



Shift distorted thinking to more balanced thinking.



Full Group Debrief



Share an aha on the skill or how you see it could be helpful

Scenarios for the Activity

1

Scenario 1: A colleague makes a suggestion in a meeting that contradicts something you said earlier. You think, "They must think I'm incompetent."

2

Scenario 2: You have a presentation coming up, and you start thinking, "I'm going to mess this up. Everyone will think I'm unprepared."

3

Scenario 3: You've been working on a team project and haven't received any feedback. You start thinking, "They probably don't like my work."

Self Regulation



managing emotions, thoughts & responses to stress effectively

Self-Regulation Tool



Stop: freeze, so you don't act impulsively

Take a step back & breathe: step away and take a few deep breaths to calm down

Observe: pay attention to what's happening around you and within you

Proceed: make a choice that moves you closer to your goal

Conflict Management

Say, perhaps, you fell behind at work and your manager comes to you and says:

“Hey, I needed this done sooner. We agreed on a deadline for yesterday. Please get that to us as soon as you can.”

That’s a soft start-up. Compare that to this harsh start-up:

“Where are the reports you said you’d file? Could you, for once, get something done on time?”



Soft Startup (Gottman)



- Begin with something positive
- Complain but don't blame
- Start with "I" instead of "you"
- Describe what is happening, but don't evaluate or judge
- Describe what you need
- Don't store things up

Soft Startup Example

Scenario: A colleague often speaks over others in conversations, making it hard for everyone to share their opinions.

Example Soft Startup:

"I really appreciate how enthusiastic you are during our discussions and how much you contribute to the conversation. I've noticed that sometimes, when we're talking, I don't always have the chance to share my thoughts. I'd really appreciate it if we could try to be more mindful about giving each person time to share."

This approach focuses on expressing your feelings and needs without blaming the colleague, encouraging a more balanced conversation.

Softened Startup Activity



- **In the breakout rooms**, work together to create a Soft Startup message for your assigned scenario.
- Focus on:
 - Begin with something positive
 - Complain but don't blame
 - Start with "I" instead of "you"
 - Describe what is happening, but don't evaluate or judge
 - Describe what you need
- **Group Sharing** – Any aha's or how this skill can help with communication

Softened Startup Scenarios

1. A colleague frequently interrupts during team meetings, making it hard for others to contribute.
2. A team member is consistently late to project deadlines, causing delays in the team's overall progress.
3. Miscommunication between two team members leads to confusion about who is responsible for which tasks on a shared project.
4. A colleague takes on too many tasks and seems overwhelmed, affecting team productivity.
5. A team member prefers working independently, leading to miscommunication and frustration.
6. A colleague is consistently late to meetings, delaying team progress.
7. Your supervisor rarely provides feedback, leaving you uncertain about your performance.
8. A colleague's disorganized project files cause confusion and duplicated work.

In Conclusion

To boost resilience and enhance well-being, while improving communication skills practice:

- Gratitude – Tetris Effect
- ABCD – Challenging our negative thoughts
- Self-Regulation – STOP
- Soft Startup



Thank you!

We welcome questions and feedback!

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Mitigating the 4 Horseman



- **Criticism** – Verbally attacking personality or character
- **Contempt** – Attacking sense of self with an intent to insult or abuse
- **Defensiveness** – Victimizing yourself to ward off a perceived attack and reverse the blame
- **Stonewalling** – Withdrawing to avoid conflict and convey disapproval, distance, and separation

Cody the Criticizer

I'm reviewing my colleague's presentation and point out, "This could be more organized, and you missed that chart. You always overlook key details." I add, "If you'd pay more attention, this wouldn't keep happening." I'm frustrated because they should know better by now.

Antidote to Criticism ... Soften Startup

Contemptuous Casey

I'm in a meeting with my colleague, and they're nitpicking my presentation. Frustrated, I roll my eyes and mutter, "Of course, you'd focus on that instead of the big picture." I snap, "Maybe you should just do it yourself if it's so easy." I know I'm being harsh, but I feel like they're always pointing out my flaws.

Antidote to Contemptuous ... Appreciation and Respect

Defensive Dylan

I'm in a meeting with my boss, and they are giving me feedback for a report I submitted. Instead of just listening, I start defending myself, saying, "I didn't have enough time with all the other tasks." They try to explain what needs fixing, but I keep interrupting with reasons. I feel frustrated, like I'm being unfairly blamed, and I can't stop myself from arguing back.

Antidote to Defensiveness ... Take Responsibility

Susie the Stonewaller

In a meeting, my colleague starts discussing the missed deadline. I'm frustrated because I feel it could've been avoided if there had been better communication. I can't help but feel annoyed. Instead of engaging, I check my phone and avoid eye contact. They keep asking for my input, but I'm too irritated to respond, so I stay silent, hoping they'll just move on.

Antidote to Stonewalling ... Self Regulation

THE FOUR HORSEMEN

AND HOW TO STOP THEM WITH THEIR ANTIDOTES

CRITICISM

Verbally attacking personality or character.



GENTLE START UP

Talk about your feelings using "I" statements and express a positive need.



CONTEMPT

Attacking sense of self with an intent to insult or abuse.



BUILD CULTURE OF APPRECIATION

Remind yourself of your partner's positive qualities and find gratitude for positive actions.



DEFENSIVENESS

Victimizing yourself to ward off a perceived attack and reverse the blame.



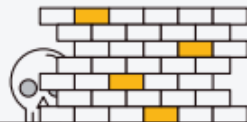
TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

Accept your partner's perspective and offer an apology for any wrongdoing.



STONEWALLING

Withdrawing to avoid conflict and convey disapproval, distance, and separation.



PHYSIOLOGICAL SELF-SOOTHING

Take a break and spend that time doing something soothing and distracting.



The Gottman Institute