

---

# Self-Care for Library Staff

## University of Iowa Libraries

Bobbi L. Newman  
bobbi-newman@uiowa.edu

---



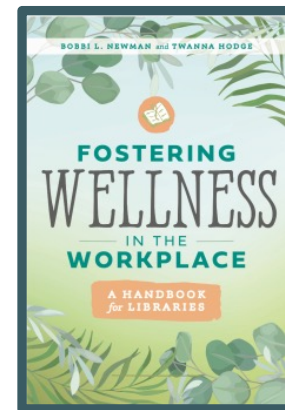
# Permission

- ❖ I encourage you to prioritize your wellness during this presentation.
- ❖ Please feel free to doodle, color, knit, eat, drink, move your body in ways that feel good to you, move around, take a break, and do whatever you need to take care of yourself.
- ❖ Your wellness is more important than anything, including this presentation.



# My Journey with Wellness

- ❖ Themes of burnout & compassion fatigue at conferences, 2017 & 2018
- ❖ Wellness in the Library Workplace Workplace class for NNLM, 2018
  - ❖ Partnership with ALA-Allied Professional Association, 2019
- ❖ Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Workshop, UIowa, 2019
- ❖ Webinars & presentations focused on self-care during COVID-19, 2020
- ❖ BLOSSOM! Building Life-long Opportunities for Strength, Self-Care, Outlook, Morale, and Mindfulness, 2021
- ❖ Author *Fostering Wellness in the Workplace, A Handbook for Libraries*, 2022
- ❖ Workplace well-being presentations and writing– ongoing
- ❖ Editor, *A Manager's Guide to Creating a Flourishing Workplace: Strategies for Fostering Wellness in Libraries*. ALA Editions, Fall 2024



---

“Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”

- World Health Organization

---





# **Challenges of Library Work**





“Vocational awe describes the set of ideas, values, and assumptions librarians have about themselves and the profession that result in notions that libraries as institutions are inherently good, sacred notions, and therefore beyond critique.”



publicly displaying certain emotions  
while hiding others



“Compassion fatigue is a state experienced by those helping people or animals in distress; it is an extreme state of tension and preoccupation with the suffering of those being helped to the degree that it can create a secondary traumatic stress for the helper.”





# Invisible Labor

- ❖ Small interactions that make the workplace more socially cohesive
- ❖ Mentoring and assisting coworkers with projects, volunteering, etc
- ❖ Mostly performed by women.

Carpenter, J. (2017, October 18).  
Chemaly, S. (2016, January 22).  
Eagly, A. H., & Crowley, M. (1986).



Syndrome resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed.

Three dimensions characterize it:

- feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion
- increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativity or cynicism related to one's job
- sense of ineffectiveness and lack of accomplishment

# Six Causes Of Burnout At Work

- ❖ Workload exceeds capacity
- ❖ Lack of control, lack of autonomy
- ❖ Rewards do not match the effort
- ❖ Supportive community/team
- ❖ Lack of fair and equitable treatment
- ❖ Mismatch of personal and organizational values



# Self Care





Self-care is the actions and habits we intentionally adopt to maintain and improve our health and happiness. It's about taking the time to attend to our physical, emotional, and mental needs to boost our overall well-being



“Caring for myself is not self-indulgence,  
it is self-preservation, and that is an act  
of political warfare.”

Audre Lorde, *A Burst of Light*



# Eight Dimensions of Health



SAMHSA, adapted from Swarbrick, M. (2006). A we approach. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, 29(4),

# Intellectual Wellness

---



Hobbies and  
interests



Lifelong  
Learning



Games and  
Puzzles



Teaching and  
Debating



Reading and  
Writing



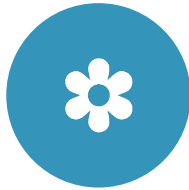


# Environmental Wellness

---



Natural Light



Nature



Change Of  
Scenery



Workspace



Home



# Emotional Wellness

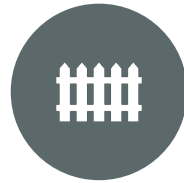
---



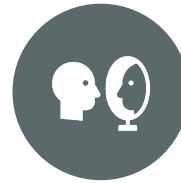
Feelings  
And  
Emotions



Self- Care



Boundaries



Healthy Self-  
esteem and  
Self-concept



Seek and  
Accept Help



# Spiritual Wellness

---



Beliefs



Values



Involvement



Practice



# Social Wellness

---



Family And  
Friends



Community



New People



Social Time



# Financial Wellness

---



Income



Checking  
and Savings  
Accounts



Spending



Debt



Retirement



# Physical Wellness

---



Nutrition



Move Your  
Body



Sleep



Preventative  
Care



Limit alcohol  
and drugs



# Occupational Wellness

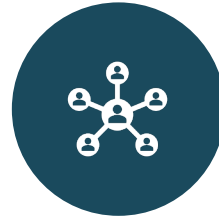
---



Satisfaction



Stimulation



Network



Balance





# Savor Happiness

- ❖ Be Present
- ❖ Behavior
- ❖ Communicate
- ❖ Positive Mental Time Travel

Price, D. (2021).





# Manage Social Media

- ❖ Set goals or intentions
- ❖ Designate time
- ❖ Unfollow accounts
- ❖ Delete apps
- ❖ Turn off notifications
- ❖ Block sites
- ❖ Track your time



# Consider Mindfulness

Mindful breathing

Mindful movement

Mindful eating

Mindful crafting

Find mindfulness resources online and in your local community



Manage stress



Cope better with serious illness



Reduce anxiety



Reduce depression



Increased ability to relax



Greater enthusiasm for life



Improved self-esteem

# Benefits Of Mindfulness



# You at Work



- ❖ Use your vacation time and sick time.
- ❖ Take your breaks and lunch and leave your desk.
- ❖ Know your limitations. Don't be a perfectionist.
- ❖ Go home on time. Don't stay late.
- ❖ Don't take work home with you.
- ❖ Modify your workspace.
- ❖ Set boundaries



# Your Physical Work Environment



- ❖ Get an ergonomic assessment
- ❖ Designate quiet times
- ❖ Wear headphones
- ❖ Be conscious of fragrances and foods
- ❖ Add decorative items that you find relaxing
- ❖ Get a plant, even a fake one
- ❖ Adjust your light





How do you practice  
self care?



Thank you!

Questions?

Bobbi Newman  
bobbi.newman@gmail.com



# References Page 1

- American Psychological Association. (2022, February 11). 6 Tips to Help Take Control of Your Social Media Use and Improve Well-being. *American Psychological Association*. <https://www.psychiatry.org/443/news-room/apa-blogs/tips-to-take-control-of-your-social-media-use>
- Carpenter, J. (2017, October 18). The “invisible labor” still asked of women at work. *CNN Money*. <https://money.cnn.com/2017/10/18/pf/women-emotional-labor/index.html>
- Chemaly, S. (2016, January 22). At work as at home, men reap the benefits of women’s “invisible labor”. *Quartz*. <https://qz.com/599999/at-work-as-at-home-men-reap-the-benefits-of-womens-invisible-labor/>
- Eagly, A. H., & Crowley, M. (1986). Gender and helping behavior: A meta-analytic review of the social psychological literature. *Psychological Bulletin*, 100(3), 283–308. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.100.3.283>
- Ettrah, F. (2018). Vocational Awe and Librarianship: The Lies We Tell Ourselves. *In the Library with the Lead Pipe*. [/2018/vocational-awe/comment-page-2/#comments](https://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2018/vocational-awe/comment-page-2/#comments)
- Figley, C. R. (n.d.). *Compassion Fatigue Awareness Project*. Compassion Fatigue Awareness Project. <http://compassionfatigue.org/>
- Hülshager, U. R., & Schewe, A. F. (2011). On the costs and benefits of emotional labor: A meta-analysis of three decades of research. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 16(3), 361-389 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0022876>
- Maslach, C., & Leiter, M. P. (2008). *The Truth About Burnout: How Organizations Cause Personal Stress and What to Do About It*. John Wiley & Sons.





# References Page 2

- Maslach, C., & Leiter, M. P. (2022). *The burnout challenge: Managing people's relationships with their jobs*. Harvard University Press
- Newman, B. L. (2022). *Fostering wellness in the workplace: A handbook for libraries*. ALA Editions.
- Price, D. (2021). *Laziness does not exist: A defense of the exhausted, exploited, and overworked* (First edition). Atria Books.
- SAMHSA. (2016). *Creating a Healthier Life: A Step-By-Step Guide To Wellness* (p. 22) [Guide]. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.
- World Health Organization. (2019, May 28). Burn-out an “occupational phenomenon”: International Classification of Diseases. *Burn-out an “Occupational Phenomenon”: International Classification of Diseases*.  
<https://www.who.int/news/item/28-05-2019-burn-out-an-occupational-phenomenon-international-classification-of-diseases>
- World Health Organization. (n.d.). *Constitution of the World Health Organization*. World Health Organization.  
<https://www.who.int/about/accountability/governance/constitution>

