



Self-Care for HR Professionals

As an HR professional, you support employees, leaders, and your organization, shaping culture and helping people thrive. But that responsibility can come at a cost.

Self-care is often talked about as an individual's responsibility, but in the workplace, it should be both an individual practice and a shared organizational priority. At its core, self-care plays an important role in preventing burnout, a result of chronic workplace stress that has not been effectively managed. Burnout can impact all areas of life, work, home, and relationships. In the workplace, it is closely linked to drops in productivity, performance, and retention, with **an estimated \$12,000 loss in productivity** for each highly stressed employee per year.¹

On an individual level, prolonged burnout can contribute to serious physical and mental health concerns, including an increased risk for conditions such as anxiety, depression, and substance abuse.

PROFESSIONAL SELF-CARE CAN TAKE SEVERAL FORMS:



INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

Organizations that actively promote emotional well-being with policies and programs that ensure work/life balance, recognize the contributions, emphasize professional development, and implement other support strategies can significantly improve overall well-being.

Conversely, ineffective leadership and rigid, top-down workplace cultures can undermine the strongest self-care efforts. These environments often create anxiety, reduce trust, and discourage employees from speaking up or seeking support.



SUPERVISORY AND MENTORSHIP SUPPORT

Small acts of recognition, appreciation, and encouragement from supervisors and mentors can improve morale and create a sense of value and belonging. These moments not only improve day-to-day experiences but can also provide lasting motivation and resilience during more challenging times.



PEER AND CO-WORKER SUPPORT

Opportunities to connect with colleagues who understand shared challenges can provide validation, insight, and encouragement. Creating space for collaboration and relationship-building, through team interactions, informal conversations, or shared initiatives, helps foster a more supportive and balanced work environment.



INDIVIDUAL AND CREATIVE PRACTICES

Find opportunities for creativity, autonomy, and meaningful contributions in daily tasks. Creativity can also play a role in shaping self-care practices, allowing individuals to tailor approaches that best meet their unique needs.

¹ American Association for Physician Leadership, [Employee Stress Is a Business Risk—Not an HR Problem](#) | AAPL Publication, 2025.

Create a Self-Care Plan

A personal self-care plan helps you manage stress and support your well-being over time. It works best when it's built around what actually restores you.



START BY IDENTIFYING YOUR NEEDS:

- What gives me energy?
- What helps me feel calm?
- Who supports or uplifts me?
- What habits support my sleep, movement, and nutrition?

BUILD SIMPLE AND SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES INTO YOUR ROUTINE:



- Prioritize sleep and regular movement
- Take breaks from devices
- Practice breathing exercises, meditation, or moments of quiet
- Journal or practice gratitude
- Spend time in nature
- Engage in creative outlets
- Stay connected to supportive people or communities

Self-care works best when supported at every level: **individual, relational, and organizational**. When both people and workplaces prioritize it, healthier and more sustainable ways of working become possible for everyone.

For more resources, visit shrm.org/foundation and workplacementalhealth.org.