

LIBRARIAN'S CORNER

SELF-CARE IN THE WORKPLACE – TIPS TO AVOID BURNOUT

Librarians are devoted to their communities and patrons. In addition to front-line duties, librarians also complete mountains of administrative duties such as reporting, coordinating partnerships and committees, cataloguing, weeding, and planning programs. It's essential for librarians to take care of their mental, spiritual, and physical health to ensure they continue being a positive role model in their community.

Here are a few practical tips to ensure the librarian's worklife is balanced and enjoyable:

1. Recognize when you are feeling stressed.

- Signs that you are feeling stressed at work: feeling tired or irritable.
- It's okay to be stressed! Everyone does at some point.
- Once you recognize the signs of being stressed, work towards organizing your space and tasks.
- You may want to start by writing down all the reasons you became a librarian and the best parts about your job. For example, "The best part of my job is helping Elders connect with their grandchildren on social media," or, "The best part of my job is discussing the latest books with patrons," or, "The best part of my job is seeing young people use the library to complete homework."

2. Take the time to organize your space and make a list of outstanding tasks.

- Organizing your workspace can include tidying your desk, filing your paperwork, or giving the room a good sweep.
- Organizing your tasks into a list will help you prioritize what needs to be completed first. Your task list columns may differ from the example below:

Patron Requests	Administrative Tasks	Collection Management/Library Maintenance	Programming Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Order book for Patron A.• Print Patron B's resume.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete quarterly report for Manager and submit by November 1st.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Catalogue new shipment of books.• Dust behind public computers.• Move bookshelf to study area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plan for FNPLW and send notice in flyer.• Select homework help hours.



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3. Ask for help.

- Once you have your list ready and your immediate workspace is tidy, you may notice some tasks require more than one person (like moving that big bookshelf).
- Don't be afraid to reach out to your community for help.
- Thank volunteers by acknowledging them on social media or in the next community flyer.

4. Take time for health breaks (walking or stretching) or stepping outside for fresh air.

- Now that your workspace is tidy and your lists have been made, it's time to work on yourself!
- Remind yourself to maintain good posture at your desk. Sitting with a straight back, and ensuring your computer monitor is at eye-level will help with concentration.
- Breathing in through your nose and exhaling out of your mouth allows your blood to circulate and relieves stress.
- Take breaks away from your desk. Walk around, stretch your legs and arms, or go outside to take a breath of fresh air.
- Drink lots of water! Staying hydrated is so important. Keep healthy snacks nearby to keep your brain fed throughout the day.

5. Talk to your library peers.

- Taking 30-minutes each month to chat with a library peer can boost morale. Your fellow library peers understand your situation and may offer some great advice and encouragement.

