

DROSTE

Stressbusters To Help Leaders Avoid Burnout.

Does this sound like you or someone you work with?

- I'm disciplined. I start work shortly after the morning coffee brews, stay at my desk all day, and respond to emails late into the evening.
- My company expects me to be always on and available. If I cut back, I'll be passed over or not seen as a team player.
- I wish I could take a real vacation, but I can't imagine not checking in with my team at least once or twice a day while I'm with my family.

You don't need an official employee well-being program at work to get some balance back in your workday. Here are some simple strategies that can give you some breathing room and a more manageable flow to your workweek.

1. **Reframe "self-care" as an investment that can create better leaders** - Banish the notion of self-care as a frivolous indulgence. A healthy diet, exercise, sleep, and emotional regulation are musts for every person. A good leader models attention to all those areas.
2. **Set boundaries** – Commit to regular start and end times for your workday to prevent overflow into your personal time. Also, schedule regular breaks in your day (which have been proven to increase your analytical and creative abilities) rather than going from meeting to meeting without a block of time to regroup. And speaking of meetings, try reducing 60-minute meetings to 45 minutes. Most attendees will thank you.
3. **Focus on one task at a time** – Behavioral economist Caroline Webb notes, "When we think we're multitasking, we typically make between two and four times as many errors, even when we think we are quite effectively juggling more than one task." Instead, turn off your phone and computer notifications and work on one task at a time for 20-30 minutes.
4. **Decide what types of self-care work for you** – Breathing exercises, an afternoon walk around the block, and reading before bed may become your dedicated habits. Someone else may prefer meditation, writing in a journal, or doing the daily crossword puzzle. Do what works for you. Examples include:
 - Getting more physical activity. (Take the stairs or park farther from the door.)
 - Following a healthy diet. (More plants, less sugar.)
 - Practicing deep breathing. (Try [4-7-8 breathing](#) or [box breathing](#).)

- Limiting screen time. (Try to create windows in your day where you don't check screens, like in the car or standing in line.)
- Spending time with friends and family or a pet. (The most important souls in your life need priority time.)
- Practicing mindfulness or meditation. (Try an [app](#), or simply set a timer to focus on your breath.)
- Spending time in nature. (A neighborhood stroll and a forest hike both count as nature.)

5. **Make time for it** – Don't just think about taking time for stress relievers; schedule them. It may take some experimentation to see what sticks as a habit but blocking even two 10-minute slots on your calendar every day will allow you to pilot a couple of healthy behaviors.

The bottom line is knowing yourself and managing your needs. Healthy leaders are disciplined and self-aware. When your team sees you prioritize your own self-care, you will empower them to do the same.

Droste specializes in [leadership coaching](#) to help you navigate stress, build resilience, and be more strategic about how you spend your time. [Contact us](#) to explore how we can help you become a healthier leader and create a better workplace.