

Therapist Self-Care

I've been a therapist for 10 years. I'm grateful I stayed busy this past year, but I'm experiencing intense burnout and fatigue. I have tools to stay balanced but have felt too drained to do anything but show up for my virtual sessions. I've considered cutting back the number of people I support, but many of them are in extremely difficult situations, and I just can't abandon them. I'm really struggling and could use some ideas and insight.

As you are likely aware, your effectiveness with those you serve wanes when you are depleted. Making difficult choices, such as releasing some clients or taking time off, may be exactly what is called for.

What originally inspired you to become a therapist? What drives you now? Has it changed? Listen closely to that inner, higher-self wisdom as you invite it to guide you. You may be surprised by what you come to understand and see differently.

Mental health professionals can find it extremely taxing to witness the intensified suffering of others, especially when your healthy, protective reserves run low. And as I am sure you know firsthand, this past year has pushed people's coping skills to a whole new edge. Burnout is certainly understandable due to the prolonged and acute emotional demands. And if you are mostly running on a sense of obligation (fear of letting down or abandoning others), the rejuvenating energy your soul and body need cannot reach and replenish you.

Fatigue indicates the need not only for rest but also for renewed physical activity. I strongly recommend taking at least a week or two off. Sleep, take baths, read, stretch, do yoga and walk outside. You can trust that by caring for yourself, you will gain a renewed ability to care for and inspire others.

I'm sure you are beloved and appreciated and, yes, perhaps even *needed* by your clients. But ultimately you are a guide and helper, not a savior. And those who continue to be served by you will understand and benefit from your decision to recalibrate. I am joining you in deep breaths of gratitude. Be well. ✨



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