

Techniques for reducing stress

CIRES Access and Cultural Innovation (ACI) Program
WorkWell, Health and Wellness Services, CU Boulder

Becca Edwards
CIRES ACI Director

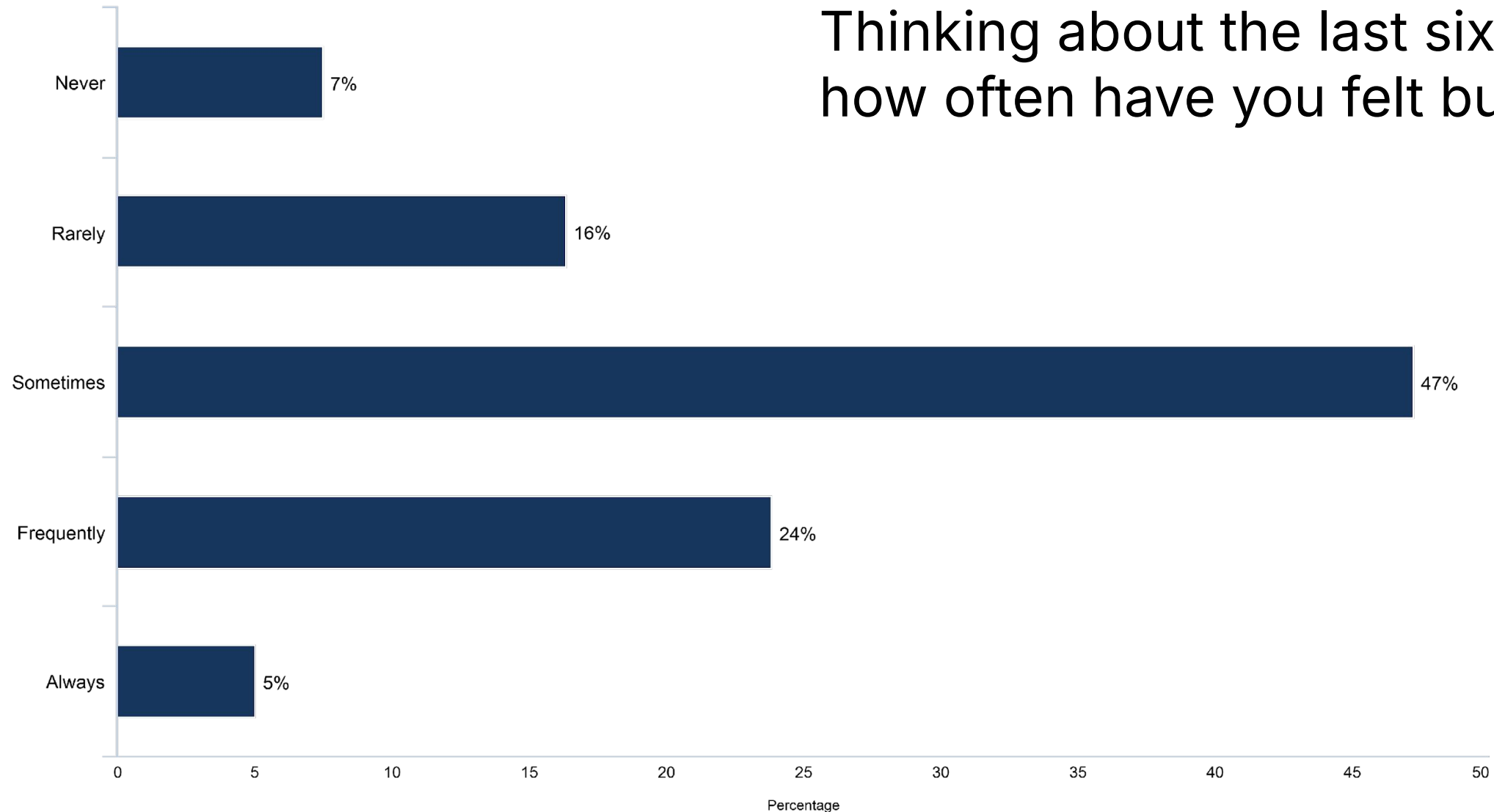
Jess Morris
WorkWell Program Director



University of Colorado **Boulder**



Data from 2023 CIRES Engagement Survey

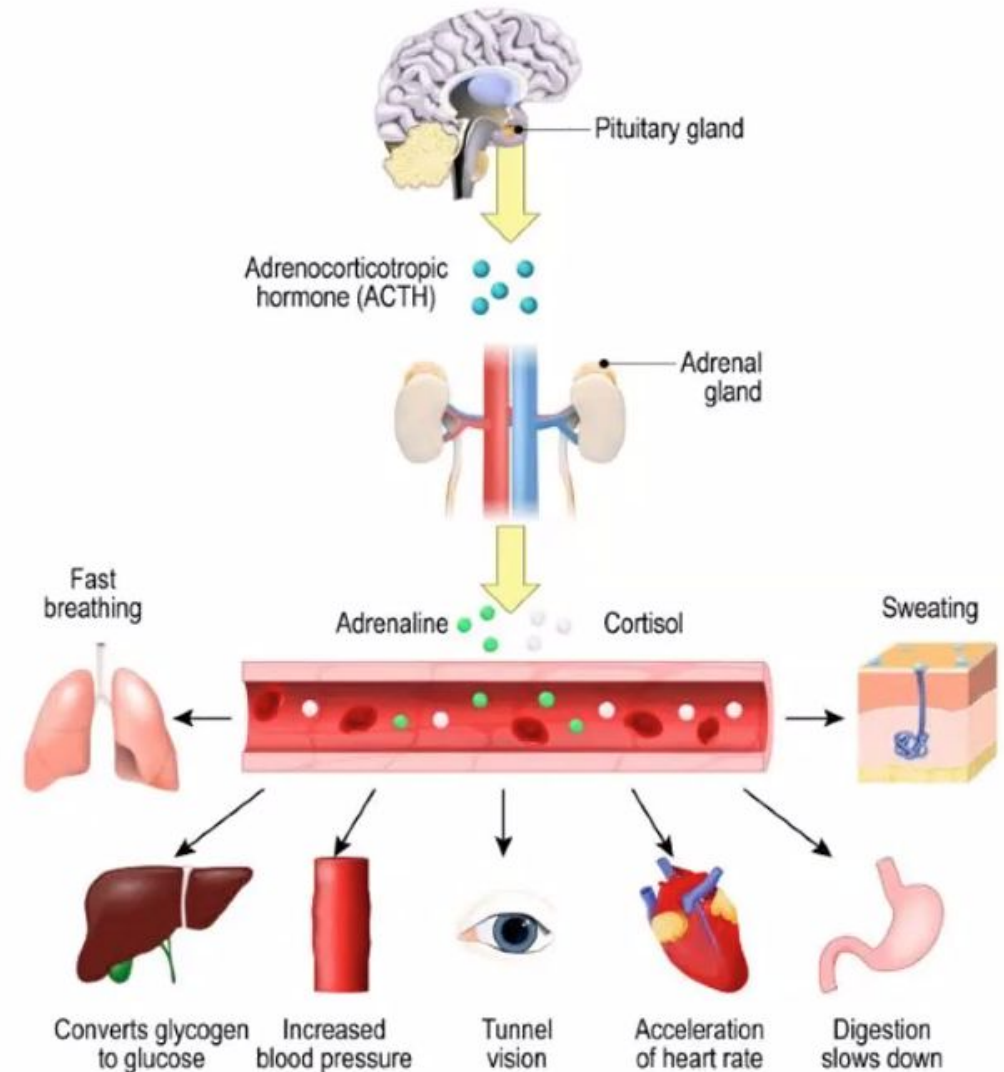


CIRES employee ideas about what causes burnout

- ★ lack of boundaries
- ★ overtasked
- ★ lack of resources
- ★ stressed about not achieving goals
- ★ too many commitments at work and home
- ★ lack of recognition/lack of feeling seen; feeling undervalued or unseen
- ★ too much to do
- ★ constantly having to re-adjust the plan
- ★ too much context switching between projects
- ★ things happening in the world that cause us to feel unmotivated
- ★ mental thrashing (switching from meetings, to work, to something else), too much
- ★ work falling apart and still being expected to show up as "fine"
- ★ frequent disruptions or too many meetings making it difficult to complete tasks

STRESS RESPONSE

Issues
related to an
increase of
adrenaline
and cortisol

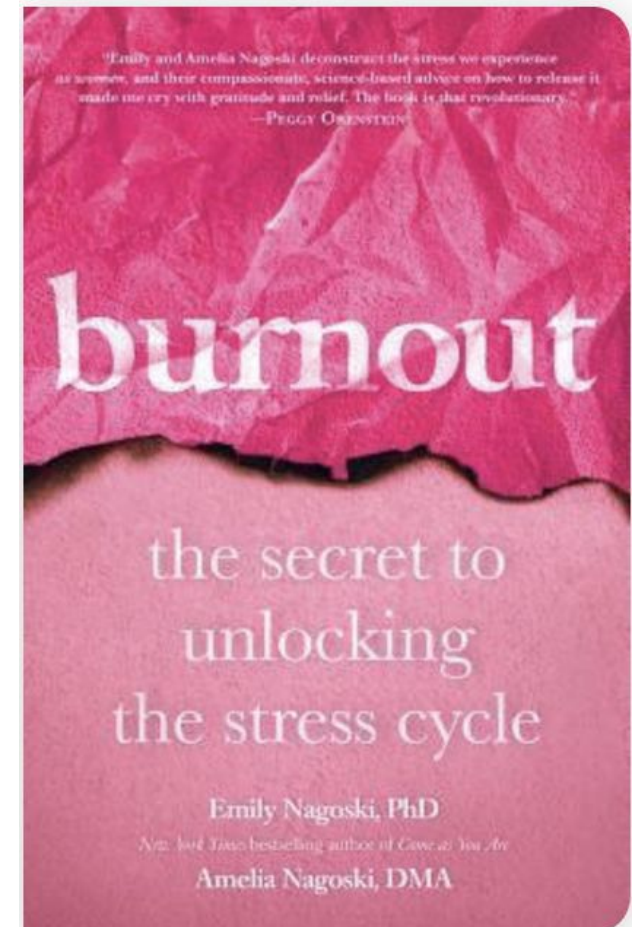


Unlocking the stress cycle



**Emily Nagoski and
Amelia Nagoski**

- ★ We are emotional beings that occasionally think. Emotions have a beginning, middle and end.
- ★ Emotions are tunnels; if you go all the way through them, you get to the light at the other end.
- ★ Exhaustion happens when we get stuck in an emotion.
- ★ We may get stuck because of what we are exposed to everyday, or we can't find our way through.



[Podcast](#)

WorkWell



Health and Wellness Services

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

STRESS LESS



WorkWell coordinates and promotes programs and services within Health and Wellness while collaborating with partners across campus to build and sustain an environment that supports the well-being of CU employees and the campus community.



CU Boulder is a nationally recognized Healthy Workplace!



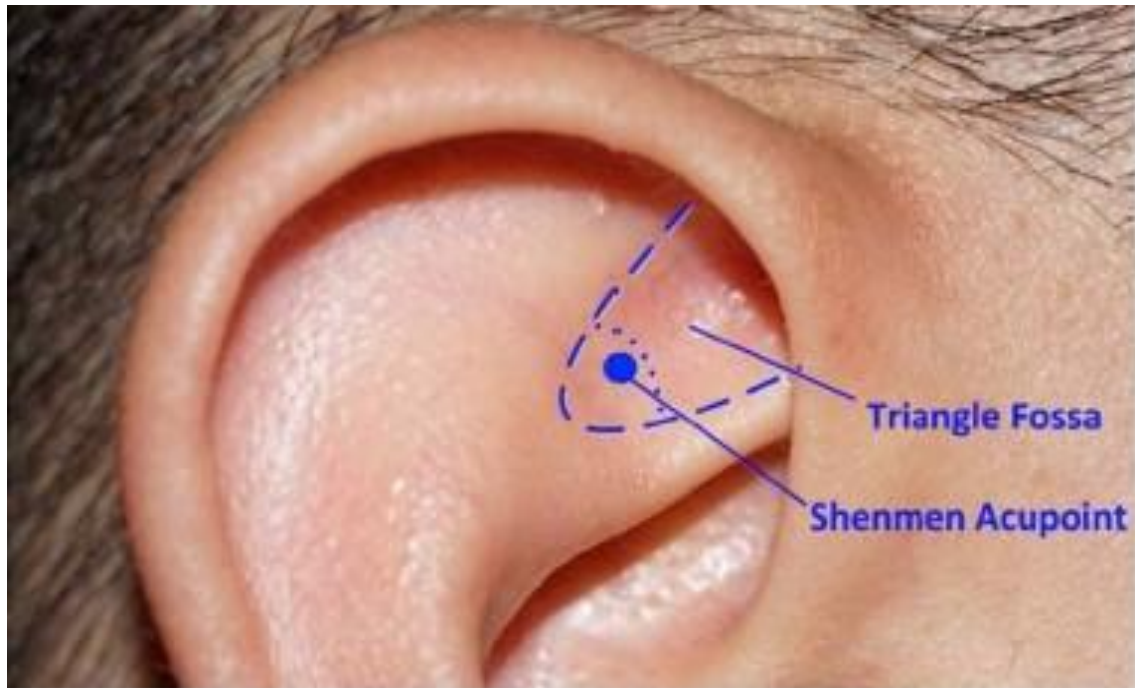
Why "*Stress Less*"?

- Calm your nervous system when different situations arise throughout your day – regardless of where you are
- Tangible tools and practices that are accessible and easy to build on
- Highlight our campus programs and research

- NADA Protocol: Uses 5 pressure points around the ear to reset the nervous system
- Nationally recognized treatment for stress, anxiety, addiction, PTSD, and trauma
- Helps relieve "energy blocks" and reduce agitation
- One research study from the NIH showed reduced postoperative pain, reduced HRV, and improved neurorehabilitation
- Participants here at CU have reported improved sleep and mental clarity, reduced stress and improved emotional well-being



How to Place Ear Seeds



Before...

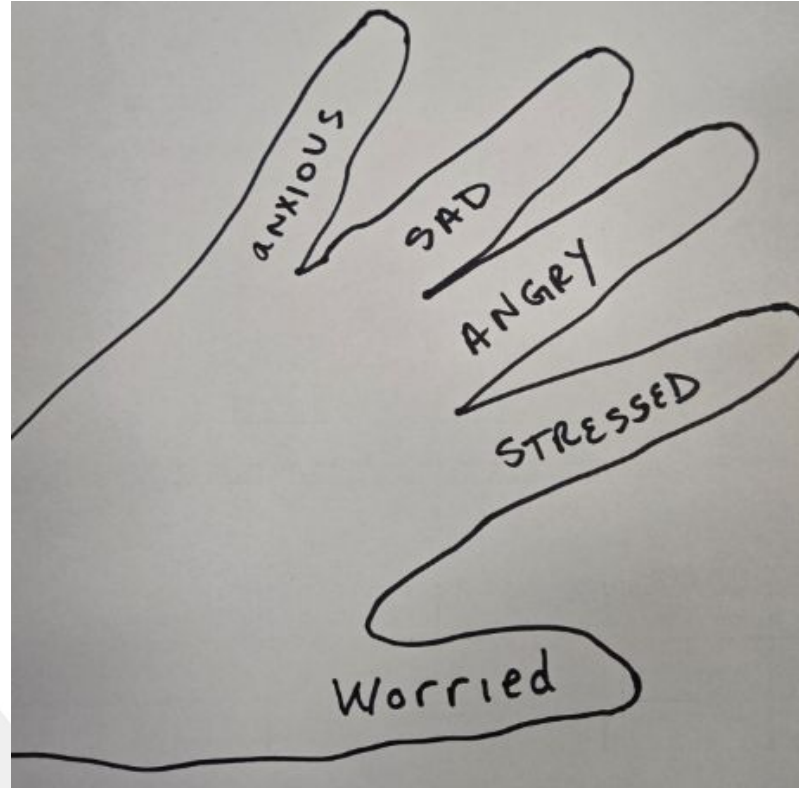


After!

Finger Holds by emotion

Pinky: Anxiety / anxious state of mind, over-exertion, boost creativity

Ring: Sadness, loneliness, breathing difficulty, bowel elimination, grieving state of mind



Middle: Anger / angry state of mind, frustration, irritation, eye strain, goal-directedness

Index: Fear, apprehension, stress, achy joints, increase energy

Thumb: Stomachache / digestion, worry, or for increasing trust or centering

<https://iteaplus.com/fingers/>



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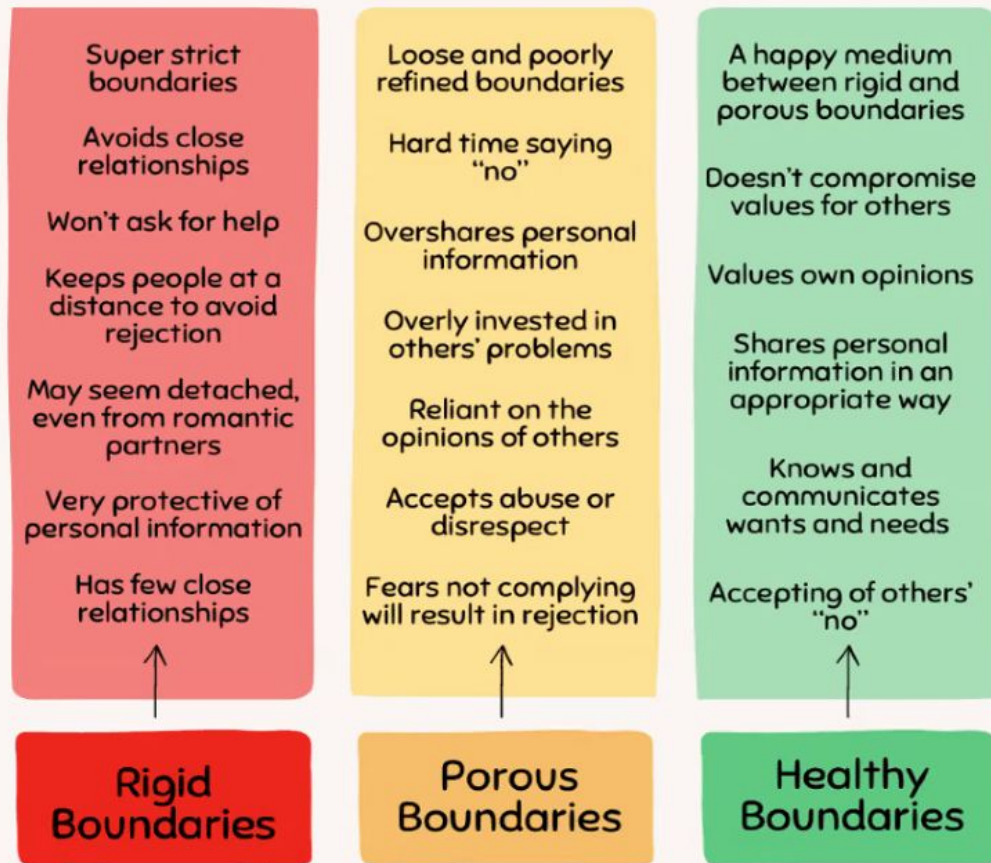
Boundary setting for work/life balance

Becca Edwards, CIRES ACI Director

Setting healthy boundaries

UNHEALTHY BOUNDARIES VS. HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

@anxietygone



How can we work on reducing stress and still support our team?

Boundaries can help us take care of ourselves, so that we can then take care of others.

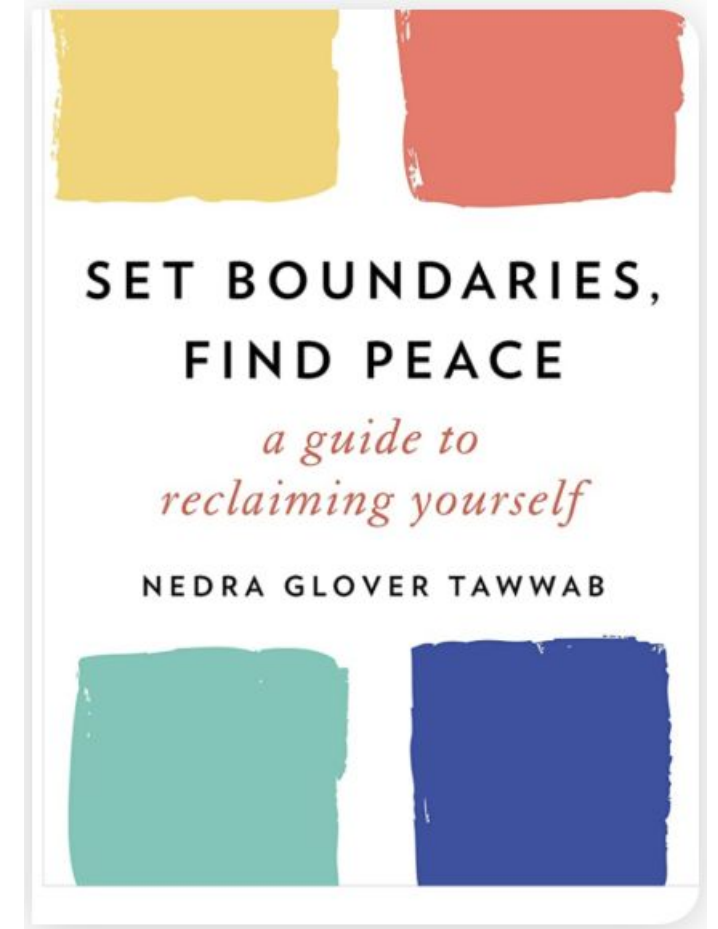
How do you set boundaries with your colleagues, your supervisor, your family and your friends?

Setting boundaries, finding peace



Nedra Tawwab

- ★ They are a safeguard to overextending yourself
- ★ They are a self-care practice
- ★ They define roles in relationships
- ★ They communicate acceptable and unacceptable behaviors in relationships
- ★ They are a way to communicate your needs to others



CIRES employee ideas about healthy boundaries

- ★ Stopping at the time I say I'm going to stop even if not all the tasks are done
- ★ Blocking time in my calendar for work and leave
- ★ No work email in the evening or on weekends
- ★ Requesting no early am meetings on school late start day (asked at the recent Town Hall)
- ★ Not working on evenings and weekends, unless deadlines are looming
- ★ No teams app on my phone
- ★ Asking teams not to schedule meetings at every lunch break because that is the last space that we have
- ★ Having a day of the work with no meetings
- ★ I'm blocked off between 5 and 8pm except for emergencies, so I can focus on my family, dinner and kids.
I can get back to people after 8pm.
- ★ No phone usage on Sunday, unless there is an emergency.
- ★ Set my cell phone to NOT notify me of work emails.

Community care

"Self-care and community-care are very much linked," Oriowo says. "There is only so far self-care can go without a community around you to help support you in the moments when you may not be at your best. True self-care does not look like the hyper-individualism we have been taught."

<https://www.livestrong.com/article/13771535-self-care-vs-community-care/>

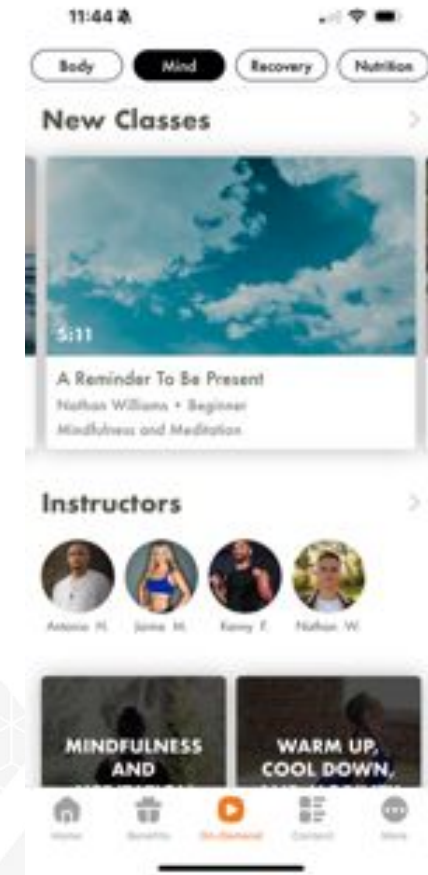
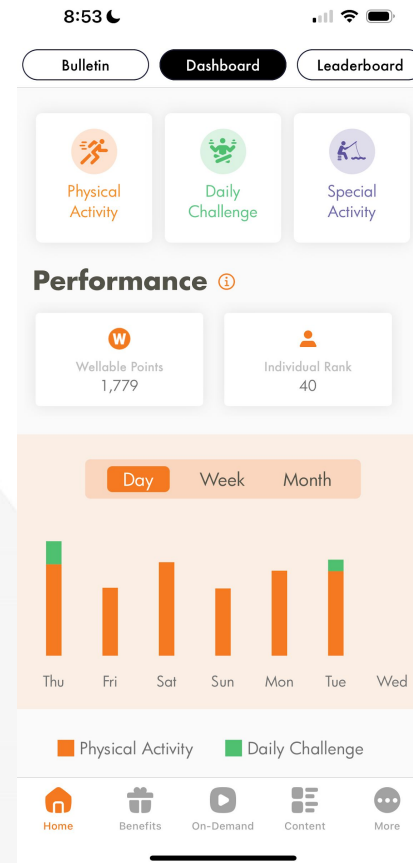
Some ideas from CIRES employees

- ★ Training teammates to take over tasks for when we are out/take leave
- ★ Setting meetings to 50 min instead of one hour to allow time in between
- ★ Deepening days to focus on a topic without email/chat/meetings... or creating a day per week without meetings
- ★ Using send later to honor people's working hours and/or putting work hours into email signatures with the understand not everyone's will align
- ★ Asking your teams/coworkers when they have stress times (late start for example) and having shared calendars so that you don't have to ask each time
- ★ System of sharing with the team work house and vacation times to allow better response of work/life balance

More Ways to Stress Less: Join Wellable!



Scan above or visit
<https://cuboulder.wellable.co/>
to claim your account



Are you feeling ready to WorkWell?

- [Click here](#) or scan this QR code to answer 3 quick questions about WorkWell
- [Join the WorkWell Teams channel](#)
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