5 ways to fight burnout at work
Lean In Circle Discussion Guide for All Women
# 5 ways to fight burnout at work

##Lean In Circle Discussion Guide for All Women

##Meeting agenda approx 90 mins

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<td><strong>Watch video</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Icebreaker</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
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<td>• Activity 1: Strategize how to cope with burnout</td>
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<td>• Activity 2: Honestly assess your workload</td>
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<td><strong>One Action</strong></td>
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##For Circles with only 60 mins, here are suggestions to shorten this agenda:

- Encourage members to watch the video in advance
- Spend 5 mins on member updates
- Spend 15 mins on activity 1 and activity 2
Member updates

2 mins or less per member  15-20 mins depending on group size

Go around your Circle and share personal updates. Generally, personal updates should be brief and focus on significant changes and important decisions in your life. (It’s okay not to have one every month!) If you have a One Action update, share that with your Circle.

Watch video  9 mins

Icebreaker  15 mins

As we learned in the video, while many women experience burnout at some point in their careers, the symptoms can be hard to differentiate from everyday stress. Pick a volunteer to read through the following list and raise your hand if you’ve experienced any of the following:

- Feeling like you’re constantly stressed at work
- Feeling cynical about your job
- Feeling irritated with your coworkers
- Unexplained physical symptoms, like headaches, stomach problems, or trouble sleeping

After reading through the list, take 10 minutes to discuss how these experiences may have been related to your work environment.
Activity 1: Strategize how to cope with burnout  

20 mins

Burnout is a common experience for many women in the workplace, so having effective strategies to prevent and address burnout is essential. Take 5 minutes to reflect on your own experiences with burnout. Think about the most effective techniques that helped you cope and recover.

After reflecting, go around your Circle and share your best strategies with the group.

Even if burnout is not something you have experienced, understanding what strategies are effective for maintaining or improving your well-being can help you prepare for difficult moments in the workplace. If you have yet to experience burnout, consider what aspects of your daily routine are essential to helping you thrive and succeed at work. Discuss some of those maintenance strategies with the group during the sharing session.

“To overcome burnout, I've been reading articles and books, talking to my Lean In peer leaders, and talking to my Circle members. I discovered many of us are going through burnout or are close to burnout. Being able to say no is a very powerful tool. I've reduced my social commitments to only those that nurture me and provide me with a good and empowering environment. By getting rid of the things that drain me, I've been able to have more energy for myself, my projects, and my professional career.”

Clari Bravo García, entrepreneur, energy industry, Lean In Network Leader, Mexico (she/her)
Activity 2: Honestly assess your workload  

Write it down (10 minutes):

One major cause of burnout is having an unmanageable workload. For the next 10 minutes, make a list of all of your current roles and responsibilities. Once you have your list, identify some places to scale back. Are there tasks on your list that you can reassign to someone else? Are there arbitrary deadlines looming that you can push forward?

Finally, if you have a manager, consider how you can strategically discuss your workload with them to prevent burnout. Whenever your workload increases, ask your manager to prioritize the new work against everything else you are managing. If they resist your request to prioritize the new workstream, remind them of all your other projects and any relevant deadlines.

Discuss as a group (10 minutes):

Once you have identified the areas where you can scale back your workload, go around your Circle and share the areas where you think reducing your workload will make a difference.

“It’s very difficult for me to ask for help or support because I believe I have to have this big old chip on my shoulder to prove that I deserve this position, and it was leading up to a lot of burnout. What helped me to overcome some of that was a lot of introspection. I got a coach and a therapist, and that helped me get out of that space.”

Filsun Moussa, senior manager, regulatory affairs, Lean In Network Leader, Tennessee, USA (she/her)
Take a look at your list from both activities this week and commit to either:

- one daily practice from Activity 1 that will help you cope with feelings of burnout or
- one action from Activity 2 that will help you manage your workload

“I feel like sometimes we think about taking care of ourselves when it's too late, and preventing burnout is a routine habitual exercise we should be doing all the time.”

Sarah Lands Ramrup, senior lead, consumer goods industry, Missouri, USA (she/her)

Congratulations on a great meeting!
Notes