

Navigating Burnout & Incorporating Self Care



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Dietitians & nutrition students are often jokingly referred to as over-achievers.

However, this "I can do it all" mindset and passion for the work can lead to long hours, heavy workloads, and immense pressure to excel. This can make RDs and RD2BEs ripe for burnout, which can be defined as exhaustion of physical or emotional strength or motivation usually as a result of prolonged stress or frustration.

Other factors impacting burnout: Added Pressure

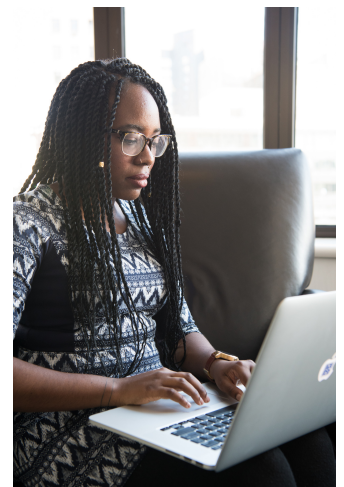
Being the only person of color, or POC, is a situation that you may find yourself in more often than you like. For some, this may be an additional stressor in your work and/or school environment.

You may feel that over achieving is a must because you have to work twice as hard, go above and beyond, or fight for respect and recognition at school and/or work. How exhausting!

In response, we may try to shift our mindset to focus on productivity, or accept failures as a learning experience or muster up enough strength to get through the day, but sometimes it's not enough. So then what?

Potential Effects of Burnout

- Fatigue, Insomnia, Excessive stress
- Lacking motivation (to attend classes, complete work projects, start assignments)
- Anger, frustration, or irritability
- Lacking inspiration and creativity to bring to projects and discussions
- Loss of confidence in abilities
- Incapability to meet important deadlines
- Increased pain and tension in your body, which can be manifested as headaches, sore muscle aches, or jaw tension
- Higher frequency of illness due to stress and exhaustion
- Inability to concentrate
- Feeling bored or uninterested in aspects of work or school or areas of leisure that you used to enjoy
- Feelings of anxiety or depression



Any of this sounding familiar?

Let's Talk About It



In your mentor/mentee pairs, discuss:

- Have you been impacted by burnout? If so, how did it manifest? How did you deal with it?
- Discuss a time when you felt supported while pursuing a personal or professional goal. What did that positive support look like?
- Some studies have shown that students of color report feeling less supported in pursuing a career in dietetics. What are things that people in your school/work/life can do to support you in reaching your goals?
- If comfortable sharing, how do you feel in situations when you are the only POC in the room?
- Tackling Burnout as a Leader - If you're in a leadership role or a position of power consider, what are ways you can create an environment that helps to limit burnout or bring about system level changes that limit burnout?



From the Diversify Dietetics Community:

WAYS TO HONOR YOURSELF DURING TIMES OF HIGH STRESS

- ✿ cook yourself a meal
- ✿ take a shower
- ✿ get adequate rest
- ✿ pause to eat
- ✿ clock out of social media
- ✿ move around
- ✿ stay hydrated, drink water

@nomorechichos

Courtesy of @nomorechichos
a.k.a. Zariel & Jenies Grullon

Support and self care are 2 key ways to combat burnout. If you are starting to feel burned out:

- **Lean on a mentor.** Find someone who can relate and support you.
- **Avoid negative self talk.** Speak your worth. Be proud. Acknowledge your strengths and walk in them.
- **Find ways to escape.** Take a break. Take a walk. Listen to music.
- **Build a support system.** Find people and safe spaces to
- In you mentor/mentee pairs, brainstorm ideas or other things you have utilized for self care.

