



# 9 TIPS FOR TEACHER SELF-CARE

By Jenny Vanderberg Shannon

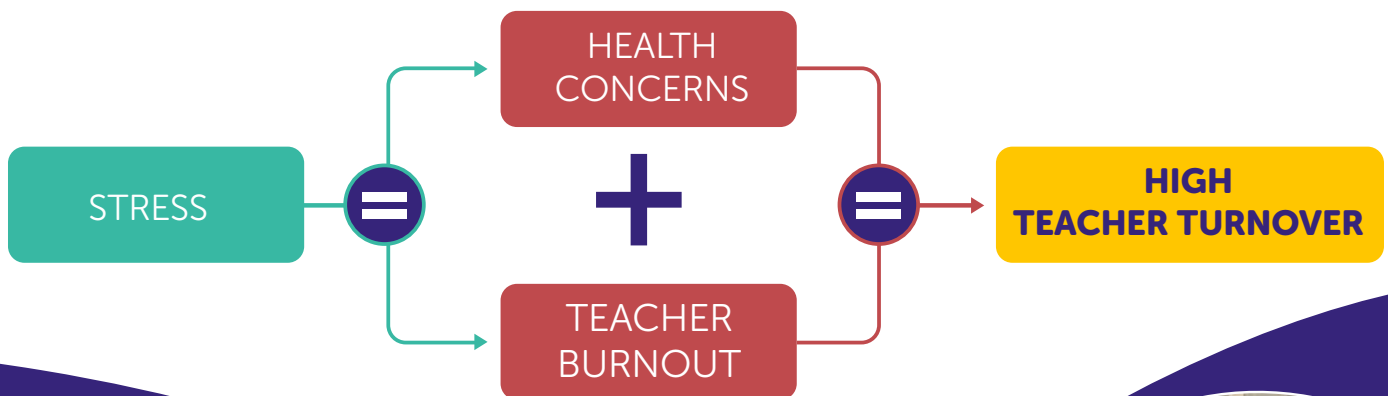
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# TRIGGERS & AWARENESS

Spending the day in the classroom can be stressful enough, whether managing challenging behavior, lacking resources, or balancing endless priorities all at once. But it doesn't stay there when you close the door behind you; teachers take their stress home with them. Stress (when left unchecked) can lead to health concerns and teacher burnout and ultimately result in high teacher turnover.

**New research** has found that teachers and principals reported experiencing job-related stress twice as much as the general population of working adults in 2022. They were also more likely to report experiencing symptoms of depression and struggling to cope with job-related stress.

While self-care sounds like a buzzword, practicing coping mechanisms and self-care strategies is the key to avoiding teacher burnout and managing stress, leading to positive outcomes for teachers and their students.



# 9 TEACHER SELF-CARE TIPS:

Practical ideas to help improve teacher well-being and reduce work-related stress.

## #1 HIGHLIGHT DEADLINES

Limit the stress associated with deadlines by carefully planning your time and tasks. Write deadlines in your planner two or three days in advance, so you don't leave tasks to the last minute. This [Time Management Workbook](#) might be helpful to streamline your responsibilities.

## #2 PLAN AHEAD

Easier said than done, but organize yourself ahead of the day or week. What clothes you'll wear, what lunches you'll pack, and are there holidays you'll need to make time for? Print resources in advance and arrange them for easy access. Get any PowerPoints opened at the start of the day. Check whether homework needs collecting. A [good planner](#) is handy for peak organization. Anything you can do in advance is a gift to your future self.

## #3 SET BOUNDARIES

Your time is valuable; thus, it requires boundaries. Set your boundaries and clearly communicate them to those who need to be aware of them. There are many potential applications for this, from deciding how long you'll spend creating a resource to how long/what days you'll spend working outside school hours. Be resolute; when the time is up, the time is up! [Writing it down](#) makes it even more final.

## #4 OPEN DIALOGUE

Often, teachers are asked to do things that have little relevance or impact on their students. You are the expert in your classroom. Question whether tasks you've been asked to do will benefit either your students (or students within your school) directly or indirectly; if not, ask for alternatives. Sometimes all it takes is for one teacher to open the dialogue for things to change. Use a [journal](#) to document the requests and the progress you've made.

#5

## JUST SAY NO

As hard as it may be, sometimes we have to say no! As much as we want to, we can't do everything and shouldn't be expected to. Our "no's" often mean we can be more present for our "yes's". It also helps cultivate healthier expectations. Use some of these **affirmations** to remind yourself why saying "no" is important for your well-being.

#6

## KNOW YOUR LIMITS

Do you require 8 hours of sleep to function properly? Are you sharper and more alert in the morning or late at night? Do you need to eat every few hours to manage your emotions? Do you need to **write your feelings out** to process them well? Know your limits and plan accordingly. You will be better for it – and because of that, so will your students and colleagues.

#7

## PRIORITIZE COMMUNITY

We need each other. It's good and necessary to talk, share and take a break with others facing similar circumstances and scenarios. **Plan ahead** so you can schedule once a week, fortnight, monthly or termly, and arrange to share lunch with colleagues. You can even organize a potluck where each person brings a dish to share. Connecting over food is a way to cultivate a positive culture and climate.

#8

## CULTIVATE QUIET SPACES

Teaching can become stressful, and, at times, we need a bit of space. If possible, create space in the school for teachers to step away from everything if they need to and take time to relax; it could even be in the back of a classroom or the faculty room. Provide books, music, and somewhere comfortable full of **affirmations and peaceful artwork** when staff need time to zone out from the world.

#9

## PRACTICE MINDFULNESS

Perhaps a lesson didn't turn out how you'd hoped, you had an awkward interaction with administration, or student behavior has affected your anxiety levels. **The practice of mindfulness** is a way to use body awareness, breathing and relaxation to reset your mindset and carry on with your day.

If you're still unsure about how to nurture healthy habits when balancing work and personal life, try **The Complete Guide to Healthy Habits For Teachers' Self-Care** – our guide will take you through the what, why, and how of physical, professional, emotional, and social self-care.

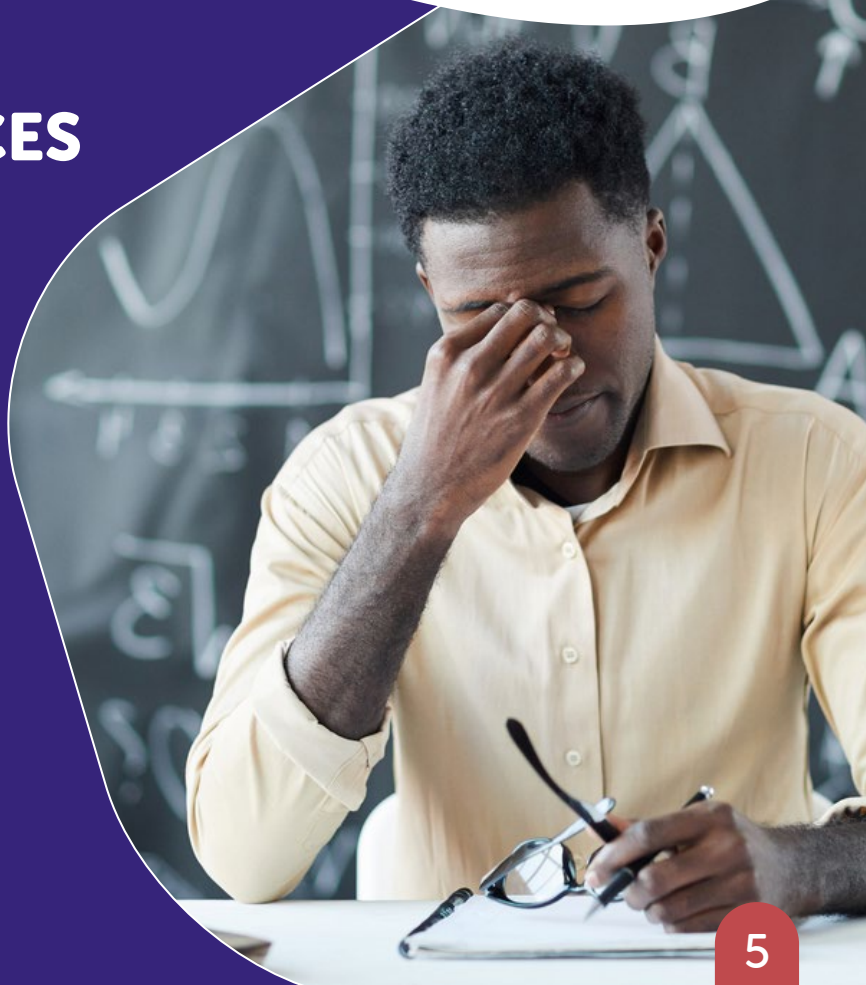
*When we **consistently** plan ahead (what we're going to eat for the week, blocking out some "me" time, moving our bodies, and prioritizing getting enough quality sleep), we experience the transformative effects of our new healthier habits. We notice renewed energy, a more positive mindset, and improved work-life balance*

– NICOLA VON BRATT  
**The Healthy Habits Coach**

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OUR EBOOK WRITER...**



## **JENNY VANDERBERG SHANNON**

Jenny Vanderberg Shannon is a former education professional with ten+ years of classroom and leadership experience, with a B.A. in English and an M.A. in Educational Leadership. She has a demonstrated history in content and curriculum development.



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