

MENTAL HEALTH - IT'S IMPORTANT FOR US ALL

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[@AutomateMyStuff](https://twitter.com/AutomateMyStuff)



**Ingham Intermediate
School District**

A Regional Educational Service Agency

INTRODUCTION

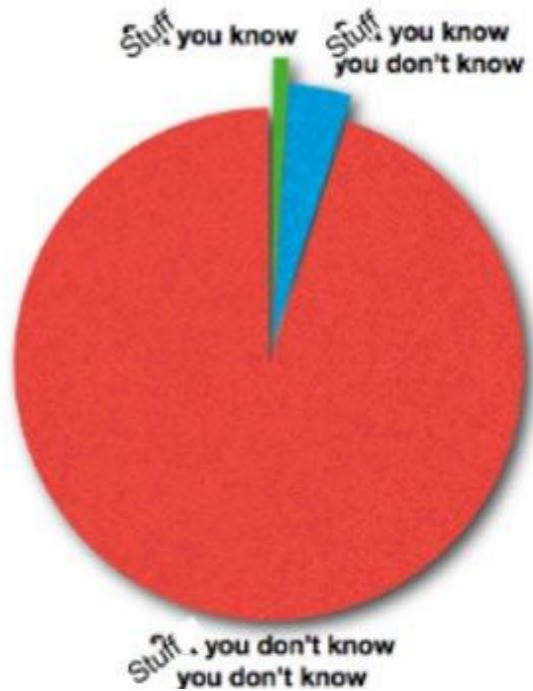
DISCLAIMER: I AM NOT A DOCTOR OR THERAPIST - JUST A HUMAN BEING VULNERABLE TO HELP OTHER HUMANS

- 27-ISH YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN K-12 TECH
 - Junior/Senior year as an Intern for Huron Valley Schools
 - 7-ish years as a Computer Repair Technician for Bloomfield Hills Schools
 - 8-ish years as a Technical Systems Coordinator for Bloomfield Hills Schools
 - 9-ish years as a Desktop Engineer for Ingham ISD
 - Few months as an Endpoint and Cloud Systems Architect for Ingham ISD
- MAEDS BOARD MEMBER AND FREQUENT PRESENTER SINCE 2014
- MISCUG BOARD PRESIDENT AND ORGANIZER
- MMSMOA PAST PRESENTER

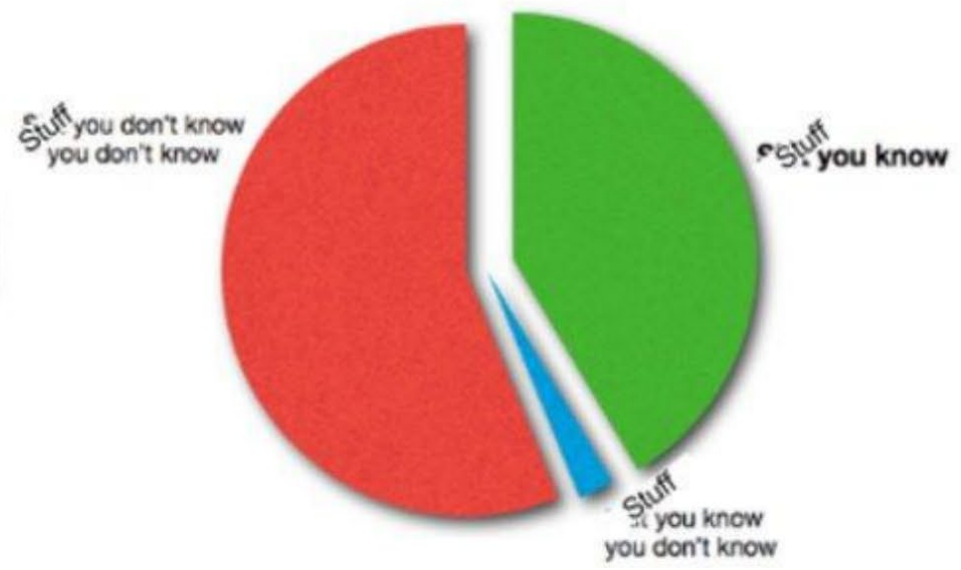


IMPOSTER SYNDROME

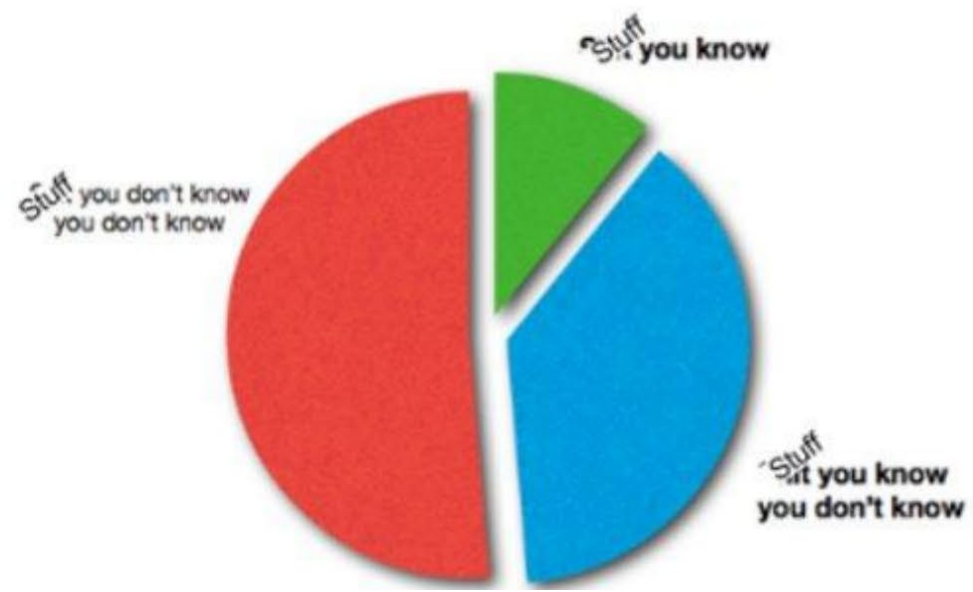
<https://www.bridge-global.com/blog/3-types-of-knowledge/>



*The goal of education and experience
(as they would lead you to believe)*



The actual goal of education and experience



SLIPPERY SLOPE

Pre-COVID and Blissfully Ignorant



Post-COVID and Burntout with Lack of Self Care



BURNOUT - MAJOR SIGNS

[HTTPS://WWW.PLURALSIGHT.COM/RESOURCES/BLOG/CLOUD/TECH-IT-WORKER-BURNOUT](https://www.pluralsight.com/resources/blog/cloud/tech-it-worker-burnout)

• EXTREME CYNICISM

- Detachment
- Constant frustration
- Loss of meaning
- Feeling disillusioned
- Being snarky
- A lack of enjoyment in work
- Dehumanizing colleagues (e.g. "X deserves it.")

• CHRONIC EXHAUSTION

- No motivation
- Feeling a need to 'soldier on'
- Inability to concentrate
- Fear of taking time off to recharge
- Overwhelming relief for the weekend
- No energy to be constantly productive

• NEGATIVE SELF-EVALUATION

- Feeling inadequate in your role
- Thinking catastrophic thoughts
- The work feels chaotic and high pressured
- Feeling like you're doing far too much for too many people
- A sense of your efforts not making a difference

12 SIGNS YOUR ~~TECH~~ EMPLOYEES ARE BURNT OUT

[HTTPS://WWW.PLURALSIGHT.COM/RESOURCES/BLOG/CLOUD/TECH-IT-WORKER-BURNOUT](https://www.pluralsight.com/resources/blog/cloud/tech-it-worker-burnout)



INCREASED ON-THE-JOB
ACCIDENTS



MORE TURNOVER
THAN NORMAL



LOWER QUALITY
WORK



HIGHER RATES
OF THEFT



UPTICK IN SICK DAYS
(ABSENTEEISM)



MONOPOLIZING OF
MANAGER'S TIME



DECREASED
PRODUCTIVITY



POOR CUSTOMER
SERVICE



PROJECTS FALL
BEHIND SCHEDULE



NEGATIVITY SPREADS
THROUGHOUT TEAM



LACK OF
PARTICIPATION

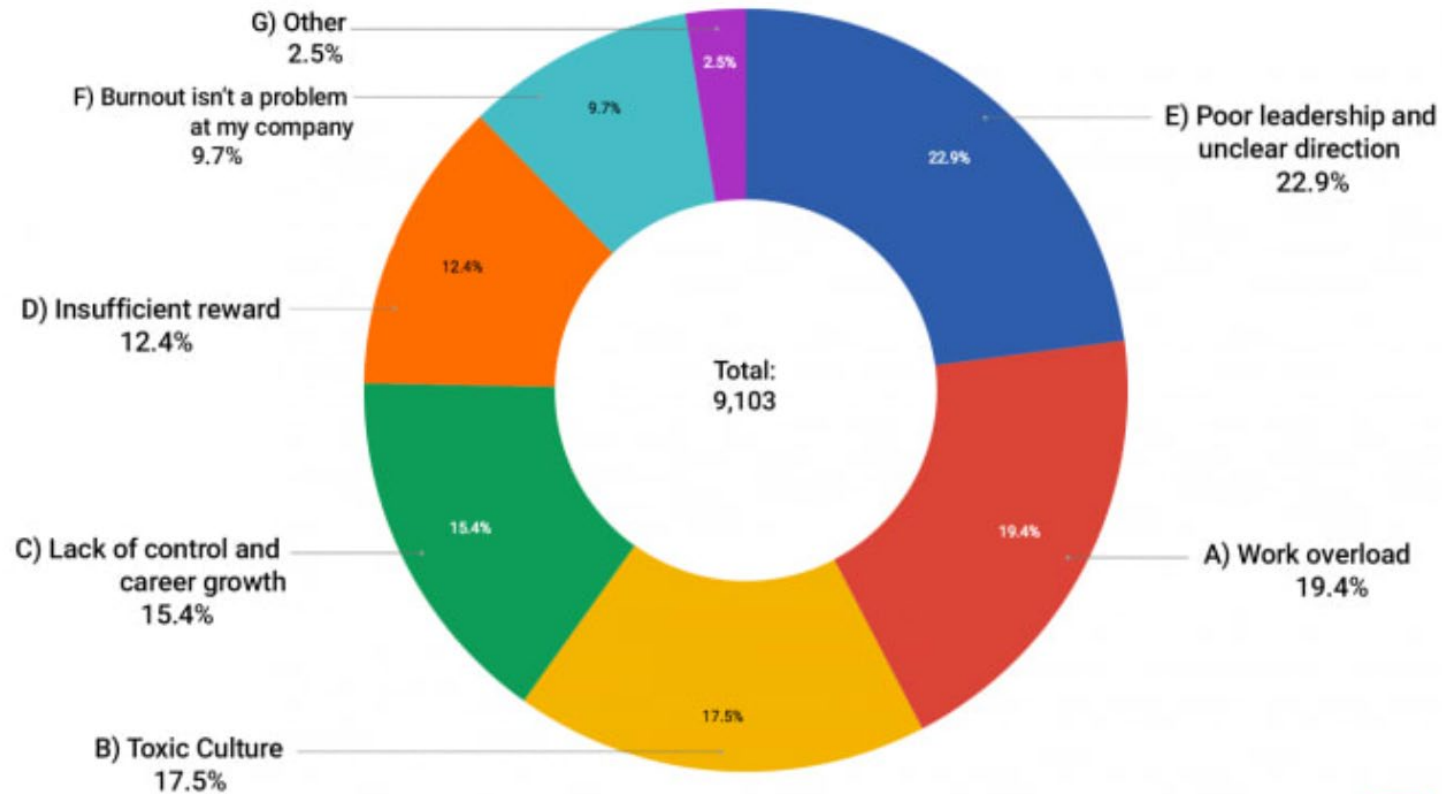


SMALL TALK
DISAPPEARS

SOURCES OF EMPLOYEE BURNOUT

[HTTPS://WWW.PLURALSIGHT.COM/RESOURCES/BLOG/CLOUD/TECH-IT-WORKER-BURNOUT](https://www.pluralsight.com/resources/blog/cloud/tech-it-worker-burnout)

What is the main source of employee burnout at your current workplace?



Data: TeamBlind.com



METHODS TO PREVENT BURNOUT

- SET BOUNDARIES BETWEEN HOME AND WORK
 - Remove your work email and messaging platforms from your phone, or turn off notifications for non-work hours
 - Set out-of-office emails when you're off for the day, weekend, or vacation
 - Set periods in your calendar to automatically reject meetings in your downtime
 - If you work hybrid or remotely, set up a separate room for your office, and don't go in there for recreational activities
 - Disney 'yellow line' example: <https://techleadjournal.dev/episodes/55/>

METHODS TO PREVENT BURNOUT

- AUTOMATE WHAT YOU CAN
 - PowerShell is pretty cool ...
 - Codeless and low-code automation tools exist ...
 - Power Automate
 - KissFlow
 - IFTTT
 - A.I. is apparently a thing, I guess ...
 - BrainFreeze.AI
 - Relay.App

METHODS TO PREVENT BURNOUT

- REACH OUT TO OTHERS
 - Colleagues and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
 - Caution advised as could be used against you
 - Friends and Family
 - "Real You" vs. "Work You"
 - Health-Care Professionals
 - Employee Assistance Program

METHODS TO PREVENT BURNOUT

- TALK TO YOUR BOSS
 - Admission is not weakness ... It is professional strength and maturity.
 - Can discuss:
 - Shifting or outsourcing workload
 - Changing deadlines
 - Flexible work hours
 - Clearer job expectations

METHODS TO PREVENT BURNOUT

- IF ALL ELSE FAILS: FIND A COMPANY THAT VALUES YOU
 - It's not you, it's them...
 - Assuming you tried and nothing changed ... what else can you do?

SIX DIMENSIONS OF WELLNESS

[HTTPS://NATIONALWELLNESS.ORG/RESOURCES/SIX-DIMENSIONS-OF-WELLNESS/](https://nationalwellness.org/resources/six-dimensions-of-wellness/)

- **EMOTIONAL**
 - The awareness and acceptance of one's feelings and the capacity to manage behaviors related to one's emotional state.
- **OCCUPATIONAL**
 - The personal satisfaction and enrichment one receives in life through their employment, academic, or volunteer work.
- **SOCIAL**
 - The contribution to one's environment and community with an emphasis on the interdependence between others and nature.
- **INTELLECTUAL**
 - The creative, stimulating activities that lead to learning, personal growth, and the sharing of one's unique gifts with others.
- **PHYSICAL**
 - The consistent prioritization of physical self-care and the engagement in a variety of health enriching behaviors.
- **SPIRITUAL**
 - The development of an appreciation for the depth and expanse of life and natural forces that exist in the universe.

INTELLECTUAL

OCCUPATIONAL

THE SIX
Dimensions
of Wellness

Bill Hettler, MD, Co-Founder,
National Wellness Institute

SPIRITUAL

SOCIAL

SIX DIMENSIONS OF WELLNESS

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- 
- **EMOTIONAL**
 - acceptance of feelings; management of emotions and stress; ability to center; resilience; attuned to others emotions
 - **OCCUPATIONAL**
 - financial health; ability to share gifts, talents, and skills through work; satisfying career; sense of achievement
 - **SOCIAL**
 - positive connections; encouraging community; giving and receiving social support; intimacy; compassion; love
 - **INTELLECTUAL**
 - creativity; stimulating mental activities; learning; reading; problem-solving; staying current with events you enjoy
 - **PHYSICAL**
 - regular exercise; healthy nutritional habits; self-care; monitoring vital signs; sense of vitality and energy; avoidance of alcohol, drug misuse, and tobacco use; connection to nature
 - **SPIRITUAL**
 - sense of purpose; connecting to a higher power; meaning in life; knowing one's values; awareness of life as a journey; tolerance; integrity

REFLECTION EXERCISE

<https://nationalwellness.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/wholeness-reflection-exercise.pdf>

STEP 2 Assess Your Current Energy Investment

In which dimensions of wellness are you investing the most — and least — energy right now? Color in each of the bars below to indicate how much time and energy you have positively invested in each of the six dimensions *this* week.

	None	Just Enough	A Lot
Spiritual			
Emotional			
Occupational			
Physical			
Social			
Intellectual			

STEP 3 Create Your Ideal Vision of Wholeness

Imagine you have **only** 30 “energy blocks” to devote across the six dimensions. Fill in a total of 30 blocks below to indicate how your ideal self would distribute those blocks across the dimensions. Devote a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 10 energy blocks to each dimension.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Spiritual										
Emotional										
Occupational										
Physical										
Social										
Intellectual										

STEP 4 Reflect on Your Vision: Reconciliation, Rebalance, Values, Inspiration

Compare your actual energy habits and investments from Step 2 with the ideal vision in Step 3. What do you notice? What would you like to improve upon, feel, or be (if anything)? Accept whatever you notice as a possibility. As you do so, reflect on the different values listed below. Is there any value or group of values that you need to identify, align with, celebrate, or re-assert in your life that can be helpful to you right now? Check off up to five values. Can you think of others not on this list? What inspires you?

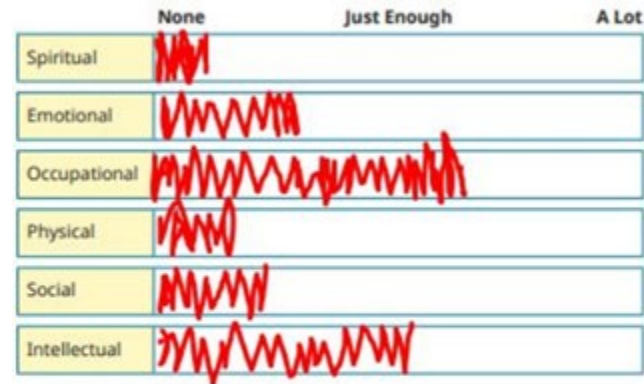
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|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spirituality | <input type="checkbox"/> Transformation | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Challenge | <input type="checkbox"/> Boldness | <input type="checkbox"/> Stability | <input type="checkbox"/> Popularity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | <input type="checkbox"/> Legacy | <input type="checkbox"/> Beauty | <input type="checkbox"/> Fun | <input type="checkbox"/> Influence | <input type="checkbox"/> Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Pleasure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Security | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth | <input type="checkbox"/> Success | <input type="checkbox"/> Curiosity | <input type="checkbox"/> Power | <input type="checkbox"/> Friendship | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peace | <input type="checkbox"/> Exploration | <input type="checkbox"/> Wholeness | <input type="checkbox"/> Justice | <input type="checkbox"/> Freedom | <input type="checkbox"/> Recognition | <input type="checkbox"/> Mystery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Love | <input type="checkbox"/> Community | <input type="checkbox"/> Achievement | <input type="checkbox"/> Reputation | <input type="checkbox"/> Creativity | <input type="checkbox"/> Intimacy | <input type="checkbox"/> Gratitude |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Integrity | <input type="checkbox"/> Unity | <input type="checkbox"/> Nature | <input type="checkbox"/> Wisdom | <input type="checkbox"/> Status | <input type="checkbox"/> Respect | <input type="checkbox"/> Adventure |

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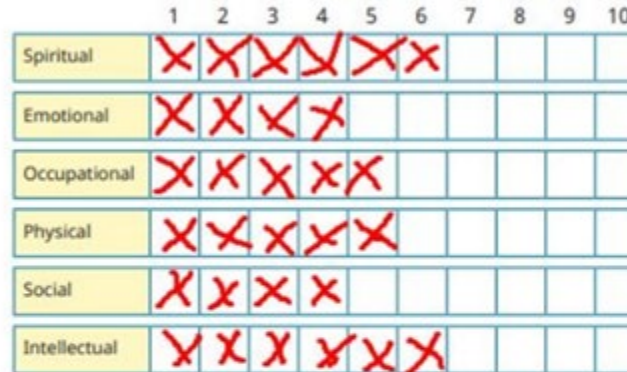
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RECHARGE: SPIRITUAL

- Find the meaning in your work
 - What do you do for your team?
 - What do you do for your customers?
- Practice Empathy
 - Remember the complaint isn't always about the issue.
 - Remember others are flawed too.
- Identify Your Values
 - Focus your energies on things that actually matter to you.
- Disconnect
 - Camp
 - Fish
 - Bonfire
 - Hike

RECHARGE: EMOTIONAL

- Think back to the wins
 - Remember your wins – not all the coming obstacles.
- Consider a therapist
 - Work may provide assistance with something like 'HelpNet' that I utilized myself.
 - Talking with someone is helpful, especially so you don't have to put emotional weight on your significant other or burden them with verbal diarrhea.
- Consider medication
 - I was having trouble regulating myself until I found a medication that made me feel like myself again.

RECHARGE: OCCUPATIONAL

- Not your problem ... lean on your supervisor!

RECHARGE: PHYSICAL

- Walks
 - "Movement" vs "Exercise"
- More Sleep
 - Try just 15-30 more minutes nightly
- Better Sleep
 - Cold vs Dark
- Quicker Sleep
 - Unplug at least 15 minutes ahead of sleep
- Restful Sleep
 - Caffeine and alcohol are sleep disruptors
- Nap More / Recharge More
 - 15-20 minute nap, with an alarm - game changer

RECHARGE: SOCIAL

- Start meetings with 'what went well this past week'
 - Set the tone.
- Thank people
 - You will feel good for showing gratitude and others will feel their efforts were worth it.
- Gratitude journal
 - 3 nights a week jot down 3 good things that happened to you that day and how it made you feel.
- Reflect
 - Find good things in your life that are consistent.
- Connect
 - Find a friend and do something with them.

RECHARGE: INTELLECTUAL

- Breathe fully three times before joining a video call.
 - Not shallow, anxious breathes ... deep, from the belly breathes. Yawning is okay!
- Read twice and breathe before hitting send.
 - Read your words from the view of your recipient and consider if you want to edit the message or send it at all.
- Hobbies that aren't technology
 - Woodworking
 - Mountain Biking
 - Knitting / Crocheting
 - Puzzles
 - Reading

NEXT STEPS / RESOURCES

- Therapy / Talking
- Psychiatry / Medication
- Exercise / Movement
- Meditation / Mindfulness
- Journaling / Writing
- Reading Self-Help / Escapism

- HelpNet
- LifeStance
- BetterHelp
- Balance (App)
- Headspace (App)
- Sanvello (App)

HABITS RADIO SKIT

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=VWGM9X5B9CC](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VWGM9X5B9CC)



CLOSING THOUGHTS

- As a tech professional, I see how connected we are. But sometimes, being so connected can make us feel disconnected from what truly matters: our well-being. The 'operating system' of our lives is our mental health.
- Our brain is like a computer. Sometimes it runs smoothly. Other times, it might have a 'bug' or need an 'update.' That's okay, and there are ways to fix it.
- Having a therapist is like having a trusted guide help you 'debug' your thoughts.
- For me, medication was like providing a vital 'patch' or 'update' to my brain chemistry. It wasn't a magic fix, but it helped level the playing field so therapy could work.
- Thinking I was 'broken' and needed 'fixing' was the problem and held me back from seeking the help I needed.
- It's okay to not be okay.
- Remember, taking care of our mental health isn't a luxury; it's essential for us all to thrive, learn, and grow, especially as we head back into a busy school year.



Q&A / COMMENTS