Anti-burnout puzzle for academics

SYLLABUS

1. General information
Workshop title: CLOSER TO YOURSELF – The wisdom of the body in preventing occupational burnout
Form of classes: Lecture and practical workshops (* e.g. practical workshops / interactive lecture / exercises / simulations / project workshops / …)
Duration: 8 hours, 2 days (*number of hours / days)
Lecturer: Lucyna Piwowarska – Dmytrów Specialist in Cultural Studies (University of Wrocław), Cultural Animator specializing in dance, Healthy Lifestyle Trainer (Jerzy Kukuczka Academy of Physical Education in Katowice), and Digital Hygiene Leader (Digital Citizenship Institute). (*name and surname, specialisation)
2. General objective of the workshop
The workshop aims to comprehensively introduce participants to the psychophysiological mechanisms of body functioning and practical ways to utilize them in preventing occupational burnout. Participants will become familiar with current knowledge about the interaction between the mind, brain, and body, with a particular emphasis on the role of the autonomic nervous system in regulating stress responses. The gut-brain axis will be discussed as a complex, bidirectional communication system between the digestive tract and the central nervous system, serving as a channel for exchanging information about the body's homeostasis. These signals can be integrated by the brain with other sensory inputs, subsequently influencing behavioral responses as well as cognitive and emotional processes. The workshop aims to develop body awareness through learning how to read and interpret signals from the body, improving self-diagnosis skills, and selecting appropriate, individually tailored techniques for working with the body and mind that may counteract the negative effects of chronic stress and workload. An integral part of the program is the introduction to selected philosophical aspects—thinking models that support and shape acceptance attitudes towards factors beyond our control—and the psychology of ownership, a field studying how the sense of ownership and decision-making impacts motivation and the durability of implemented changes. Participants have the opportunity to independently choose and customize bodywork techniques and psychophysical regulation methods according to their preferences and needs. Such individual selection enhances the sense of autonomy and agency, which supports the consistent application of chosen practices in daily life. According to research on the endowment effect, greater engagement and attachment to developed strategies occur when they are perceived as "mine" — in the sense of personal choice rather than imposed solutions. Focusing on one's own actions can support mental resilience, promote inner balance, and strengthen the sense of agency in everyday professional and personal functioning. (*Brief description of what participants should achieve after completing the workshop, e.g. identifying and developing their own potential, diagnostic skills, knowledge about preferred hobbies, etc.)

3. Learning outcomes (in line with the EQF)

(*list of operational verbs in Appendix 1)

Knowledge – Participant: (what will the participant know after completing the workshop?)

L1. Describes the connections between the body, emotions, and thoughts
L2. Identifies symptoms of psychophysical overload
L3. Classifies bodywork techniques in the context of preventing occupational burnout

Skills – Participant: (what will the participant be able to do?)

S1. Analyzes signals coming from the body and interprets their meaning
S2. Selects bodywork techniques based on psychophysical condition
S3. Applies simple relaxation and movement techniques for self-regulation

Social competences – Participant: (how will the participant function in a social and professional context?)

SC1. Adapts to changing conditions in work and life
SC2. Builds relationships based on empathy and open communication
SC3. Initiates actions to maintain psychophysical balance

4. Programme content (list of topics discussed during the workshop)

Topic 1:
"The Body's Mind" – Neurophysiology of Stress and Regulatory Mechanisms

- Structure and functions of the autonomic nervous system.
- The role of the gut-brain axis as a system for information exchange between the digestive tract and the brain.
- Neurophysiological basis of the stress response.
- Homeostasis and its importance for psychophysical well-being.

Topic 2:
"Thoughts and Beliefs" – The Impact of Cognitive Processes on Psychophysical State

- Beliefs and cognitive schemas in relation to bodily responses.
- Self-diagnosis – recognizing signs of psychophysical overload.
- Self-acceptance as a factor in burnout prevention.
- Stoic philosophy – distinguishing factors within and beyond our control.

Topic 3:
"Responding" – Bodywork Techniques and Energy Balance

- The principle of balancing psychological and physical loads.
- Movement techniques that don't require thinking (intuitive movement, shaking, free dance).
- Working with muscle tension, self-massage, breathing techniques.
- Micro-break exercises for everyday work.

Topic 4:
"Integration" – Personalized Burnout Prevention Plan

- Resilience – building mental and physical resistance.
- Creating a personalized "regeneration manual."

- Incorporating elements of nature connection and ownership psychology methods.
- Planning implementation in the context of academic work.

***Number of topics adjusted to the area, content and purpose of the workshop**

5. Teaching methods used during the workshop

☐ **pair/group work**	☐ **lecture with presentation**	☐ project
☐ case study	☐ simulations	☐ **moderated discussion**
☐ **practical exercises indoor**	☐ **outdoor practical exercises**	☐ ……

6. Methods of verifying learning outcomes

☐ observation of activity	☐ presentation	☐ **self-assessment**
☐ **group feedback**	☐ test or quiz	☐ evaluation survey

☐ **Personal User Manual**

7. Teaching materials

- Presentation
- Worksheet
- Audiovisual materials, audio files
- Set of practical exercise tools: e.g., sensory bags, balls, bands, noise-cancelling headphones

8. Literature

- **Sensory Awareness: Rediscovery of Experiencing Through the Workshops of Charlotte Selver** — *Charlotte Selver, Charles V. W. Brooks*
- **Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers** — *Robert M. Sapolsky*
- **The Power of Now** — *Eckhart Tolle*
- **The Pocket Guide to the Polyvagal Theory: The Transformative Power of Feeling Safe** — *Stephen W. Porges*
- **Awareness Through Movement** — *Moshe Feldenkrais*

9. Organisational remarks (e.g. technical requirements, accessibility for persons with disabilities, necessary equipment to be provided by participants, recruitment conditions)

- a room for movement exercises
- loose, non-restrictive clothing
- projector, screen, or multimedia board

- markers, flip chart, sheets of paper, and writing utensils

R1. Academic Burnout = Prevention Workshop Proposal