

Autistic Burnout

What is Autistic Burnout?

Autistic Burnout is when an autistic person experiences intense fatigue, stress, and loss of skills.

What Causes Autistic Burnout?

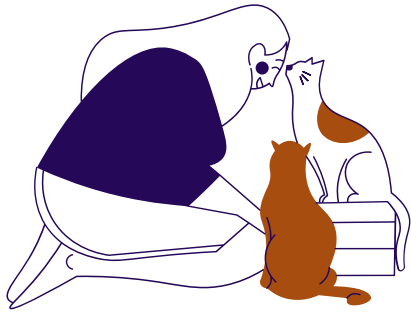
- Masking autistic traits or behaviors in order to be perceived as non-autistic
- Unobtainable or unreachable expectations from others and/or self
- Good or bad transitions or life changes
- Doing too much or living unsustainably
- Having poor boundaries
- Inability to self-advocate or say no
- Not having support



What are Signs of Autistic Burnout?

- Increased stimming, number of meltdowns, or fight or flight response
- Inability to communicate, advocate, or take care of yourself
- Losing skills, words or speech, and/or memory difficulties
- No interest in special interests or preferred activities
- Being antisocial and/or withdrawn
- Fatigue, bad mood, and/or irritability
- Having little to no boundaries
- Everyday tasks are harder
- May look like regression

Things That Help With Burnout



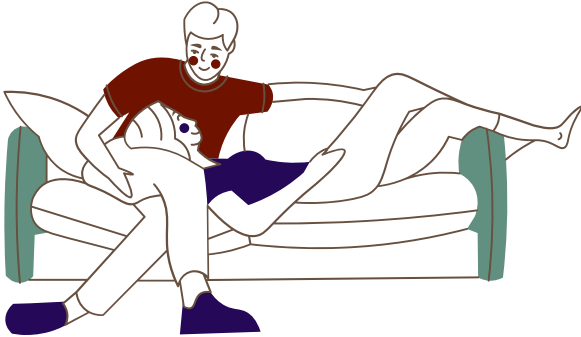
I need time to rest and recover.



I can set reminders to eat food.



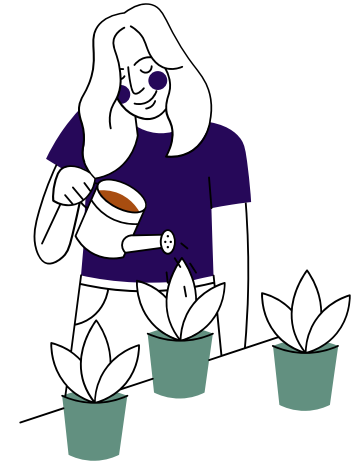
I can slow down and exercise.



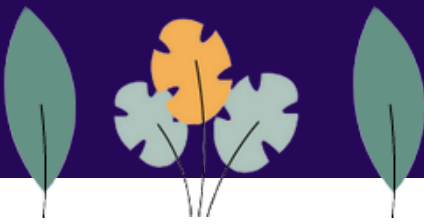
I can create and use scripts to ask for help.



I can stim and self regulate.



I can be kind to myself.



Resources for Burnout

Things That Help With Burnout:

- Use calendars, make lists, and set reminders/timers to help with executive function
- Allow yourself to stim and do comforting activities
- Make a sensory diet (with an OT or professional) to help maintain regulation
- Set reminders to eat and/or use lists to help with steps in preparing food
- Ask a trusted friend or family member for help in creating scripts or narratives to use for self-advocacy
- Reduce schedule, use time blocking, and/or energy conservation methods, and do the bare minimum
- Take time to relax and recover
- Participate in preferred activities and special interests
- Talk to a therapist

Autistic Advocates on Burnout

- <http://www.autisticscholar.com/burnout-and-expectations/>
- <https://theautisticadvocate.com/2018/05/an-autistic-burnout/>
- <https://livingautism.com/autistic-fatigue/>
- <https://awnnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/autistic-burnout.pdf>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DZwfujkNBGk>

Additional Resources

- [https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/professional-practice/autistic-burnout#:~:text="Autistic%20burnout%20is%20a%20state,"](https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/professional-practice/autistic-burnout#:~:text=)
- <https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/pdf/10.1089/aut.2019.0079>
- https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jane-Mantzas/publication/359924348_A_conceptual_model_of_risk_and_protective_factors_for_autistic_burnout/links/62a95a38c660ab61f87dc373/A-conceptual-model-of-risk-and-protective-factors-for-autistic-burnout.pdf
- <https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/10.1089/aut.2021.0021>