

# Implementing Evidence-Based Wellness Practices for Counselors to Mitigate Long-Term Professional Burnout by Margaret Hindman, Ph.D., LPC, RPT, and Kayla Newkirk St. Bonaventure University

## Introduction

Wellness has been engrained within counseling since the beginning of the profession and has been considered a difficult aspect of the lifestyle within mental health professionals; however, the field still has high burnout levels. (Puig et al., 2012). To further prevent burnout or compassion fatigue, it is suggested that wellness become an integral part of early counselor development to strengthen a sense of self-awareness, higher adaptation skills, and knowledge with supports for an improved symptomology of professionals growing within the field (Blount & Mullen, 2015). Applying this knowledge through synchronous and asynchronous opportunities virtually with self-care videos available to students, self-care expressive arts night with supervisors of many backgrounds who may be CSI members of many chapters, and implementing these opportunities throughout the course of early counselor training can help increase the accessibility of these supportive resources. Participants will learn how CSI chapters can help support counselors-in-training begin self-care practices earlier in their counseling careers when there is much support through faculty and universities.

## Resources

Blount, A. J., & Mullen, P. R. (2015). Development of an Integrative Wellness Model: Supervising Counselors-in-Training. *Professional Counselor*, 5(1), 100–113.  
<https://doi.org/10.15241/ajpb.5.1.100>

Gibson, D. M., Pence, C., Kennedy, S. D., Gerlach, J., Degges-White, S., & Watson, J. (2021). Development of the counselor wellness competencies. *Journal of Counselor Leadership & Advocacy*, 8(2), 130–145.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/2326716X.2021.1925997>

Puig, A., Baggs, A., Mixon, K., Park, Y. M., Kim, B. Y., & Lee, S. M. (2012). Relationship between job burnout and personal wellness in mental health professionals. *Journal of Employment Counseling*, 49(3), 98–109.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-1920.2012.00010.x>

Wolf, C. P., Thompson, I. A., & Smith-Adcock, S. (2012). Wellness in Counselor Preparation: Promoting Individual Well-Being. *Journal of Individual Psychology*, 68(2), 164–181.

## Preventing Burnout Through Evidence-Based Wellness Practices

### Supervision:

- Learn about warning signs of burnout and how to prevent them
- Using the supervisory relationship to gain insight on areas of personal growth
- Creating wellness goals in supervision

### Wheel of Wellness:

- Using a holistic approach to identify many components to wellness
- Implementing wellness strategies early into counselor training to prevent burnout
- Gaining an understanding of multidimensional wellness for individuals of different backgrounds

## Implications for Counselor Education and Supervision

- Advocate for counselor wellness by increasing accessibility to supportive resources

- Create asynchronous and synchronous opportunities for students to access wellness practices and support

- Utilize professional support to enhance knowledge, skills, and practice of wellness

- Apply wellness in supervision and within the supervisory relationship through mentorship, goal setting, and advocacy

- Identify supportive self-care strategies to prevent compassion fatigue

- Use the Wheel of Wellness to discover individual wellness approaches to mitigate long-term burnout

- Advocate for a focus on counselor wellness beginning in the foundational stages of professional development

- Integrate wellness opportunities for students by enmeshing self-care strategies and resources throughout coursework, classes, and supervision