

Self-Care by Valencia Wade



Our first 2022 Feature Contributing Writer is NAMIC Carolinas member Valencia Wade. Valencia shares with us some timely insights, guidance and recommendations on the importance of Self-Care. Thank you, Valencia, for sharing your voice!

Did you know that stress in the early days (pre–Civil War) was viewed as a “post-pregnancy” symptom or effect in women? According to JopWell, even with Soldiers in/after combat, it was never understood where the emotional trauma or distress was coming from. (<https://bit.ly/StressNAMIC>)

From that point, it was important to figure out this condition, and with the constant need for change in our work environments, we must acknowledge how to alleviate stress and burnout. Working for our clients is a top priority within our industry, but we also must consider how much time and effort is put into accomplishing our goals for them and the company. If there is no work/life balance, it is harder for us as employees to commit to our families and friends, let alone our workloads.

Despite these circumstances, if stress is controlled and managed, it is not as negative or crippling as one would expect it to be. To help aid in better stress-management techniques/ideas, JopWell (<https://bit.ly/StressNAMIC>) lists 5 ways to alleviate stress:

1. Read a Book – helps to relax your mind; best to read before bed to maximize results
2. Cooking! - keeps the mind engaged and boosts your mood
3. Stretching or yoga – helps your body stay aligned and reduces heart rate
4. Exercise or walk – increases your brains’ natural endorphins
5. Journaling – provides opportunities to write down your feelings

Burnout is the aftermath of stress, which makes work and life less enjoyable overtime. Most people are not even aware that they are stressed until the burnout stage, which, for some people, can be too late. According to JopWell, over 70 percent of people experience stress that affects BOTH their mental and physical health (<https://bit.ly/NAMICBurnout>).

First, identifying if you are stressed is a key part in knowing next steps to prevent it from continuing. Below are additional ways to prevent a burnout, whether at work, home or elsewhere, thanks to JopWell:

1. Find some ME time – take time to prep each day to give yourself some alone time.

2. Talk to someone – Therapy is a GREAT option, but also consider your manager or close friends.
3. Celebrate your wins and self-reflect – look back on what you have done RIGHT and all your wins!
4. Take breaks – turn your brain off after an arduous task and rest or exercise.
5. Curate a positive work environment – make sure your desk/workplace are welcoming; decorating your space affects your mood!

We are in a New Year, which means that our choices in life should be better than the previous year(s). Take the time you need to destress before burnout happens, and no matter how your year is, make it your best year yet!