

Japanese “Ai” to Prevent Burnout

by Kaki Okumura



The kanji “ai”「愛」is said to be the feeling one has when they turn around to look at someone they care about. “Ai” in the case of burnout prevention is about embodying this feeling for yourself, by checking in with self-compassion. Why is this important? Burnout is one of those things that you don’t really notice until it’s very bad—and once it’s very bad, you are left with very limited options for addressing it, which is to stop or cut off what is burning you out. And while that works, it’s not always an option available to us (we can’t always quit our job or take a leave of absence). So we must check-in and readjust when we’re approaching it.

Instructions:

1. Answer the following prompts, to check-in with self-compassion.

How did you feel when you started your day this morning?

Write down 3 things (signs or symptoms) that let you know when it’s time to rest your mind and body

What advice would you give to a good friend who may be close to experiencing burnout?

Write down 3 habits you find helpful for stress relief. Make plans to incorporate 1 of them this week.

You are already caught up, and anything you accomplish today is progress.

