



***The Hygienist's  
Secret to  
Beating Burnout  
(and Becoming Relaxed AF)***

# ***A Letter from the Creator***

To My Fellow Hygienists,

In professions like dental hygiene, burnout is an all-too-familiar challenge due to the demanding nature of our work. The long hours, physical strain, repetitive tasks, and emotional toll of patient care can take a significant toll on us. But, as a hygienist, you already know this.

Addressing burnout is not just essential for maintaining your effectiveness as a dental hygienist; it's crucial for nurturing your overall well-being as a thriving human being. So to begin, I want to commend you for taking the first step towards addressing the emotions and fatigue you may be grappling with.

Before we embark on this journey together, let me share why I created this journal and why it matters so much to me. In December 2022, I found myself in the midst of burnout. It struck unexpectedly, though looking back, I realize that it was about 7 years in the making. It was 4:30 am, and I was in the shower getting ready for work, sobbing uncontrollably. And then it happened - my first panic attack. I had to call out of work, a decision I questioned at first, thinking a week off would suffice. But the anxiety, the persistent fatigue, and the overwhelming emotions didn't dissipate. For the next three weeks, I felt like a newborn, eating every two hours and sleeping when I wasn't eating, and also seeing a therapist.

My journey to recovery has been anything but easy or linear. I couldn't function independently for about a month, and I couldn't return to work for nearly six months. It's been a full year of tears, hard work, and self-compassion to get to where I am today. And while I'm not entirely recovered, I embrace this ongoing process, acknowledging that every small step brings me closer to a healthier state of well-being.

This journal is my offering to fellow hygienists to prevent and recover from burnout. I've been in that dark place, and I never want any of you, my colleagues, to experience the depth and darkness of burnout and what it's like to climb out of that hole. For those currently in that space, please know that I see you. Remember, burnout is a challenge, but it's also something you can recover from and prevent in the future.

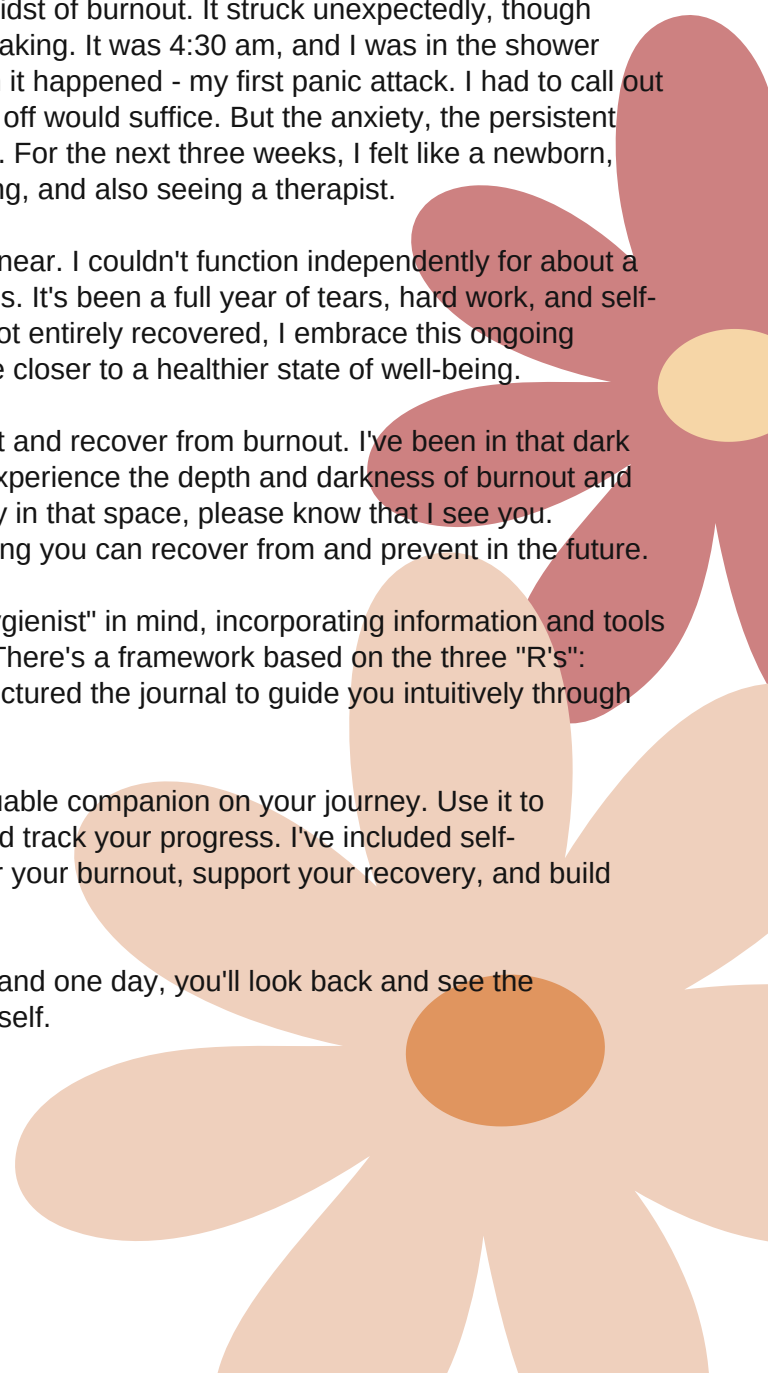
I've carefully designed this journal with the "burnt-out hygienist" in mind, incorporating information and tools that I wished I had during my early stages of recovery. There's a framework based on the three "R's": Recognizing, Recovering, and Reinforcing, and I've structured the journal to guide you intuitively through each stage.

My earnest hope is that you find this journal to be a valuable companion on your journey. Use it to document your experiences, process your emotions, and track your progress. I've included self-assessments and user-friendly tools to help you monitor your burnout, support your recovery, and build resilience against future burnout.

Always remember to give yourself kindness and grace, and one day, you'll look back and see the remarkable love and growth you've nurtured within yourself.

With warmth and empathy,

*Heather "The Relaxed Hygienist"*



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# ***Introduction to Burnout***

## ***Did you know?***

Burnout is a psychological syndrome that occurs from ongoing stress in the workplace.

## ***The 3 Subtypes/Dimensions of Burnout***

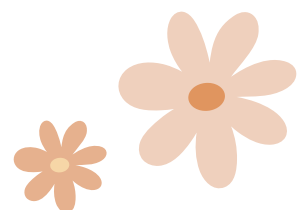
These subtypes can occur simultaneously or independently. It's important to note that experiencing a combination of these burnout types or shifting between them can happen, depending on your work circumstances and personal factors. Recognizing the *specific* type of burnout you're experiencing can be helpful in tailoring strategies for prevention and recovery.

**Frenetic Burnout (Overload Burnout):** This type of burnout is characterized by excessive ambition, high workload, and overcommitment. Individuals experiencing frenetic burnout often push themselves beyond their limits, striving for perfection and overextending their efforts. They may have a strong desire to achieve, but it can lead to physical and emotional exhaustion.

**Underchallenged Burnout (Boredom Burnout):** Underchallenged burnout occurs when individuals feel unstimulated or underutilized in their work. They experience a lack of engagement and fulfillment due to routine tasks or a perceived lack of personal development. This type of burnout can result in feelings of disinterest and detachment from work.

**Worn-Out Burnout (Worn-Out Burnout):** Worn-out burnout is characterized by a feeling of helplessness and hopelessness. Individuals in this state have typically been exposed to chronic stressors for an extended period, leading to emotional exhaustion and a sense of ineffectiveness. They may feel drained and unable to cope with their work responsibilities.

***What subtype(s) do you identify with?***



# ***“RECOGNIZING” Burnout***

*“These mountains that you are carrying, you were only supposed to climb”. -Najwa Zebian*

# ***RECOGNIZING***

## ***Identifying Burnout Symptoms***

Recognizing burnout symptoms is crucial for early intervention and effective management. Just like early detection of hypertension or periodontal disease can save lives and improve quality of life, so can early detection of burnout.

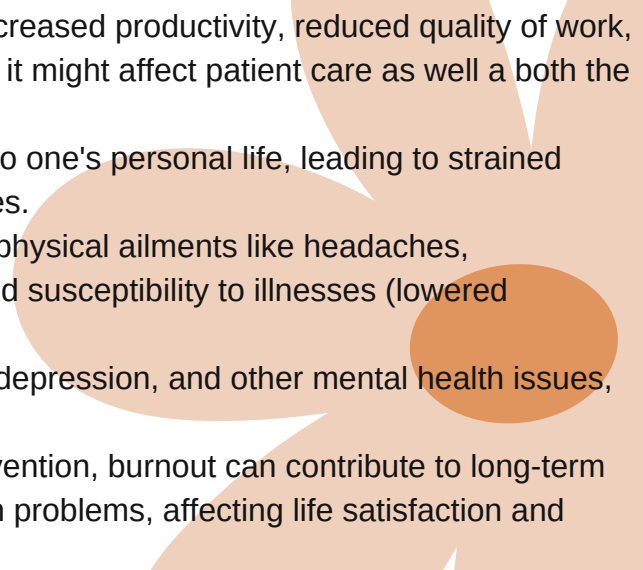
- Emotional Exhaustion: Feeling drained and unable to cope, lack of energy, and feeling emotionally depleted.
- Cynicism and Detachment: Having a negative or distant attitude towards work, colleagues, and even patients.
- Reduced Professional Efficacy: Feeling that you are not contributing meaningfully or achieving less than you should.
- Physical Symptoms: Headaches, muscle pain, changes in appetite or sleep patterns.
- Mental Health Issues: Increased anxiety, depression, or irritability.

## ***Specific Stress Scenarios Related to Burnout***

- High Patient Volume: Managing a continuous stream of patients with little downtime.
- Complex Patient Cases: Dealing with difficult or complex dental cases that require intense focus and skill.
- Administrative Pressure: Coping with paperwork, insurance processing, and other administrative tasks.
- Interpersonal Conflicts: Navigating conflicts with colleagues or superiors in the workplace.
- Limited Resources: Working in environments with inadequate resources or support.

## ***Understanding the Impact:***

In order to make forward progress, it's important we understand the impact of burnout because it affects so many aspects of life and work.

- **Professional Life:** Burnout can lead to decreased productivity, reduced quality of work, and increased absenteeism. In healthcare, it might affect patient care as well as both the clinician's and patient's safety.
  - **Personal Life:** Burnout often spills over into one's personal life, leading to strained relationships and diminished social activities.
  - **Physical Health:** Burnout can manifest in physical ailments like headaches, gastrointestinal disturbances, and increased susceptibility to illnesses (lowered immunity).
  - **Mental Health:** It can exacerbate anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues, impacting overall well-being.
  - **Long-term Consequences:** Without intervention, burnout can contribute to long-term career dissatisfaction and significant health problems, affecting life satisfaction and career longevity.
- 

# ***RECOGNIZING BURNOUT***

***with***

## ***Assessment Tools***

These tools are designed for self-reflection and can help to identify your level of burnout and recognize when to seek further assistance.

***“I am who I am today because of the choices I made yesterday”.***

***-Eleanor Roosevelt***

\*Please note these quizzes are meant for self-assessment purposes and do not replace professional evaluation. If your results indicate a significant impact on your well-being or the need for professional help, please consider seeking support from a mental health professional.

# Feelings Inventory

Highlight or circle the emotions that you feel when your needs are being met

## **AFFECTIONATE**

Compassionate  
Friendly  
Loving  
Open hearted  
Sympathetic  
Tender  
Warm

## **EXHILARATED**

Blissful  
Ecstatic  
Elated  
Enthralled  
Exuberant  
Radiant  
Rapturous  
Thrilled

## **INSPIRED**

Amazed  
Awed  
Wonder

## **GRATEFUL**

Appreciative  
Moved  
Thankful  
Touched

## **EXCITED**

Amazed  
Animated  
Ardent  
Aroused  
Astonished  
Dazzled  
Eager  
Energetic  
Enthusiastic  
Giddy  
Invigorated  
Lively  
Passionate  
Surprised  
Vibrant

## **REFRESHED**

Enlivened  
Rejuvenated  
Renewed  
Rested  
Restored  
Revived

## **ENGAGED**

Absorbed  
Alert  
Curious  
Engrossed  
Enchanted  
Entranced  
Fascinated  
Interested  
Intrigued  
Involved  
Spellbound  
Stimulated

## **CONFIDENT**

Empowered  
Open  
Proud  
Safe  
Secure

## **HOPEFUL**

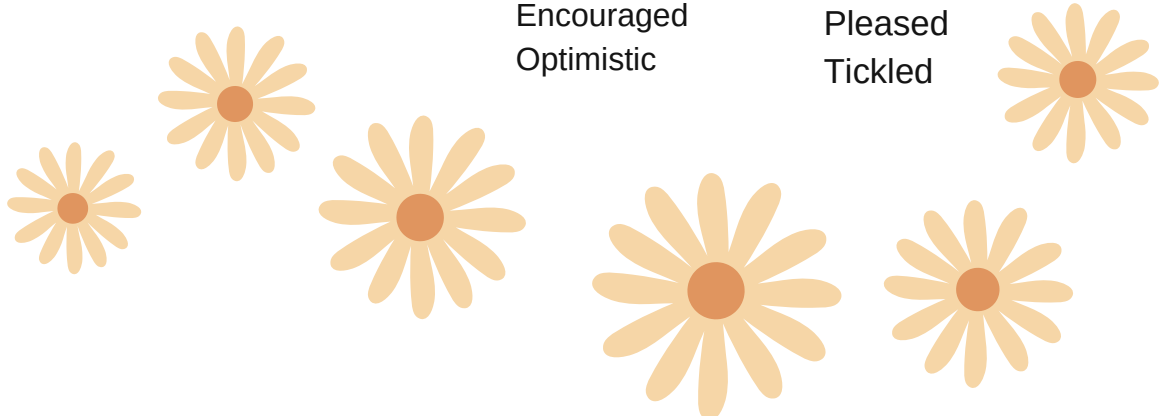
Expectant  
Encouraged  
Optimistic

## **PEACEFUL**

Calm  
Clear headed  
Comfortable  
Centered  
Content  
Equanimous  
Fulfilled  
mellow  
Mquiet  
Relaxed  
Relieved  
Satisfied  
Serene  
Still  
Tranquil  
Trusting

## **JOYFUL**

Amused  
Delighted  
Glad  
Happy  
Jubilant  
Pleased  
Tickled



# Feelings Inventory

Highlight or circle the emotions that you feel when your needs are NOT being met

## **EMBARRASSED**

Ashamed  
Flustered  
Guilty  
Mortified  
(Self-Conscious)

## **DISQUIET**

Agitated  
Alarmed  
Discombobulated  
Disconcerted  
Disturbed  
Perturbed  
Rattled  
Restless  
Shocked  
Startled  
Surprised  
Troubled  
Turbulent  
Turmoil  
Uncomfortable  
Uneasy  
Unnerved  
Unsettled  
Upset

## **CONFUSED**

Ambivalent  
Baffled  
Bewildered  
Dazed  
Hesitant  
Lost  
Mystified  
Perplexed  
Puzzled  
Rorn

## **ANGRY**

Enraged  
Furious  
Incensed  
Indignant  
Irate  
Livid  
Outraged  
Resentful

## **YEARNING**

Envious  
Jealous  
Longing  
Nostalgic  
Pining  
Wistful

## **AFRAID**

Apprehensive  
Dread  
Foreboding  
Frightened  
Mistrustful  
Panicked  
Petrieved  
Scared  
Suspicious  
Terrified  
Wary  
Worried

## **PAIN**

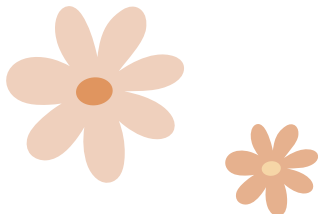
Agony  
Anguished  
Bereaved  
Devastated  
Grief  
Heartbroken  
Hurt  
Lonely  
Miserable  
Regretful  
Remorseful

## **TENSE**

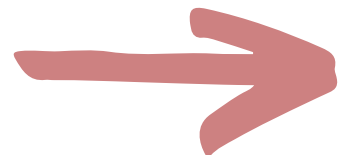
Anxious  
Cranky  
Distressed  
Distraught  
Edgy  
Fidgety  
Frazzled  
Irritable  
Jittery  
Nervous  
Overwhelmed  
Restless  
Stressed out

## **SAD**

Depressed  
Dejected  
Despair  
Despondent  
Disappointed  
Discouraged  
Disheartened  
Forlorn  
Gloomy  
Heavy hearted  
Hopeless  
Melancholy  
Unhappy  
Wretched



Continue on next page



# ***Feelings Inventory Continued***

Highlight or circle the emotions that you feel when your needs are NOT being met

## ***DISCONNECTED***

Alienated  
Aloof  
Apathetic  
Bored  
Cold  
Detached  
Distant  
Distracted  
Indifferent  
Numb  
Removed  
Uninterested  
Withdrawn

## ***AVERSION***

Animosity  
Appalled  
Contempt  
Disgusted  
Dislike  
Hate  
Horrified  
Hostile  
Repulsed

## ***FATIGUE***

Beat  
Burnt out  
Depleted  
Exhausted  
Lethargic  
Listless  
Sleepy  
Tired  
Weary  
Worn out

## ***ANNOYED***

Aggravated  
Dismayed  
Disgruntled  
Displeased  
Exasperated  
Frustrated  
Impatient  
Irritated  
Irked

## ***VULNERABLE***

Fragile  
Guarded  
Helpless  
Insecure  
Leery  
Reserved  
Sensitive  
Shaky

***HOW DO YOU FEEL AFTER  
TAKING INVENTORY?***

# ***Burnout Symptom Checklist:***

This is a simple checklist of common burnout symptoms for self-identification

- Persistent fatigue, even after rest.
- Feeling emotionally drained and unable to cope.
- Developing a negative or cynical attitude toward work.
- Reduced interest and satisfaction in your job.
- Decreased job performance or productivity.
- Difficulty concentrating or making decisions.
- Physical symptoms like headaches or muscle pain.
- Changes in sleep patterns (insomnia or oversleeping).
- Withdrawing from social interactions or colleagues.
- Increased irritability or frustration.
- Loss of enthusiasm or passion for your work.
- Frequent mood swings or emotional instability.
- Feeling overwhelmed by daily tasks and responsibilities.
- Increased forgetfulness or difficulty concentrating.
- Changes in eating habits (loss of appetite or overeating).
- Difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep due to work-related stress.
- A sense of hopelessness about your job or career.

# ***Burnout Symptom Checklist Continued:***

- Decreased tolerance for workplace stressors.
- Reduced job engagement and motivation.
- A decline in personal hygiene or self-care habits.
- Increased absenteeism or desire to skip work.
- Frequent negative thoughts about your job or career.
- Reduced empathy towards patients or colleagues.
- Feeling disconnected from your professional goals.
- A sense of isolation or loneliness at work.
- Heightened sensitivity to criticism or feedback.
- Decline in your ability to problem-solve or find solutions.
- Decreased creativity or innovation in your work.
- Loss of interest in professional development or growth.
- Physical health issues like stomach problems or heart palpitations.

# ***Job Burnout Inventory***

This is a straightforward questionnaire to assess job-related burnout, and can help to gauge your level of burnout in the workplace. Answer all questions truthfully, rank answers on a scale of 1 to 5, and write answers in the colored circle at the end of each question. Total your scores for all questions. Higher scores indicate a higher level of job-related burnout.

## SCORING:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

1. I often feel emotionally drained from my job.



2. I frequently doubt the significance of my work.



3. I find it hard to concentrate on tasks at work.



4. I have experienced physical symptoms (e.g., headaches) due to work stress.



5. I have lost interest in the goals of my job.



6. I feel detached from my colleagues and patients.



7. I frequently think about leaving my current job.



8. I often feel overwhelmed by my job tasks.



9. I have noticed a decline in my work performance.



10. I no longer derive satisfaction from my work achievements.



Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly Agree








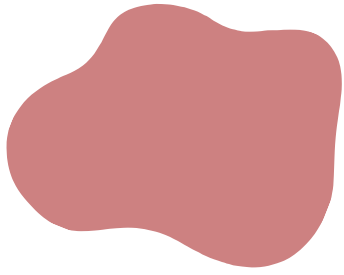
# ***Wellness Self-Assessment***

This questionnaire offers a comprehensive view of well-being, and can be used to identify burnout in a broader context. Answer all questions truthfully, rank answers on a scale of 1 to 5, and write answers in the colored circle at the end of each question. Total your scores for all questions and write them in the large colored bubble for each section. Higher scores indicate a higher level of well-being. I encourage you to complete the assessment, and then reflect on areas where you scored lower. Then, consider some self-care strategies that could improve your overall wellness.






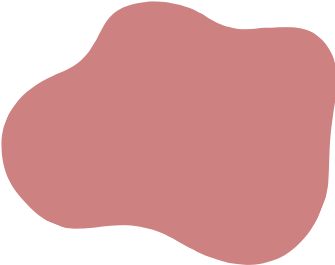
## **SCORING:**

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

## ***Physical Health***

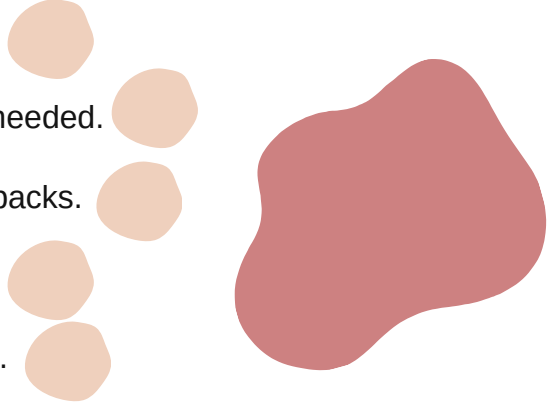
1. I prioritize regular exercise and maintain a balanced diet. 
  2. I get adequate restful sleep most nights. 
  3. I am free from persistent physical health issues. 
  4. I engage in activities that promote physical fitness. 
  5. I manage my physical health through regular check-ups. 
- 

## ***Emotional Health***


1. I can effectively manage stress and cope with life's challenges. 
  2. I have a strong support system of friends and family. 
  3. I express my emotions in healthy ways. 
  4. I experience positive emotions regularly. 
  5. I practice self-compassion and self-care. 
- 

# ***Wellness Self-Assessment Continued***

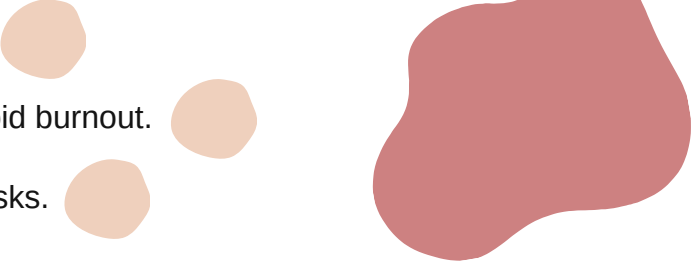
## ***Mental Health***

1. I have a clear and focused mind for most of the day.
  2. I practice mindfulness or relaxation techniques when needed.
  3. I feel mentally resilient and can bounce back from setbacks.
  4. I seek opportunities for personal growth and learning.
  5. I have healthy mental habits, such as positive self-talk.
- 

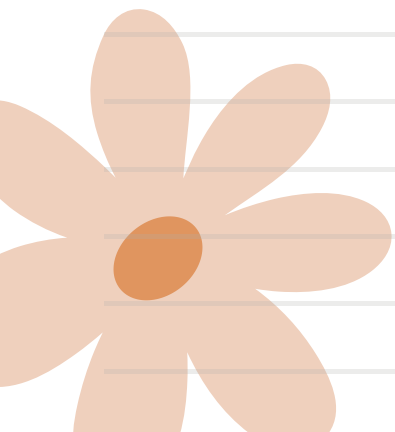
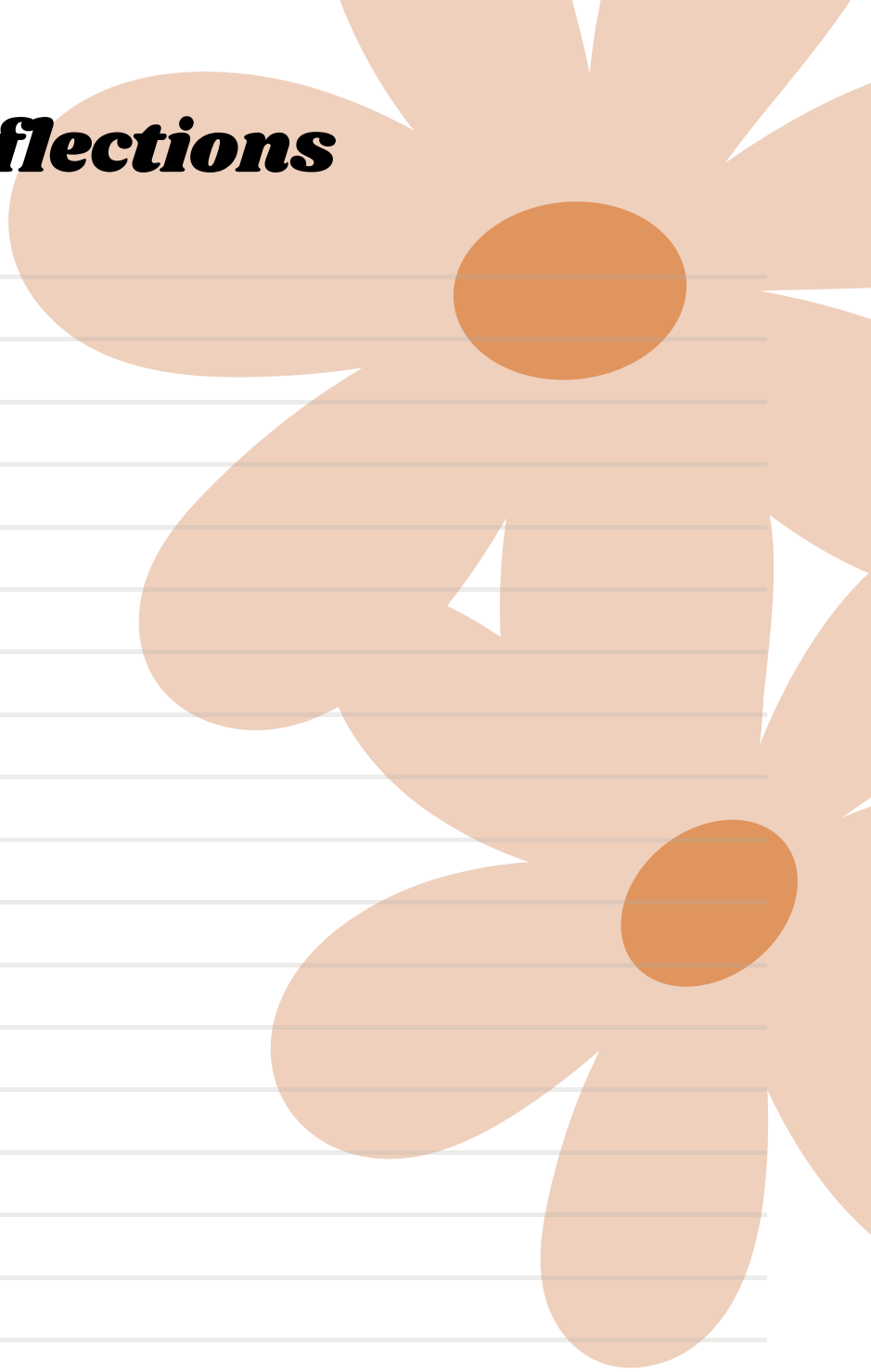
## ***Social Health***

1. I maintain meaningful and supportive relationships.
  2. I feel a sense of belonging and connection to my community.
  3. I have a healthy work-life balance.
- 

## ***Work-Related Wellness***

1. I find satisfaction and fulfillment in my job.
  2. I have a manageable workload and can avoid burnout.
  3. I feel motivated and engaged in my work tasks.
- 

# ***Reflections***



A series of horizontal grey lines providing a writing area for reflections, spanning most of the page width and height.

# ***Severity Evaluation***

This self-evaluation assesses various dimensions of burnout symptoms, and can help gauge the severity of burnout and signal when professional help might be necessary.

Rate/circle how often you experience symptoms like fatigue, irritability, or detachment on a scale from "Never" to "Every Day".

## ***Frequency of Symptoms:***

1. How often do you experience persistent fatigue?

Never

Rarely

Occasionally

Frequently

Every Day

2. How often do you feel irritable or easily frustrated?

Never

Rarely

Occasionally

Frequently

Every Day

3. How often do you notice a sense of detachment from your work or colleagues?

Never

Rarely

Occasionally

Frequently

Every Day

4. How often do you have difficulty concentrating or making decisions?

Never

Rarely

Occasionally

Frequently

Every Day

## ***Intensity of Symptoms:***

Assess/circle the intensity of your symptoms ranging from "Very Mild" to "Very Severe".

1. How would you rate the intensity of your fatigue?

Very Mild

Mild

Moderate

Severe

Very Severe

2. How intense are your feelings of irritability or frustration?

Very Mild

Mild

Moderate

Severe

Very Severe

3. How intense is your sense of detachment from work or colleagues?

Very Mild

Mild

Moderate

Severe

Very Severe

4. How intense are your difficulties in concentrating or making decisions?

Very Mild

Mild

Moderate

Severe

Very Severe



### ***Impact on Work:***

Evaluate/circle how burnout affects your work, from "No Impact" to "Significantly Hinders My Ability to Work".

How much does burnout impact your ability to work effectively?

No Impact

Minor Impact

Moderate Impact

Significant Impact

Significantly Hinders My Ability to Work

### ***Impact on Personal Life:***

Consider/circle how your symptoms affect your personal life, ranging from "No Impact" to "Significantly Affects My Personal Life".

How does burnout affect your personal life and relationships?

No Impact

Minor Impact

Moderate Impact

Significant Impact

Significantly Affects My Personal Life

### ***Overall Well-Being:***

Rate/circle your overall feeling of well-being from "Excellent" to "Very Poor".

1. How would you rate your overall feeling of well-being?

Excellent

Very Good

Good

Fair

Very Poor

2. Do you find it difficult to enjoy activities outside of work?

Not at all

Slightly

Moderately

Very

Extremely

### ***Overall Well-Being Continued:***

3. Are you satisfied with your current work-life balance?

Very Satisfied

Somewhat Satisfied

Neutral

Somewhat Unsatisfied

Very Unsatisfied

4. How often do you experience physical symptoms like headaches or muscle pain?

Never

Rarely

Occasionally

Frequently

Every Day

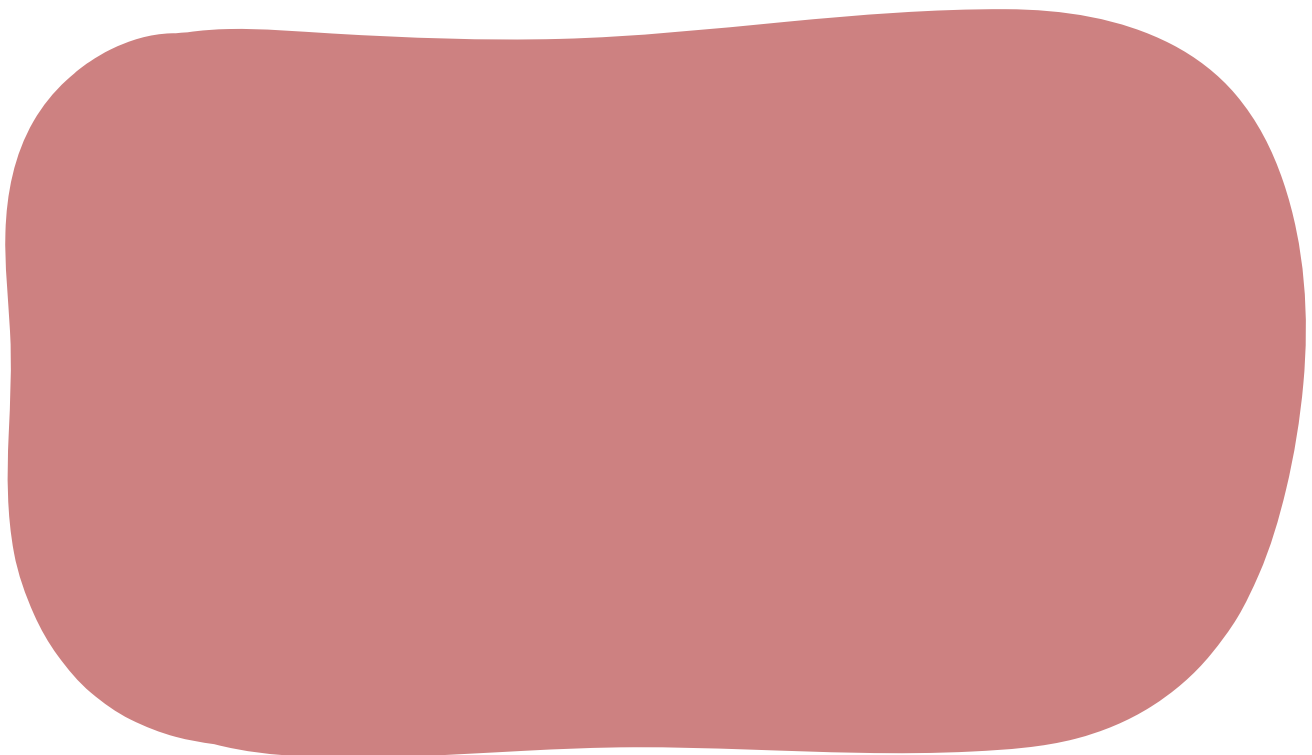
5. Are you seeking or open to professional help for your burnout symptoms?

Yes

No

Not Sure

### ***How Do You Feel About Your Score?***



# ***Personal Symptoms Note***

For each symptom listed below, please indicate whether you have experienced it recently.

1. Have you experienced constant tiredness, even after getting adequate rest?

Yes

No

2. Have you felt emotionally drained and unable to cope with your emotions?

Yes

No

3. Have you developed a negative attitude towards patients, colleagues, or your job?

Yes

No

4. Have you lost interest and satisfaction in your work achievements?

Yes

No

5. Have you noticed a significant drop in the quality of your work or productivity?

Yes

No

6. Do you frequently experience difficulty concentrating or making decisions?

Yes

No

7. Have you had physical symptoms such as headaches, muscle pain, or gastrointestinal issues?

Yes

No

8. Do you struggle with sleep disturbances, such as insomnia or oversleeping?

Yes

No

9. Have you withdrawn from colleagues or reduced social interactions?

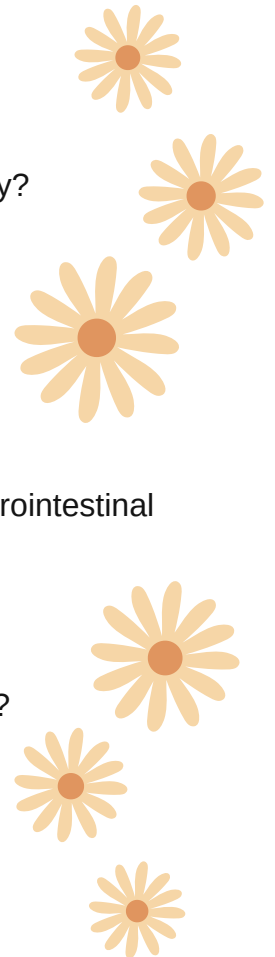
Yes

No

10. Have you noticed an increase in irritability, having a shorter temper, or becoming easily frustrated with small issues?

Yes

No



# ***RECOGNIZING Conclusion***

Remember, acknowledging burnout and seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness. As we wrap up the “Recognize” section, keep a few things in mind as we enter into “Recovery”.

## ***Encouragement for Recovery***

Recovering from burnout is undoubtedly challenging, but it's important to remember that it is possible. Keep some things in mind on your recovery journey.

## ***Resilience***

Remember that your ability to face this challenge demonstrates resilience and strength. Recovery is a journey and a process that builds even more resilience over time. Don't give up!

## ***Support:***

You're not alone, though it can feel extremely isolating. Seeking support from friends, family, or professionals is a brave and effective step.

## ***Self-Care:***

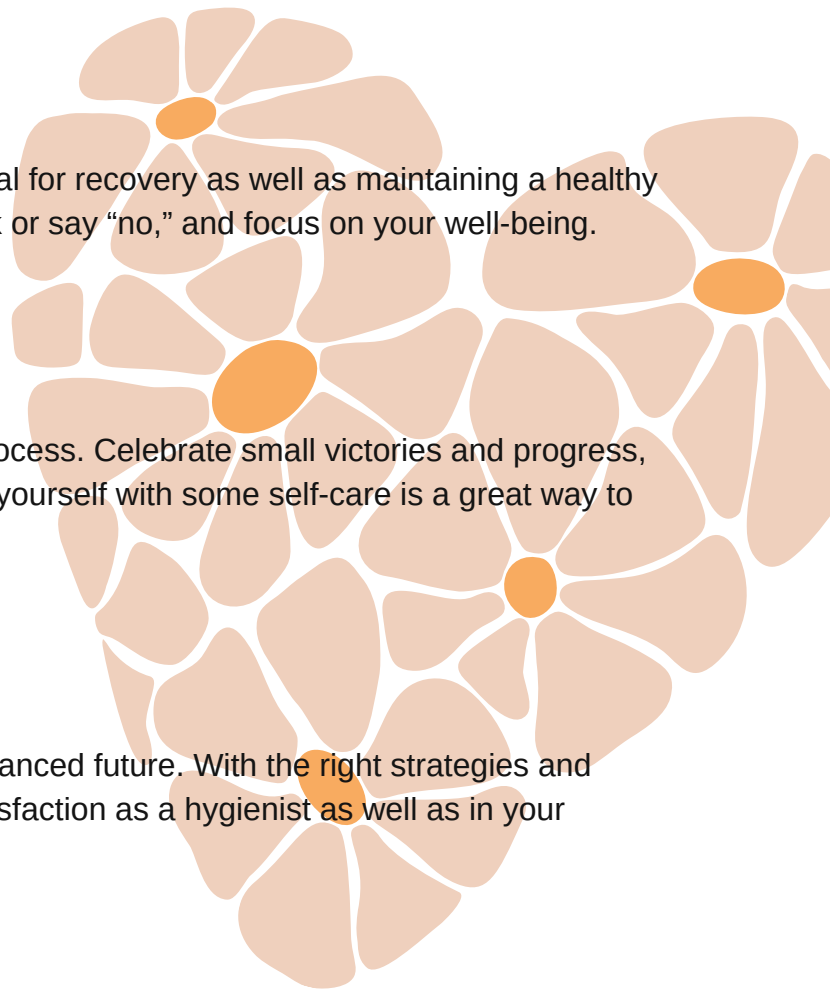
Prioritizing self-care is not selfish; it's essential for recovery as well as maintaining a healthy lifestyle balance. It's okay to take a step back or say “no,” and focus on your well-being.

## ***Small Steps:***

Recovery doesn't happen overnight- it's a process. Celebrate small victories and progress, no matter how minor they seem. Rewarding yourself with some self-care is a great way to encourage and love yourself.

## ***Hope***

There is always hope for a brighter, more balanced future. With the right strategies and support, you can rediscover passion and satisfaction as a hygienist as well as in your personal life.





# ***“RECOVERING” from Burnout***

*“Nobody’s perfect, so give yourself credit for everything you’re doing right and be kind to yourself when you struggle”.*

*-Lori Deschene*

# ***A Hygienist's Burnout Story***

Hindsight is often said to be 20/20, and I can attest to that. As I look back now knowing the signs of burnout, I can trace its beginnings to around 5-6 years ago. It wasn't a persistent state of exhaustion and social withdrawal; instead, it manifested in episodic waves. These waves were marked by random outbursts, moments of utter exhaustion, and an overwhelming sense of antisocial behavior. To be honest, I chalked it up to getting older.

Now, let's fast forward to 2020, a year that will be remembered for many reasons. Burnout became widespread, especially among healthcare workers. Dental hygienists were identified as the #1 highest-risk group by Business Insider magazine during the early months of the pandemic. Due to the shortage of hygienists, I agreed to work assisted hygiene (double-column scheduling). However, with my personal concerns about COVID and the added stress of wearing PPE, I was on overdrive.

In addition to the pandemic and the challenges of long, demanding days in hygiene, I was dealing with health issues. My inflammatory markers were elevated, leading to a diet limited to just 30 foods at one point. Then, after a weekend of skateboarding and learning a new trick that required weighting my wrist, I lost mobility in my left wrist. Subsequently, my right wrist, ankles, knees, and neck followed suit. I could hardly perform daily tasks, and even simple activities like cooking or putting my hair in a ponytail became difficult. This lasted for a year, but left me with limited joint mobility.

During this period, I grappled with identity issues. I mourned the loss of the person I once identified as, as I could no longer engage in activities like skateboarding, rock climbing, or running. Swimming and yoga were also challenging, and even snowboarding, my one solace, became painful.

As the pandemic eased, my husband and I ventured into the world of entrepreneurship. I had the opportunity to work my dream hygiene job for three days a week, but those days were long, starting at 7 am and ending after 5 pm with short lunches. After such days, I often had a list of things to do for our start-up company. On my non-hygiene days, I would work 12-16 hour days- it's no wonder I couldn't see straight.

Subsequently, I returned to assisted hygiene and took on additional responsibilities, which came with a substantial raise. However, I was never able to capitalize on it because the very next week I hit burnout and experienced a mental breakdown. It took me about a month to start recovering, both physically and mentally. Over the previous years, I had become increasingly reclusive due to COVID, so the isolation felt oddly comforting. I never wanted to leave the comfort of home especially since I had developed a very noticeable twitch.

But gradually, I mustered the courage to engage in activities again like snowboarding. I also ventured out to meet a friend I had connected with on Instagram. I even auditioned for a snowboarding role in a commercial for a renowned ski/snowboarding company and got the part. Through very deliberate efforts to climb out of the burnout hole, I slowly emerged. I practiced bilateral tapping, listened to bilateral stimulation music, and devoted hours to EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing) therapy. Most importantly, I spent time with myself, offering encouragement, repeating positive affirmations, meditating, and providing my body with what it needed when it needed it.

Today, I continue to start my mornings with stillness through yoga and breathwork. I engage in positive self-talk (I actually talk out loud to myself as if I were talking to a friend), reassuring my body that it's doing well and promising to be more receptive to its needs. Sometimes, I even give myself a hug because I deserve it. My journey to healing continues, and although I'm not fully recovered, I've come a long way.

So, to kick off the "Reinforcing" chapter of this journal, we'll begin by exploring the various types of burnout. Afterward, you'll have the opportunity to complete a Burnout Self-Identification quiz. I encourage you to revisit this list and the various assessments provided in the journal to track/assess your position in your own burnout journey.

## ***Common Types of Burnout***

**Work-Related Burnout:** This is the most common type of burnout and occurs as a result of chronic workplace stressors. It can manifest as physical and emotional exhaustion, reduced job satisfaction, and decreased performance. Work-related burnout often leads to feelings of being overwhelmed and drained due to work demands.

**Academic Burnout:** Academic burnout is prevalent among students and educators. It arises from the pressure of academic performance, exams, deadlines, and educational demands. Symptoms include fatigue, decreased motivation to study, and a sense of hopelessness regarding academic success.

**Caring Professions Burnout:** Professionals in caregiving roles, such as healthcare workers and social workers, may experience burnout due to the emotional demands of their jobs. This type of burnout can result in compassion fatigue, where individuals become emotionally exhausted from caring for others.

**Parental Burnout:** Parents can also experience burnout as a result of the demands of parenting. It includes feelings of exhaustion, emotional strain, and reduced satisfaction in parenting roles. Balancing work, family, and personal life can contribute to parental burnout.

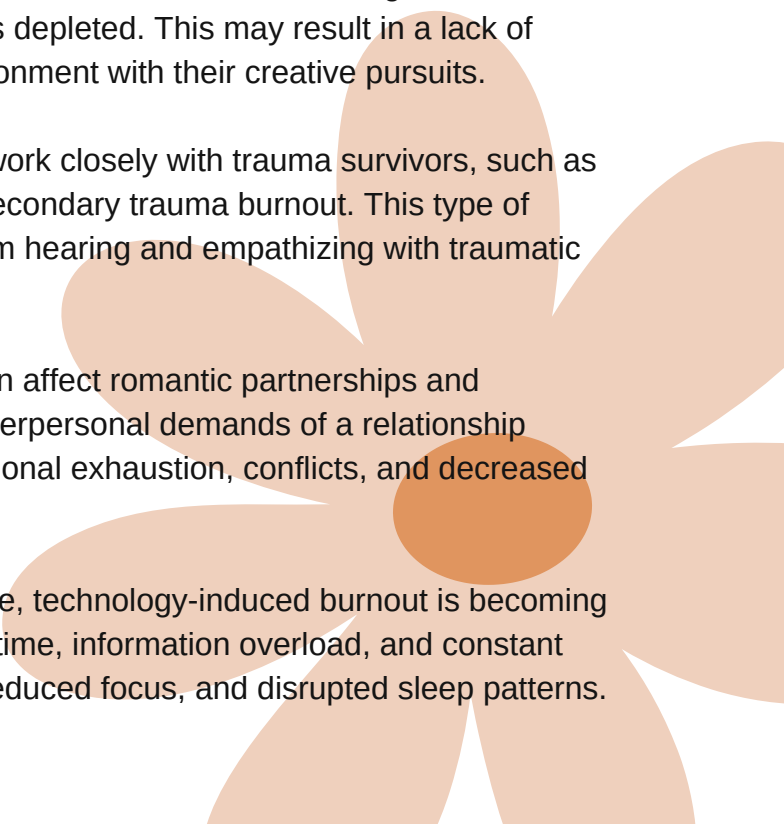
**Entrepreneurial Burnout:** Entrepreneurs and small business owners are susceptible to burnout due to the stress of managing a business. Symptoms include long working hours, financial pressure, and a sense of isolation. Entrepreneurs may struggle to disconnect from work.

**Creative Burnout:** Creative professionals, such as artists, writers, and designers, can experience burnout when their creative energy is depleted. This may result in a lack of inspiration, artistic block, and feelings of disillusionment with their creative pursuits.

**Secondary Trauma Burnout:** Individuals who work closely with trauma survivors, such as therapists or first responders, may experience secondary trauma burnout. This type of burnout is characterized by vicarious trauma from hearing and empathizing with traumatic experiences.

**Relationship Burnout:** Relationship burnout can affect romantic partnerships and friendships. It occurs when the emotional and interpersonal demands of a relationship become overwhelming. Symptoms include emotional exhaustion, conflicts, and decreased satisfaction in the relationship.

**Technology-Induced Burnout:** In the digital age, technology-induced burnout is becoming more common. It results from excessive screen time, information overload, and constant connectivity. Symptoms include digital fatigue, reduced focus, and disrupted sleep patterns.



# ***Burnout Self-Identification***

Answer each question honestly; write your scores in the colored circle at the end of each question. After completing the quiz, calculate your total score by adding up the points for each question and write it in the large colored bubble for each section. The higher your total score, the more likely you may be experiencing burnout in the corresponding area.

I encourage you to spend some time at the end of the quiz to reflect on the areas you scored highest in. Can you identify some root causes? What are some solutions that may help to alleviate some of the symptoms around your burnout?

SCORING:

- 1: Never
- 2: Rarely
- 3: Sometimes
- 4: Often
- 5: Always

## ***Work-Related Burnout:***

I often feel overwhelmed by my workload.



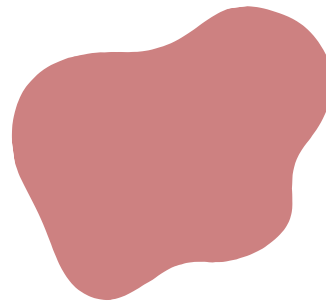
I struggle to maintain a work-life balance.



I frequently experience job-related stress.



I find it challenging to stay motivated at work.



## ***Parental Burnout:***

Balancing my work and family responsibilities is a constant struggle.



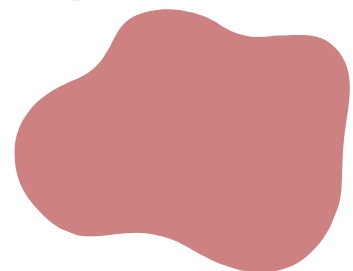
I often feel emotionally drained due to parenting demands.



I have little time for self-care or relaxation.



I sometimes feel disconnected from my children or family.



# ***Burnout Self-Identification Continued***

## ***Academic Burnout:***

I frequently experience stress related to my academic performance.

Preparing for exams or assignments feels overwhelming.

I have lost motivation for my academic goals.

I often procrastinate on academic tasks.

## ***Relationship Burnout:***

I frequently experience conflicts or tension in my relationships.

Maintaining healthy relationships feels challenging.

I feel emotionally drained after interacting with certain people.

I often avoid social interactions due to relationship stress.

## ***Technology-Induced Burnout:***

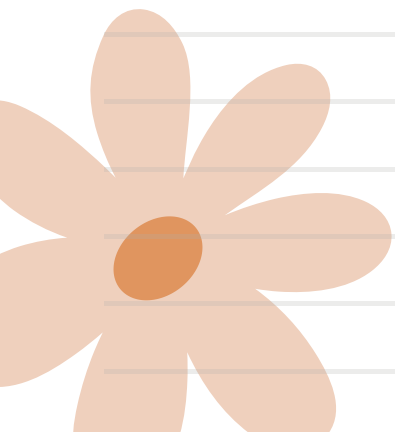
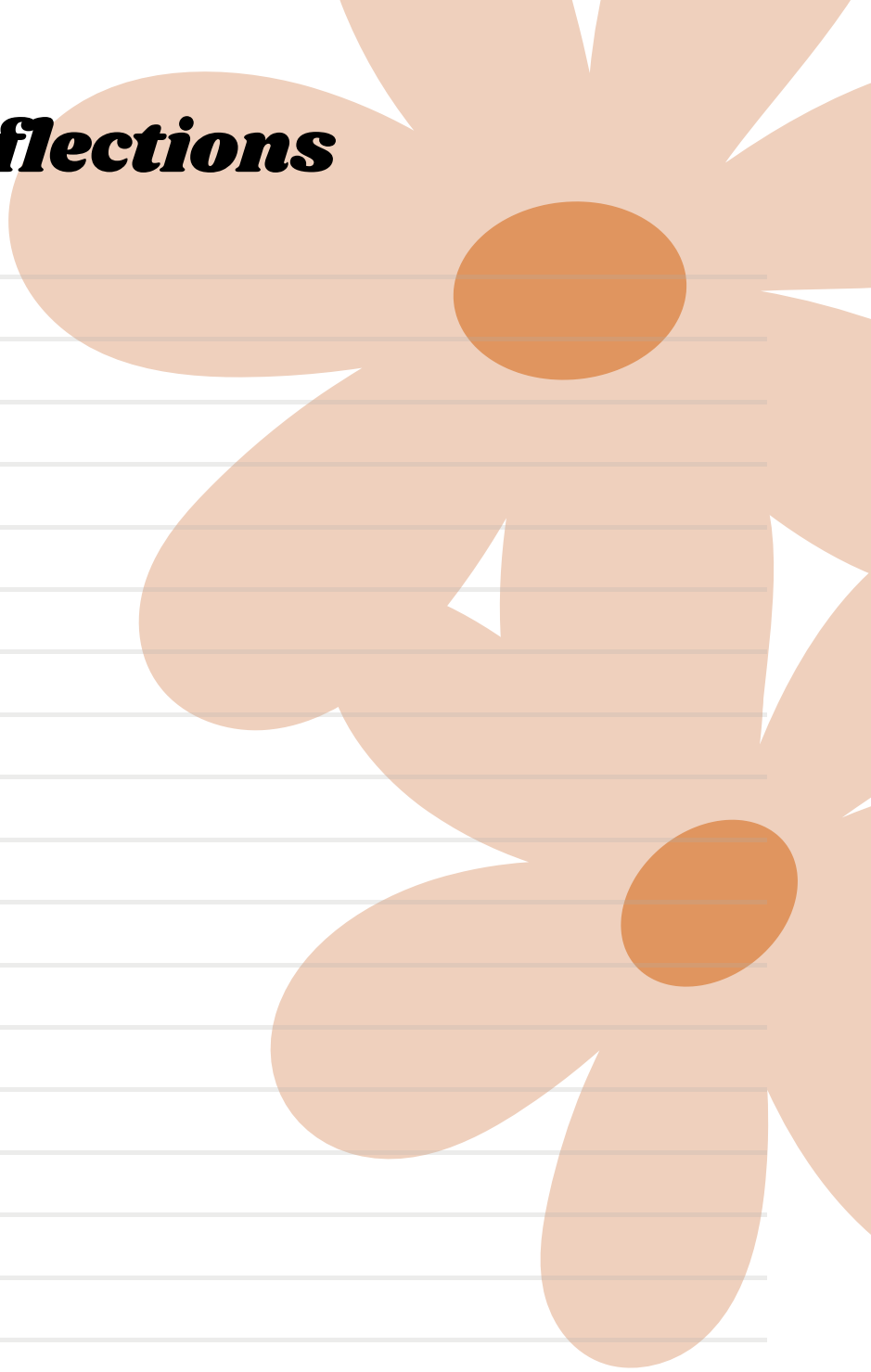
I spend excessive time on digital devices or social media.

Constant connectivity through technology has affected my well-being.

I often feel distracted by notifications and online content.

I struggle to disconnect from technology and find offline enjoyment.

# ***Reflections***



A series of horizontal grey lines providing a writing area for reflections.

# ***“RECOVERING”***

## ***Daily Reflections***

***"It's the small wins on the long journey that we need in order to keep our confidence, joy and motivation alive". -Unknown***

***Date/Day***



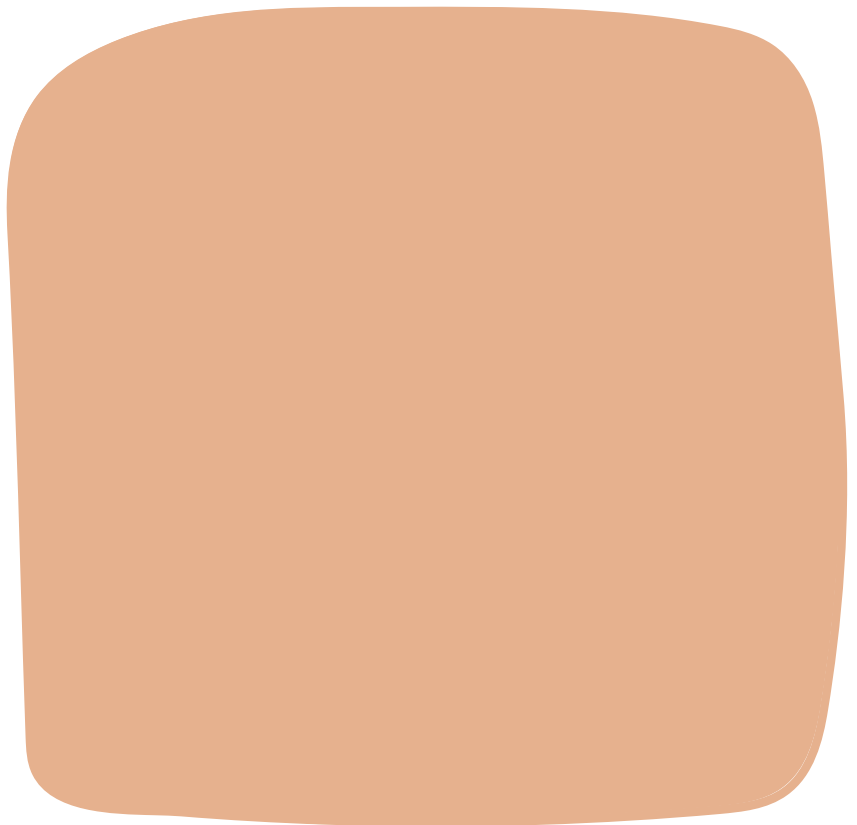
***Energy Level***



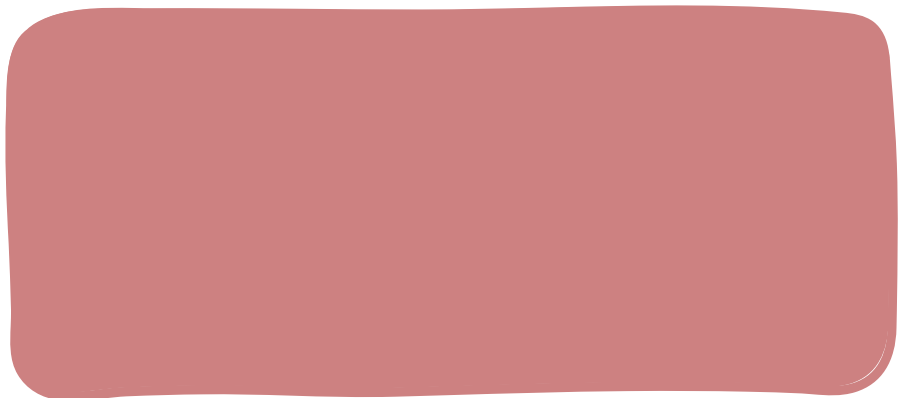
***Full Charged***

***Running on Fumes***

***Daily Goals***



***Daily Mantra/Focus***



# ***Mood & Stress Tracker***

***Today, I feel...***

***Today, I felt...***

## ***Noting Stressors***

***I feel stressed about...***

***Things that stressed me out today...***

## ***Decompression Techniques to Focus On***

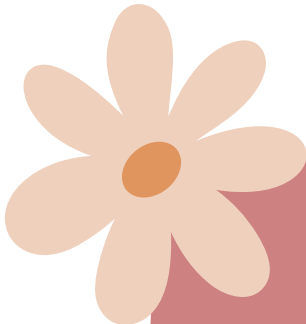
**1.**

**2.**

**3.**

## ***Self-Care Reminders***

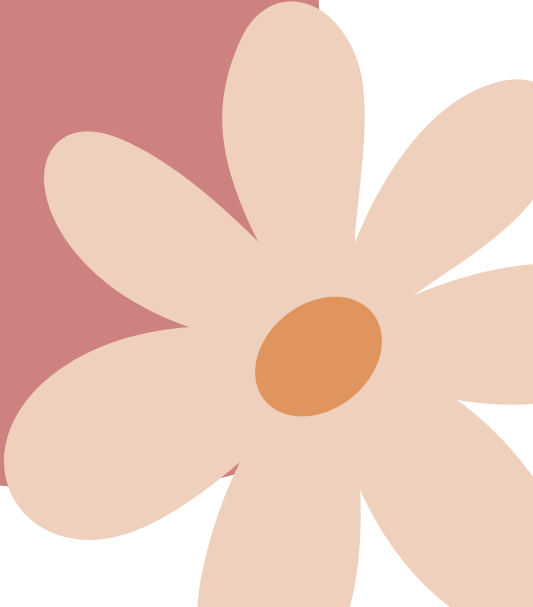
# ***Daily Wins***



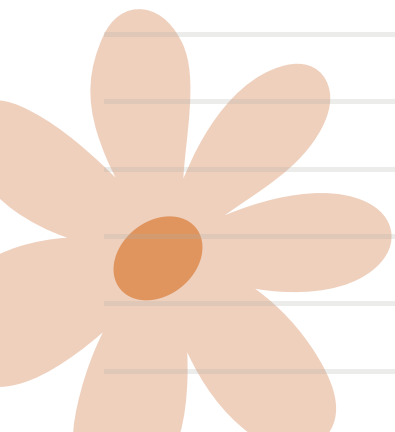
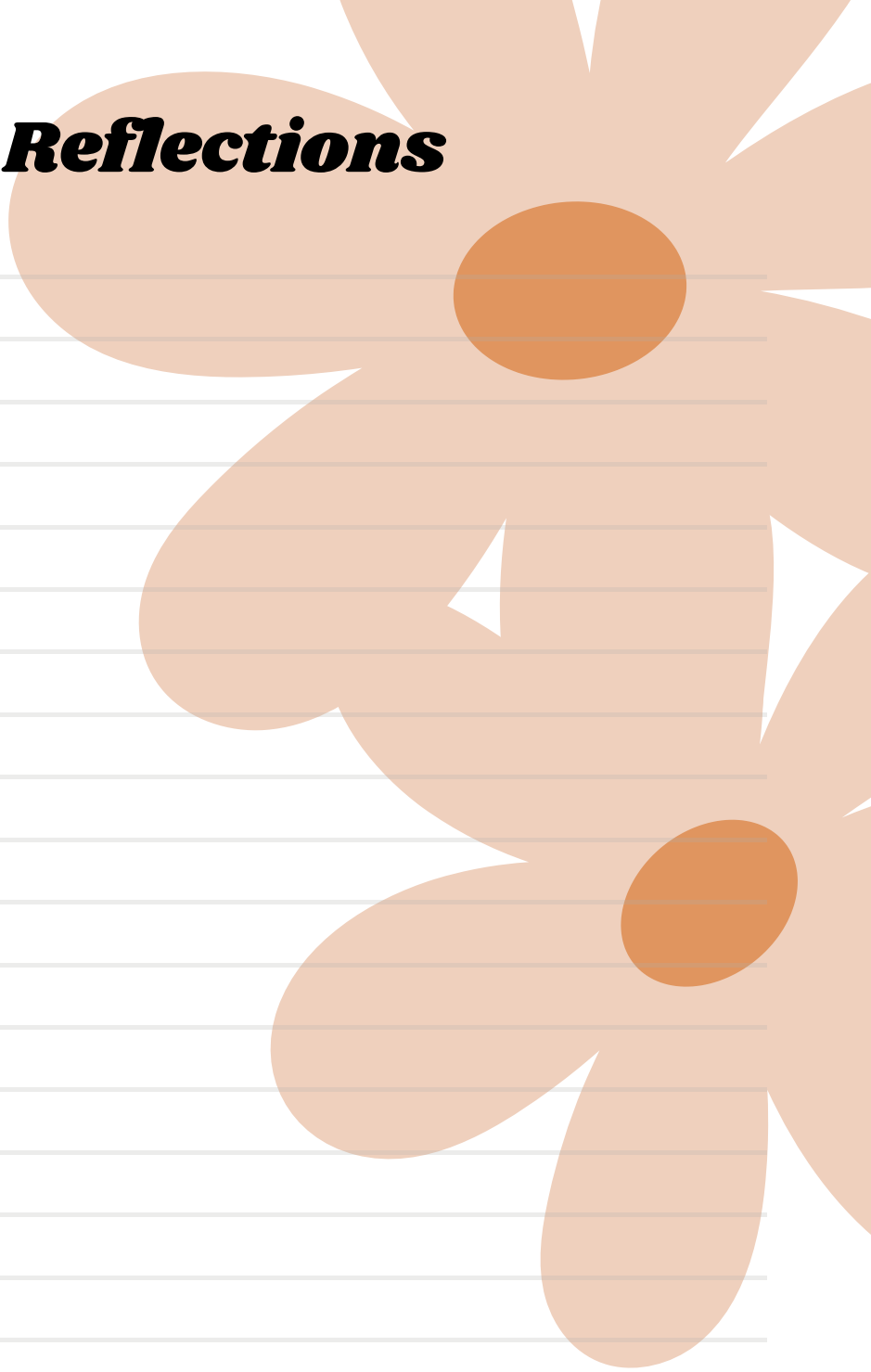
1.

2.

3.



# ***Daily Reflections***



A series of horizontal grey lines providing a writing area for daily reflections.

# ***“RECOVERING”***

## ***Weekly Self-Care Plan***

***“Self-care is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation”.***  
***-Audre Lorde***

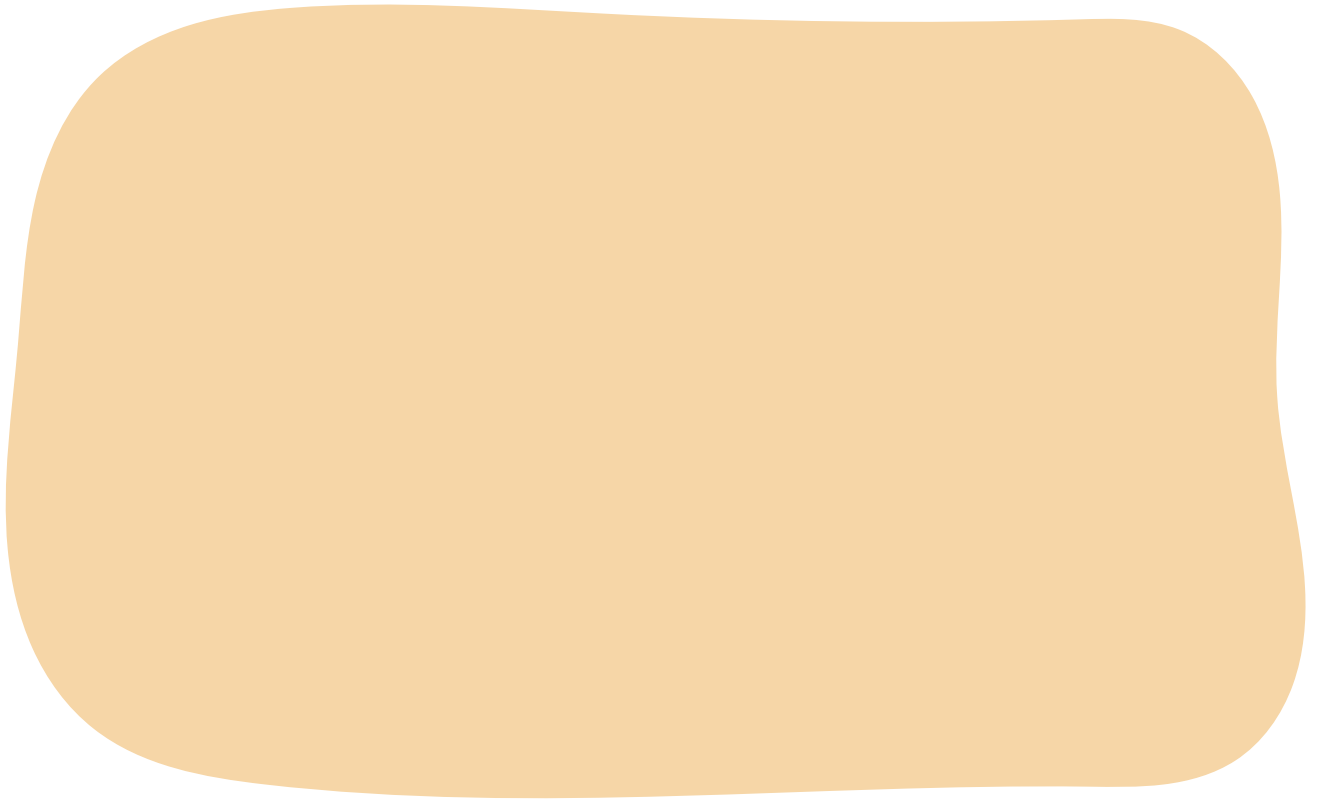
## ***My Weekly Goals***

A large, solid orange rounded rectangle with a soft gradient, intended for writing weekly goals.

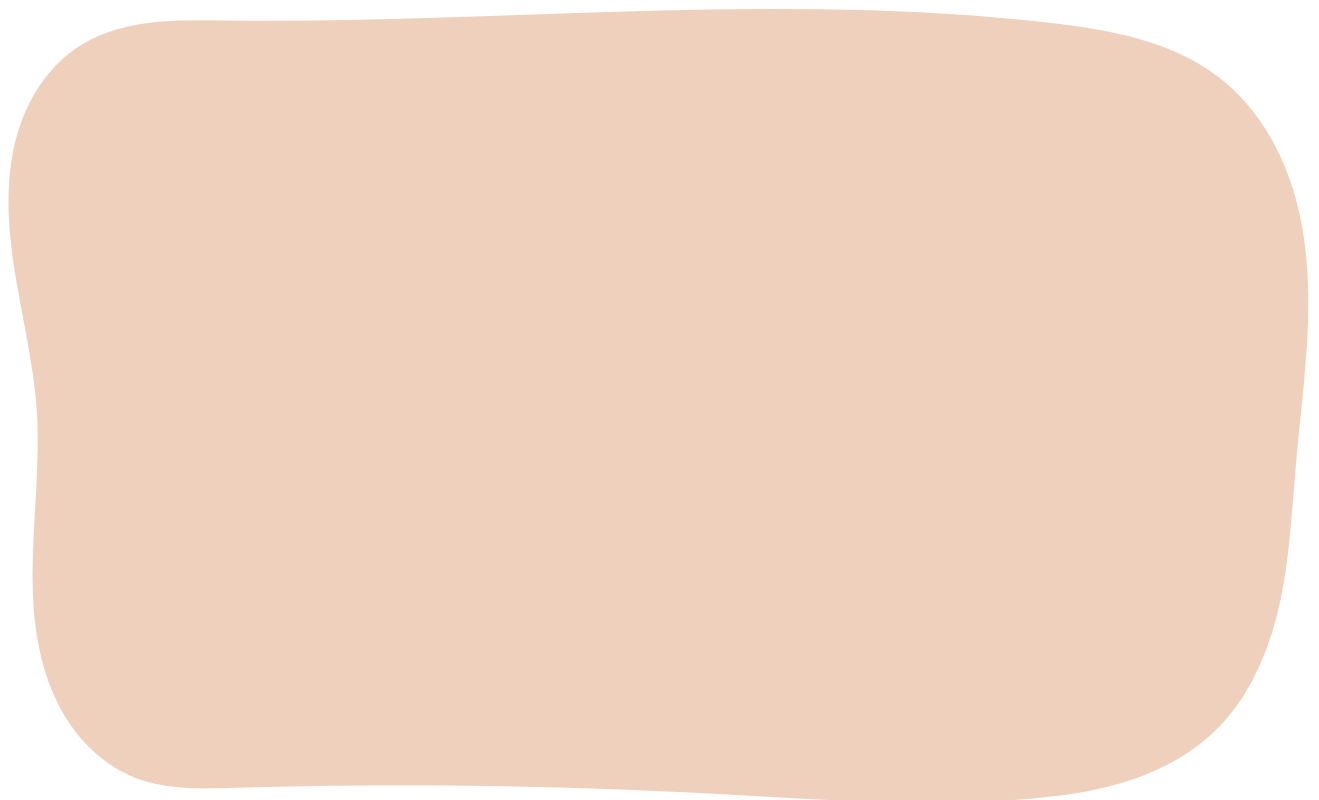
## ***My Weekly Mantra/Focus***

A smaller, solid orange rounded rectangle with a soft gradient, intended for writing a weekly mantra or focus.

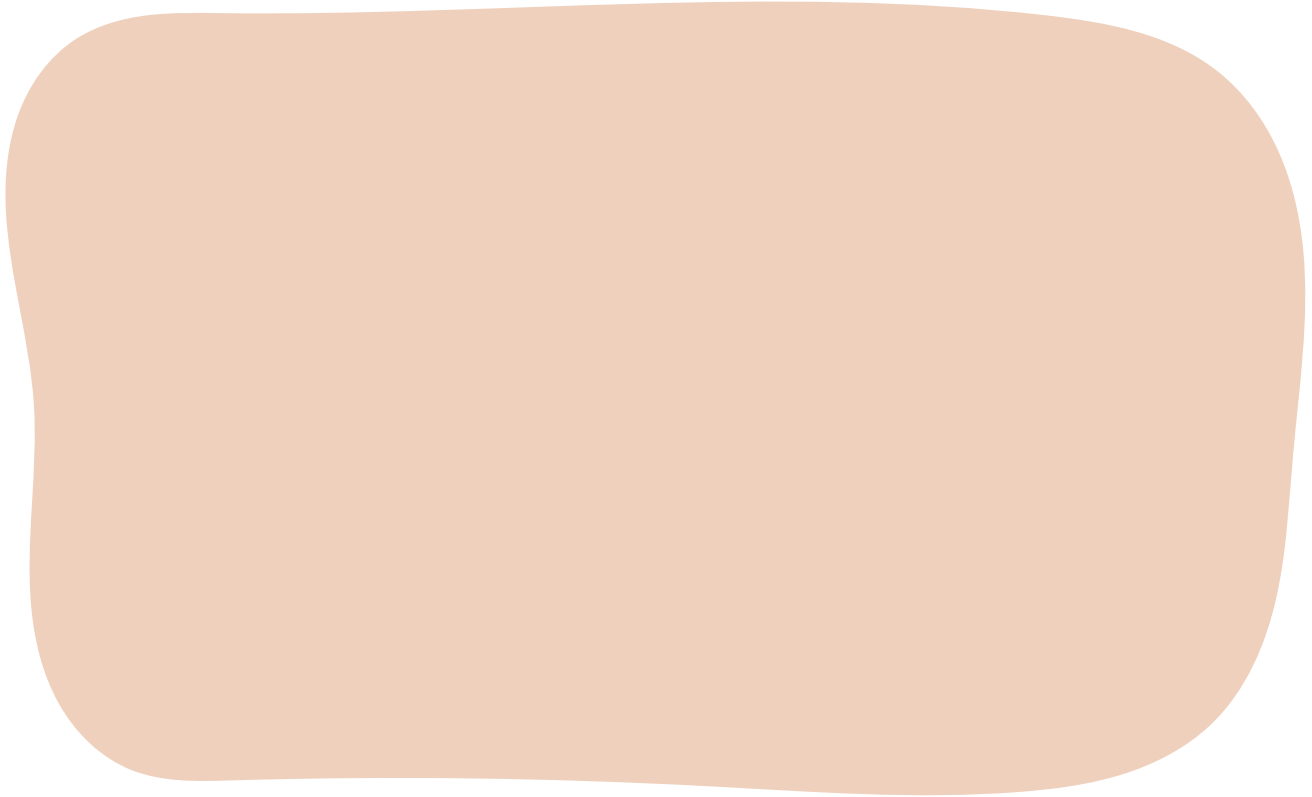
## ***Physical Wellness Goals***



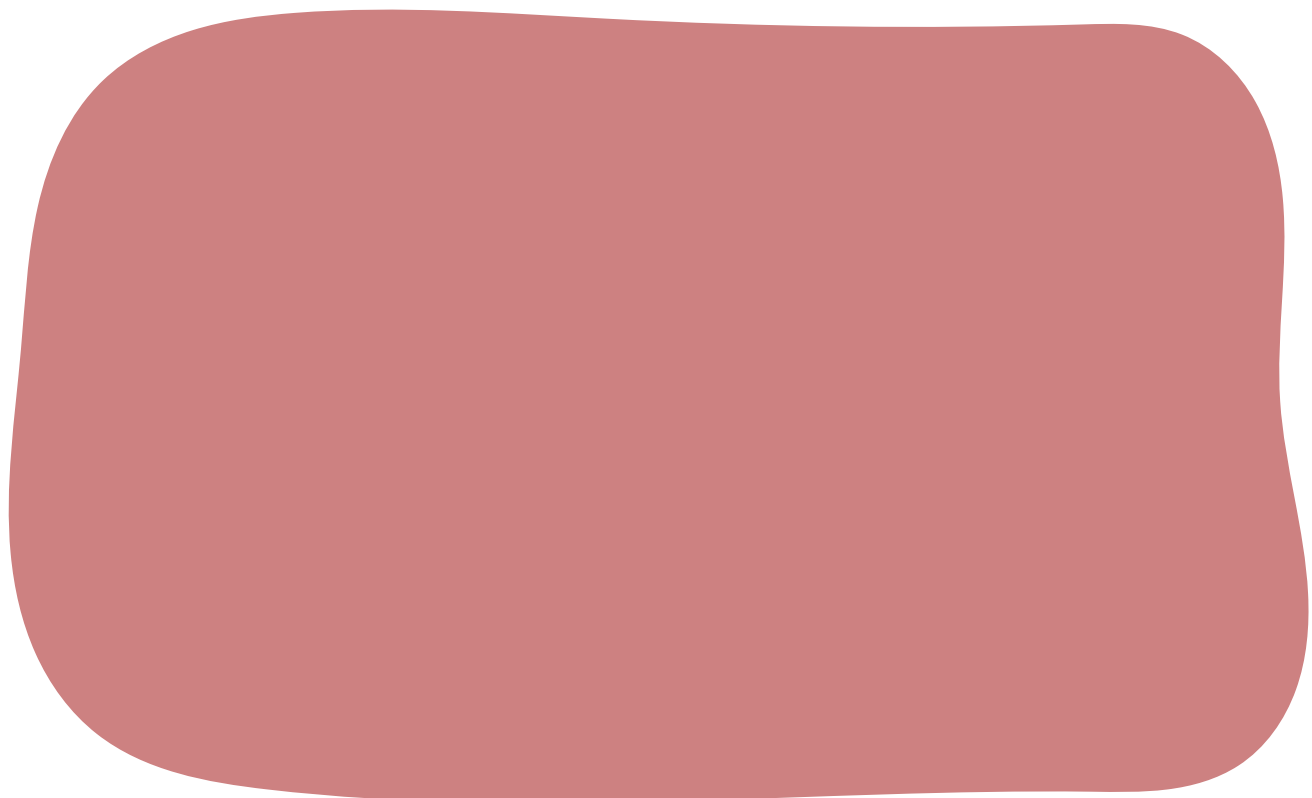
## ***Emotional Wellness/Self-Care Goals***



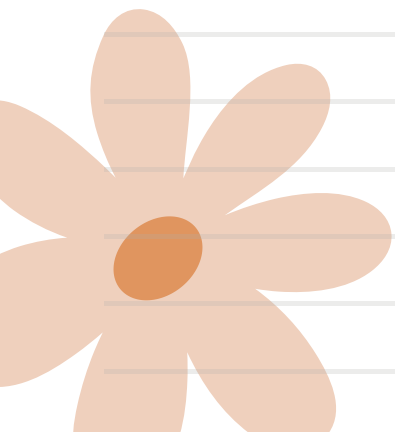
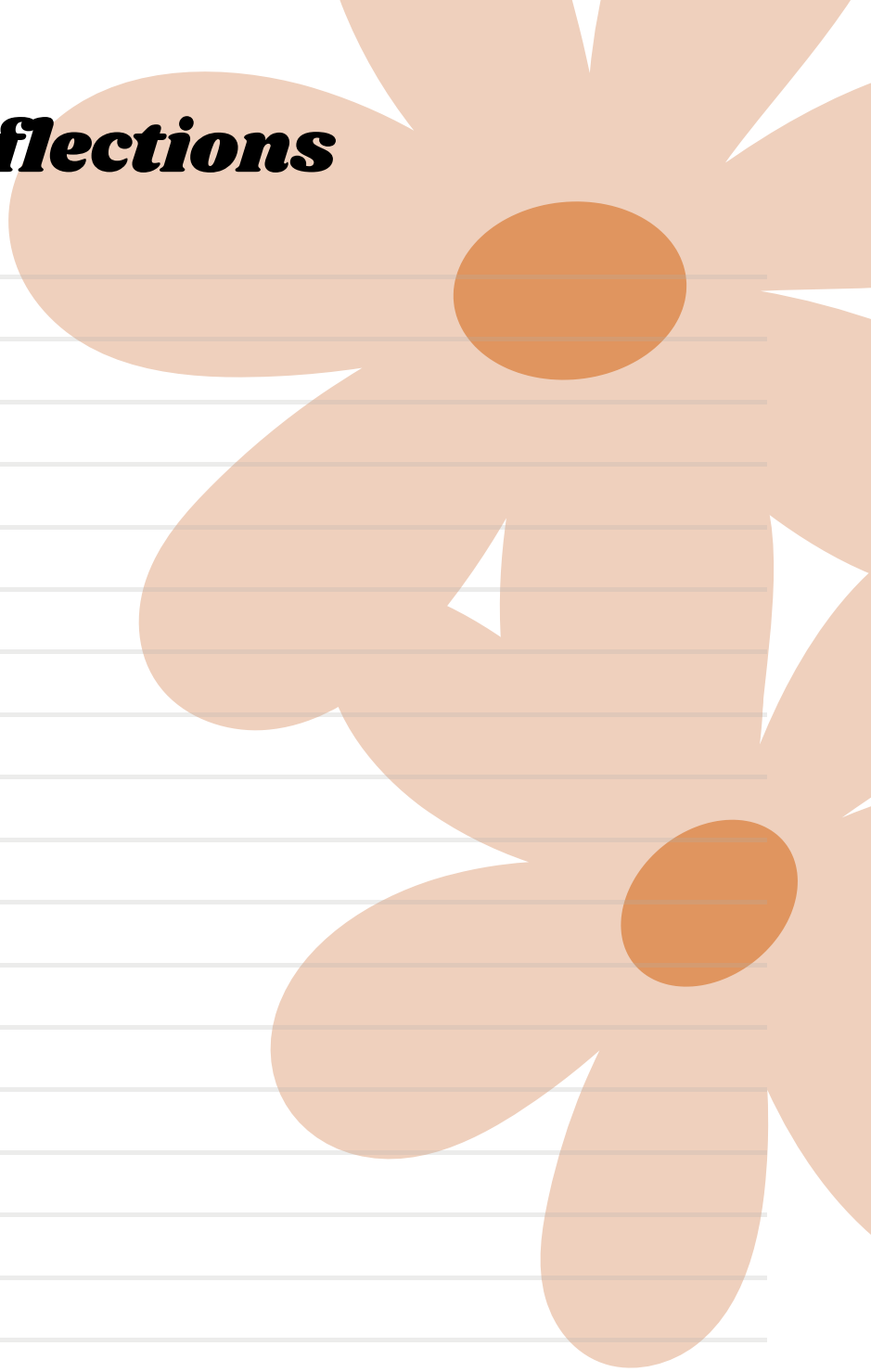
## ***Mental Wellness Goals***



## ***Social/Leisure Goals***



# ***Reflections***



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# ***“RECOVERING”***

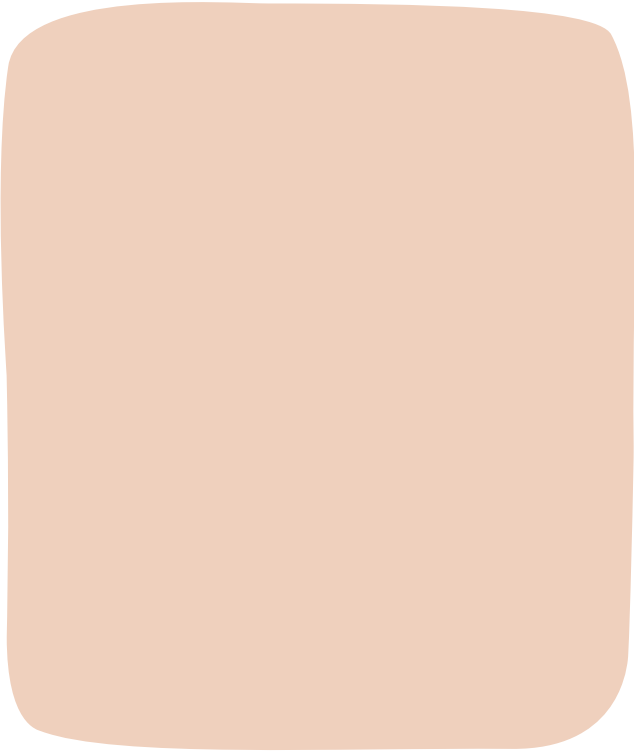
## ***Weekly Review***

***“Accept yourself, love yourself, and keep moving forward. If you want to fly, you have to give up what weighs you down”.***

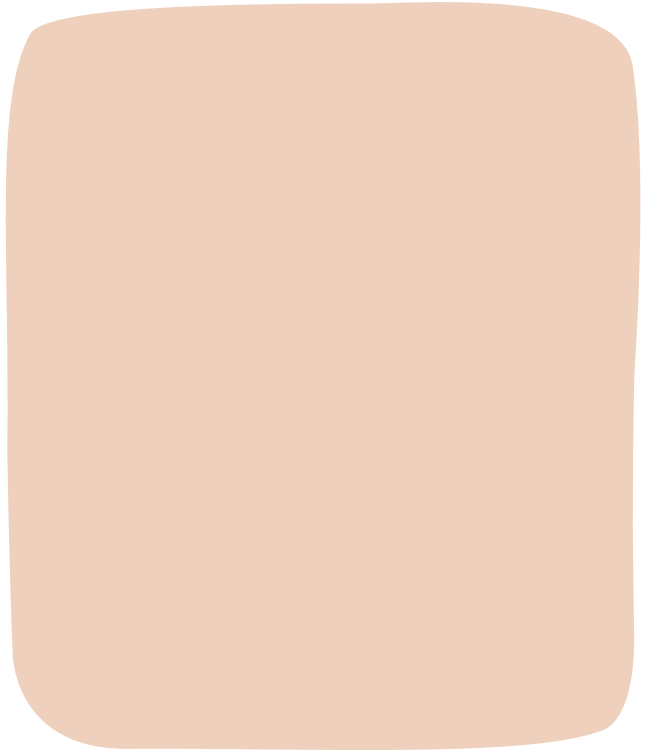
***-Roy T. Bennett***

# ***Summary of My Week***

## ***My Achievements***



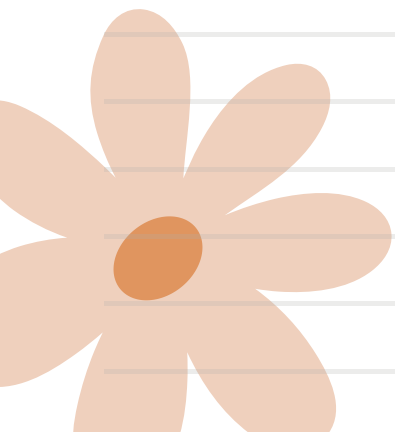
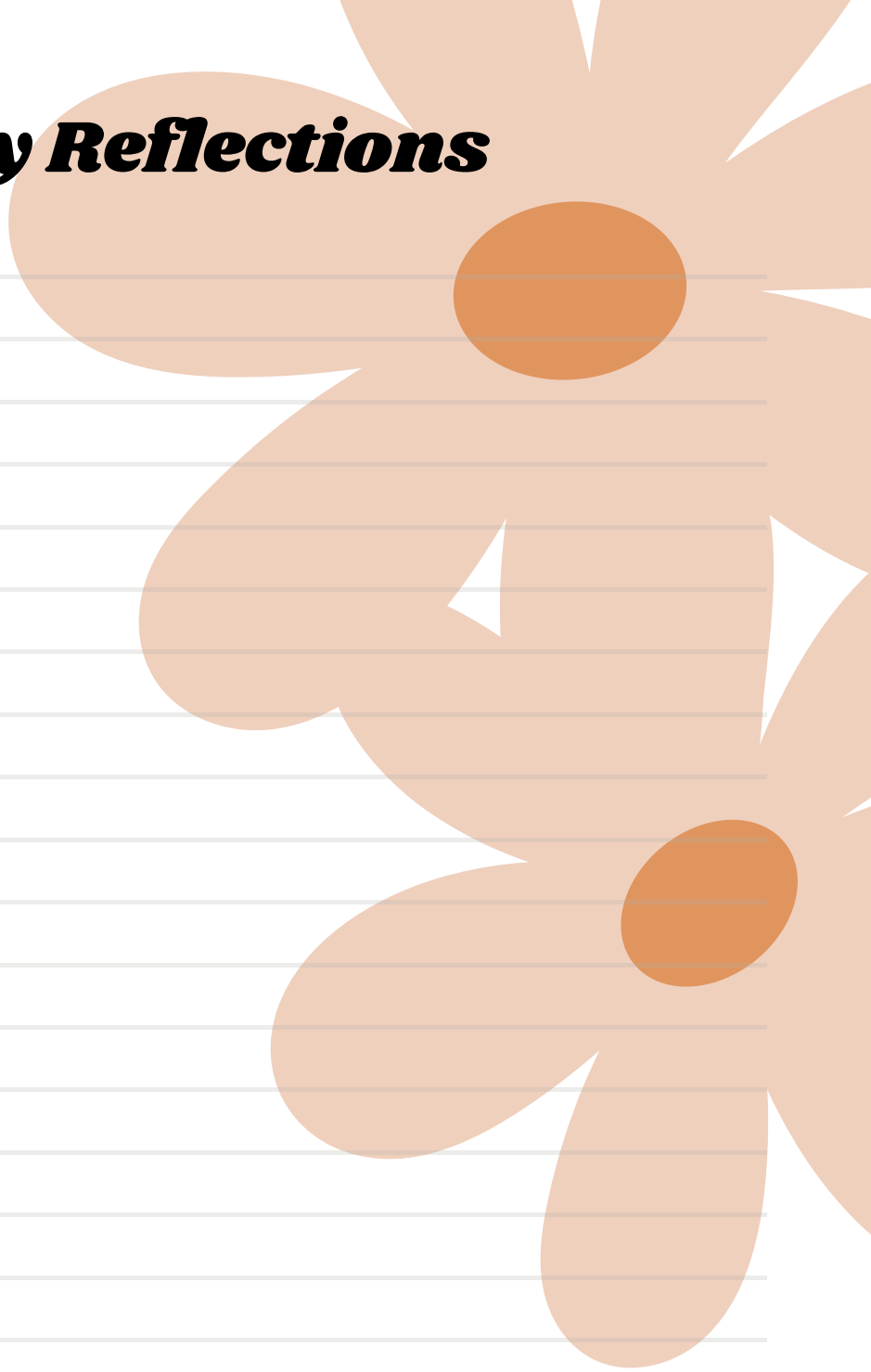
## ***My Challenges***



## ***Work-Life Balance Assessment***

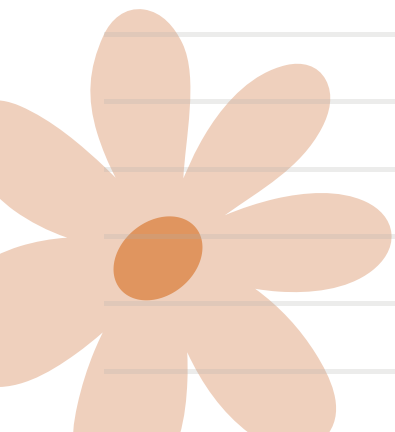
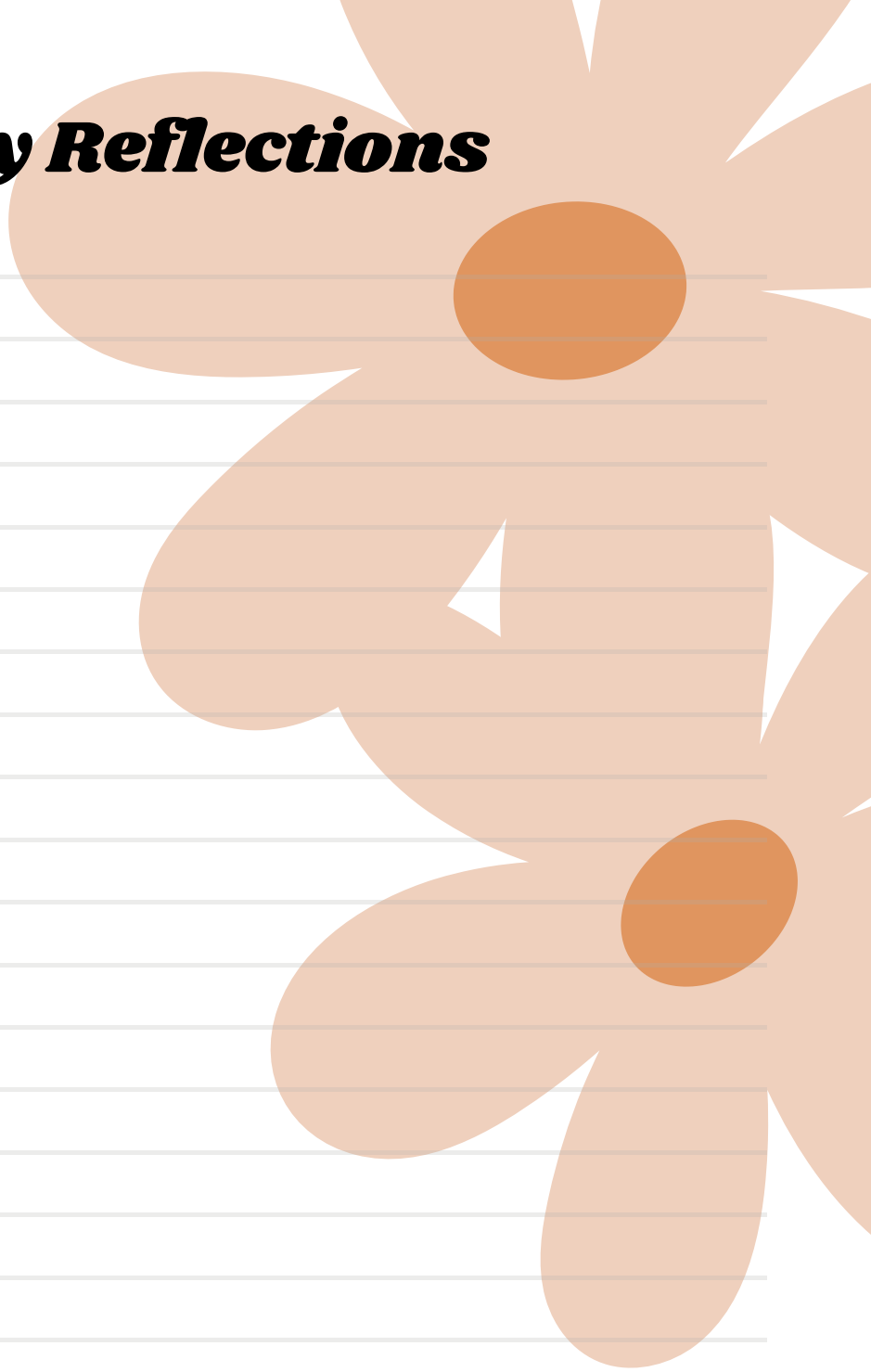


# ***Weekly Reflections***



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# ***Weekly Reflections***



A series of horizontal grey lines providing a writing area for reflections.



***“REINFORCING”  
Habits to  
Prevent Burnout***

*“Motivation is what gets you started.  
Habit is what keeps you going”. -Jim Ruyen*

## ***Note from the Creator***

Well-being is comprised of three distinct elements: physical, mental, and emotional. Picture it as a three-legged stool; if you remove one leg, the stool becomes unstable. The journey of recovering from burnout and reinforcing healthy habits is a daily challenge. By addressing each element daily, you can significantly enhance your chances of success.

One question I often ask myself when feeling stressed or anxious is, "Does my current level of stress serve me at this moment? Will I remember this incident tomorrow, in a month, or a year from now?" Typically, the answer is no; I won't remember it. But you know who will remember this level of stress? My body. And it's not worth subjecting myself to a lifetime of chronic stress, illness, or, dare I say, rapid aging.

I encourage you to develop your own set of questions to pose to yourself when you find yourself pushed to the limit. Does this serve your best interests? How will this particular incident impact your current and future quality of life?

# ***Stress Management Techniques for RDH's***

Stress management is a very personal journey, and it may take time to find the techniques that work best for you. Here is an extensive list of different techniques that can help to manage stress and improve overall well-being. I encourage you to go through the list and highlight specific techniques that interest you and that could easily be incorporated into your daily routine. Write them in your journal ("Recovery- Decompression Techniques to Focus On), as an added reminder to slow down and prioritize yourself.

**Mindfulness Meditation:** Practice mindfulness meditation to stay present and reduce stress. It can help you manage anxiety and improve focus during patient appointments.

**Deep Breathing Exercises:** Incorporate deep breathing exercises into your daily routine. Deep, slow breaths can calm the nervous system and reduce tension.

**Time Management:** Use effective time management techniques to prioritize tasks and create a structured schedule. This can reduce the feeling of being overwhelmed.

**Regular Breaks/Micro-Breaks:** Take short breaks between appointments to relax, stretch, and recharge. Even a few minutes can make a significant difference in managing stress. P.S. It's OKAY to run a couple minutes late.

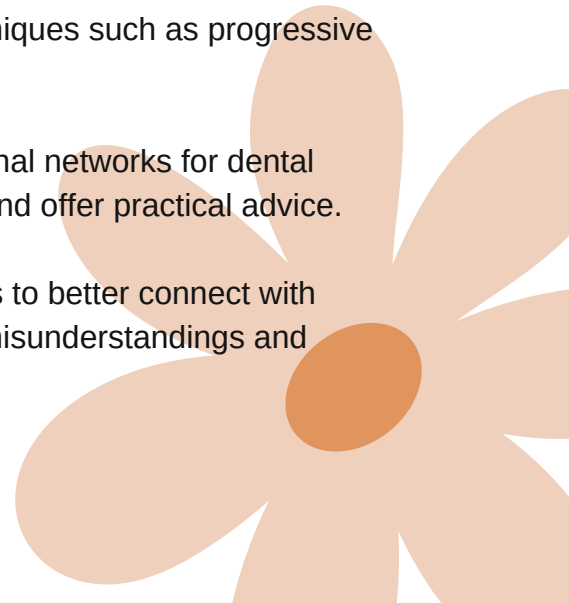
**Self-Care Rituals:** Develop self-care rituals that you can practice before or after work. This may include activities like reading, taking a warm bath, or practicing a hobby.

**Physical Exercise:** Engage in regular physical exercise to release endorphins and reduce stress. Even a short walk during breaks can be beneficial.

**Stress-Reduction Techniques:** Explore stress-reduction techniques such as progressive muscle relaxation or biofeedback to manage physical tension.

**Support Groups:** Consider joining support groups or professional networks for dental hygienists. Sharing experiences with peers can be comforting and offer practical advice.

**Effective Communication:** Enhance your communication skills to better connect with patients and colleagues. Effective communication can reduce misunderstandings and stress.



# ***Stress Management Techniques Continued***



**Healthy Nutrition:** Maintain a balanced diet and stay hydrated. Proper nutrition can positively impact your energy levels and overall well-being.

**Sleep Hygiene:** Prioritize quality sleep by following good sleep hygiene practices. A well-rested mind and body are better equipped to handle stress.

**Seek Supervision & Support:** If you experience burnout or excessive stress, seek supervision or support from a mental health professional who specializes in healthcare-related stress.

**Set Boundaries:** Establish clear boundaries between work and personal life. Avoid bringing work-related stress home whenever possible.

**Positive Affirmations:** Use positive affirmations to boost your self-esteem and resilience. Repeating affirmations can promote a positive mindset.

**Learn Stress Coping Strategies:** Educate yourself on stress coping strategies and implement them in your daily life. This may include problem-solving techniques and resilience-building exercises.

**Mindful Eating:** Practice mindful eating by savoring your meals and paying attention to the sensations of taste, texture, and aroma. This can be a calming experience.

**Organize Workspace:** Keep your workspace organized and clutter-free. A tidy environment can reduce visual stressors.

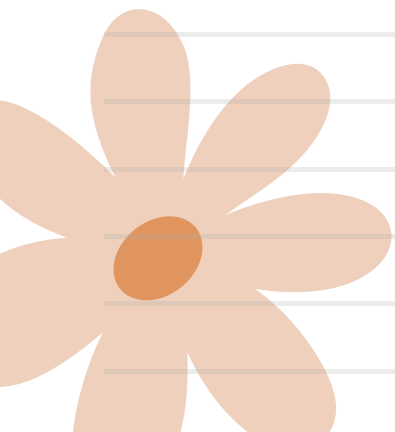
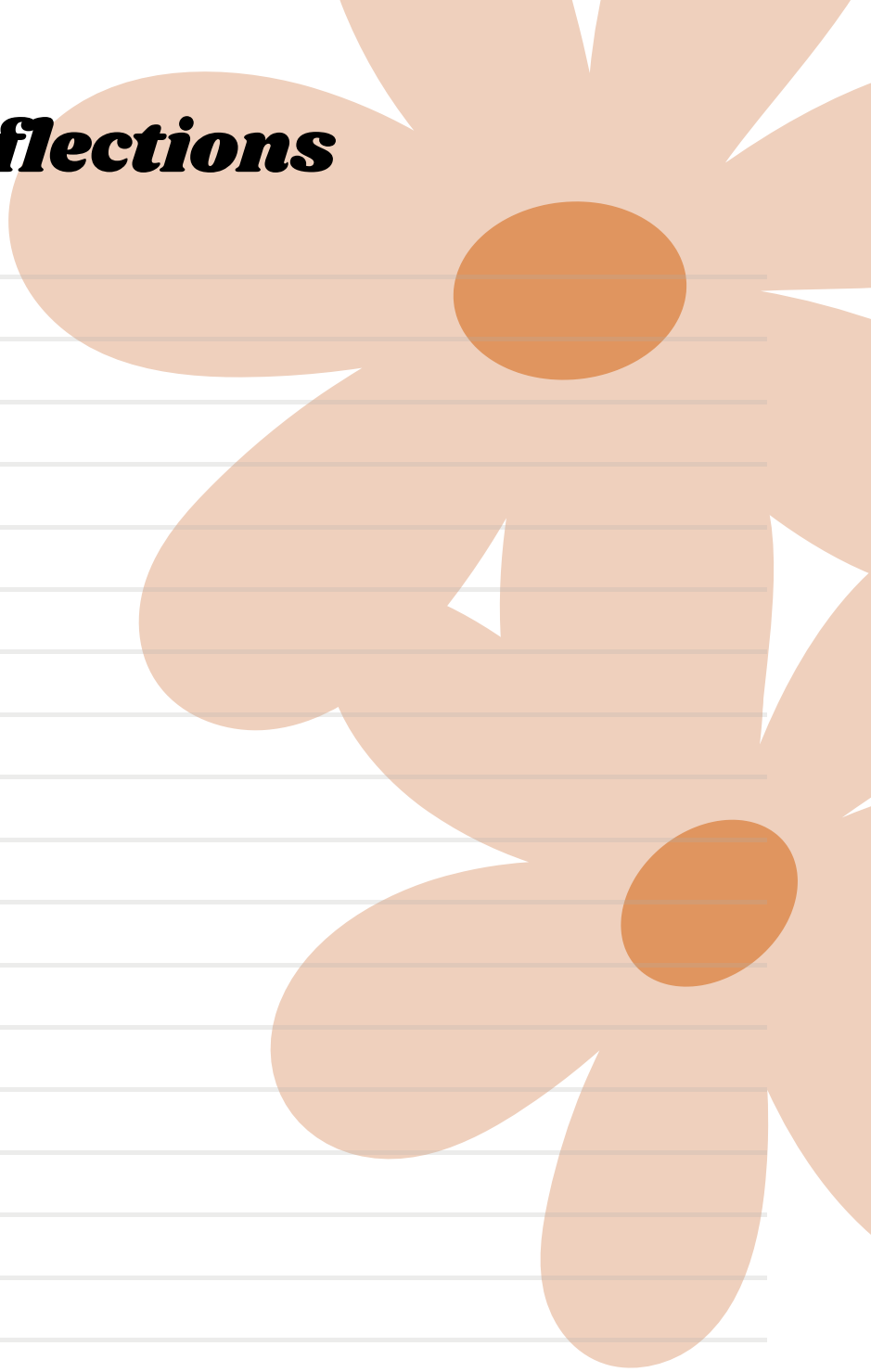
**Gratitude Journal:** Maintain a gratitude journal to reflect on positive aspects of your work and life. Expressing gratitude can boost your mood.

**Relaxation Techniques:** Learn relaxation techniques such as progressive muscle relaxation or guided imagery to unwind after a challenging day.

**Professional Development:** Invest in your professional development by attending workshops and courses related to dental hygiene. Expanding your skills can increase your confidence and reduce job-related stress.

***Remember to give yourself grace- you're establishing a new life-style.***

# ***Reflections***



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# ***Ergonomic Considerations***

Did you know that over 94% of dental professionals suffer from musculoskeletal disorders (MSD's)? Chronic pain and discomfort are extremely taxing over time and can play a role in burnout. I encourage you to go through the list and highlight specific tips that interest you and that could easily be incorporated into your work routine. Keep these ergonomic considerations in mind while practicing in the op as well as in your daily life.

**Proper Seating:** Invest in an ergonomic dental chair with adjustable features to support a neutral posture. Ensure that your feet can rest flat on the floor or a footrest.

**Maintain a Neutral Posture:** Position yourself so that your back is straight, and your shoulders are relaxed. Avoid hunching over patients.

**Use Loupes and Adequate Lighting:** Wear magnification loupes to reduce the need to lean forward. Ensure proper lighting to minimize eye strain.

**Adjustable Instruments and Equipment:** Use dental instruments and equipment with adjustable settings to accommodate your posture and reach comfortably.

**Chairside Assistant Support:** If available, utilize chairside assistants to help with equipment adjustments, reducing the need for repetitive bending and reaching.

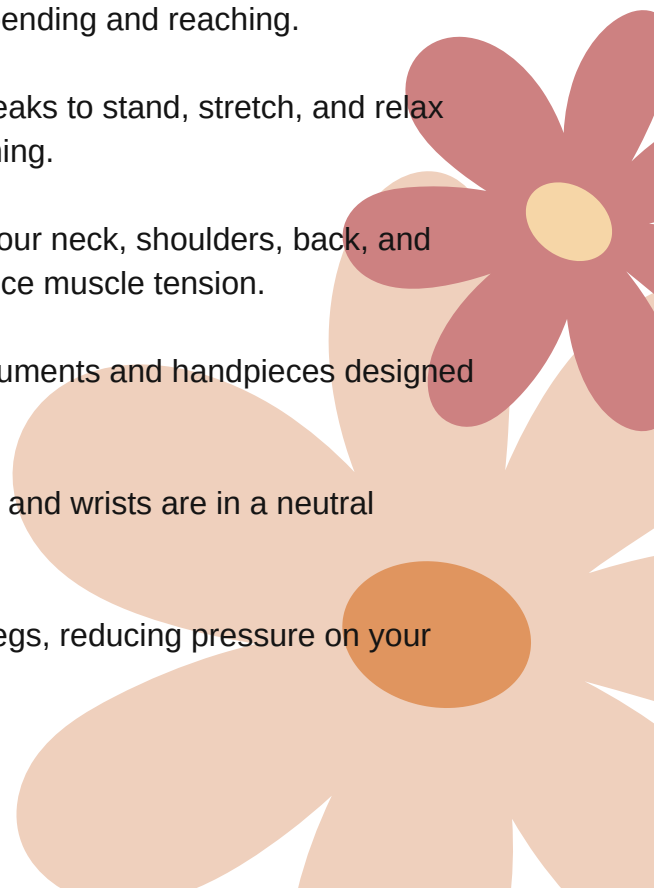
**Frequent Breaks/Micro-Breaks:** Take short, frequent breaks to stand, stretch, and relax your muscles. This helps prevent prolonged sitting or leaning.

**Stretching Exercises:** Perform stretching exercises for your neck, shoulders, back, and wrists before and after work to improve flexibility and reduce muscle tension.

**Ergonomic Instruments:** Choose ergonomic dental instruments and handpieces designed to reduce hand and wrist fatigue.

**Maintain Proper Hand Position:** Ensure that your hands and wrists are in a neutral position while working to minimize strain.

**Footrest Use:** Utilize a footrest to support your feet and legs, reducing pressure on your lower back.



# ***Ergonomic Considerations Continued***

**Organize Your Workspace:** Keep instruments and supplies within easy reach to minimize excessive reaching or twisting.

**Anti-Fatigue Mat:** Place an anti-fatigue mat on the floor to reduce the impact on your legs and lower back from prolonged standing.

**Maintain Neutral Neck Position:** Position your patient's chair at a height that allows you to maintain a neutral neck position while working.

**Monitor Screen Position:** If using a computer or monitor, ensure it is at eye level to prevent neck strain.

**Use Magnification:** Invest in high-quality magnification loupes or microscopes to reduce the need to bend forward when working.

**Hydrate & Stay Energized:** Drink water regularly and eat balanced meals to maintain energy levels and focus throughout the day.

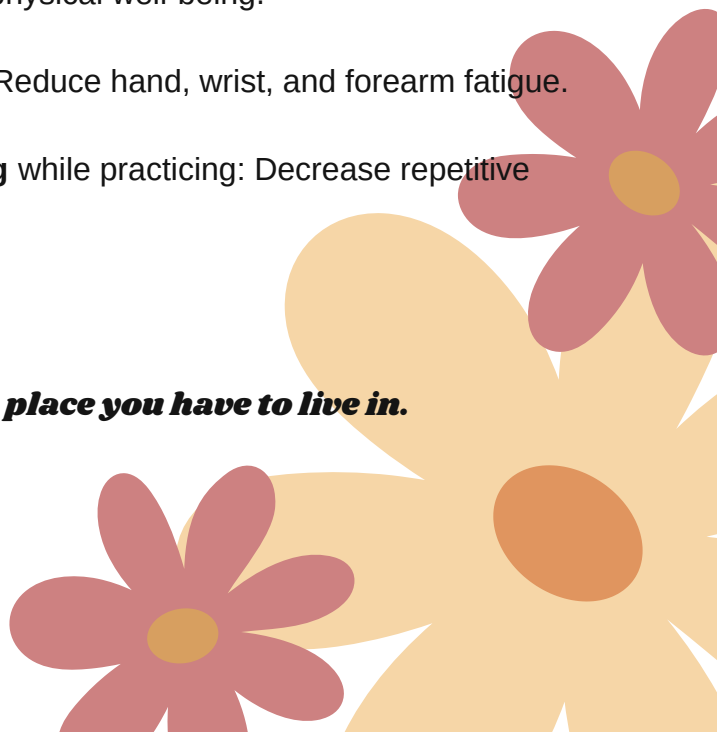
**Regular Check-ups:** Schedule regular check-ups with an ergonomic specialist to assess your workspace and make necessary adjustments.

**Maintain a Healthy Lifestyle:** Engage in regular exercise, practice stress management techniques, and get sufficient rest to support overall physical well-being.

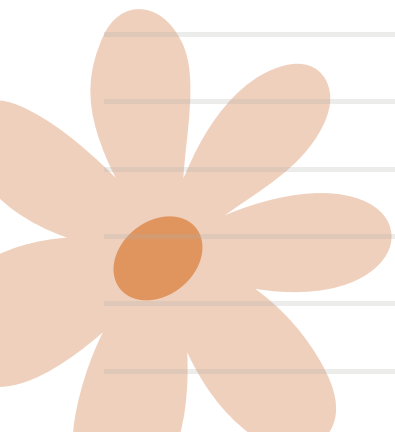
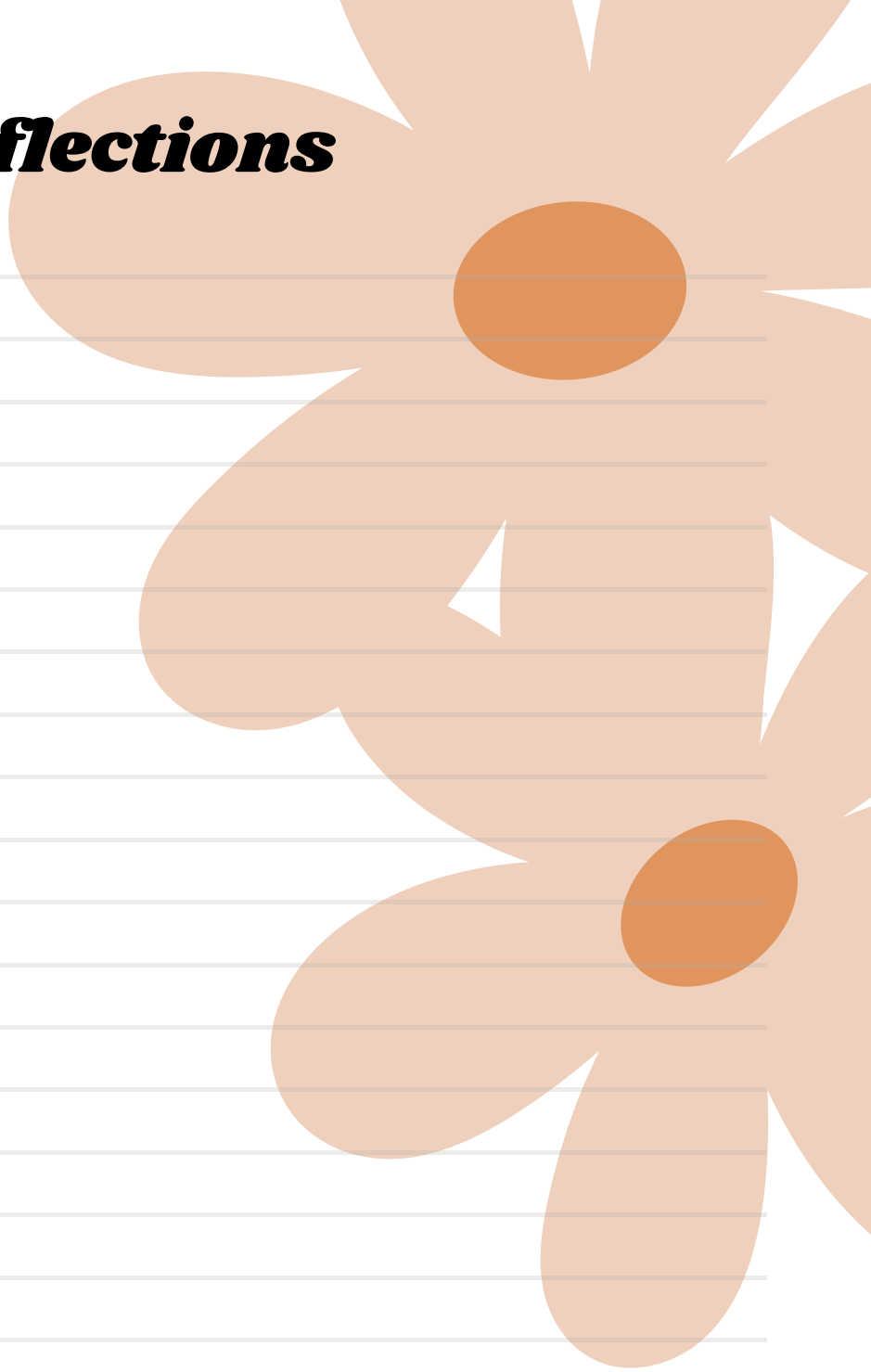
**Ensure that instruments are effective and sharp:** Reduce hand, wrist, and forearm fatigue.

**Consider alternating between standing and sitting** while practicing: Decrease repetitive movement and repetitive body positioning.

***Take care of your body- it's the only place you have to live in.***



# ***Reflections***



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# ***“REINFORCING” Boundaries***

**“The only people who get upset about you setting boundaries are the ones who were benefitting from you having none”.**

**-Unknown**

# ***Establishing & Maintaining Professional Boundaries***

Setting professional boundaries is essential in preventing burnout and maintaining well-being; establishing/maintaining these boundaries can help to provide high-quality patient care while also providing clinician safeguards. I encourage you to go through the list and highlight specific professional boundaries that you would like to establish at work.

**Patient Appointment Scheduling:** Establish clear boundaries for the number and length of patient appointments you can comfortably handle in a day to avoid overexertion.

**Breaks and Rest:** Ensure you take regular breaks between appointments to rest, recharge, and prevent physical and mental fatigue.

**Work Hours:** Set specific work hours and avoid excessive overtime. Stick to your schedule to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

**Emotional Boundaries:** While it's important to empathize with patients, maintain emotional boundaries to prevent taking on their emotional burdens. Practice self-care to manage the emotional toll of the job.

**Personal Health:** Prioritize your own health and well-being. Don't neglect your own dental care, physical health, and mental wellness.

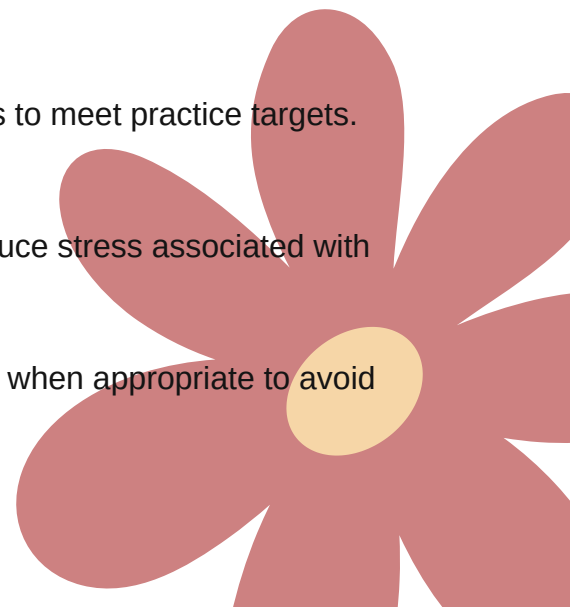
**Professional Development:** Allocate time for professional development and continuing education to stay current in your field. Avoid overcommitting to extracurricular activities that may cause burnout.

**Workload Negotiation:** Communicate with your employer or supervisor about your workload and seek assistance or adjustments when necessary.

**Avoid Overbooking:** Resist the urge to overbook appointments to meet practice targets. Prioritize patient care quality over quantity.

**Time Management:** Practice effective time management to reduce stress associated with rushing through appointments.

**Delegation:** Delegate tasks to dental assistants or support staff when appropriate to avoid taking on responsibilities outside your scope of practice.



# ***Professional Boundaries Continued***

**Communication:** Clearly communicate your boundaries with colleagues, patients, and supervisors. Educate them about your limitations and expectations.

**Patient Education:** Set boundaries for patient education, ensuring it is comprehensive but not overwhelming. Provide information in manageable portions.

**Informed Consent:** Always obtain informed consent before performing any procedures. Ensure patients fully understand the treatment plan and potential risks.

**Self-Care Routine:** Develop a self-care routine that includes relaxation techniques, exercise, and stress management strategies.

**Support System:** Seek support from colleagues, friends, or a therapist when you encounter challenging cases or stressors. Don't hesitate to ask for help.

**Monitor Stress Levels:** Regularly assess your stress levels and recognize signs of burnout. Take action when you notice warning signs.

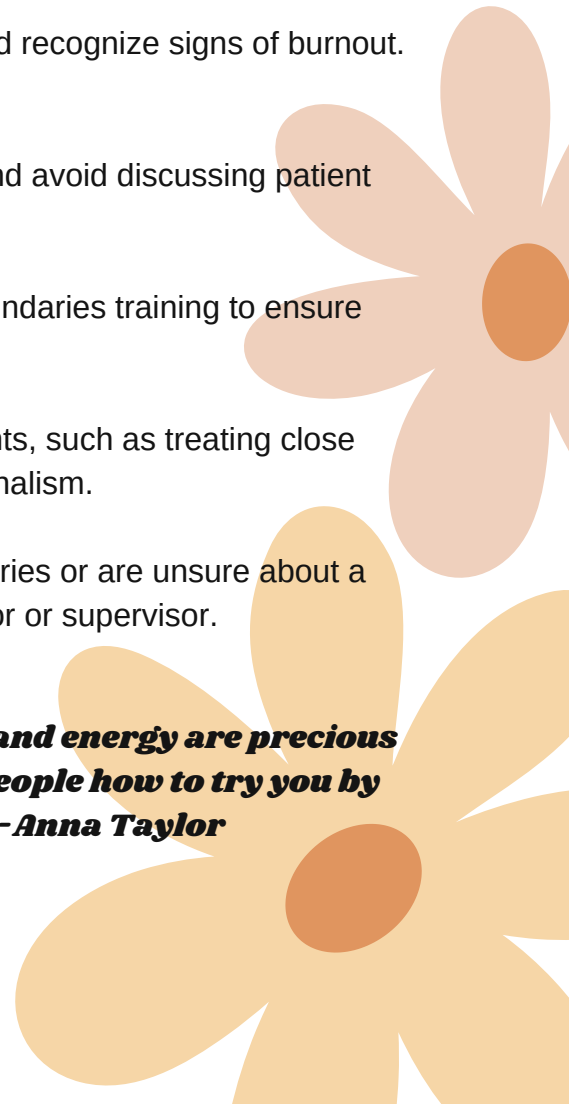
**Patient Confidentiality:** Maintain strict patient confidentiality and avoid discussing patient cases outside of the healthcare team.

**Ethics and Boundaries Training:** Participate in ethics and boundaries training to ensure you are knowledgeable about professional conduct.

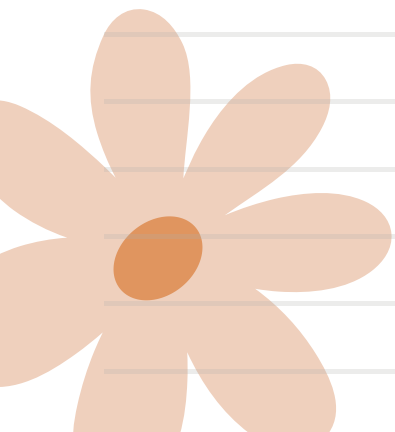
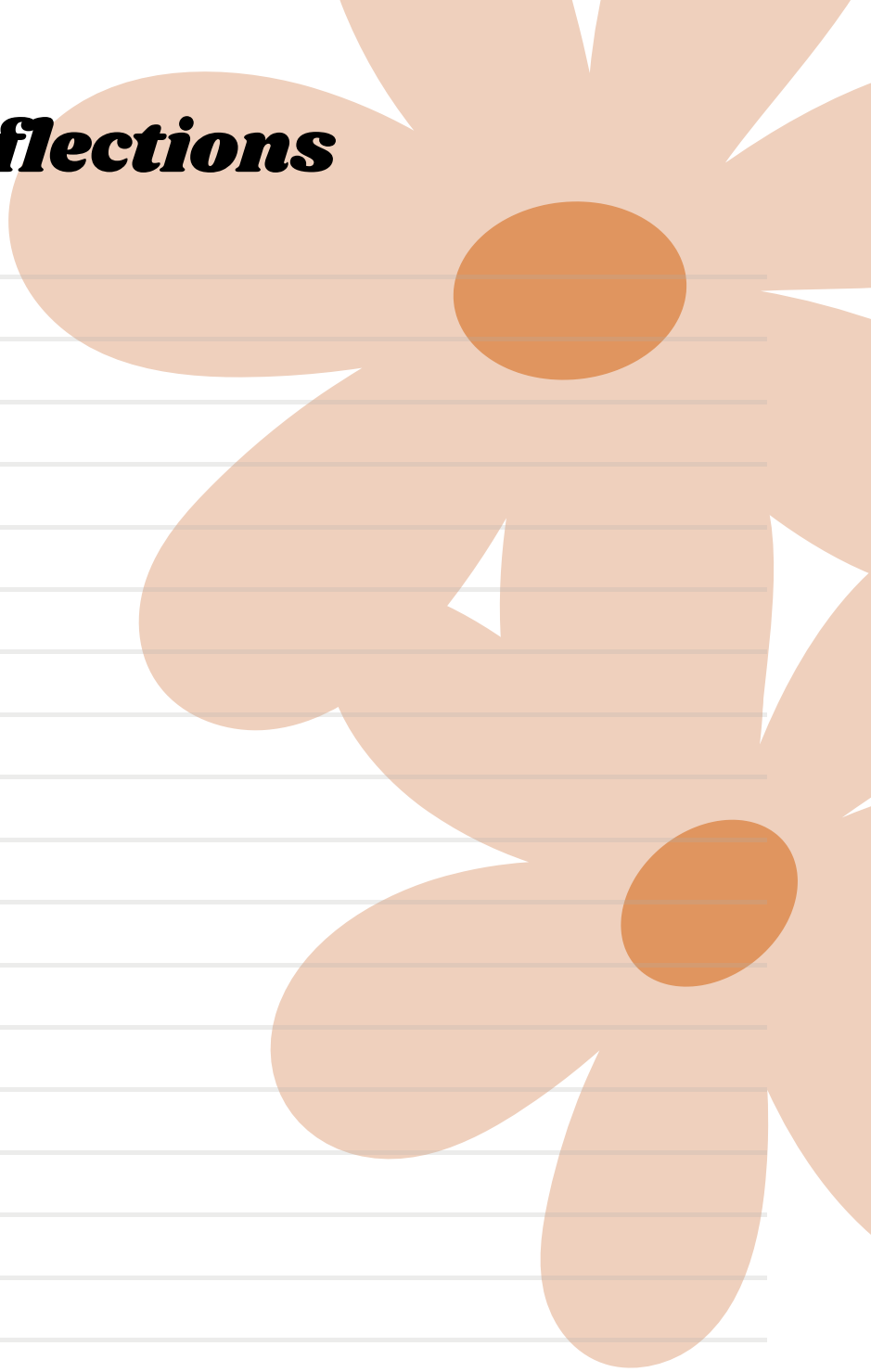
**Avoid Dual Relationships:** Avoid dual relationships with patients, such as treating close friends or family members, to maintain objectivity and professionalism.

**Seek Supervision:** If you find it challenging to maintain boundaries or are unsure about a specific situation, seek supervision or consultation from a mentor or supervisor.

***“Love yourself enough to set boundaries. You’r time and energy are precious and you get to decide how you use them. You teach people how to try you by deciding what you will and won’t accept”. -Anna Taylor***



# ***Reflections***



A series of horizontal grey lines providing a writing area for reflections.

# ***Establishing & Maintaining Personal Boundaries***



Personal boundaries are equally important to maintain for well-being and burnout prevention; maintaining personal boundaries is crucial for preserving your mental and emotional health as a dental hygienist. I encourage you to go through the list and highlight specific personal boundaries that you would like to establish in your daily life *outside* of work.

**Separation of Work & Personal Life:** Set clear boundaries between your work life and personal life. Avoid bringing work-related stress or concerns home.

**Personal Time:** Allocate dedicated personal time for relaxation, hobbies, and spending time with family and friends. Protect this time from work-related interruptions.

**Social Media Boundaries:** Be cautious about connecting with patients on social media platforms. Maintain a professional online presence and avoid sharing personal information with patients.

**Availability After Hours:** Establish limits on your availability after work hours. Avoid responding to work-related emails or calls during your personal time, unless it's an emergency.

**Privacy at Work:** Ensure your personal privacy at work. Keep personal items, such as your phone or belongings, secure and separate from patient areas.

**Personal Health & Wellness:** Prioritize your own health and well-being. Make time for regular exercise, a balanced diet, and adequate sleep.

**Boundaries with Colleagues:** Maintain respectful and professional relationships with colleagues. Avoid engaging in gossip or unnecessary personal discussions at work.

**Stress Management:** Develop effective stress management strategies to cope with work-related stressors. Seek support from a therapist or counselor if needed.

**Self-Care Routine:** Implement a self-care routine that includes activities you enjoy and that help you relax and recharge.

**Say "No" When Necessary:** Don't hesitate to say "no" when additional work or commitments may compromise your personal boundaries or well-being.

# ***Personal Boundaries Continued***

**Personal Goals:** Set and pursue personal goals and aspirations outside of your dental hygiene career to maintain a sense of fulfillment and balance.

**Mental Health Support:** Seek mental health support if you experience symptoms of stress, anxiety, or burnout. Reach out to a therapist or counselor for assistance.

**Self-Reflection:** Periodically reflect on your personal boundaries and make adjustments as needed to align with your well-being and life goals.

**Time for Self-Reflection:** Allocate time for self-reflection and self-awareness to understand your own needs and boundaries better.

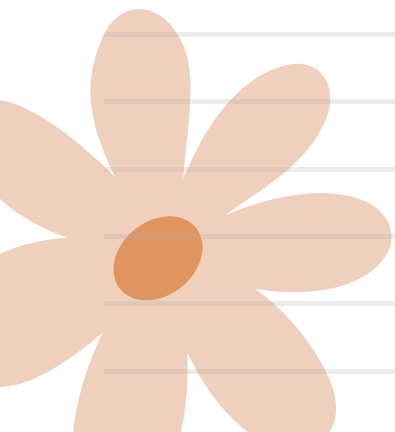
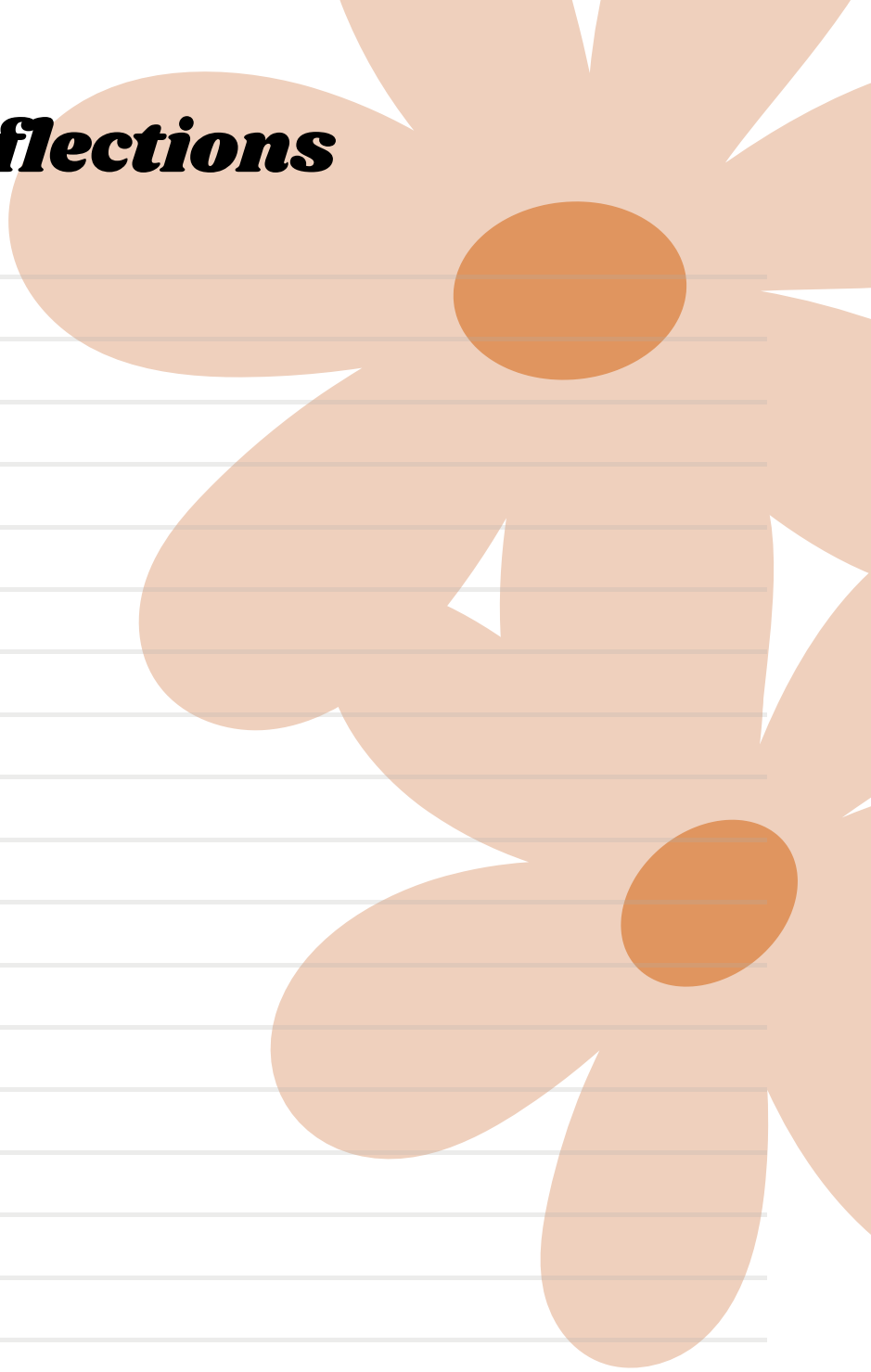
**Maintain Personal Boundaries with Patients:** While empathy is important, maintain appropriate personal boundaries with patients to prevent over-involvement in their personal lives.

**Boundary Maintenance:** Regularly assess and reinforce your personal boundaries to ensure they remain intact and effective.

***“Daring to set boundaries is about having the courage to love ourselves even when we risk of disappointing others”. - Brene Brown***



# ***Reflections***



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# ***Burnout Resources***

It's important for dental hygienists to explore options around mental health resources and seek support when experiencing burnout or high levels of stress. Every individual's experience is unique, so finding the right resources and support network is essential for recovery and well-being. I encourage you to go through the list and highlight specific resources that resonate with your level and type of burnout.

**Employee Assistance Programs (EAP):** EAPs offer confidential counseling and support services to employees. Dental practices often provide EAPs as part of their benefits package, and hygienists can access professional counseling for personal or work-related issues.

**Therapists & Counselors:** Dental hygienists can seek the services of licensed therapists or counselors specializing in mental health and burnout. Therapy sessions can provide a safe space to explore feelings, develop coping strategies, and manage stress.

**Online Support Groups:** Online support groups and forums can connect hygienists with others experiencing burnout. These platforms allow individuals to share their experiences, seek advice, and find emotional support from peers.

**Crisis Hotlines:** Various crisis hotlines, such as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, offer immediate support for individuals in distress. These hotlines are available 24/7 and provide a confidential and compassionate listening ear.

**Stress Reduction Programs:** Stress reduction programs, workshops, and classes teach individuals effective techniques for managing stress and preventing burnout. These programs often include mindfulness, relaxation, and meditation practices.

**Mobile Apps:** There are mobile apps designed to support mental health and well-being. Apps like Headspace and Calm offer guided meditation, stress relief exercises, and sleep support.

**Books & Self-Help Resources:** Self-help books and resources on burnout, stress management, and resilience can provide valuable insights and strategies for overcoming burnout.

**Podcasts & Webinars:** Educational podcasts and webinars focused on mental health and burnout can offer guidance and tips for coping with stress. Many of these resources are available for free online.

# ***Burnout Resources Continued***

**Workplace Wellness Programs:** Some dental practices offer workplace wellness programs that include mental health resources, such as stress management workshops and access to counselors.

**Professional Associations:** Dental hygienists can turn to professional associations for resources and support. These associations often have sections dedicated to mental health and well-being.

**Mindfulness & Meditation Centers:** Local mindfulness and meditation centers may offer classes and workshops on stress reduction and relaxation techniques.

**Healthcare Providers:** Dental hygienists can discuss their burnout symptoms with their healthcare providers, who can offer guidance, referrals, or medication if needed.

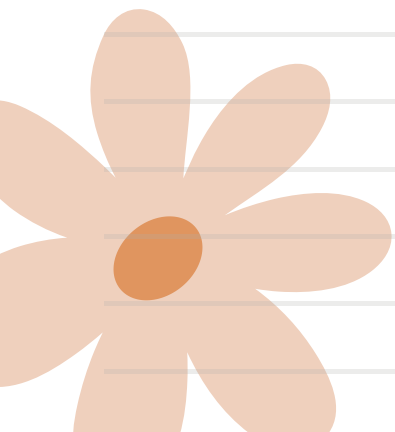
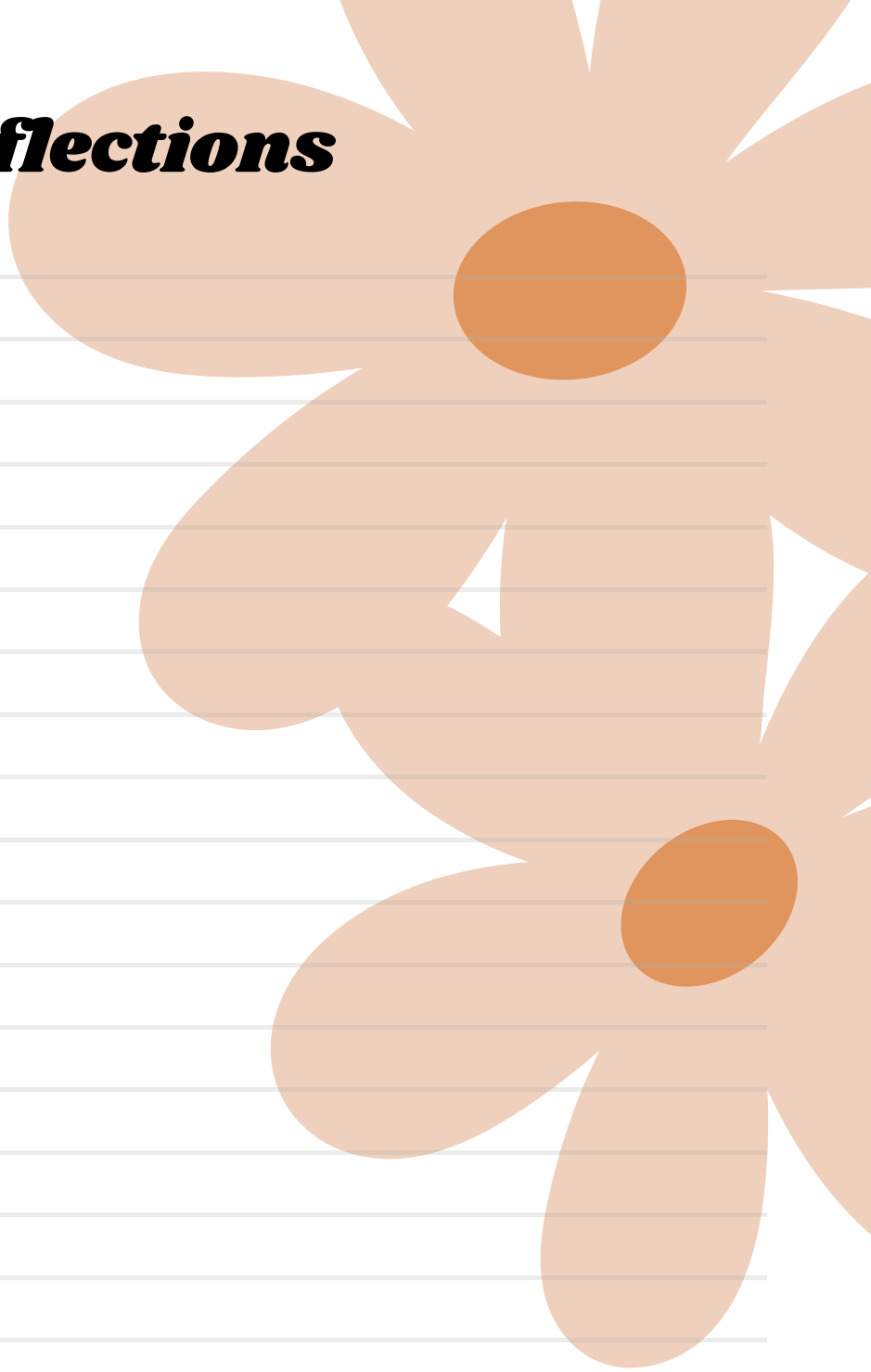
**Online Self-Assessments:** Some websites offer self-assessment tools and quizzes that can help individuals gauge their stress levels and potential burnout risk. \*Stress and Burnout Questionnaire by Stress.org focuses on identifying stress levels and burnout risk factors.

**Employee Assistance Resources:** Employers may provide resources related to employee assistance, which can include access to counseling services, self-help materials, and stress management programs.

**Retreats & Workshops:** Retreats and workshops focused on well-being and personal growth may provide opportunities for hygienists to recharge and gain new perspectives on burnout.

***“Asking for help is never a sign of weakness. It’s one of the bravest things you can do. And it can save your life”. -Lily Collins***

# ***Reflections***



A series of horizontal grey lines providing a writing area for reflections.

# ***Counseling Options***

It's essential to seek therapy or counseling when experiencing symptoms of burnout. The guidance and support of a therapist can help regain emotional well-being, find effective coping mechanisms, and work toward a healthier work-life balance and overall wellness. I encourage you to go through the list and highlight specific counseling options that resonate with your lifestyle/personality, and then begin the process of finding a good fit.

**Individual Therapy:** Individual therapy sessions with a licensed therapist or counselor are a common approach to addressing burnout. In these one-on-one sessions, hygienists can discuss their feelings, challenges, and sources of stress. Therapists provide guidance and strategies to manage burnout and improve mental well-being.

**Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT):** CBT is a widely used therapeutic approach for burnout and stress management. It helps individuals identify and change negative thought patterns and behaviors contributing to burnout. CBT equips hygienists with practical coping skills.

**Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR):** MBSR programs incorporate mindfulness meditation and relaxation techniques to reduce stress and increase self-awareness. Dental hygienists can benefit from MBSR to manage work-related stressors.

**Teletherapy:** Teletherapy or online counseling offers convenience and accessibility, allowing hygienists to receive therapy from the comfort of their homes or workplaces. Many therapists now offer teletherapy services.

**Group Therapy:** Group therapy sessions provide a supportive environment where hygienists can connect with peers facing similar challenges. Group discussions, led by a therapist, focus on sharing experiences and learning coping strategies.

**Workplace Counseling Programs:** Some dental practices may offer in-house counseling services as part of their employee assistance programs (EAPs). Hygienists can inquire about such resources within their workplace.

**Specialized Therapists:** Seeking a therapist with expertise in occupational stress and burnout can be beneficial. These therapists understand the unique challenges faced by healthcare professionals, including dental hygienists.

**Stress Reduction Techniques:** Therapists often teach stress reduction techniques such as deep breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation, and visualization to help hygienists manage stress on a daily basis.

# ***Counseling Options Continued***

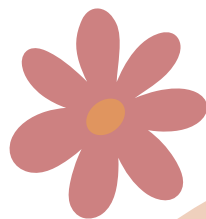
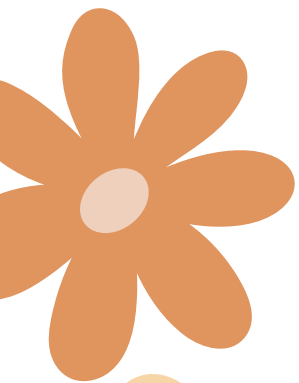
**Goal Setting:** Therapy sessions may involve setting achievable goals to regain a sense of control and purpose. Hygienists can work with their therapists to define personal and professional objectives.

**Self-Care Strategies:** Therapists emphasize the importance of self-care in preventing and managing burnout. They assist hygienists in developing self-care routines tailored to their needs.

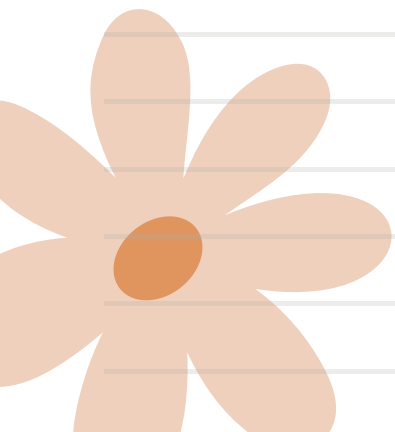
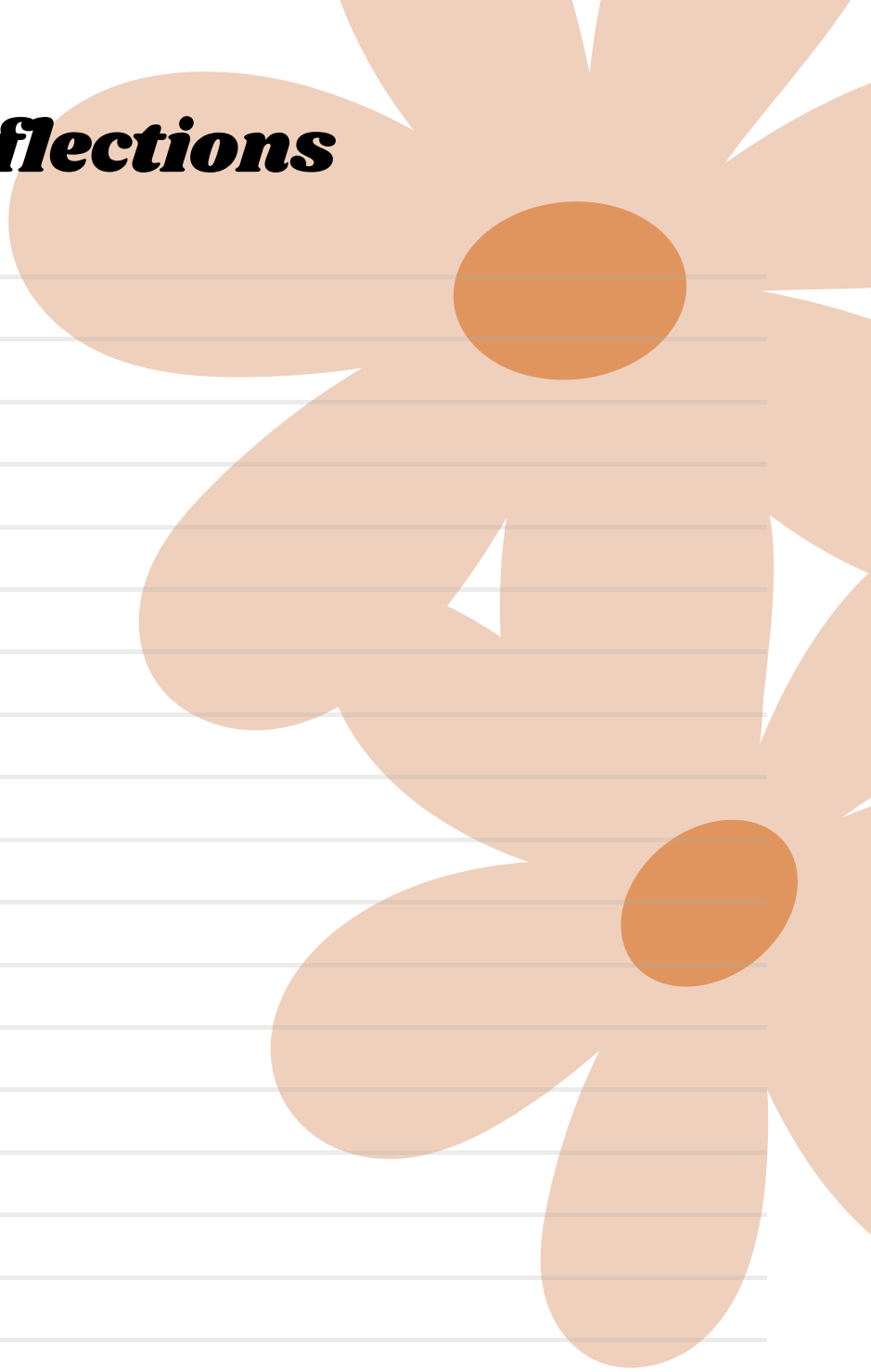
**Emotional Support:** Beyond practical strategies, therapy provides a safe space for hygienists to express their emotions, fears, and concerns. This emotional support can be highly beneficial.

**Continued Support:** Therapy is often a dynamic process, and the number of sessions required varies from person to person. Some individuals may benefit from short-term therapy, while others may choose longer-term support.

***“Be strong enough to stand alone, smart enough to know when you need help,  
and brave enough to ask for it”. - Unknown***



# ***Reflections***



A series of horizontal grey lines providing a writing area for reflections.

# ***Online Support Groups***

Burnout online support groups can be a valuable resource and can offer a sense of community, a platform for sharing experiences, and access to peer support. I encourage you to go through the list and highlight specific support groups/platforms that interest you as well as resonate with where you are at in your burnout journey.

**Facebook Groups:** Facebook hosts various groups dedicated to dental hygienists' well-being and burnout support. You can search for groups using keywords like "Dental Hygienist Burnout Support" or "Hygienists' Wellness Community."

**LinkedIn Groups:** LinkedIn also features professional groups for dental hygienists. These groups often have discussions on well-being, stress management, and burnout prevention.

**Reddit Communities:** Reddit has subreddits related to dental hygiene and healthcare professionals' burnout experiences. Subreddits like r/DentalHygiene and r/HealthcareProfessionals can be helpful.

**Online Forums:** Websites like DentalTown and Dentaltown Hygiene offer forums where hygienists can discuss a wide range of topics, including burnout. These forums have sections for sharing personal experiences and seeking advice.

**Mental Health Platforms:** Some mental health platforms host online support groups for burnout and stress management. Websites like PsychCentral may have relevant forums.

**Healthcare Professional Associations:** Check with professional associations such as the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA). They may offer online resources and support groups for their members.

**Local or Regional Groups:** Consider joining local or regional dental hygienists' associations or groups. They may organize online support meetings or events.

**Therapist-Hosted Groups:** Some therapists or counselors specialize in facilitating online support groups for professionals experiencing burnout. Look for therapists offering such services.

***"Rarely, if ever, are any of us healed in isolation. Healing is an act of communion". -Bell Hooks***



# ***Online Support Groups Tips***

Participating in an online support group can help to connect with others facing similar challenges, gain insights into coping strategies, and receive empathy and encouragement during the burnout recovery journey. When joining an online support group, it's important to consider the following:

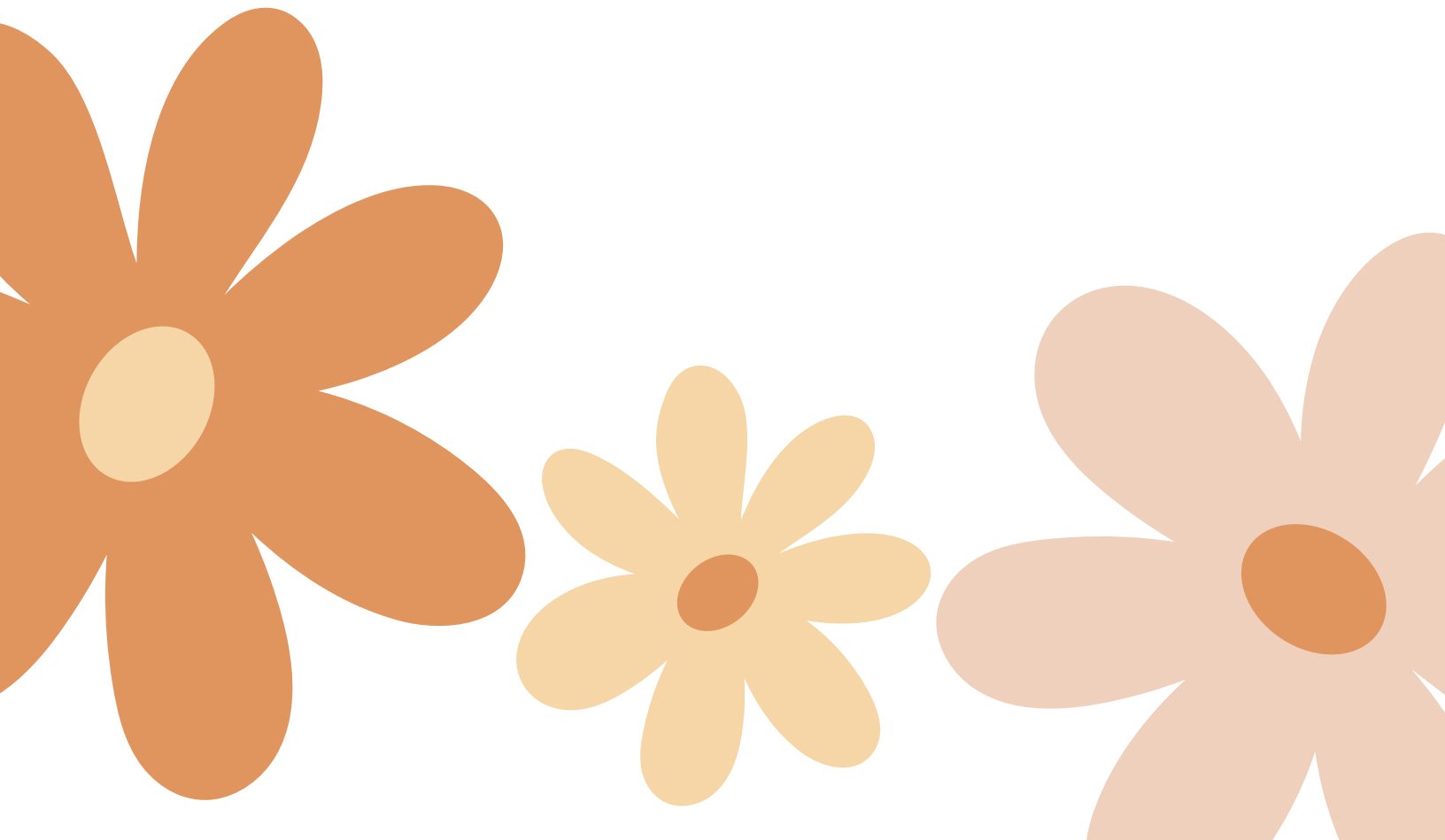
**Anonymity:** Ensure that the group respects members' privacy and allows for anonymous participation if desired.

**Moderation:** Check if the group has moderators who enforce guidelines and maintain a supportive atmosphere.

**Community Guidelines:** Familiarize yourself with the group's rules and guidelines to ensure a positive and respectful experience.

**Active Participation:** Active engagement, sharing experiences, and offering support to others can enhance the benefits of the group.

**Professional Advice:** While online support groups provide valuable emotional support, it's essential to consult with healthcare professionals or therapists for personalized guidance and treatment.



# **Conclusion**

As we reach the end of this burnout journal, I want to extend my heartfelt congratulations to you. You've embarked on a journey of self-discovery, healing, and growth, and that's something truly commendable. Remember, you're not alone on this path, and there's a community of hygienists who understand and support you.

But our journey doesn't end here. In fact, it's just the beginning. I invite you to continue this voyage with me, not only as a reader but as a fellow traveler. Follow my journey on Instagram at [@the\\_relaxed\\_hygienist](#) where I share tangible, easy-to-execute tips and tricks on managing stress and anxiety both at work and at home. Let's learn and grow together, supporting one another every step of the way.

Always remember, you have the strength to overcome burnout, to thrive in your profession, and to live a fulfilling life. Take care of yourselves, practice self-compassion, and never underestimate the power of small, positive changes. Your well-being matters, and you are worth every effort.

With gratitude and warmth,

*Heather "The Relaxed Hygienist"*

## **About the Creator**

Heather's journey began on the shores of West Michigan, where she spent her youth playing soccer and basketball, experimenting with her Easy Bake Oven to bake snacks, and creating her own paints from crushed rocks and plants (although her mother wasn't thrilled when her flowers went missing).

In her late twenties, Heather made the move to Denver, Colorado, driven by her passion for snowboarding. Now with 15 years of experience in dental hygiene, she has found fulfillment in returning to the clinical side of hygiene. During her free time, Heather enjoys snowboarding and spending quality time in the mountains with her husband Mark and their dog Macdawg. She also finds relaxation and balance through slow, Hatha-style yoga, barre workouts, and kickboxing.

Someday, Heather hopes to experience the beauty of Alaska and Japan, where she can chase winter storms for snowboarding adventures. She also plans to visit Korea to stock up on skincare products and unwind in the Korean spas and hot springs. Looking ahead, Heather aspires to purchase property, construct her dream home, cultivate a sprawling garden and greenhouse, and, of course, share her space with adorable pets.