

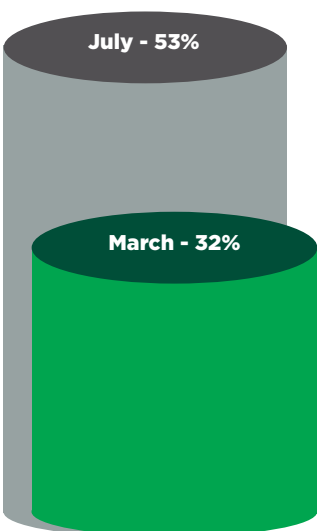
# FACULTY & STUDENT SUCCESS: QUICK TIP #2

## COMPASSION IS VITAL FOR DIMINISHING BURNOUT

### Did you know?

According to the World Health Organization, psychological stress is caused by high job demands and low employee control. Effort-reward imbalances are risk factors for mental and physical health problems.

**US adults have reported that their mental health has been negatively impacted due to stress and worry over COVID-19:**



↑ **66%**  
INCREASE

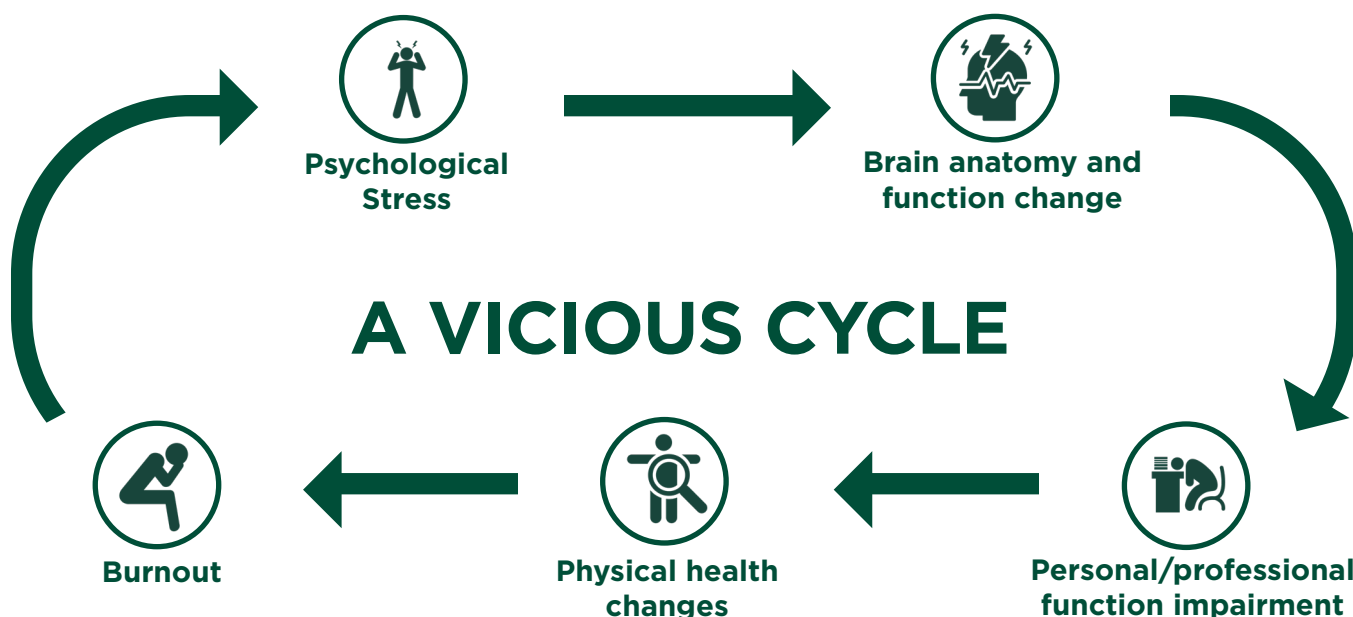
Kaiser Family Foundation Tracking Poll conducted March 2020 and mid-July 2020

"I feel overwhelmed, out of control, and burned out..."

"... I dread teaching and researching, and I feel guilty about this."

"After months of juggling childcare and full-time work, I hit a wall..."

"... I'm stressed and can't sleep. I can't concentrate. I have no energy."





# The power of 40 seconds a unique way to diminish burnout

The term “power of 40 seconds” was coined by Dr. Stephen Trzeciak, a physician-scientist who spent years researching, studying data, and proving that compassion matters during a serious health care crisis.

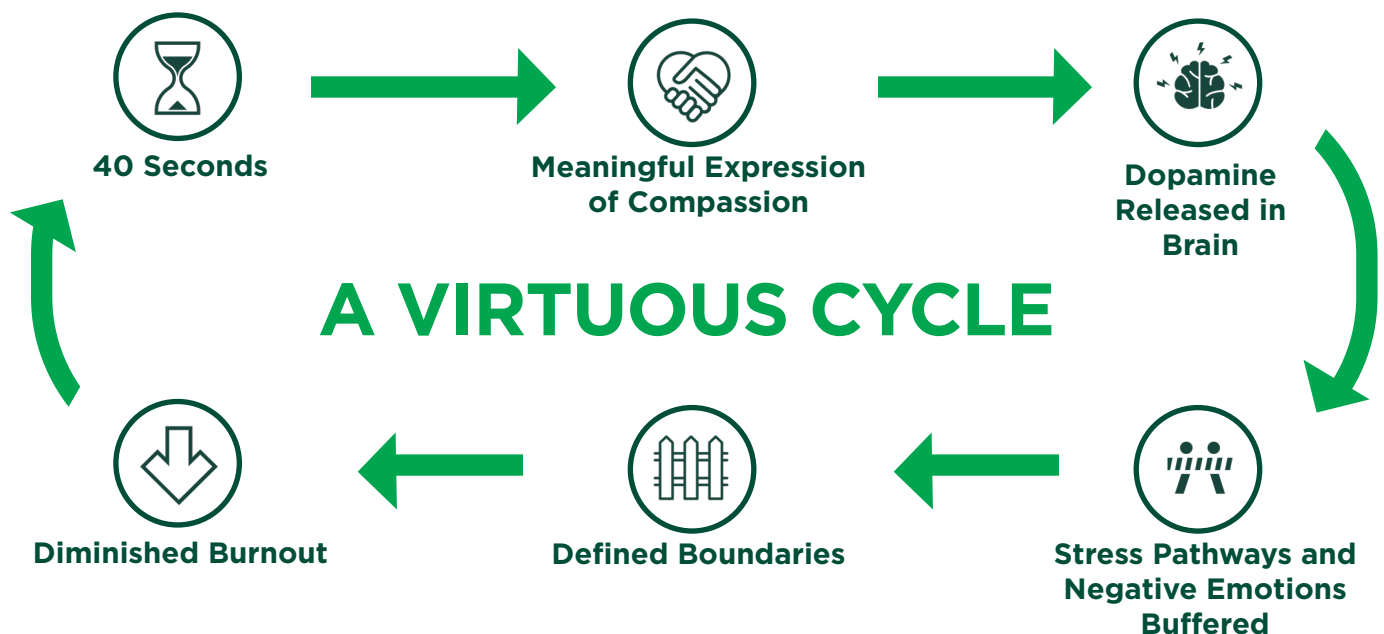
**What if ... 40 seconds of compassion could reduce student anxiety, increase student engagement, AND diminish faculty stress and burnout?**

Dr. Trzeciak’s research suggests that “the power of 40 seconds” can impact the general public in the same way it positively affects health care providers. Below is an adaptation of the script used in a Johns Hopkins Cancer Patient Compassion Intervention that you can use or modify to test “the power of 40 seconds.”

*“I know it is tough to receive a disappointing grade after you have worked hard and studied for a long time. I want you to know that I will help you. Let’s set up a time when we can talk about the challenges you are having in this course. Know that you are not the only one struggling in this class and that you don’t have to go through this experience alone.”*

at the end of the conversation ...

*“I know this is a difficult situation for you and I want to emphasize again that we are in this together. I will help you, and I will share with you other resources that may be helpful.”*



# Burnout Q and A

## Why is it hard to escape burnout?

We don't deal with the difficult feelings, so we get stuck on an emotion, which is exhausting. We must deal with the difficult feelings with kindness and compassion.

## How can you get unstuck?

- Physical activity: stand at your desk, walk in your work place, tense and relax your muscles.
- Breathe: nothing fancy ... just breathe and notice your breathing.
- Engage in positive social interaction: *Hey! I like your coffee mug.*
- Laugh out loud: connect with someone or do something that makes you laugh
- Cry: get it all out!
- Do something creative: imagine, doodle, paint, color, craft, look at art/nature, watch a movie, dance, listen to music.

## How do you know when you are unstuck?

- Listen to your body
- Be patient and kind with yourself; dealing with emotions is a forever incremental process

**“Self-care is never a selfish act - it is simply good stewardship of the only gift I have, the gift I was put on earth to offer others. Anytime we can listen to true self and give the care it requires, we do it not only for ourselves, but for the many others whose lives we touch.”**

— Parker Palmer

## What are some common self-care myths?

- Having to take care of yourself means you are not strong or capable
- Prioritizing your needs over others' needs is selfish
- Self care takes extra time and money
- Those in helping professions do not need to practice self care

## Is there a cure for burnout?

Caring for each other **and** caring for yourself can diminish burnout.

*Based on the audio podcast episode “Brene Brown with Emily and Amelia Nagoski on Burnout and How to Complete the Stress Cycle,” 14 October 2020.*

# Additional resources

**“How 40 Seconds of Compassion Could Save a Life.”** Stephen Trzeciak, MD. TEDXPenn.

**“Burnout and the Brain.”** Alexandra Michel. Association for Psychological Science, January 29, 2016.

**“Advice for Faculty to Help Them Avoid Burnout During the Pandemic.”** Rebecca Pope-Ruark. Inside Higher Ed, April 28, 2020.

**“Fighting Faculty Burnout.”** University of Mississippi Medical Center.

***Compassionomics: The Revolutionary Scientific Evidence That Caring Makes a Difference.*** Stephen Trzeciak, MD and Anthony Mazzairelli, MD. Studer Group, 2019.

**The Strategic Student Success Team in the Office of the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education (APUE) is here to help you solve complex student success challenges. Our Team is happy to consult with you about student success practices, share student success resources, and identify solutions for student success barriers.**

**Please let us know if you are interested in engaging with us to ensure all students at MSU can learn, thrive, and graduate. For more information please contact Renata Opoczynski, Assistant Dean for Students Success Assessment and Strategic Initiatives. We look forward to partnering with you.**