

Balancing Service & Self

Sustaining Educators in the Work of Caring

The Reality of Service

Educators are called to serve with empathy, compassion, and commitment. This work is meaningful and demanding. When we consistently prioritize others at our own expense, the cost can include stress, emotional exhaustion, and disconnection from the people and practices that sustain us.

Recognizing the Signs

- Chronic fatigue or difficulty concentrating
- Increased irritability or emotional overwhelm
- Guilt when taking time for yourself
- Neglect of personal relationships or interests
- Physical symptoms (headaches, insomnia, tension)
- Feeling disconnected from your purpose

Reflect

What pushes me toward self-sacrifice in my role?

When do I feel most out of alignment?

What warning signs tell me I need to pause?

Strategies for Restoration

1. Set Boundaries: Define work hours, limit after-hours communication.
2. Reclaim Personal Time: Make space for rest, hobbies, and relationships.
3. Engage in Meaningful Growth: Pursue professional development that energizes you.
4. Practice Self-Forgiveness: Release guilt and extend yourself grace.

My Restoration Plan

My Warning Signs: _____

My Boundary to Start This Week: _____

One Way I Will Reclaim Personal Time: _____

One Professional Growth Goal: _____

Closing Thought

Restoration is not a reward; it is a requirement for sustainable leadership. When we care for ourselves, we expand our capacity to care for others.