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Duration of the workshop:
3 hours

4. Short description:

The workshop is about burnout in NGOs. Through different activities, participants will gain basic knowledge about stress and burnout, signs of burnout, risk factors, and possible strategies of preventing burnout and dealing with it. They will explore their current position at work and in activism, and also their needs and desires for the future. Additionally, participants will have the opportunity to share their experiences with burnout and question their attitudes about burnout.

5. Workshop goal

The goal is to raise awareness about the burnout problem in NGOs, recognize individual signs of burnout and to plan the introduction of self care in daily schedules.

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6. Workshop target group

The workshop is created for individuals from different NGOs. Maximum number of participants is 12-15.

7. Workshop agenda

	Time	Goal	Description of the activity
1.	Introduction 10 minutes	Presentation of the program and facilitators. Setting group rules.	Facilitators present themselves, their professional experience, the structure of the workshop and its goals. Also, facilitators suggest important group rules and check whether participants agree with them and if they want to add some rules. See: Appendix 1. Group rules
2.	Icebreaker „Pick an animal“ 15 minutes	To get to know each other and to explore what is their position in the NGO sector and activism today, how they see themselves.	Participants get a task to pick one animal that represents how they feel now at their work and one that represents how they want to feel. They share their names, where they work, and for how long, and also animals they picked and why. Facilitators will get an impression of how stressed out participants are and whether they already share some possible signs of burnout.
3.	Myths about burnout 25 minutes	To explore attitudes and knowledge about burnout.	One of the facilitators reads myths about burnout. Participants raise their hand on an online platform if they agree, and don't do anything if they disagree. Opinions and experiences of the participants are discussed. In the end, facilitators share facts about the statement and related knowledge about burnout from the literature, but also the research that was done previously in this project. Facilitators will have the opportunity to get an impression of participants' attitudes about burnout. See Appendix 2. Myths about burnout

4.	What is burnout? 25 minutes	To educate participants about stress and burnout.	<p>Facilitators have a short PPT about burnout. Content for the presentation is on the first page of the handout that participants get after the workshop, at the end of this scenario. See Appendix 7.</p> <p>Themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Definition - Dimensions of burnout - Signs of burnout on the organizational level - Signs of burnout on the individual level – physical, cognitive, behavioral, emotional <p>After the presentation, the group discusses the content. Trainers can use suggested questions in moderating the discussion. Another possible version of this activity is suggested at the end of this scenario, in the part with additional activities.</p> <p>Questions for the group: What signs of burnout do you recognize by yourself? How do you usually react in stressful situations? What consequences of burnout did you and your NGO experience?</p>
5.	Break 15 minutes		
6.	What is important to me? 30 minutes	To detect areas of life and values that are neglected at the moment.	<p>Each participant takes a piece of paper and a pencil. In the middle of the paper, they write their name. Around their name, they write what is important to them (eg. friends, freedom, fun...). The number of things is not limited. They connect their name with the words but in a way that they make a hierarchy of things that are important to them. They use tree lines if something is very important, two if it is important on a medium level, and one if it is less important. After that, they cross the lines that connect their name with words using three lines if they are very satisfied with how much they are devoted to that important thing in their life at the moment and how much space it has in their life, two lines if they are satisfied on a medium level, and one if they are less satisfied. If it is needed, for better understanding, facilitators can show one example on the flipchart. Finally, each participant shares what did they become aware of, how they are satisfied with what they see, what important things are neglected, and what is well represented in their life.</p>
7..	Self-care bank 25 minutes	To collect all forms of self-care that an individual prefers at one place. To determine time in a day for self-care.	<p>Each participant can take an envelope if they have it or just small papers. They can write their names on it, write „self-care bank“ or decorate it in some other way. While doing this activity, participants should have in mind the previous exercises – how they want to feel at work, what they need, what important things are neglected at the moment... On pieces of paper, they write all forms of self-care they prefer that they can remember. The number is not limited. If they miss ideas, they can use some from Appendix 3, but they should write down only things they will really do, things that relax them, not someone else.</p> <p>After that, participants should determine a specific time in a day, that they will use for self-care. It can be 30 minutes or 2 hours, but it should be very specific and manageable.</p> <p>In the end, the group talks about available forms of self-care.</p>

17	My Safe Place Visualisation 20 minutes	To introduce one form of relaxation and self-soothing.	One of the facilitators reads guided visualisation (Appendix 4). Participants sit comfortably and follow the instructions. After the visualisation it is discussed how their safe places looked like. The important conclusion is that we can always get back to our safe place when we are having a hard time or we are under severe stress.
18	Final round + evaluation 15 minutes	To check whether expectations were met and to say goodbye.	Participants share impressions about the workshop, conclusions, and what they will take for themselves from this workshop. They are asked to fill in an online evaluation after the workshop (Appendix 8). Also, facilitators announce that participants will get a handout from the workshop with important information about burnout and basic guidelines for prevention and dealing with burnout on individual and organizational level (Appendix 7).

5. Materials for the workshop

Papers, pencils, coloring pencils, colorful papers, envelopes. Participants are asked to prepare materials before the workshop.

6. Context (list of publications, films, presentations worth looking at after the workshop)

1. *An Idealist's Guide to Avoiding Burnout* - podcast with Alessandra Pigni: <https://nonprofitquarterly.org/an-idealists-guide-to-avoiding-burnout/>
2. Maslach, C., & Leiter, M. P. (2005). *Banishing Burnout: Six Strategies for Improving Your Relationship with Work*.
3. Pigni, A. (2016). *The Idealist's Survival Kit. 75 Simple Ways to Avoid Burnout*.

5. Comments/ possible modifications - suggestions for additional activities:

1. What do we know about burnout? - group activity

Facilitators split participants into 3 groups (breakout rooms), each group gets a task. They share their knowledge about a specific subject.

1st group: writes what they know about the definition and signs of burnout

2nd group: consequences of burnout for the individual and the NGO

3rd group: prevention of burnout and strategies to deal with burnout.

Each group has 10 minutes to share and write their ideas. After that, they present their ideas and each subject is discussed. In moderating the discussion, trainers should use the handout from the Appendix 7.

Goal: To share knowledge about burnout among participants and to educate participants about burnout.

Duration: 30 minutes.

2. Progressive muscle relaxation

Facilitators announce that they will do one example of relaxation technique called Progressive muscle relaxation and one of them leads the activity, others follow. In Progressive muscle relaxation we squeeze and relax different parts of our body. The exercise is presented in the Appendix 7. After the exercise it is discussed among the group how they felt while doing it.

Goal: To learn one of the relaxation techniques.

Duration: 20 minutes

3. Stressful situations

Each participant takes a paper and thinks about one stressful situation at work. They can draw, write or note it in any other way they prefer. They get 10 minutes to do that. They present their situations in the group and also describe how they dealt with them.

Facilitators summarize strategies to deal with stress that participants mention and separate them on shared screen into useful (eg. Talking with colleagues, getting enough sleep, relaxation techniques...) and unuseful (eg. worrying, suppression of emotions, staying late at work, smoking, drinking...). It is discussed why some strategies are useful, and some are not. List of useful and unuseful strategies is presented in Appendix 5.

Goal:

To list stressful situations at work and share how participants react in stressful situations.

Education about useful and unuseful strategies to deal with stress.

Duration: 30 minutes

APPENDIXES:

Appendix 1. *Group rules*

- ✓ **We listen to each other** (Microphone rule - when one person speaks, other people listen to him/her)
- ✓ **We respect each other** (every experience is valuable, no condemnation, no insults)
- ✓ **We speak from "I"** (there is no generalization like "everyone thinks", "everyone knows"..., when we speak, we express our opinion and describe our experience, we do not assume someone else's)
- ✓ **We take care of our needs** (we take care if we need a break, how much we want to share with the group, we ask for space to say something when we need it)
- ✓ We arrive on time after the breaks
- ✓ **Confidentiality** (what is said at the workshop remains at the workshop; outside the workshop, we talk about our experiences and how it was for us, we do not retell other people's experiences)

Appendix 2. *Myths about burnout*

Myth: There are so many more important issues than burnout.

True: There are many important issues that NGOs deal with. At the same time, the attitude that burnout prevention and dealing with burnout is not so important results in neglecting the wellbeing of people working in NGOs and makes them more vulnerable for burnout. Taking care of the wellbeing and issues that can contribute to burnout, like working conditions or relations in the team, is important for the general functioning of the NGO and its work.

Myth: Burnout is a sign of weakness.

True: Burnout is a consequence of work related issues such as work overload, bad working conditions, unresolved conflicts in the team and other. Myth that it is a sign of weakness strengthens the wrong attitude that burnout is an individual problem that should be solved individually and neglects organizational responsibility for burnout.

Myth: Burnout is normal in activism.

True: Burnout is a common problem in NGOs but it shouldn't be seen as something that must be a part of working in NGOs since it can be prevented.

Myth: Now we have to deal with more important things, when it's over we can take care of ourselves.

True: There are always some issues that can seem more important but this attitude usually leads to endless postponing the interventions that can protect the wellbeing of the NGO team.

Myth: Taking care of yourself when other people's lives are at stake is selfish.

True: Taking care of yourself is responsible and necessary in order to help others.

Myth: Burnout requires a major work or life change.

True: Usually burnout prevention and dealing with burnout require some manageable and realistic changes.

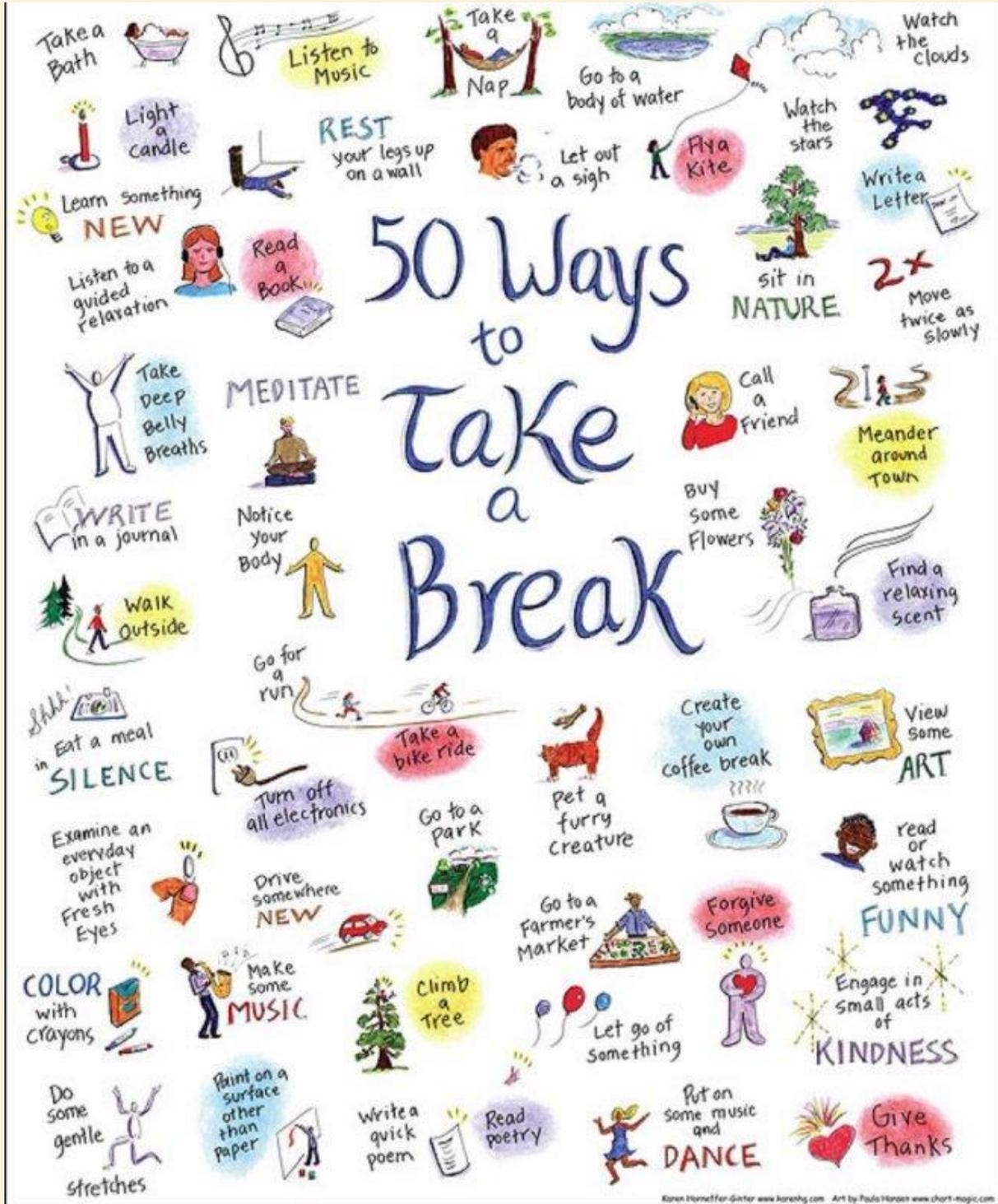
Myth: A vacation or a day off will solve your burnout.

True: If the environment and risk factors that contributed to burnout stay the same vacation or day off can have only a short term effect. Also, not being able to rest during vacation or day off is one of the signs of burnout.

Myth: My burnout is only my responsibility.

True: Although there are some things that we can do in order to help ourselves, burnout is not a problem that can be dealt with only on an individual level.

Appendix 3. Examples of self-care activities



Appendix 4. „Safe space“ – guided visualisation

Sit comfortably. If you can and want to, close your eyes. Feel your body. Can you feel your heartbeat? Body contact with stool? Do you feel any tension somewhere in your body? Focus your attention on different parts of the body, starting from the feet, then the legs, then focusing on your abdomen, then your shoulders, your arms, and finally the face and head area. If you feel tension somewhere, try to tense up for a few seconds and relax those parts of your body. For example, if you feel tension in your shoulders, tense the muscles in your shoulders as you bring your shoulders up towards your ears, and then relax them.

Then pay attention to breathing. Feel your breathing go on incessantly, on its own. Feel the air entering your lungs and coming out again. Feel the rhythm of your breathing. Imagine being filled with a new energy that flows through your entire body with each new breath. Imagine the tension coming out of you with each exhalation. You can also think about your favourite color, and one color you dislike. Imagine that the color you like fills in every single part of your body as you breathe in representing good, calming energy, and the color you dislike leaves your body as you breathe out representing all the tension and unpleasant sensations.

Try to breathe slowly and deeply. Count to five as you inhale, then as you hold your breath, and finally as you exhale. Repeat this five times. Inhale 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5, hold air 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5, exhale 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5.

Now imagine going for a walk. Take it easy, don't rush anywhere. The day is beautiful and sunny; everything around you exudes light. You see nature, colors, feel pleasant smells, and hear pleasant sounds. Try to experience what is around you through all your senses. Take a good look at what you see around you. What sounds do you hear in your walk? What tactile stimuli? Is it hot or cold? What kind of ground is under your feet? What smells do you feel around you? What does it taste like in your mouth while walking?

Steps lead you to a place you know well; it is your special place where you feel safe and protected. Maybe it's a place somewhere outdoors, maybe it's a house, or one room, maybe there's another person there, and maybe it's a part of you. No one knows about this special place, only you. When you arrive, give yourself time, look around, feel what it feels like to be safe and feel protected. Feel calm and relaxed. Only you can understand how much this place means to you. Take a look around and let it soak up every detail so you can remember it and take it with you. Stay in that place a little bit. When you feel ready, you can slowly say goodbye to your safe place..

You can go back the same way, knowing that this place will still be there for you every time you want, that it will be waiting for you. It's a place where no one can find you. When the time comes, you return slowly. Don't rush. Maybe you're going back the same way and want to look at that place from a distance. Slowly, you return to the room you are in now. Before you open your eyes again, remember the pictures. Then you slowly open your eyes and return to the room.

Appendix 5. Useful and unuseful strategies to deal with stress.

Useful strategies	Unuseful strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Listening to music ● Playing with a pet ● Showing emotions (laughing or crying) ● Talking or going out with a friend ● Taking a bath or shower ● Writing, painting, or doing other creative activities ● Exercising or getting outdoors to enjoy nature ● Discussing situations with a close person ● Gardening or making home repairs ● Practicing deep breathing meditation, mindfulness, or muscle relaxation ● Problem solving ● Setting S.M.A.R.T. goals ● Seeking counselling if you continue to struggle with stress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Criticizing yourself (negative self-talk) ● Working overtime ● Eating too much or too little or drinking a lot of coffee ● Smoking more or drinking more alcohol ● Yelling at your close people ● Taking drugs or misusing prescription medicine ● Avoiding friends and family ● Suppressing your emotions ● Not getting enough sleep ● Avoiding leisure activities we enjoy ● Not taking breaks at work

Appendix 6. Progressive muscle relaxation

1. Slow down your breathing and give yourself permission to relax.
2. When you are ready to begin, tense the muscle group described. Make sure you can feel the tension, but not so much that you feel a great deal of pain. Keep the muscle tensed for approximately 5 seconds.
3. Relax the muscles and keep it relaxed for approximately 10 seconds.

Relaxation sequences:

- Right hand and forearm. Make a fist with your right hand.
- Right upper arm. Bring your right forearm up to your shoulder to “make a muscle”.
- Left hand and forearm.
- Left upper arm.
- Forehead. Raise your eyebrows as high as they will go, as though you were surprised by something.
- Eyes and cheeks. Squeeze your eyes tight shut.
- Mouth and jaw. Open your mouth as wide as you can, as you might when you’re yawning.
- Neck. Face forward and then pull your head back slowly, as though you are looking up to the ceiling.

- o Shoulders. Tense the muscles in your shoulders as you bring your shoulders up towards your ears.
- o Shoulder blades/Back. Push your shoulder blades back, trying to almost touch them together, so that your chest is pushed forward.
- o Chest and stomach. Breathe in deeply, filling up your lungs and chest with air.
- o Hips and buttocks. Squeeze your buttock muscles
- o Right upper leg. Tighten your right thigh.
- o Right lower leg. Pull your toes towards you to stretch the calf muscle.
- o Right foot. Curl your toes downwards.
- o Left upper leg. Repeat as for the right upper leg.
- o Left lower leg. Repeat as for the right lower leg.
- o Left foot. Repeat as for the right foot.

4. When you have finished the relaxation procedure, remain seated for a few moments allowing yourself to become alert.

Appendix 7. Handout with basic information about burnout



Workshop handout

Burnout is a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion associated with work. It is a consequence of chronic stress at work, which is inefficiently managed primarily on a social and organizational level, and then on an individual level. It is characterized by three dimensions: 1. exhaustion, 2. work-related cynicism, and 3. reduced work efficiency.

NGOs are vulnerable to burnout due to insufficient and irregular funding and an unfavorable social and political climate.

EXAMPLES OF ORGANIZATIONAL BURNOUT SIGNS

- Expressed pressure to achieve goals and planned activities and to always do more,
- Neglecting the importance of rest and distancing from activities related to the work,
- Reduced efficiency despite the same or even greater amount of work,
- Disturbed relations in the organization, which include more frequent conflicts, mutual accusations and sometimes quitting.

EXAMPLES OF INDIVIDUAL BURNOUT SIGNS

<p>Physical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of energy - Muscle tension - Insomnia - Changes in the rhythm of sleeping and eating - Headache - Digestive disorders - ... 	<p>Emotional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mood swings - Irritability - Constant emotional arousal - A sense of emptiness - Guilt - Depressed mood - Anxiety - Helplessness - ...
<p>Cognitive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attention and memory difficulties - Loss of interest in activities - Difficulties in decision making - Cynicism - Pessimism - Thinking about quitting - Ideas of irreplaceability - Distractibility - ... 	<p>Behavioral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More work with less efficiency - Delay/procrastination - Withdrawal and isolation - Lack of self-care and refusal to accept help - Frequent verbalizations about overload - Excessive consumption of coffee, cigarettes, alcohol... - More frequent conflicts at work and in private life - ...

PREVENTION AND DEALING WITH BURNOUT (BASIC GUIDELINES)

<p>Individual</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintaining physical health Enough sleep, physical activity, a balanced diet, enough fluids, regular check-ups and general health care. 2. Planning self-care Taking care of yourself does not happen spontaneously, but should be a planned part of your daily schedule. 3. Being more mindful Focusing on one's own physical, emotional, and thought processes in the present moment. 4. Show vulnerability It's okay to show ourselves and others that we are having a hard time. 5. Burnout is not a sign of achievement We live in a culture that values burnout as an indicator of success and effort, it is important to strive to actively reject such expectations. 6. Listen to yourself Listen, recognize, and take into account your burnout signs. 7. Listen to others Listen to other's feedback and consider how much it applies to you. 8. Connection with others Nurture relationships with others and leave time for the people you love and who are important to you. 9. Avoid accusation Use "I" messages and avoid accusing each other, focus on behavior when criticizing, not on the person. 10. Seek professional help and support Sometimes it is necessary to engage in psychotherapy or counseling with a mental health professional. 	<p>Organizational</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nurture supportive relationships Talk about stress and check how everyone is at team meetings. 2. Team building Organize joint activities unrelated to work, but during working hours. 3. Organized support Introduction of supervision/individual counseling/workshops/training on mental health and/or communication. 4. Celebrate successes Celebrate finished activities and reward yourselves. 5. Talk about difficult moments Provide time and space to talk about difficult work situations. 6. Provide time for rest Respect working hours, break time and include planned breaks during the working day. 7. Limit communication outside working hours Establish an agreement on in which situations one communicates after working hours and by what hour max. 8. Clear distribution of activities and tasks Try to agree as clearly as possible who, what and when is doing. 9. Simplify work Learn about effective ways to simplify project management and administration and implement them. 10. Normalize failures and mistakes Encourage the attitude that mistakes are normal at work and that the team can solve them together. 11. Encourage setting boundaries Develop the attitude that it is okay and normal to set a limit when we are asked to do something we do not want or cannot do.
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Appendix 8. Example of evaluation form



Burnout Aid – international project on professional burnout in non-governmental organizations

Please share your thoughts with us after the workshop, so we can develop this project.

Date and place of the workshop:

What content or activities during the workshop were most useful for you and why?

.....
.....

Would you recommend this workshop? If so, to whom?

.....
.....

How do you assess the probability of using the acquired knowledge and skills in your daily work? (on a scale from 1 to 5)

1.- very low 2 low 3 - medium 4 - high 5 - very high

Was the length of the workshop suitable?

1 - too short, 2 - perfect, 3 - too long

Was the number of the participants suitable?

1 - I would prefer smaller group,

2 - it was perfect,

3 - more participants would not influence the dynamic of the workshop



Burnout Aid Workshop for
individuals from NGOs

What did you miss during today's workshop?

.....
.....

How can we improve this workshop?

.....
.....

Other comments you would like to make

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