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# 5 Signs You're Running on Empty

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*A quiet check-in for educators who never stop checking on everyone else.*

You spend your days noticing everything about the children in your care — their moods, their needs, the small shifts that tell you something's not quite right. When was the last time you noticed that in yourself? Read through each sign below, and jot a quick note if something lands.

Here are seven honest signs worth sitting with.

1

**You still love the children — but you're exhausted before the day even starts.**

*The love hasn't gone anywhere. But something underneath it has worn thin.*

*Where do you see this showing up for you?*

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2

**You feel guilty taking a sick day, even when you need one.**

*As if rest has to be earned, or justified, rather than simply needed.*

*Where do you see this showing up for you?*

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3

**You keep pouring from a cup that's already empty.**

*Showing up for everyone else, even when there's nothing left over for you.*

*Where do you see this showing up for you?*

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4

**You look like you're coping — and that's exactly the problem.**

*Competence has become a mask. Nobody checks on the ones who seem fine.*

*Where do you see this showing up for you?*

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***“You cannot pour from an empty well.”***

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Burnout isn't just being tired. It's not something a good night's sleep fixes, and it's not a personal failing or a sign you're not cut out for this work.

Burnout is what happens when the demands of caring for others outpace your ability to recover. It builds slowly, often invisibly, until one day the tank is empty and you're not quite sure how it got that way.

### Three things tend to show up together

- **Exhaustion**

Not just tired. Depleted, in a way that rest doesn't seem to touch anymore.

- **Detachment**

Going through the motions. Caring less, or caring the same but feeling emptied by it.

- **Feeling ineffective**

Doubting whether what you do even makes a difference anymore, even when it clearly does.

### Why Educators Are Especially at Risk

This work asks for constant emotional labour — patience, warmth, and full presence, hour after hour, often while managing ratios, paperwork, and other people's expectations too. Much of what educators give is invisible. It doesn't show up on a roster or a pay slip, but it's real, and it adds up.

#### **Burnout is not:**

Laziness • A character flaw • Only something that happens to people who “can't cope” • Permanent

*It responds to support, boundaries, community, and time — which is exactly what the WELL Framework was built to help with.*

### A Note on Support

This page is educational and reflective, not diagnostic or clinical, and it isn't a substitute for professional care. If burnout is sitting heavily with you, please reach out to your GP or a mental health professional. Support is also available through Lifeline (13 11 14) and Beyond Blue (1300 22 4636).

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***“Thriving is never the result of a single factor. Thriving is the result of an ecosystem.”***

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5

**You've stopped asking yourself how you're really doing.**

*Not as an educator. Not as a colleague. Just as a person.*

*Where do you see this showing up for you?*

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6

**The things you used to enjoy outside work have quietly disappeared.**

*The parts of you that exist beyond the classroom have gone quiet too.*

*Where do you see this showing up for you?*

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7

**You feel like you're getting through the day, rather than living it.**

*Surviving the day instead of showing up fully — for the children, and for yourself.*

*Where do you see this showing up for you?*

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## What To Do Next

### 1 Sit with it.

Pick the one sign that hit hardest. You don't have to fix it today — just stop looking away from it.

### 2 Choose one small thing this week, just for you.

Not a holiday, not a big gesture. A cup of tea sat down. Ten minutes of quiet. Something that's only for you.

### 3 Talk to someone.

A colleague, a friend, or a community that gets it. This isn't something you're meant to carry alone.

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### If even one of these landed —

You're not alone, and you're not failing. This is exactly why The Educators Well exists. The WELL Framework is a 16-week guided journey built to help educators restore their wellbeing, rediscover their purpose, and lead from a fuller cup — not an empty one.

## The Educators Well

Wellbeing First • Empower Through Learning • Lead With Purpose • Lift Each Other Up  
[theeducatorswellwithrachel.com](http://theeducatorswellwithrachel.com)