What does your mutual aid group provide?
Is anyone in your group being paid to do the work?

- Yes: 47
- No: 227
- n/a or it's complicated: 30
How long has your group existed?

- More than 5 years: 42
- More than 2 years: 52
- More than 1 year: 139
- More than 6 months: 23
- More than 1 month: 15
- Trying to start up now: 17
How much does your group provide things online (like $) versus in person (like food, childcare, etc.)?

- More than half of our work is online: 71
- More than half of our work is in person: 210
What is the biggest problem facing your group?
What is one strength you have experienced in an organizational culture you have been in?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Humanely</th>
<th>5 months</th>
<th>organizing to get EVERYONE involved in the work paid so this work is open to more people &amp; doesn't cause burnout – tapping the non-profit industrial complex to steal that money for organizing work! ☹️</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We try to have a system of backup people in place so that people do not feel bad if they don't have the capacity to complete a task</td>
<td>honestly</td>
<td># of Active participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledging the strength in the room and in the community, as well as sensing Emerging innovation</td>
<td>Sensing our edges and not going over, staying with tolerable discomfort and not trying to be stronger than we are</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct and Clear</td>
<td>I want our group to be open about their limitations and be comfortable taking a step back when they are overwhelmed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staying with our edges without being heroic.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Firm and soft boundaries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I want my group to talk about capacity openly and transparently. We all have maxed ones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>As an evolving concept, but I simultaneously want people to follow through.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Talk about it specifically, allow space for folks to say they need a break without blame or shame. (To be clear, my group does this already)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>acknowledge it and be able to step back and address it &amp; work on ways to reduce it from happening again</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?

State concerns when they arise

How can we bring more people into our group? How can we share the decision making? How can we be more welcoming?

normalizing summarizing long group chat convos for folks who can't read them all

how to encourage volunteers to jump in

"How's your heart"

I wish people were more willing to organize, rather just pulling things together without cooperative planning

I get exhausted doing more than I can do as an isolated poor aging disabled queer orphan while young people with access to enormous privilege claim low capacity and its pulling teeth to get any mutual aid so resentment builds and it's unsustainable

Actually knowing what it is, we don't have a sense of amount of need in the community.

open forum
How do you want your group to talk about capacity?

- I wish we had an onboarding process
- non judgmentally
- I want members to be honest about their individual capacity
- I want them to be fearless to share and be vulnerable but the regional culture is all about passivity and not rocking the boat. This pervades even resistance spaces.
- candidly
- honestly, with compassion for ourselves and each other.
- as honestly as possible
- honesty
- I wish we had willing to have facilitation, consensus, and conflict resolution training
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Honestly, with compassion and frequently!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vulnerability and honesty</td>
<td>Be honest and transparent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>holding themselves accountable</td>
<td>Talking openly and honestly with one another and listening to one another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>honestly and with compassion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct, using transformative justice</td>
<td>Direct, using transformative justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>collectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solutions not complaints</td>
<td>more slowly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honest</td>
<td>Reassurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With the understanding that we all have limits and there is no shame in that</td>
<td>In the moment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?

- Without Fear of Judgement
- short and sweet - be direct
- Direct and honest
- non-defensive
- Being mindful of ableist tendencies
- Honesty and compassion
- with empathy
- with honesty and compassion
- Be direct and set community agreements!
How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?

- Straight up without filters
- Honestly and collaboratively
- Using NVC
- Not valorizing overworking yourself
- Acknowledgment of intersectionality—understanding that internalized ableism can play a huge part with disabled participants
- With vulnerability and bravery.
- Frequently, unprompted, before they reach burnout
- Clearly, honestly, straightforward
- With honesty, but with understanding of group dynamics
How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?

- Honestly, and ensuring we hear from everyone in the group
- Honestly, with vulnerability, and having timelines around capacity
- to have psychological safety
- Just honestly.
- Direct, honest, written and audio, non-violently
- Honest self-assessment, transparent communication, understanding, trust, and grace
- i want to track what we don't have capacity for now, so we can come back to it when we do. Feeling disorganized drains capacity.
- Directly and clearly. Comfortably
- with compassion and understanding
How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?

- Acknowledging our limitations
- bluntly, can use emojis to signify level of energy
- Valuing people over the work; there will always be more work.
- needs, strengths, & boundaries
- Soon after they realize their capacity has changed
- no judgement when folx need to step back
- Authentically, honestly, without fear of judgment.
- encouraging each other to only do what we feel joyful to do
- without fear to change their minds
How do you want your group to talk about capacity?

- Directness and being able to sit with tension
- Without shame.
- Asking others for help
- I want to feel comfortable naming it and allowing others to do the same (thanks capitalism)
- Direct and honest without taking things personally but interpersonally
- Honestly, and with enough time to shift expectations so we don't drop the ball on important stuff and lose trust
- Honest with self and others
- I want everyone to feel safe and like they can assert boundaries
- with radical love
How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?

- being clear, honest and open
- recognize not just intention but impact
- honest and up front about needs and abilities

- Honestly and directly. Bluntly. Don't make people guess at your meaning or intentions. (I'm autistic so this is rooted in my own support needs.)
- Openly with accountability to community needs. Recognizing our growth edges and finding ways to grow.
- directly and with kindness
- I want us to not overcommit, focus on not burning out or leaning too hard on one or two individuals.
- Making space for people to share their expertise
How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?

- It's ok to talk about boundaries
- work towards sustainable engagement
- Honestly, with folks feeling comfortable having their voice heard
- Be honest about capacity (without fear of judgment)
- honestly and without urgency
- With humility and transparency. As soon as they come up so there’s time to react without sacrificing end goals
- I want people to be very direct about their capacity, feel comfortable letting each other know when something isn’t done
- being aware of overpromising.
- Feeling safe in welcoming others sharing their mental/emotional/physical limits at any/all the time
How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?

- As a fluid conversation where there’s allowance for honesty around capacities changing over time
- Honor folks’ access needs
- Accountable - not shaming
- People coming in and out as needed, and being understanding
- Space for folks to share about where they’re at and also to pass along projects before burnout leads to dropping things.
- Being honest about where we are and asking for help. Having each person jump in and out and change their capacity.
- Saying no rather than just staying silent
- Want people to feel comfortable exercising their no muscles when they need
- Feeling grounded in ability to communicate how they want to engage at a time-understanding that our capacity is a fluid fluid thing
How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?

- If something changes, tell the group. Practice saying no and yes and collaborating to reduce the load.
- Knowing where we've overpromised and being able to walk it back -- knowing what commitments we can keep so we can move forward.
- In container.
- People knowing their own boundaries and offering within them from love, for others and themselves.
- Frequently and in multiple ways.
- Openly and with forgiveness and understanding.
- Honestly and directly with flexibility and anti-ableist frameworks.
- Be clear and not take on too much.
- Take on projects that excite them/recognize that all projects are important.
How do you want to talk about capacity?

- Communicate openly without fear of judgement about what you can and cannot do.
- Circle keeping in organizations to address issues like this. A habit of circle keeping helps build trust and safety.
- Stop gossipping about people who do less and offer support when people need help.
- Consensually
- with intention, direct,
- Hold both individual and group boundaries around yes/no
- i would like for us to be able get to a place where we all honestly feel like we are in a good place
- with grace and compassion
- Grace for everyone's changing needs while making sure if people need to take a break, someone else will take over and it won't mean the work doesn't get done
### How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advice</th>
<th>Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being realistic, sometimes undercommitting in order to not burn out, and constantly checking in with one another about capacity</td>
<td>Orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sit and listen without judging</td>
<td>Blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honestly. Directly. No judgement. Openly. Honored for whatever is said.</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanding beyond the &quot;usual suspects&quot;</td>
<td>Purple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be brave enough to say no when you can't AND generous enough to say yes if you can!</td>
<td>Orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct, clear and with acceptance.</td>
<td>Purple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not assuming that a nebulous &quot;someone&quot; will step up if you don't see it happening</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking breaks are good for everyone--working until burnout achieves less in the long-run</td>
<td>Purple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Want everyone to check in every time we meet, that it's part of our ongoing discussions so that it's normalized.</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?

- Transparency about personal bandwidth without fear of judgement
- Ask each other where our capacity is explicitly when making task requests
- Open & ongoing, honestly & promptly
- I want to talk about it honestly while building trust
- Not gonna lie, stepping up if someone can
- With creativity
- To be inclusive and “big tent” so we can capture all the strengths of our community
- Get more creative with what people can give and receive - sometimes relationships are enough
- I want honesty! And others asking about capacity if we feel innately they may be taking on more than they can handle. Offering to help when we sense others have a lot on their plate
How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?

- Be more welcoming
- Why we can't recruit
- Transformative justice & healing processes when we go beyond capacity & harm each other
- Allowing space support vulnerability away from shame
- Being empathetic to other's capacity and stepping up to support one another.
- Intentionally, make space for it in meetings and communication channels
- Communication with participants on either side of prison walls
- Making space for people to take breaks explicitly. Succession planning, or vacation planning, or something.
- Holding space for each other. Tending to our boundaries. Truly loving each other. Talking directly with each other in the moment if there is tension, rather than letting things fester and ganging up on people.
How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?

- Constantly holding that we are humans but also want/need to get the thing done.
- To have space for disagreements without people feeling like they are in open conflict.
- Actively check in with each other; give and receive care with each other.
- I want people to follow up when they’re not able to complete tasks or fill role. Just need communication.
- Early, often, and honestly.
- Direct communication with respect. Supporting boundaries. Be accountable for what we say we’ll do. And believe in ourselves and our work.
- With a willingness to change and without pressure to try to do everything.
- Forgiving.
- Find how people want to connect more and help more.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestion</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dean we luv u</td>
<td>Reassurance on the work we have been doing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want folks to not feel shame and to be open about where they are and</td>
<td>in a focused and open space - giving time to capacities - seeing the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how they can show up</td>
<td>creative designs we can generate to support each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normalize communicating personal boundaries and respect them without</td>
<td>encouraged but not pressured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shaming others for doing less</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?

- Be able to be honest about capacity often, no pressure to do more. Find ways to bring it up often, so can pivot when necessary, before necessary really.
- Need to notice resentment building and take a break.
- With awareness that capacity looks different for marginalized people than relatively privileged people.
- Use capacity check-ins as an opportunity to see if people's needs aren't being met, and if there's a way we can step up to support.
- Participatory action research.
- I want us to build more cushion into our work, so that people can step forward and back more often.
- Speak only for one's self and listen open and earnestly to others speaking for themselves.
- How to rotate to combat burnout.
- Take time to think about what are our strengths and to envision different futures.
How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?

- Acknowledging shame directly (for not showing up/ for not being able to show up) and working through that shame.
- Broaden the circle of those who can share the burden, not demanding from people who are already there to give more than they can.
- Supporting folks to be accountable!
- Making it clear that perfection isn't the goal.
- Someone is very good at gently calling people on their shit, I want to be more like them.
- Allowing people to just back away without us giving up on them until they can return to the work.
- Teaching others to do what you know how to do- stop essentializing yourself to feel important.
- Talk about it in terms of sustainability, not always individually.
How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?

- nonviolently with empathy and compassion
- reminders, revisit, & review often
- how growing capacity is also related to how we communicate and share information, welcome people etc. I feel like there's a lot of untapped capacity and wisdom and energy, like the larger circles in that diagram
- How do we engage all these people on our “general” slack channel? Aka generally interested people but how can we bring them in?!
- The opposite of passive aggression
- yes/no exercised regularly and openly.
- under promise and over deliver
- Resist creating "hierarchies of the burned out" where people working over capacity exercise power over those who are trying to maintain boundaries
- admitting the pressure i/me put on ourselves to do a lot
How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?

- **build capacity, have the work be fulfilling. direct communication.**
- **approaching it as a cultural issue instead of a personal one**
- **BLAME and SHAME**
- **how to improve communication between neurodivergent people and neurotypical people without putting unequal emotional labor on one end or the other or furthering stigma**
- **talk about capacity as neutral-- everyone is giving what they can. i want a space where radical honesty is welcomed**
- **That is can be fluid and the door is always open for people to come back with judgement**
- **With judgement or resentment**
- **we lov u**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>defensively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passive aggressively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ableism, hostility, capitalist ways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blame shame gossip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>timidly, side conversations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With shame or judgement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being passive aggressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gossip, defensive, shaming, rigid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't want people to have a holier than thou attitude.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?

- Gossip, dropping out/disappearing
- Steamrolling, With resistance to change.
- Urgency, scarcity, judgmental
- As if it's something concrete. We are fluid!! so is our capacity
- Spiraling
- Avoidance, immediate anger, shame, or blame.
- Relying on the “regulars” in the group
- Passive aggressiveness
- Blaming
How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?

- I'd love to see less anger when someone says they don't have capacity.
- Shaming, lack of empathy for exactly where everyone is right now.
- Being sorry.
- just ghosting us.
- No hierarchies of the burned out!
- Oppression olympics.
- I want for folks to feel like they can rest and rest and rest and still be part of the work, I want to encourage each others' well being and our own paces.
- Impossibly long emails.
- Shutting others down or pushing folks to do more without consent.
How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?

"The same people are always the ones who show up"

Guilt, innocence, attack, defense, criminal justice binary punitive bullshit

as an excuse for flakiness

By ghosting each other, or talking in circles.

Exaggerating how urgent the work is

Competitiveness, stealing

Guilting people into taking on work

martyrdom

avoiding conflict
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do you want to your group to talk about capacity?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behind each others backs. Accusatorily? (making up that word). Or not talking about it at all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blaming, attacking, harmful language, shaming, martyrdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>long emails or one person taking up a large percent of the meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop being excited about firefighting - that means you need more things on FIRE to keep people happy!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think we are experiencing collective burn out and so we are silent! No communication doesn't make space for transparency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passive aggressively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>being defeatist - believing capacity problems can never get better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No passive aggression, please.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>people with more capacity are seen as more dedicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shaming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with resentment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avoiding the discussion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How do you NOT want your group to talk about capacity?

- With yelling
- Silence - lack of response
- Last minute
- Apologizing for our capacity.
- Irritation
- No blame
- Guilt filed
- Stop essentializing yourself! Teach others how to do the things you know how to do
- No more assumptions
How do you NOT want your group to talk about capacity?

- Complaining for the sake of it - not actively looking for solutions
- Blaming
- No gossip. No self demeaning talk. No shaming others.
- Judgement, silence, sweeping under rug, a few people picking up all the slack and not talking about it openly
- Telling something to everyone BUT the person it concerns
- Bitterness, attacking, shaming, secrecy, lying to self and others
- We luv u
- Presumptively
- Shame. blame.
How do you NOT want your group to talk about capacity?

- ghosting
- with judgement
- with judgement and shaming
- disorganized! letting things we don't have capacity for slip through the cracks
- to shame or to trigger insecurities
- blaming
- ableism
- resentment
- discuss solutions to burnout not that you're burnt out
How do you NOT want your group to talk about capacity?

- Conflict avoidance
- Implicitly
- Passive aggressively!
- Judgmental
- Talking behind each other's backs
- I'm tired of ableism and gossip. Shaming of those who people perceive as doing less
- Savior & martyr
- With guilt
- Don't be a hero
How do you NOT want your group to talk about capacity?

- humblebragging
- Inserting urgency to create pressure
- Overcommitting and then apologizing a lot
- passive aggressively
- With a sense of urgency and in a way that produces guilt/shame
- Ignoring our humanity
- stop flexing
- complaining/shaming in email threads
- shaming
How do you NOT want your group to talk about capacity?

- Blame, shame, burnout, but also avoiding 'no one has to do anything and that's ok'
- Shaming, blaming, with resent, comparing, etc.
- No news is good news. Don't assume everyone is alright. Do consistent check ins to normalize giving yourself space.
- Judging,
- Judgmentally or leveraging guilt
- By feeling shame, or noping out because of that shame.
- Not seeing each other as full people
- With ultimatums or "if you don'ts"
- Argumentative and taking points personally when there is disagreement
How do you NOT want your group to talk about capacity?

- competition "who's working the hardest"
- By making capacity or trauma a competition. Everyone has needs and limits.
- not practicing transformative justice
- Being sorry
- Mostly silence, with those with soft power dominating the conversation and making the decisions
- "The Grind"
- just passively letting people say they are at their limit/overwhelmed without taking it seriously and making changes soon
- At last minute or in unhealthy capitalist ways that value productivity above all else
- ghosting
How do you NOT want your group to talk about capacity?

- resentful/negative silence
- thinking that we can't find solutions or change the scope or scale of the project
- Stoicism serves nobody in a group project
- Taking over and not letting people in
- feeling isolated and not talking about it
- taking things personally or centering ourselves within issues and losing sight of the purpose
- stop overpromising!!!!!!! internalized capitalist shame!!!!!
- ableism, shaming, capitalist ways, wanting to move to nonprofit instead of resolving capacity issues in a horizontal format
- "only i can do this"
How do you NOT want your group to talk about capacity?

- assuming specific priorities
- as though small capacity isn't enough
- that if you're not martyring yourself then you're not really "down" for the cause
- avoiding conflict
- Do not expect gender minorities and BIPOC to pick up all slack
- Apologizing and then not changing any behavior – continuing to overpromise, not communicate, etc
- passive aggressive language
How do you NOT want your group to talk about capacity?

- Punitively
- Pushing blame on others
- Not raising the topic of limited capacity until people have already taken on too much
- Judging other peoples capacity "They CLAIM low capacity but I think they have more". Remembering we don't know peoples full story.
- Conflict avoidant
- Not being inclusive of people at different places in their social justice learning
- Silence/lack of response
- Infantilizing
- Expecting others to have capacity when you do not
How do you NOT want your group to talk about capacity?

- Over apologizing for not having capacity
- Radical honesty and acceptance of limits society creates
- Stop privileging action items and deliverables.
- Immediate agreement only to back out later, delay of communicating that you cannot do something, make a process for saying no so the discord mags have consms on them!
- Don’t keep quiet when you can’t show up -- let someone know.
- With blame and resentment towards people for taking the space they need
- Seeing yourself as the always first option rather than thinking about delegation or what might be leading to others not participating
- Reactive and generalised conversations about capacity...
- Comparing capacity between people. You never know what someone has going on, so never make assumptions about what someone can handle
How do you NOT want your group to talk about capacity?

- Avoid discussions rooted in capitalism and "hustle" culture. People can only do what they can do.
- silence + absence - so the work is left unspoken / forgotten
- Tired of this hierarchy of those who do too much and never say no, versus the rest of us who are trying to have boundaries

100% stop romantisizing overworking

- At last minute or in capitalist ways that value productivity above all else
- ableist

continuing at exactly the same pace, not slowing down

- Being shy about it - ok to just say, hey we can't do this
- Not to resent people who pull away for long breaks
How do you NOT want your group to talk about capacity?

- not ghosting us
- stop cutting off your communications with people you don't like
- being super vocally supportive of folks taking breaks without having honest conversations about the burden that puts on everyone else
- oppression olympics
- Defensively, passive aggressively, comparatively, ghosting or being non-responsive because of shame
- by avoiding confrontation
- Interrogating / Requiring explanations
- ghosting us
- Inundating people with so many ideas that we feel unable to really make even the slightest difference.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do you NOT want your group to talk about capacity?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ok to take a break and come back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stop assuming other peoples capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>being shady or passive aggressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with blame and backbiting -- or conversely with charging ahead without group consent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can't be the hero to everyone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>having a structure in which a lot of responsibilities &amp; power naturally fall to a few people (hierarchical structure)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ableism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disingenuously</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How do you NOT want your group to talk about capacity?

- Belittling someone else's priorities, if they are not the same
- With a sense of unrelenting urgency
- Keeping capacity discussions to a small group and not the whole group
- Ignoring the call for more engagement for things that are hard work, especially when only one or few folks repeatedly taking on because just needs to be done
- Passive aggressively!
- Pretending everything is fine when it is not,
- Shame, blame, resorting to identity politics to shut people down, no matter who they are.
- Weakness-centered
How do you NOT want your group to talk about capacity?

- I do NOT want people to validate why they can't contribute or participate using the virtue of what they are doing (I'm doing a very virtuous thing instead of being at the meeting)
- With bitterness from burn out
- Fear of vulnerability, judgement, playing our cultural roles
- Passive aggressively
- NA
- No assuming, don't be afraid to clarify
- Ignoring
- Gossip
- Guilting out, confusing
How do you NOT want your group to talk about capacity?

- avoiding
- stop not showing up
- No one else can do it as well as me
- It'll all work out
- No one else can get this done
- Avoidance
- I do NOT want my group to signal its capacity by silence, or not answering. Especially in quantized forms of communication (I could use a better word but don't know it), forms like texting or email
- ...
- I can't let her down
How do you NOT want your group to talk about capacity?

I don't want us to encourage firefighters, as they require FIRES.

If I don't do it, who will?

I will feel guilty

suck it up!

who else is going to do this

It needs to get done and you are the one who knows how to do it

no one else will do it if I don't
How do you NOT want your group to talk about capacity?

- we all are busy
- other people do way more than I do
- I gotta carry us through this week!
- I gotta take the weight off the people who are burning out who carry us all the time
- It's exciting for me to explore my edges
- Guilt from privilege - I don't deserve all the good I have
- Yeah I'm in a position of more privilege and ability, so it's hard to ask others to take stuff on when we are all maxed out, yet the work still needs to happen.

- dismissive
What messages do I hear in my head when I am deciding to overcommit?

- Just this one more time!
- I need to do more
- I can do this
- if i don't do it the group will fall apart
- I can help! (Savior)
- No one else volunteered. This has to get done.
- this is important
- i'm the only one who will do it.
What messages do I hear in my head when I am deciding to overcommit?

- It needs to get done
- If I don't do it, no one else will
- Everyone else is more system-impacted than me
- It must get done and I'm the only one who can
- I wasn't able to help as much as I wanted to last time and now I need to make up for it
- I'm the only one that has the relationships / access to information that can do this
- It's important that it be a Black person there and everyone other BIPOC person is over capacity
- don't let them down!
- I'm the only one
What messages do I hear in my head when I am deciding to overcommit?

- Other people can do this, what is the matter with you
- I can do it!
- No one else will do it I don't volunteer
- People will like me more
- I will feel guilty - I have so much privilege, I need to use it for good
- I want to do it right
- "It's my fault I didn't delegate, and now there's urgent need and it's too late so I have to suck it up" - Redwoods
- Urgency
- I hope this makes people like/respect me
What messages do I hear in my head when I am deciding to overcommit?

- Someone should do this; I know I'm capable
- You have to do it for the revolution, if I don't do it no one does
- No one else is doing it
- I'm lazy if I don't use all my time and energy
- No one else cares enough to take this on
- Perfectionism
- Someone needs to step up, and it's urgent.
- You've done it before you can do it one more time
- I don't trust other people in the group to get it done.
What messages do I hear in my head when I am deciding to overcommit?

- Others are going through worse. I’m hiding behind my privilege if I don’t step up.
- If I don’t, I will be punished.
- Silence from the group is uncomfortable so I should do it.
- I over do it to avoid myself.
- That if I don’t do it it won’t get done, for sure.
- Everyone else has low capacity, too.
- I haven’t done enough for a while. I have to make up for not doing on the ground work, so I have to do more online work than is feasible.
- I am responsible for all this.
- I’m scared of the silence when no one else commits.
What messages do I hear in my head when I am deciding to overcommit?

- It has to get done and I will do it best
- This work is important and someone has to get it done
- I need to be useful
- The task is more important than my free time
- Need to be needed
- I'm not doing enough.
- "I'll let people down if I don't do this"
- I need to do this because I'm not doing enough or because I'm a bad person if I don't.
- I've had so much privilege -- it is my duty now to give back
What messages do I hear in my head when I am deciding to overcommit?

- Worried that our participants will suffer if I don’t
- Need to be perfect
- I am not enough/I am not doing enough
- I want to make up for my privilege
- Making up for lost time
- I need to please the group and have the group think I’m valuable
- Our group needs it and I am able.
- Anxiety - no one is stepping up, I’ll do it.
- There are people depending on us and no one else is going to step up
What messages do I hear in my head when I am deciding to overcommit?

Right, don't do this critical work and go home and relax and enjoy your relatively easy life.

If I want it done right...

If I do it, then I have no one to blame but me - I like the control.

What's my worth if not

Eh, who needs sleep anyway

This is urgent, this is too important to say no

I should do this because I have privilege and could

This is how I can be worthy. I have privilege so I should

People will forget about me if I stop
What messages do I hear in my head when I am deciding to overcommit?

- It's easier to step up than ask for someone else to help.
- I'll be treated as not having a right to be in & benefit from the space if I don't.
- Privilege guilt
- Have no time to train someone new
- What right do I have to ask for someone to do what I won't/can't?
- I live a very privileged life and there are people suffering who are counting on me. It's the least I can do.
- Everyone else is doing stuff
- I'm lazy and need to work hard against that tendency.
- Someone will suffer if no one does it, and I am one of the few who has capacity.
What messages do I hear in my head when I am deciding to overcommit?

- If I don't do this then I'm not down
- I want to contribute to change
- Hard not to help others when you have an open heart
- If I don't do it, it won't get done. I'm letting down the org. The other person who knows how to do this has done it the last two weeks, it's my turn to pick up the slack.
- People don't respond (in time)
- This will fail if I let it wait
- No one else is volunteering and it has to get done
- It's my trauma response to want to do more work because it's necessary and good work, and it helps my existential dread.
- I need to show up more or I want to show them that I can do a good job
What messages do I hear in my head when I am deciding to overcommit?

I can deal with this over commitment in the short term (yet, then, the exit point keeps getting pushed back)

I'm one of few people who can do this (in groups where white members delegate racial diversity tasks to BIPOC folks)

I need to do things for people so they like and accept me.

I'm white and have enough money to help, and if I say no, I'm not contributing to my community or living out my anti-racist/anti-capitalist values

It'll take more time to explain to someone else how to do it and I'm already burned out

I'm wasting my life if I don't

"You're not doing enough, and that's selfish"

I have more privilege than others in the group

I'm grifting because I'm a white person working at a predominantly BIPOC org, I don't belong here, etc. It's complicated.
What messages do I hear in my head when I am deciding to overcommit?

- People's literal lives depend on it, so if I don't do it....
- Being the only one to offer to do something leads to overcommitting -> it won't get done if I don't do it.
- I have more time available.
- It will be faster and easier if I just do it.
- If I can help get work off someone else's plate, that's how I can be most helpful.
- Need to make up for the time my job has me doing "nothing".
- No one else will do it otherwise and I'd rather sacrifice than have someone who needs it miss their food delivery, etc.
- People pleasing.
- As always, my father.
What messages do I hear in my head when I am deciding to overcommit?

- Everyone is doing more in I should try to match them
- I have to live up to my "potential"
- I often deprioritize my own needs and to do lists by minimizing their importance or telling myself i’ll do it later. this is more important. get it done
- if i see something that needs to be done, i have to do it or i’m telling others they hav to
- Neighbors are counting on us and we need to follow through
- This will be personally fulfilling and I need it (even if it’s not and I don’t)
- No real reason to say no (not doing anything "better" with my time, just watching tv)
- No time for messages!!! I’m overcommitting!!!
What messages do I hear in my head when I am deciding to overcommit?

- Someone has to do this
- I can't let this person down
- I want to be loved and valued (breaks my heart to say this)
- I'm a bad person if I don't push myself or do as much as I possible (unfortunately, I know this is a trauma response, specifically "fawning", in combination w/ internalized ableism)
- No one else is stepping up, guess I have to.
- I need to prove I deserve to be here
- This is the most important work I could be doing.
- It's my responsibility because of my privilege.
- I want to show up because I don't want to be seen like I don't care. Even if it means showing up for multiple things/people/needs at once.
What messages do I hear in my head when I am deciding to overcommit?

- Nothing can do it better than me
- "prove yourself, be exceptional"
- There aren't enough hours in the day to do all the things (esp. when having to work to survive, too) but I want to do them!
- I should do this because I have privilege and I can
- I have free time, I should be able to do it. Everyone else is doing so much.
- even though I regularly feel overcommitted, I'm sure I can do it better this time...
- As a privileged person, I have the obligation to work myself to the bone -- I'm still suffering less than xyz
- That I have more privilege than others and need to use it
- It's exciting for me to explore my edges
What messages do I hear in my head when I am deciding to overcommit?

- The need for reparations and that I need to give till it hurts
- Rest is something hard to learn
- What will this comrade in need think of me if I say I can’t / let them down
- It must be done.
- Things will fall apart if no one does this work.
- People will disappoint me so I better step in
- This is urgent! (Not taking the time to think through alternatives, let others speak up)
- It’s my role to serve
- It will take too long to train the new person.
What messages do I hear in my head when I am deciding to overcommit?

- I should be able to do more than I'm currently doing
- If I don't work, no one even knows I exist and then I can't get support when I need it
- If I don't actively, visibly participate, I have no value to others.
- Why are you here if you're not doing the work
- I want to be helpful
- People will be mad at me if I can't help more. I have to prove I'm valuable in this work and it has to be done. Urgency
- "Someone has to do it" "I don't want so and so taking this on"
- If I ask too much of my small overworked team, they may want to leave the group? (Thinking about abandonment)
- I want to do it!! even though I know it's really likely that I'll procrastinate/not follow through, but I somehow believe every time that I sign up that "this time will be different"
What messages do I hear in my head when I am deciding to overcommit?

- I want to do everything, each toe dipped in a different pond
- All the work we've done so far will be for nothing if I don't overcommit.
- Saying no is being "lazy"
- I have to prove my dedication, worth and value of community by overcommitting
- It's easier to do the "tasks" than spend time on building a strong group culture and decision making process
- Sometimes it feels more stressful to find someone to help out than to do it myself
- My self concept needs me to be The One Doing The Most
- Everyone else seems really overwhelmed
- I am worried if I don't then I will be letting people down
What messages do I hear in my head when I am deciding to overcommit?

I haven't had a positive result from my work, so I must add more opportunities to add something productive.

Don't want to let the people down we help

service/care work is some of the most important work I can do (and my value comes from it)

I'll have to spend more time fixing it later if someone else does it, so I should just do it myself now.

I was there at its origin and feel accountability for how we are falling short

I want the control of knowing whatever happens, it's on me

you are wallowing in the rewards of your family's blood money and you need to answer to the people suffering around you

No one else has the expertise/experience to do this particular project

I want people to like me. I want to feel needed
What messages do I hear in my head when I am deciding to overcommit?

- I can do this. But I maybe don't think about whether or not it's healthy.
- I'm only worthy if I'm productive.
- There's not enough of us (for me to not commit).
- I think [other person] has enough on their plate so I should take this on.
- Worry that it won't be done well, that I wouldn't be happy with the product or want to put my name on it.
- As the elder in the group, I need to step up and do this.
- The need is so great, it needs to get done, my time isn't that important.
- I have more time than everyone else.
- I don't recognize my own capacity until I'm way over it.
What messages do I hear in my head when I am deciding to overcommit?

- If not me, who?
- unscheduled time is wasted
- no one else will do as good of a job on it as I will
- This is the only space I don't feel like something is wrong with me and I need to make sure it doesn't fall apart.
- urgency
- I gotta carry us through this week and then we’ll build capacity
- you are a social parasite and this is the only way people will see any value in you, but don’t expect anyone to express that.
- gendered ideas of who should be doing all the admin type work
- I gotta carry the people who have been carrying us and burning out so they can rest.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Message</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I failed at recruiting someone else to do this task so now it's mine to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I resent having to do this work. Why doesn't so and so step up?</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am crazy because I can't do this.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Show up for myself and others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prove my worth to the group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not enough time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They really need me. I'm valuable. There is nobody else to do it. They've asked four times and nobody else responded. I have more energy/privilege than those who need this service. I can get my stuff done later. This is the work.</td>
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</tbody>
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