Knowledge Gateway

Practice Guidance and Information

Trauma Informed Support

Navigating Hostility and Intolerance: Practical Guidance for Voluntary Organisations and Community Groups

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Contents

Introduction 3
How to Use This Guidance 4
Methodology 5
Acknowledgements 6
1. Trauma-Informed Practice 7
1.1. Top Tips for Staff and Volunteers 7
1.2. Core Set: 8
2. Professional and Clinical Supervision 10
2.1. Top Tips for Staff and Volunteers 10
2.2. Core Set: 11
3. Debriefing Models 12
3.1. Top Tips for Staff and Volunteers 12
3.2. Core Set: 13
4. Volunteer and Staff Wellbeing Support 15
4.1. Top Tips for Staff and Volunteers 15
4.2. Core Set 16
5. Burnout Prevention 17
5.1. Top Tips for Staff and Volunteers 17
5.2. Core Set 18

Introduction

This guidance document equips volunteers, voluntary-sector staff and managers with trauma-informed principles, emotionally safe communication techniques, grounding strategies, reflective-practice tools and wellbeing supports drawn from Scotland-specific bodies, national authorities and specialist organisations. It supports calm, ethical and compassionate practice across public-facing, emotionally demanding and trauma-linked volunteer roles.

Each topic includes two types of support: short "Top Tips" that offer quick, easy-to-use prompts, and more detailed Core Set of resources that provides fuller guidance, structured tools and practical resources drawn from Scotland-specific and UK-wide organisations.

The Top Tips act as rapid reference points that volunteers and staff can use before an interaction, during a moment of distress or uncertainty, or afterwards to reflect and strengthen future practice.

The Core Set offers deeper learning for training, supervision, wellbeing planning or more complex situations, giving organisations a comprehensive set of approaches to emotionally safe, trauma-aware and sustainable practice.

Trauma-informed support is organised into five core areas that help volunteers and staff respond safely and confidently when working with people who may be distressed, overwhelmed or affected by trauma:

- **Trauma-Informed Practice** – understanding trauma, recognising its impact and using emotionally safe, behaviour-aware communication.
- **Professional / Clinical Supervision** – accessing structured support, reflective practice and trauma-skilled supervision to maintain safe, sustainable practice.
- **Debriefing Models** – using non-clinical debriefing approaches, grounding tools and structured reflection after challenging or distressing situations.
- **Volunteer and Staff Wellbeing Support** – maintaining emotional safety, accessing wellbeing tools and supporting volunteers and staff in emotionally demanding roles.
- **Burnout Prevention** – recognising early signs of stress, managing emotional labour and supporting sustainable volunteer and staff practice.

These subtopics bring together practical, evidence-informed guidance on:

- trauma-informed principles and grounding techniques
- behaviour-aware and emotionally safe communication
- reflective practice and safe supervision
- non-clinical debriefing models
- wellbeing and emotional safety tools
- Scotland-specific national trauma frameworks

- awareness of misinformation, harmful narratives and hostility

Together, these resources provide a strong foundation for **emotionally safe volunteer and staff practice across Scotland's third sector** - supporting calm, compassionate and regulated responses in trauma-linked or high-stress environments.

How to Use This Guidance

This guidance is designed to be practical, accessible and easy to use in real situations. It supports volunteers, staff and managers to communicate in ways that are safe, calm and emotionally aware - particularly when service users may be experiencing distress, uncertainty, heightened emotion or emerging tension.

The aim is to help people feel steadier and more in control during challenging interactions, and to give volunteers and staff clear, trauma-informed approaches they can use to maintain safety, reduce escalation and support respectful, regulated communication.

Each topic includes two types of support:

- **Top Tips** – short, quick-reference prompts you can use before, during or after an interaction or situation that may involve distress, uncertainty or emotional load. These provide immediate, trauma-aware actions that help steady communication, reduce escalation and support emotional safety for volunteers, staff and the people they work with.

- **Core Set** – fuller guidance, structured tools and resources informed by evidence and practice. These provide deeper learning for training, supervision, reflective practice or more complex trauma-linked situations.

Together, the Top Tips and Core Set offer a clear two-step support structure: rapid practical advice when you need it, and more detailed guidance when you want to build skills, strengthen team practice or respond to complex, emotionally demanding or unpredictable contexts.

You can dip into individual sections as needed, or use the full set to support training, supervision, volunteer management, wellbeing planning or organisational development. The guidance is designed to be flexible - something volunteers and staff can use in the moment, and something organisations can use to build safer, more confident practice over time.

This guidance sits alongside, and does not replace, your organisation's own policies and procedures. Volunteers and staff should always follow local safeguarding, incident-reporting, escalation and wellbeing processes, and use this guidance to support safe, consistent practice within those frameworks.

Methodology

This project used a structured, systematic process to identify, assess, and categorise guidance for staff, volunteers and organisations dealing with hostility, misinformation, and community tensions. The NCVO framework (Protecting Our People and Protecting Our Work) provided the organising structure. A targeted web search and review of Scotland-relevant organisations, TSIs, equality bodies and specialist safety or communications groups was conducted, supported by topic-based and Scotland-specific keywords. All materials found were screened for relevance, clarity, and practical usefulness.

Each resource was coded and assessed using a consistent scoring framework covering reliability, evidence base, relevance to Scotland, practicality, and coverage of key risks. Metadata and scores were compiled into a filterable spreadsheet matrix to support comparison and gap analysis. The mapping highlighted strengths, weaknesses, and areas where further guidance was needed, including topics with limited coverage and areas where staff or volunteers were particularly vulnerable.

Once mapped, the resources were organised into topic-specific documents aligned with the core areas of the framework (sensitive conversations, differing viewpoints, conflict resolution, psychological safety, and inclusive/anti-racist dialogue). These documents brought together guidance identified as most relevant for each area and provided a clear structure for review.

The working group then reviewed each topic-specific document using a structured Hostile Environments Framework Review Form. The checklist guided reviewers through subtopic relevance, clarity of purpose, suitability of core set of resources, Scotland-specific applicability, accessibility, strengths, gaps, and overall usability for volunteers, staff, and small organisations. Reviewers identified broken links, highlighted any items that were weak or unsuitable, confirmed where guidance was strong and practical, and suggested minor edits to strengthen clarity and relevance.

Feedback from the checklist review was collated and actioned across all topic documents. Resources were updated, replaced, or removed where necessary; broken links were corrected; and framing was refined to ensure consistency, trauma-aware practice, and Scotland-specific relevance. This process strengthened the structure and accessibility of the final guidance.

Following this review, concise Top Tips were distilled from the core resources identified through the review process for each topic. These Top Tips provide quick, easy-to-use prompts that give readers an immediate entry point into safe, trauma-aware practice. The more detailed Core Set resources then offer deeper guidance, models, and Scotland-specific tools. Together, this two-step structure ensures that volunteers, staff, and managers can access both rapid practical advice and more comprehensive support when navigating hostility, tension, or sensitive conversations.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the working group for their collaborative review and valuable feedback. Their careful assessment of the core sets, identification of gaps and practical suggestions played a key role in shaping the final guidance and strengthening its usefulness for organisations across Scotland.

1. Trauma-Informed Practice

Trauma-informed practice helps volunteers and voluntary sector staff respond safely, compassionately and confidently when supporting people who may be distressed, overwhelmed or affected by trauma. It focuses on emotional safety, behaviour-aware communication, grounding techniques and an understanding of how trauma shapes feelings, reactions and interactions.

In public-facing, outreach and emotionally demanding roles, trauma-informed practice enables volunteers and staff to:

- recognise signs of distress or trauma responses
- use calm, emotionally safe communication
- avoid re-traumatisation
- maintain boundaries while remaining compassionate
- support grounding and regulation
- understand how stigma, discrimination and harmful narratives affect people's behaviour
- create safe environments for service users, volunteers and staff

1.1. Top Tips for Staff and Volunteers

The following Top Tips offer practical, emotionally safe actions volunteers and staff can use when supporting people affected by trauma. They are designed as quick, easy-to-apply prompts that help steady interactions, reduce emotional load and maintain calm, predictable communication in situations where distress, overwhelm or trauma responses may emerge. Volunteers and staff can use these tips to prepare before an interaction, guide the flow of communication during moments of uncertainty, or reflect afterwards to strengthen future practice.

The tips focus on pacing, predictability, grounding, boundaries and non-judgement - the core components of trauma-informed communication that help people feel safe, understood and in control.

- **Prioritise emotional safety.** Slow the pace, use a calm tone and avoid sudden movements or pressured questions.
- **Be predictable.** Explain what will happen next and avoid surprises - predictability reduces anxiety.
- **Use grounding techniques.** Simple tools like slow breathing, naming objects in the room or focusing on feet on the floor help regulate distress.
- **Validate feelings.** "It makes sense that you're feeling this way" supports emotional safety without agreeing with harmful behaviour.
- **Avoid judgement.** Trauma responses can look like anger, withdrawal, confusion or agitation - focus on safety, not interpretation.

- **Offer choices.** Even small choices ("Would you prefer to sit or stand?") help restore a sense of control.
- **Be aware of triggers.** Loud noises, crowded spaces, certain phrases or authoritative behaviour can escalate distress.
- **Maintain boundaries.** Compassion does not mean over-involvement - volunteers and staff must stay within safe role limits.
- **Reflect after difficult interactions.** Trauma-linked conversations can affect volunteers and staff; reflective practice supports emotional safety.

1.2. Core Set:

The following core set of resources provide practical, evidence-informed guidance on trauma-informed practice, emotional safety and behaviour-aware communication. Each resource offers practical, evidence-informed tools volunteers and staff can apply directly in public-facing environments.

Title (Linked)	Brief Description	Format	Audience
National Trauma Transformation Programme – Trauma-Informed Practice	Scotland's national trauma framework outlining principles, skills and behaviours for trauma-informed practice. Strong on emotional safety, communication and organisational responsibilities.	Webpage	Volunteers, Staff, Managers
NES – Trauma-Informed Practice Toolkit	Comprehensive toolkit covering trauma-aware communication, grounding techniques, reflective practice and trauma-skilled approaches. Highly relevant for volunteers and staff in public-facing roles.	Toolkit / Web Resource	Volunteers, Staff, Managers
Rape Crisis Scotland – Trauma-Informed Practice	Guidance on trauma responses, emotional safety and supporting people affected by sexual trauma. Strong on compassionate communication and avoiding re-traumatisation.	Webpage / Toolkit	Volunteers, Staff
Scottish Women's Aid – Trauma-Informed Safety Planning	Practical safety-planning guidance for people experiencing domestic abuse. Useful for volunteers and staff supporting individuals in crisis or high-risk situations.	Webpage	Volunteers, Staff

My Learning Cloud – Trauma-Informed Practice Scotland	Online training modules covering trauma-aware communication, reflective practice and emotional safety. Supports supervisors and volunteers working in trauma-linked roles.	Online Learning Resource	Volunteers, Staff, Supervisors
See Me Scotland – Tackling Stigma & Discrimination	Guidance on understanding and reducing mental-health stigma. Supports volunteers and staff to create safe, non-judgemental environments.	Webpage	Volunteers, Staff, Managers
Barnardo's Scotland – Trauma-Informed Practice Film Notes and film	Accessible trauma-informed practice notes and accompanying film designed for youth and family settings. Strong on practical examples and emotionally safe communication.	PDF & Video	Volunteers, Staff
Inclusive Volunteering – Trauma-Informed Volunteer Management	Guidance on trauma-aware volunteer management, emotional safety and wellbeing support. Useful for organisations designing safe volunteer roles.	Webpage / Guidance	Managers, Coordinators
CYCJ – Trauma-Informed Practice (Children & Young People)	Guidance tailored to supporting children and young people affected by trauma. Useful for volunteers working in youth, family or community settings.	Webpage	Volunteers, Staff

2. Professional and Clinical Supervision

Professional and trauma-informed supervision provides volunteers, staff and managers with structured support, reflective practice and emotional safety when working in demanding or emotionally sensitive environments. Effective supervision helps people process challenging interactions, maintain boundaries, reduce stress and sustain safe, ethical practice.

In Scotland's third sector, supervision is essential for:

- supporting volunteers and staff after emotionally demanding interactions
- maintaining trauma-informed, reflective practice
- managing emotional labour and role pressure
- preventing burnout and compassion fatigue
- strengthening confidence, decision-making and ethical boundaries
- ensuring safe, sustainable service delivery

Supervision may be formal (clinical or professional), informal (peer support), or embedded within team practice (reflective sessions, check-ins, debriefs). All forms help volunteers and staff stay grounded, regulated and supported.

2.1. Top Tips for Staff and Volunteers

The following Top Tips offer practical, emotionally safe actions supervisors, staff and volunteers can use to support reflective practice. They are designed as quick, easy-to-apply prompts that help create calm, predictable and non-judgemental supervision spaces where volunteers and staff can process experiences safely. Supervisors can use these tips to prepare before a session, steady the flow of reflection during challenging discussions, or revisit afterwards to strengthen future practice.

The tips focus on predictability, grounding, non-judgement, boundaries and shared learning - the core components of trauma-informed supervision that help maintain emotional safety, regulate stress and support sustainable practice.

- **Prioritise emotional safety.** Supervision should feel calm, predictable and non-judgemental.
- **Use reflective questions.** "What felt difficult?", "What helped?", "What would you do differently next time?"
- **Focus on impact, not blame.** Explore how the situation affected the person, rather than analysing what they "should have done".
- **Normalise emotional responses.** Distress, frustration or uncertainty are common in emotionally demanding roles.
- **Use grounding techniques.** Begin or end sessions with breathing, sensory grounding or regulation tools.
- **Set boundaries and expectations.** Volunteers and staff should know what supervision covers - and what it doesn't.

- **Include strengths.** Trauma-informed supervision balances challenge with recognition of what went well.
- **Use peer support where appropriate.** Peer reflection can be powerful when formal supervision isn't available.
- **Document themes.** Patterns help organisations improve training, wellbeing and safety planning.

2.2. Core Set:

The following core set of resources provide practical, evidence-informed guidance on trauma-skilled supervision, reflective practice and emotional-safety support. Each resource offers practical, evidence-informed tools for supervisors, volunteer managers and frontline staff.

Title (Linked)	Brief Description	Format	Audience
NES – Trauma Skilled Supervision Guidance	Scotland's national guidance on trauma-skilled supervision. Covers reflective practice, emotional safety, supervision models and organisational responsibilities. Strong foundation for volunteer-involving services.	Webpage / Toolkit	Supervisors, Managers, Volunteers, Staff
Iriss – Supervision Learning Resources	Practical tools, models and reflective-practice resources for supervisors and frontline workers. Useful for volunteer managers and staff delivering supervision.	Web Resource Hub	Supervisors, Managers, Staff
Scottish Recovery Network – Peer Support	Guidance on peer-based reflective practice, emotional support and shared learning. Useful for volunteer teams without formal supervision structures.	Webpage	Volunteers, Staff, Peer-Support Roles
Improvement Service – Trauma Welcome Pack	Accessible toolkit introducing trauma-informed principles, grounding tools and reflective practice. Strong on practical examples for frontline staff and volunteers.	PDF Toolkit	Volunteers, Staff, Managers
Ella Baker School of Organising – Sustainable Organising & Emotional Labour	Guidance on emotional labour, sustainable activism and collective care. Useful for volunteers and staff managing high emotional load or community-based organising.	Toolkit / Web Resource	Volunteers, Staff, Coordinators

3. Debriefing Models

Debriefing provides volunteers, staff and managers with a structured, emotionally safe way to process challenging, distressing or high-intensity situations. It supports grounding, reflection, regulation and learning - helping people recover after difficult interactions and maintain safe, sustainable practice.

Trauma-informed debriefing is a non-clinical, supportive conversation that helps volunteers and staff:

- regulate after distress or shock
- understand what happened and why it felt difficult
- identify emotional and physical responses
- reduce the risk of cumulative stress
- strengthen future decision-making
- maintain boundaries and emotional safety
- access further support if needed

Debriefing can be immediate (grounding and stabilisation), short-term (reflective conversation), or structured (using a model such as Gibbs). All forms help volunteers and staff feel supported, heard and safe.

3.1. Top Tips for Staff and Volunteers

The following Top Tips offer practical, emotionally safe actions volunteers and staff can use to support grounding, reflection and regulation after distressing events. They are designed as quick, easy-to-apply prompts that help steady people's nervous systems, create predictable space for processing, and reduce the risk of overwhelm following high-intensity or challenging situations. Volunteers and staff can use these tips immediately after an incident, during early reflection, or afterwards to strengthen future practice.

The tips focus on pacing, safety, non-judgement, containment and next steps - the core components of trauma-skilled debriefing that help people feel supported, regulated and heard without entering deep therapeutic territory.

- **Start with grounding.** Slow breathing, sensory grounding or orienting to the room helps regulate the nervous system before reflection begins.
- **Focus on safety first.** Ask: "Are you feeling safe enough to talk about this now?"
- **Use simple, open questions.** "What felt most difficult?", "What helped you cope?", "What do you need now?"
- **Avoid blame or judgement.** Debriefing explores impact, not fault.
- **Validate emotional responses.** Shock, confusion, anger or numbness are normal after distressing events.

- **Keep it short and contained.** Trauma-skilled debriefing is supportive, not a deep therapeutic process.
- **Identify next steps.** This may include supervision, wellbeing support or a follow-up check-in.
- **Document themes.** Patterns help organisations improve training, safety planning and volunteer support.
- **Know when to pause.** If someone becomes overwhelmed, return to grounding rather than continuing reflection.

3.2. Core Set:

The following core set of resources provide practical, evidence-informed guidance on trauma-skilled debriefing, grounding, early support and reflective practice. Each resource offers practical, evidence-informed tools volunteers and staff can apply directly after challenging interactions.

Title (Linked)	Brief Description	Format	Audience
Psychological First Aid – British Red Cross / WHO	Evidence-based guidance on immediate emotional support after distressing events. Covers grounding, stabilisation, listening skills and safe early support.	Webpage / Toolkit	Volunteers, Staff, Managers
Oscar Kilo – Emergency Services Trauma Intervention Programme (ESTIP)	Structured trauma-risk-management model used in emergency services. Strong on early intervention, peer support and safe post-incident processes.	Webpage / Toolkit	Volunteers, Staff, Managers
Gibbs Reflective Cycle – University of Edinburgh	A simple, structured reflection model widely used in health, social care and volunteer settings. Helps volunteers and staff process experiences step-by-step.	Webpage	Volunteers, Staff
NES – Trauma Skilled Debriefing Guidance	Scotland-specific guidance on trauma-skilled debriefing, grounding, emotional safety and reflective practice. Strong foundation for volunteer-involving services.	Webpage / Toolkit	Volunteers, Staff, Managers
Mind UK – Managing Trauma and Crisis	Accessible guidance on trauma responses, crisis management and emotional regulation. Useful for volunteers supporting people after distressing incidents.	Webpage	Volunteers, Staff

Scottish Government – Trauma-Informed Practice Toolkit	Practical tools for grounding, emotional safety, reflective practice and trauma-aware communication. Strong on Scotland-specific context and frontline application.	Toolkit / Web Resource	Volunteers, Staff, Managers
NICE NG116 – Early Trauma Support Guidance	Evidence-based guidance on early support after traumatic events. Helps organisations understand safe boundaries and avoid harmful “critical incident stress debriefing”.	Webpage	Managers, Coordinators, Supervisors

4. Volunteer and Staff Wellbeing Support

Volunteer and voluntary sector staff wellbeing is essential for safe, sustainable and compassionate practice across Scotland's third sector. Volunteers and staff often work in emotionally demanding, public-facing or trauma-linked environments where stress, overwhelm or cumulative pressure can build quickly.

Wellbeing support helps volunteers and staff:

- regulate after emotionally intense interactions
- maintain confidence and emotional safety
- recognise early signs of stress or overwhelm
- access grounding and self-care tools
- stay connected to supportive peers and supervisors
- sustain long-term involvement in demanding roles

Wellbeing is not an "add-on" - it is a core safety practice that protects volunteers, staff and service users.

4.1. Top Tips for Staff and Volunteers

The following Top Tips offer practical, emotionally safe actions volunteers and staff can use to maintain emotional safety, regulate after difficult interactions and sustain long-term involvement in demanding roles. They are designed as quick, easy-to-apply prompts that help steady the nervous system, reduce cumulative stress and support confident, grounded practice in trauma-linked or high-pressure environments. Volunteers and staff can use these tips before an activity, during moments of strain, or afterwards to reflect and strengthen future wellbeing.

The tips focus on grounding, boundaries, peer support and early recognition of stress - the core components of wellbeing in trauma-linked environments that help volunteers and staff stay regulated, connected and safe.

- **Normalise emotional responses.** Feeling stressed, drained or overwhelmed after difficult interactions is common - not a sign of weakness.
- **Use grounding tools regularly.** Slow breathing, sensory grounding or short pauses help regulate the nervous system.
- **Build predictable routines.** Regular check-ins, breaks and debriefs reduce cumulative stress.
- **Stay connected.** Peer support strengthens resilience and reduces isolation.
- **Set boundaries.** Volunteers and staff should not take on more than they can safely manage - role clarity protects wellbeing.
- **Notice early signs of strain.** Difficulty sleeping, irritability, withdrawal or feeling "on edge" can signal stress.
- **Use organisational supports.** Supervision, wellbeing resources and reflective practice sessions help maintain emotional safety.

- **Take breaks after high-intensity interactions.** Even short pauses support regulation and prevent overwhelm.
- **Ask for help early.** Seeking support is a strength - not a failure.

4.2. Core Set

The following core set of resources provide practical, evidence-informed guidance on wellbeing, emotional regulation and mental-health support for volunteers and staff. Each resource offers practical, accessible tools that can be used immediately in demanding roles.

Title (Linked)	Brief Description	Format	Audience
NCVO – Supporting Your Team	Guidance for managers on supporting volunteer and staff wellbeing, including stress reduction, emotional safety and organisational responsibilities.	Webpage	Managers, Coordinators, Supervisors
NHS Every Mind Matters – Wellbeing Tools	Accessible wellbeing tools including stress management, sleep support, grounding techniques and emotional regulation. Useful for volunteers and staff needing simple, practical strategies.	Webpage	Volunteers, Staff
SAMH – Mental Health & Wellbeing Support	Scotland-specific guidance on mental health, self-help tools, wellbeing strategies and emotional support. Strong on accessible, volunteer-friendly advice.	Webpage	Volunteers, Staff, Managers
Breathing Space Scotland	Confidential emotional support for people feeling low, overwhelmed or needing someone to talk to. A key wellbeing resource for volunteers and staff.	Helpline / Webpage	Volunteers, Staff
Scottish Recovery Network – Peer Support	Practical guidance on peer-based wellbeing support, shared reflection and collective resilience. Useful for volunteer and staff teams.	Webpage	Volunteers, Staff
Scottish Government – Trauma-Informed Practice Toolkit	Grounding tools, emotional-safety techniques and trauma-aware wellbeing guidance. Strong Scotland-specific resource	Toolkit / Web Resource	Volunteers, Staff, Managers

	for frontline volunteers and staff.		

5. Burnout Prevention

Burnout is a cumulative state of emotional, physical and mental exhaustion caused by prolonged stress, high-intensity interactions or sustained pressure. Volunteers and staff working in public-facing, trauma-linked or emotionally demanding roles are particularly vulnerable - especially when boundaries are unclear, workloads fluctuate or support structures are limited.

Burnout prevention helps volunteers and staff:

- recognise early warning signs
- manage emotional labour safely
- maintain sustainable involvement in demanding roles
- protect wellbeing during high-stress periods
- reduce the risk of compassion fatigue
- stay grounded, regulated and connected

Burnout is not a personal failure - it is a response to prolonged strain. Prevention requires organisational support, clear boundaries, reflective practice and accessible wellbeing tools.

5.1. Top Tips for Staff and Volunteers

The following Top Tips offer practical, emotionally safe actions volunteers and staff can use to prevent burnout, maintain emotional safety and sustain long-term involvement in demanding roles. They are designed as quick, easy-to-apply prompts that help steady the nervous system, reduce cumulative strain and support grounded, sustainable practice in trauma-linked or high-pressure environments. Volunteers and staff can use these tips before an activity, during moments of fatigue or overwhelm, or afterwards to reflect and strengthen future wellbeing.

The tips focus on boundaries, grounding, pacing, peer support and early recognition - the core components of burnout prevention that help volunteers and staff stay regulated, connected and able to continue contributing safely and confidently.

- **Notice early signs.** Exhaustion, irritability, withdrawal, difficulty concentrating or feeling “detached” can signal burnout.
- **Set clear boundaries.** Volunteers should not take on more than they can safely manage - role clarity protects wellbeing.
- **Use grounding and regulation tools.** Slow breathing, sensory grounding and short pauses reduce cumulative stress.
- **Take regular breaks.** Short, predictable pauses during demanding tasks prevent overwhelm.

- **Share emotional load.** Peer support, supervision and reflective practice reduce isolation and pressure.
- **Avoid over-commitment.** High-stress roles, events or crisis situations should be rotated across teams.
- **Prioritise recovery time.** After intense interactions, volunteers and staff should have space to decompress.
- **Stay connected.** Isolation accelerates burnout; connection strengthens resilience.
- **Ask for help early.** Seeking support is a strength - not a sign of weakness.

5.2. Core Set

The following core set of resources provide practical, evidence-informed guidance on burnout prevention, stress management and sustainable wellbeing. Each resource offers practical, accessible tools volunteers and staff can use immediately.

Title (Linked)	Brief Description	Format	Audience
Mental Health Foundation – Burnout: Signs, Causes & Recovery	Accessible explanation of burnout, its causes and recovery strategies. Strong on emotional wellbeing and practical self-care tools.	Webpage	Volunteers, Staff, Managers
SAMH – Burnout & Stress Support	Scotland-specific guidance on burnout, stress management and emotional wellbeing. Includes practical tools volunteers can use immediately.	Webpage	Volunteers, Staff
NHS Every Mind Matters – Burnout Tools	Accessible advice on managing work-related stress, emotional exhaustion and early burnout signs. Strong on simple, practical strategies.	Webpage	Volunteers, Staff
NHS Inform Scotland – Stress & Burnout	Clear Scotland-specific guidance on stress, burnout symptoms, coping strategies and when to seek further support.	Webpage	Volunteers, Staff
Mind UK – Preventing Burnout	Evidence-based guidance on burnout prevention, emotional regulation and sustainable wellbeing practices. Useful for volunteers and staff in demanding roles.	Webpage	Volunteers, Staff
HSE – Work-Related Stress Guidance	National guidance on organisational responsibilities, stress risk assessment and safe workload management.	Webpage	Managers, Trustees

	Essential for volunteer-involving organisations.		
Ella Baker School of Organising – Sustainable Organising & Emotional Labour	Guidance on emotional labour, sustainable activism and collective care. Useful for volunteers and staff managing high emotional load or community-based organising.	Toolkit / Web Resource	Volunteers, Staff, Coordinators

Knowledge Gateway

This resource was created in partnership with:

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The Knowledge Gateway is created and led by **Volunteer Scotland**

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This is a regularly reviewed resource. If you have any suggested updates, please email Volunteer Scotland at **hello@volunteerscotland.org.uk**