

MANAGING BURNOUT



If you feel overwhelmed, exhausted and struggle to feel motivated each day, you may be suffering from burnout. It's more than everyday stress; it's chronic stress that hasn't been managed. Continue reading to learn how to recognize burnout and how to treat it.

Signs of Burnout

Workplace burnout can look different for each individual. Some signs you may be experiencing burnout include:

- A sense of dread about work
- Anger, cynicism or hopelessness
- A period of stress that never seems to end

What causes burnout?

In today's workplace, employees are expected to constantly adapt to change. They are asked to balance a myriad of responsibilities, and struggle to find time to take a break. All of this can lead to burnout.

One of the biggest causes of burnout is a loss of control of work. It could be an uneven cadence in your workload — one week you're swamped and the next you don't have anything to do. Or, perhaps your job expectations are unclear.

How to Handle Feelings of Burnout

To alleviate burnout, first assess expectations at work. Know that your manager is available to offer support. Meet them to go over unclear expectations and ask about delegating tasks if your plate is too full. While working, schedule regular

breaks — avoid the temptation to eat lunch at your desk! Try to glance away from the computer every 20 minutes at an object 20 feet away for 20 seconds. Focus on your breathing during this time and take the opportunity to mentally reset. In addition, minimize multitasking. Not only will this help you stay alert throughout the day, it will also deter you from feeling overloaded with information.

At home, maintain a work-life balance. Don't check your email during off hours just to "catch up." If it can wait until the following morning, let it sit in your inbox. Focus instead on your home life. Pick up a new hobby to have something to look forward to at the end of each workday. Use your time at home to take care of yourself mentally and physically, so you'll be refreshed for the next morning.

When Burnout Isn't Caused by Work

Burnout isn't limited to the workplace. The constant juggling of work, family and other responsibilities can take a toll on your overall wellbeing. You may feel burned out from caring for a child or loved one, but remember, it's only a myth that bad caregivers feel burned out. Everyone experiences stress. It's important to recognize those feelings and work on preventing them, rather than criticizing yourself.



Prevention Techniques

The best way to prevent burnout is to take steps to manage feelings of stress. You can do this by:

- Exercising regularly
- Eating a healthy diet
- Meditating or utilizing other relaxation techniques
- Managing your time

It's also important to learn to work with purpose. Look for one thing each day that drives you. Speak with a satisfied customer, outline a path for a promotion or develop a project that you're passionate about. Start every day with an open mind to set a positive tone. Practice positive thinking and limit your contact with negative coworkers.



Helping Others with Burnout

Managers, take note of your employees with symptoms of burnout.

Listen to their concerns and provide a safe space for open dialogue. If needed, look for ways the team can take on their responsibilities. Encourage them to speak to an EAP counselor for additional support.

If your loved one is affected by burnout, offer them help with tasks at home. Ask them what their needs are and follow up to ensure they are met. Find ways to promote self-care. And above all, be a listening ear to their concerns.

References

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