

Fighting Burnout

Burnout has become especially pervasive amid the fast-paced culture and chronic stress we have grown used to in the past decade. The constant juggling of work, family and other responsibilities had major implications for health even before being exacerbated by the pandemic. Now burnout has become a pandemic of its own in many areas.

Signs of Burnout

- Excessive fatigue
- Insomnia
- Susceptibility to illness
- Irritability and mood disorders
- Errors at work
- Decreased productivity
- Loss of overall vitality

3 Ways to Counteract Burnout

1. Recognize signs of burnout by determining which of the below is relatable and how strongly on a scale of 1-10.

- **Exhaustion:** Immense emotional, physical and/or cognitive fatigue, dread waking up to face responsibilities of the day
- **Cynicism:** Feeling unengaged or disconnected from the purpose of your daily responsibilities; loss of motivation; bleak outlook
- **Inefficacy:** Lack of productivity and feelings of incompetence, "I don't think I am making a difference"

The higher your score the higher the likelihood that you are suffering from burnout. As you work on counteracting burnout, rate these categories again to gauge your progress.

2. Respond:

- **Seek support:** Whether a partner, family, friend, or licensed mental health professional, talk with someone who will listen without judgment.
- **Focus on what you can control:** Shift energy and attention to what is in your power to improve your situation. What is the next step that can be taken?
- **Find meaning:** Reflect on what is meaningful in your day to day. How can your experience shape your future or purpose?

- **Set boundaries:** Be aware of what you commit to. Saying "no" allows you to say "yes" to the commitments you actually want to make.
- **Disconnect from technology:** Set a time each day to take a break from your laptop, phone, email and social media.
- **Energy balance:** Make sure to identify and incorporate activities that give you energy to help counteract those that drain you.

3. Recharge

- Weave in small behaviors throughout the day to start to detach, increase your emotional threshold, and build resilience. Some ideas: meditation, a short walk, listening to music, or quality time with your family.
- Whether you have two minutes or two hours, every minute you can take a moment to yourself improves the quality of your day and life.
- Consider a "menu" of options or rituals for different amounts of time you have available throughout the day, week and month.
 - 10-minute morning meditation
 - 5-minute mindfulness breaks
 - Weekly hike in the woods
 - Monthly massage

Once you have determined the rituals or activities you want to insert into your schedule, consider booking them into your calendar or planner. Your emotional and physical well-being must be a top priority in order to do your best with other priorities.

Here when you need us.

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