

# Effective strategies for managing burnout

Burnout is an increasingly common issue today. It's the feeling of being completely worn out, both mentally and physically, due to prolonged stress. Given our busy lives, it's crucial to understand how to deal with burnout. We'll help you recognise the signs of burnout and provide practical ways to manage and prevent it, with advice to give you clear steps to feel better and avoid burnout in the future.



## Signs and symptoms of burnout

Recognising the signs of burnout early can help you act before it worsens.

Here are some key indicators; understanding these signs can help you take steps to mitigate burnout early.



## Physical Signs

Persistent tiredness, sleep disturbance, frequent illnesses.



## Emotional Signs

Overwhelm, anxiety, depression, feelings of inefficacy.



## Behavioural Signs

Withdrawal from social activities, loss of enjoyment in previously liked activities, difficulty concentrating.

## Practical techniques for immediate relief

Here are some effective techniques that can provide quick relief and help you regain control over your wellbeing.

### 1. Practising deep breathing and relaxation techniques

Try deep breathing exercises to calm your mind and reduce stress. Use the 4-7-8 technique: inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 7 seconds, and exhale for 8 seconds. This simple practice can help lower your heart rate and promote a sense of calm.

### 2. Setting boundaries and learning to say no

It's important to set clear boundaries to protect your time and energy. Learn to say no to additional tasks or commitments that may contribute to your stress. Politely declining extra work can prevent overload and help maintain a manageable workload.

### 3. Creating a stress-relief toolkit

Develop a personalised stress-relief toolkit that includes activities and items that help you relax. This could include a favourite book, soothing music, essential oils, or a journal for writing down your thoughts. Having a go-to kit can make it easier to take a break and recharge.

### 4. Practising mindfulness and staying present

Practice mindfulness through meditation, mindful eating, or simply taking a few minutes to focus on your breathing. This can help reduce anxiety and improve overall mental clarity.

### 5. Incorporating physical activity into your routine

Physical activity is a powerful tool for managing stress. Incorporate regular exercise into your routine, whether it's a daily walk, a yoga session, or a workout at the gym. Physical activity releases endorphins, which can improve your mood and energy levels.

### 6. Establishing a sleep routine

Quality sleep is essential for recovery from burnout. Establish a consistent sleep routine by going to bed and waking up at the same times each day. Create a calming bedtime ritual, such as reading or taking a warm bath, to signal to your body that it's time to wind down.

### 7. Seeking social support

Reach out to friends, family, or colleagues for support. Talking about your experiences and feelings can provide relief and offer new perspectives. Social connections are vital for emotional wellbeing, and sharing your load can lighten it.

### 8. Technology for stress management

Use technology to your advantage by exploring apps and tools designed to reduce stress. Meditation apps, time management tools, and digital planners can help you stay organised and manage your stress more effectively.

### 9. Scheduling 'me time' regularly

Dedicate regular time for yourself to engage in activities you enjoy. Whether it's reading, painting, or taking a walk in nature, prioritising 'me time' is essential for maintaining balance and preventing burnout.

### 10. Reflecting and adjusting your approach

Regularly reflect on your stress levels and the effectiveness of your coping strategies. Adjust your approach as needed to ensure you're addressing the sources of stress effectively. Continuous self-assessment can help you stay on track and make necessary changes to your routine.

Burnout is a serious issue that can have a profound impact on your mental and physical health, as well as your overall wellbeing. Recognising the signs early and taking proactive steps to manage and prevent burnout is crucial. It's essential to listen to your body and mind, and to take action when you notice signs of stress. By doing so, you can protect your health and maintain a happier, more balanced life.

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