Burnout

NWiR Education Committee in March dedicate the month to an increased understanding of burnout.

* Gain a basic understanding of what defines burnout.
* Explore signs and symptoms of burnout.
* Review some of the common contributors to burnout
* Learn about ways to help prevent or deal with burnout.

We will complete the month with a panel discussion on the topic. The panel will be hosted by the Education Committee and will feature HR specialists, Mindset coaches, and others. The goal will be to walk away from March with a solid understanding of burnout and real ways to either prevent it or help if you are currently experiencing burnout.

**So what is the definition of burnout?**  
The term burnout has been around since the 70’s.  In 1970 Herbert Freudenberger defined burnout as, “the extinction of motivation or incentive, especially where one's devotion to a cause or relationship fails to produce the desired results.”  According to the Mayo Clinic, work related stress is defined as “a  state of physical or emotional exhaustion that also involves a sense of reduced accomplishment and loss of personal identity.”  The World Health Organization recognizes burnout as well! Describing it as "chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed."  Going further to provide some

Burnout presents some concerning issues given we spend most of our time working,  And this isn’t just an issue you as an employee should be concerned about!  If you manage people, it is important to understand burnout and be mindful of ways to prevent it in your teams.

**Let’s explore some common signs and symptoms of burnout. Are you in a state of burnout? How can you tell?**

The World Health Organization characterizes burnout by three symptoms:

* feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion;
* increased mental distance from one’s job, or cynicism related to one's job; and
* reduced professional efficacy.

Burnout is more than just feeling stressed out at work! Burnout tends to follow you from day to day, presenting itself as a feeling of dread on Sunday night (if you know you have to work again on Monday), a feeling of being unable to muster any enthusiasm or motivation for your work and a lack of pleasure in what you do. It can feel scary because you may not know how to get yourself out of this place once you're feeling burned out.

Since we are dedicating the month of March to burnout, take time this month for self reflection.  Find time to review some of the signs of burnout below.  Then take stock of your current situation. Do any of these resonate with you?  Are you experiencing some of the common signs of burnout?  These signs might include:

* Sense of failure and self-doubt.
* Feeling helpless, trapped, and defeated.
* Detachment, feeling alone in the world.
* Loss of motivation.
* Increasingly cynical and negative outlook.
* Decreased satisfaction and sense of accomplishment.
* Increased irritability

If some of the signs or symptoms hit home then this week will be especially important. Maybe you recognized some of the signs in yourself, or maybe an employee.  Either way, understanding some common contributors to burnout is an important step towards dealing with (or preventing) burnout.

What are some common contributors leading some to burnout? We have learned that burnout is not the same as “stress”.  Although sustained high levels of stress might begin to create burnout situations for some, and not others, there are other factors that lead to burnout.  These include but aren’t limited to:

* Unclear job expectations, roles lacking clarity
* Lack of communication and support
* Lack of control or resources
* Workplace dysfunction
* Unmanageable workloads or extremes of activity
* Lack of recognition

Understanding the common contributors gives us a starting point for taking back control.  If the signs of burnout sounded a little too much like your present self, then understanding the contributors is the first step in tackling a path out of burnout.  The good news is these common contributors are in our control.

Let’s revisit some of the common causes of burnout, but put a positive spin on them. We learned that a lack of clear expectations, a lack of support, lack of communication and extreme work volumes can all contribute to burnout.  The good news?  Maybe the following items can reduce or control the risk of burnout:

* Clear job expectations, roles with clarity
* Strong communication and support
* Being in control or having access to resources
* Work life balance
* Manageable workload and balanced levels of activity
* Receiving recognition

High levels of stress don’t always lead to burnout, but without clarity in roles and expectations, communication and support, situations can soon become overwhelming and exhausting.

Looking for a place to start when addressing levels of burnout?  If you have followed us this month and have determined you are in a state of burnout, or have an employee you recognize might be in burnout the time to act is now! Review the list above and do the work to establish or reestablish some of these key items.

Work to define and establish key priorities and de-prioritize others. Take control of your schedule, try to implement meeting free Mondays. Seek out social connections, take time off. Remember what you value most about your work? Plan on joining the Education Committee March 29, 2022 for a panel discussion on burnout.  And use some of the resources we found to gain more knowledge on the topic and drive awareness.

**Resources for more information on Burnout:**

Schedule the time to take a break and get in touch with what’s going on in your life. Consider an exercise to re-establish your values and create intentions that line up with these values.  We found a great exercise to walk you through this process. Follow the link provided here [A Mental Exercise to Help You Find Meaning in Your Life (verywellmind.com)](https://www.verywellmind.com/finding-meaning-425380)

[How to Tell You Have Reached the Point of Burnout (verywellmind.com)](https://www.verywellmind.com/stress-and-burnout-symptoms-and-causes-3144516)

<https://www.theladders.com/career-advice/8-experts-on-how-to-deal-with-job-burn>

[Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for Stress Relief (verywellmind.com)](https://www.verywellmind.com/acceptance-and-commitment-therapy-for-stress-relief-4155334)

[A Mental Exercise to Help You Find Meaning in Your Life (verywellmind.com)](https://www.verywellmind.com/finding-meaning-425380)

**PodCasts:**

Brene Brown

<https://brenebrown.com/podcast/brene-with-emily-and-amelia-nagoski-on-burnout-and-how-to-complete-the-stress-cycle/>

Amy Morin

<https://www.verywellmind.com/the-verywell-mind-podcast-5113058>

Techniques  
Challenge Limiting Thinking Patterns by the art of asking powerful questions.

Being at Cause

Presence  
Develop Awareness and encourage people to take action

Free Gift

<https://calendly.com/find-true-love-within/empowerment-call>

**Books:**

<https://www.goodreads.com/search?q=burnout&qid=34GMassaBb>

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