



## Avoiding Burnout

Burnout is a major problem for a lot of work fields. Any individual working in a field with high stress can find themselves getting “burned out”. Burnout is very common in low level positions that have high levels of stress, but where the workers are not given compensation relative to those high stress levels.

Individuals who work directly with their clients (caretakers, direct care, nurses, etc.) have additional stresses since they are in charge of another person's life; mistakes can lead to sickness, injuries, or even death.

These are some things to remember; no matter what field you work in:

- ***What you do is important*** – While it is often hard to see the bigger picture, **you would not be getting paid for your work if it was not necessary**. From janitors to CEOs, cleaning bathrooms to orchestrating mergers, work needs to be done, and if you were not doing that work, someone else would have to do it. The more effectively each person in a business does their job, the better the business does overall, and the happier everyone will be.
- ***You are appreciated*** – No boss is going to commend someone for every little thing they do throughout the day. Some businesses have learned that workers that are happy and feel appreciated work harder, while others may treat employees like a number. Be happy when your good work is recognized, and be glad when your work is not criticized. While it may seem cold, **the fact that you are still employed, and still receiving a paycheck, means that your employer appreciates you.**
- ***Appreciate what you have*** – Everyone would be happier to make more money and get more benefits, but there is not enough money in the world for everybody to be millionaires. Be happy with the pay and benefits you are receiving, things could always be worse. Yes, things can (and should eventually) get better. **The experience, relationships, money, and benefits you receive from a job will help you improve your life in the future.**
- ***Keep work and home separate*** – No matter where you work, there will be stress; no matter how you live your life, there will be stress; there is no reason for the stress from work and home to combine. If you let your stress from work infect your home life, and vice versa, it will only increase the overall amount of stress. **When you leave your place of work, leave those problems at the door; and the same goes for when you leave your house, leave those problems at the door.**



No matter what field you work in, you may find yourself getting “burned out”. Work can be stressful, especially since your career and financial future depend on it. When work stress levels are getting to you, your work begins to suffer, which can lead to additional stress. It can become a vicious cycle. It is important to alleviate your stress at work and prevent burnout so that you can live a happier and healthier life. These are some tips that will help you avoid burnout:

**I. Take a little vacation.**

If you are tired of work, one of the easiest ways to change that is to get away from work. While everybody could use a nice tropical getaway regularly, it is not always affordable. Sometimes just taking a couple days off from work to lounge around the house is enough to refresh yourself.

**II. Talk about it.**

Talk to family, friends, co-workers, therapist, religious leader, pets, random people on the bus, *anybody*. If you are frustrated at work sometimes it just helps to let those feelings out. The person you are talking to may not always understand what you are going through, but a little empathy will go a long way.

**III. Make friends at work.**

As the saying goes “misery loves company”. No one understands your problems quite like your co-workers. Make friends with your co-workers, it will make a more comfortable work environment, provide you with people you can talk to about the stress of work, and in general, you may find someone you enjoy spending time with.

**IV. Know your work.**

Understanding the environment you work in can greatly increase your happiness as work. Think about why everyone you interact with acts the way they do; co-workers, customers, clients, managers, other business contacts, they all have their own personalities they bring to their position. Learn about your position, your job tasks, and management's expectations. By understanding your work, and the people you come into contact with, you will be better prepared when problems arise.

**V. Plan for the future.**

Do you want to stay in your current position? Do you want to move into a higher position? What do you need to do with your current employer to make your goals a reality? By determining where you want your career path to take you, it will make it easier to put up with the stress at work.

If those methods did not seem to help your burnout problems, you may be starting to have major problems with the type of work you are doing. While everyone needs to work, it is not always a good idea to keep doing work that is hazardous to your mental health. If that seems to be your case, try these options:

- A) **See an employment specialist** – Seek out a group that helps with job placement or other job skills. They can help you determine if the work you are doing is the type of work you want to be doing. You may find that your interests do not align with the work you are doing. An employment specialist can help you set up a plan to meet your career goals.
- B) **Transfer to a different position** – Most companies are large enough that you can be shuffled around to a different department or position depending on circumstances. However, it is important to stress that you want to do this not just because you “hate your job”, but more because you do not feel fulfilled in the position and would be interested in learning other skills to be better utilized within the company.
- C) **Talk to a professional** – Sometimes companies have mental health professionals they work with to ensure that their workers are satisfied with their work. If your company works with someone like this, seek them out; if not, seek out a mental health professional on your own. A mental health professional will help you determine what you dislike about your position (it may not even be a problem with your job itself),
- D) **Seek employment elsewhere (this should be the last resort)** – If you have exhausted all options at your work, and have done whatever you can to alleviate your work stress, and still find that you dread going to work, then you may need to start searching for a new job. There are plenty of jobs out there, and it is important to find one that will lead you towards your goals, not crush your hope for the future. You should never quit a job without another one lined up, especially since many employers are reluctant to hire people who are not currently working or have been out of work for a prolonged period.

No matter where you work, or who you work for, there will be stress at work. It is important that you know what your personal stress levels are, and that you do whatever you can to limit the stress you receive at work. Everyone deserves to have a job where they feel fulfilled, not just monetarily, but mentally. **You may not always love your work, but you should never hate it.**