



## Identifying and Dealing with Burnout

Burnout is a psychological term for the experience of long-term exhaustion and diminished interest usually in the work context. Identifying sources of stress in your life is important to help you prevent burnout. You are most vulnerable to burnout when the stresses you experience impact negatively on the things that you find most fulfilling in your job. You can do the activity below to identify burnout pressures.

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### Tips

- If you are having work overload try to determine if you can reduce your work load and commitments. Review your time management in order maximize the amount you can accomplish.
  - Prioritize things you need to get done and do them in order of importance.
  - Know your limits and accept your limitations.
  - Delegate tasks to others where you can.
  - Consider whether you are being too accommodating. Should you be politely turning down new work that people pass to you? If this is the case, then improved assertiveness skills may help you to do this in a positive way.
  - Check that you are using all of the resources available to you. Use your support network as fully as you can and ensure you are getting the help you need when you need it.
  - Where politics seems to be a problem, you need to check that you are allocating enough time to managing your stakeholders and that you are correctly managing your support network. It is easy when under stress to stop communicating with others and this can lead to political problems that create more stress.
  - Avoid exhaustion. Going on a vacation is a good way to avoid burnout. Leave your laptop and cell phone behind. Rest and enjoy life.
  - Get enough sleep and rest. Try to relax.
  - Fulfill your emotional needs. Seek counseling to help with emotional stress.
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### Activities to Do On Your Own

- Identify the things that attracted you to your current job in the first place. Make a list of the things that give real meaning to what you do. From the list identify five things that give the greatest meaning to your work. These are the things you should protect as much as you can.
- Identify the things that cause you the most stress at your current job. Make a list of the things that frustrate you most about your work. Note the frustrations that threaten the things that are most important to you. These are the items that you need to monitor and they may indicate or signal the possibility of burnout.

- Take this online test to check yourself for burnout: [www.mindtools.com/stress/Brn/BurnoutSelfTest.htm](http://www.mindtools.com/stress/Brn/BurnoutSelfTest.htm)
  - Try relaxation techniques such as imagery, self-hypnosis, music or relaxation tapes, physical relaxation techniques, or yoga.
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## Other Resources

- [www.mindtools.com/stress/Brn/PressurePoints.htm](http://www.mindtools.com/stress/Brn/PressurePoints.htm)
- [www.mindtools.com/stress/Brn/AvoidBurnout.htm](http://www.mindtools.com/stress/Brn/AvoidBurnout.htm)
- [www.mindtools.com/stress/RelaxationTechniques/IntroPage.htm](http://www.mindtools.com/stress/RelaxationTechniques/IntroPage.htm)
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burnout\\_\(psychology\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burnout_(psychology))
- “Self-care for Psychology Students: Strategies for staying healthy and avoiding burnout.” Psynopsis 2003, Fall: 14. Badali, M and Habra, M.