

# Beware of Job Burnout

Usually, you are enthusiastic and confident at work. However, lately something may have changed. You may feel you are in a “no win” situation—unmotivated, overwhelmed, and unfocused.

**You may be experiencing burnout.** This is a state of physical and/or emotional exhaustion resulting from a long period of increased stress without plenty of time for rest and recreation. Usually, burnout is connected with work. However, you might feel burnout if you are the primary caregiver for small children or sick and elderly individuals.

Remember, you can experience burnout no matter where you work.

## Causes of Burnout

- **Overwork**—Exhaustion from working too many hours causes frustration and stress.
- **Incurable patients or clients**—Healthcare professionals who repeatedly encounter patients showing little or no improvement may feel unfulfilled.
- **Lack of flexibility**—If your schedule or workflow does not allow you the personal and family time you need, it causes frustration with your job.
- **A critical boss**—Constant criticism can leave you feeling frustrated and angry.
- **Lack of recognition**—If you are not well compensated for your hard work or your job is far below your skill level and education, you may lose motivation.
- **Lack of information and goals**—Without enough information or clear objectives, sometimes it is hard to do a good job.
- **Value conflicts**—Working for a

company whose values you do not share can cause your motivation to dissolve.

## From Burnout to Satisfaction

Don't panic—there is hope! Don't wait until it affects work, and don't start looking for a new job. Instead, make positive changes in your current job. Talk to your supervisor and discuss changes that could reenergize you.

## Know Yourself

YOU can undo the negative effects of burnout and experience growth and satisfaction. Identify reasons for burnout and work to change the situation. Set small goals and objectives easily achieved. Make contracts with yourself to work on your goals at a specific time and reward your when they are accomplished.

## Manage Stress

It is impossible to escape stress, even in a positive work situation. Keep track of what causes stress in your life. Learn relaxation techniques such as deep breathing and visualization to take the edge off stressful situations.

## Tailor the Job

Everyone brings different strengths to the workplace. Look for ways to fit your talents, skills, and work style to your job. Expand your job by identifying other problems you can solve. Suggest more efficient ways to get the job done.

## Build Support Networks

Establish and rely on support teams at work and in your personal life. Coworkers can help you get your job done. Strong support networks build your confidence and help solve problems. Find a mentor to work with you.

## Build Your Skills

Work demands are always changing. Instead of thinking of ways to fit into a job category, think about the skills you can offer. Evaluate how to transfer those skills to different jobs in your company.

## Negotiate for More Flexibility

If your workflow allows, talk with your supervisor to find ways to change your schedule, such as working from home or adjusting your hours. Take a sabbatical from your job.

## Change Jobs

Sometimes the best way to prevent job burnout is to change jobs. You are more likely to find a new job that is a better fit if you understand what causes burnout in your present job.

## Practice Detached Concern

If your job is stressful and you cannot change or leave it immediately, strive for an attitude of detached concern until you find another solution. Focus on the present. View problems as opportunities to be creative and apply your skills, knowledge, and ingenuity.

*If you or someone you know is having a problem, contact your EAP—help is available!*

For further information, please call your EAP:

**1.800.492.4357**

Callers with TTY equipment, please call:  
**1.800.338.2039**

Online Services: [www.mhnetep.com](http://www.mhnetep.com)