

Opinion: 4 things to help you overcome burnout at work

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MORE AND MORE millennials are experiencing burnout, but why? There's one thing for sure – our economy over the past decade has not helped. Each year, companies are trying harder and harder to become more efficient by giving more responsibility to a smaller number of people. This is leading to employees working longer hours for less money. In some cases, it almost becomes a badge of honour you must wear in order to receive a promotion.

Luckily there are a few things you can do to help overcome burnout when you're running on empty.

Reaching? Stop!

For many people, they equate a failed business or career with death or extreme failure, as opposed to a new start or new beginning. This connection can be so strong that the idea of quitting or stopping whatever career field you're in is more scary or painful than the idea of struggling with every last bit of energy to make it work. The most important thing in this stage is to stop the thought process leading to this decision. Ask yourself questions like, "What is my biggest fear if I do stop reaching?" or "What would it look like if I threw in the towel?"

Refuel

Imagine for a moment that people had petrol tanks like cars do. Where are your energy reserves in this 'petrol tank'? If it's less than a quarter full, you definitely have burn out.

But why does this happen? The amount of energy you were expending to make things work was being used at a quicker rate than you were able to replenish it.

It's very important during this phase to do things you enjoy, and allow happiness back into your life. It doesn't have to be anything huge. It could be reading books, watching comedies, trying new restaurants, picking an old hobby back up or even catching up on sleep. But the most important thing is that you do something that

gives you a sense of joy to feed your soul, not just a sense of achievement – which only feeds your ego.

Rewire

It's important that, once you have joy back in your life, you rid yourself of old habits of negative thinking. Why? Negative thoughts lead to negative emotions. Your previous thoughts may have told you that if you weren't busy all the time, you weren't working hard enough. Or, that you were not allowed to leave your desk until every email was returned. It's different for everyone. There are several things you can do to rewire your thinking to be more positive:

- Write down three positives or things you are grateful for at the end of each day
- Do at least one thing you enjoy everyday
- Identify someone you've been meaning to connect with or thank. Send them a message to say hello or thank them for helping you.
- Move around and get physical. The more you move, the more your body can release those 'feel good' chemicals.

Rebuild

Whether it's finding a new job or a new career field, this is the time to rebuild your work life. Now that you're ready to do so, where do you start? Often the self-awareness gained from the previous three steps will help you figure out what it is you would like to do.

However, it's not always that easy and sometimes the ideas can be overwhelming. It may be helpful to see someone like a counsellor, career coach or business coach to help you organise your ideas and provide clarity and guidance.

As CS Lewis said: "Isn't it funny how day by day, nothing changes, but when you look back, everything is different?" Implementing some of these changes will take time and effort, but the benefit in the end is most definitely worth it. Whatever path you do choose, just remember that no one can change it but you. You have the power to gain control of your life and the path that it takes.

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