

Before we touch on the topic of ‘why and ‘how’’, do you even know if you are burnt out? Or do you even know what is a burnout? According to studies by researchers, “burnout is an individual’s response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors within the workplace” (Maslach et al., 2001). They’ve defined 3 main components that makeup burnouts — exhaustion, inefficiency & cynicism.

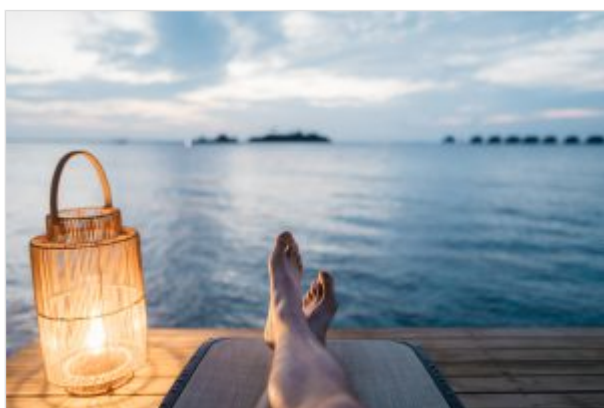
Here’s a few tell-tale signs of a burnout:

- Are you feeling **irritated/frustrated** most of the time?
- Feeling **exhausted**/extreme **fatigue** (physically & mentally)?
- Lacking any form of **motivation**?
- Just going through the motions?
- Unproductive days?
- **Unhealthy coping mechanisms** — excessive smoking/drinking/snacking?
- Taking work home and work is basically your day and night?

If you’re not experiencing them right now, that’s awesome but I’m pretty sure these scenarios sound familiar. We’ve all experienced a burnout at one point in our lives and it’s crucial that we avoid that. Not only is it tiring to live life this way, it’s simply unhealthy for your body and mind. Do yourself a favour and help yourself first.

Here are 5 ways to minimise your burnout:

## 1. Relax



relaxation sensation

Honestly, take the time to breathe and refresh yourself. Sometimes, it's better that way — you'll feel better and might finally be able to see the solution to that problem you've been stuck at forever. Relaxing could mean multiple things. It could be as simple as reading a book, meditating or going for a good spa. Define your own version of relaxation and really make sure that you don't remain tensed.

## 2. Occupy & Unplug



dance those worries away

Occupying yourself forces you to stop whatever work that you are doing as you've made this other prior commitment. Sign yourself up for classes! Be it a dance course, gym/yoga sessions or language class, you're more likely to commit to it as you've paid for it.

Unplugging means you've got to seriously put down that phone of yours. Switch it off, airplane mode or do not disturb mode, it'll all work. You can't focus on relaxing if your phone is going to light up every few minutes. That email can wait. Unplug could also mean to unplug yourself from social events. As crazy as that sounds, sometimes we just don't know how to say no. We end up overbooking ourselves, even when we're extremely drained and in desperate need for sleep. A good amount of hanging out with our friends could be relaxing but we need our 'me' time too. It's for us to recalibrate and make sure that you're refreshed for the next day.

### **3. Sleep**



snooze

This is what you absolutely need. It's not a want but a necessity. You can't possibly work at your best without a sufficient amount of sleep. In fact, this should be one of your highest priorities. If you really have to sacrifice something for more time at work, don't let it be sleep. A lack of sleep could cause greater detrimental effects to your health and well-being. I don't think your colleagues would appreciate a grumpy coworker too. If you have problems falling asleep, try not to rely on sleeping pills. It may sound lame but a warm drink at night really helps. Additionally, don't scroll through your phone before you sleep. The bright light emitting from the phone signals to your brain that it's still daytime. Moreover, we all know how addictive some shows can be.

### **4. Organise**



organised table, organised mind

Sometimes it's not about us having too much to do but rather it's our poor time management. It's painful to hear this but it could be the case. Start organising! Get a planner and list down your commitments and workload. This makes it clear for you to know when your deadlines are and what has to be done each day. Organise could also mean your messy table! A messy table isn't a conducive environment and doesn't help when you need to find that particular file hidden under stacks of junk.

## 5. 'It's not me, it's you'



let your voice be heard

This is probably the hardest to do. It's hard to draw a clear and distinct line of when is it a problem with yourself or the company. Unfortunately, it has to be done by you and you alone! No one else would know your limits better than yourself. Know how much you can take

on and push. If you've done all that you can and there's still too much on your plate, it's the organisation's matter to handle.

Luckily, we have a tip to help you identify the root of the problem. It's simple, look around you — are your colleagues equally as burnt out? If yes, then you can be sure that it's not just you. In fact, this is a common phenomenon. However, just because it's common, doesn't mean you let it die down and you suffer with it. With the right tone and tact, you could sound out to your employers/HR department. And if you're from HR, maybe this [article](#) could help you understand why your employees are burnt out. Even better, we've broken down some of the solutions to this problem:

- Be realistic and practical in assigning tasks
- Don't spread your team too thin
- Create a supportive culture
- Reasonable deadlines
- Team welfare — scheduled breaks, mental health day leave, healthy snack pantry
- Acknowledge and reward them when necessary
- Make sure there's a platform for their voices to be heard

Burnouts are common and you shouldn't be too hard on yourself for it. Just make sure you are clear of how much you can take on your plate! Life is much better when you've got a good grip of your work.