

# WORK BURNOUT

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**Work burnout** is considered a type of work-related stress described as a sense of reduced accomplishment and loss of personal identity. Burnout is not a medical diagnosis by itself, but it may exacerbate, or be a nidus of, numerous health-related problems.

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## SYMPTOMS OF WORK BURNOUT

- Becoming cynical or critical at work
  - Dragging yourself to work and having trouble getting started
  - Irritability or impatience with co-workers, customers or clients
  - Fatigue
  - Difficulty concentrating
  - Lacking satisfaction from your achievements
  - Using food, drugs or alcohol to feel better or to void negative feelings
  - Sleep problems
  - Unexplained headaches, stomach or bowel problems, or other physical complaints
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## CONSEQUENCES OF WORK BURNOUT

- Excessive stress
- Fatigue
- Insomnia
- Sadness, anger or irritability
- Alcohol or substance use disorders
- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Type II diabetes
- Vulnerability to medical problems, including infections

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## TIPS FOR MANAGING BURNOUT

- Recognize the signs and symptoms of burnout
- Discuss specific concerns with a supervisor (if possible).
- Seek support. Whether you reach out to co-workers, friends or loved ones, support and collaboration might help you cope. If you have access to an employee assistance program, take advantage of relevant services.
- Engage in one or more stress-reducing activities for at least 20 minutes each day. This may include yoga, meditation, tai chi, martial arts, mindfulness exercises, boxing, weight training, cross-fit, running, swimming, other aerobic exercise, sports, creative writing, painting, drawing, listening to music, playing an instrument, or reading for pleasure.
- Get quality sleep. We spend about a third of our lives sleeping. Sleep allows our body to reset. Interestingly, sleep is important for our memory, our immune system, and our ability to regulate our emotions.
- Healthy diet. Junk food is comforting, but it doesn't help your cause. Having the occasional "cheat meal" is important, but limit those sweets and saturated fats as much as possible. A high protein, high fiber, moderate fat, and low carbohydrate diet can improve your energy levels, concentration, memory, and mood!
- Set healthy work-life boundaries. Setting healthy work-life boundaries will not only improve your mental health but prevent burnout and promote more effective and efficient work!

# WORK-LIFE BOUNDARIES

**Boundaries** are the rules we set for ourselves in our relationships, our work, and our personal lives. Healthy boundaries mean preventing others from projecting beliefs, judgements, or expectations onto you. A person with healthy boundaries can say "no" to others when they need to while also supporting those in need. This includes work-related tasks, home chores, or supporting those you care about. This is not as easy as it sounds.



## PRIORITIZE YOUR VALUES

Boundaries should be based on your beliefs and values (i.e., the things that are important to you). These may or may not align with others but that is ok...they are YOURS. The first step is to make a priority list. Example below:

- Spending time with family
- Personal Free time/Hobbies
- Exercise
- Productive and Efficient work

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# WORK-LIFE BOUNDARIES

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## PRIORITIZE YOUR TIME

Each day, it is important to make time for the top 4-5 priorities. To do this, you will need to create a skeleton schedule. This does not mean scheduling everything to the minute. Here is an example:

### **Morning**

- Wake up at 6:30AM
- Exercise for 30 minutes before work
- Check/respond to emails for 30 minutes
- Work from 8AM-11AM with 15 minute breaks every 45 minutes

### **Noon**

- Spend 30 to 45 minutes eating lunch and visiting with a friend/family member
- Check/respond to emails for 30 minutes prior to starting afternoon work

### **Afternoon**

- Work from 1PM-4PM with 15 minute breaks every 45 minutes
- End all work at 5PM and spend 30 minutes checking/responding to emails one more time for the day

### **Evening**

- Spend 1 hour with a friend/family member
- Spend 1 hour playing guitar (or other hobby)
- Get ready for bed at 10:00pm
- Leisure reading for 30 minutes in bed
- Lights out by 10:30PM

# WORK-LIFE BOUNDARIES

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## CHECKING EMAIL

Schedule the times you plan to check your email. One of the biggest problems people have is obsessively checking email. This is anxiety-provoking and inefficient as it disrupts any tasks at hand. Use the auto-respond function to inform those who email you of when you check your email. You can also instruct people to call you directly if it is urgent.



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## PHONE

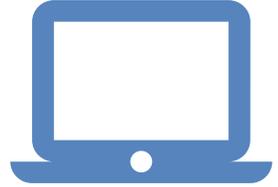


As with email, limit phone checking. Whatever you do, checking your phone and/or email should not be the VERY FIRST thing or VERY LAST THING you do each day. When not working, your phone or computer should be somewhere else. DO NOT have it on you or near you at all times.

# WORK-LIFE BOUNDARIES

## COMPUTER

Your computer should only be used for work. When you are not using the computer, shut it down. If you need to use the computer for personal use, then use it for personal use ONLY. Some people find it helpful to have two devices – one for work and one for play. But this may not be possible.



## CONSISTENCY

Try your best to remain consistent with your schedule! There will always be some flexibility but do your best to remain consistent.

## USE REMINDERS OR OTHER ELECTRONIC APPS

Use technology to help you. If you need reminders for when to check emails, spend time with family, or take a minute to practice mindfulness then do so!

## WHEN YOU HAVE THE URGE TO GET BACK TO WORKING, MAKE A HABIT OF ASKING YOURSELF THE FOLLOWING:

- Is this in line with my values and priorities?
- How important on a scale from 1-10 is it that I complete this RIGHT NOW? Anything 6 or below can wait..