

BURNOUT INDICATORS

**YOUR FIRST SIGNS TO
RESPOND TO
DO NOT IGNORE!**

Awareness is the first step to change.

Burnout doesn't happen overnight. It creeps in slowly through small compromises, constant self-pressure, and believing you just have to keep going.

Think of your body as whispering to you. If you ignore the whispers, they'll eventually become shouts. The earlier you notice and respond, the easier it is to prevent the downward spiral.

These are some of the first signs of burnout — subtle, often ignored, but important signals that something needs your attention.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the work of Dr Christina Maslach, and the American Psychological Association (APA), burnout is an occupational phenomenon with three core factors:

1

Emotional Exhaustion

Complete physical, emotional, and cognitive depletion that makes everyday tasks feel heavy.

2

Cynicism & Depersonalisation

Feeling detached, negative, and completely disengaged from your occupation.

3

Reduced Personal Accomplishment

Trouble concentrating, decreased performance, ineffectiveness.

Let's improve this with awareness, then let's take action.

Emotional & Mental Signs



Restless,
Scattered,
Overwhelmed



Reactive,
Irritable,
Tearful,
Meltdowns



Loss of
motivation
or
satisfaction



"I'll never
get through
this" or "I
need a
holiday"



Cynical or
negative
thinking
creeping in,
disengagement

Physical Signs



Tension,
headaches,
migraines,
body aches
and pains



Tired, wired
yet fatigued,
more illness
(lower
immunity)



Restless,
difficulty
relaxing



Digestive issues,
appetite
changes, weight
loss or gain



Overwhelm,
increased
sensitivity to
stress, brain
fog

Behavioural & Lifestyle Signs



Saying "yes"
when you
really want
to say "no"



Overwork,
procrastinati
on,
struggling to
prioritise



Withdrawal
from social or
professional
activities you
normally
enjoy



Leaning on
unhealthy
coping
strategies



Feeling
trapped,
hopeless

What to Do About These Early Signs

Don't wait! Listen to your body and mind: Acknowledge the whispers before they become shouts. Be kind to yourself.

1

Adjust your standards: Acknowledge when your standards are unrealistic, or if you are trying to achieve perfection. Readjust to make it sustainable.

2

Adopt healthy coping mechanisms: Pause, breathe, talk to someone, or take a short walk instead of numbing with alcohol, sleeping, work, or ignoring the stress.

3

Address the root causes of stress: Adjust workload, clarify priorities, or ask for your supervisor's advice and support rather than just "pushing through".

4

Learn to self-regulate and reduce stress: Practice mindfulness - connect with nature, focus on your five senses, breathe deeply... find a technique that works for you and practice it regularly

5

Seek professional guidance: Therapists and coaches can help with communication skills, boundaries, priorities, habits, and stress management.

Remember there's nothing wrong with you. There is no need to blame yourself or feel any shame. Your body and mind are just protecting you from excessive stressors.

When you start slowing down and taking small steps to regain control, you begin to feel better almost immediately; mentally, physically, and emotionally.



You've got this!

Burnout can feel like you are trapped, and you need to keep pushing, working, and doing without any time to rest. And when you rest, you feel guilty and you do not truly recover. It doesn't have to be this way. If you find it hard to take control and get on top of your early signs of burnout, contact me; I can help.

Sophie

Sophie Anderson is an ICF-certified coach and social entrepreneur. After 25 years working in high-pressure corporate roles, Sophie knows exactly what it feels like to juggle huge workloads, constant pressure, and burnout creeping up. She now helps busy professionals protect their energy, set boundaries, and avoid burning out. Sophie blends mindfulness with science and practical tools and programs to make wellbeing and productivity simple and sustainable. Based in Cairns and serving Australia-wide, she is passionate about creating healthier, more fulfilling ways to live and work.



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