

BURNOUT (JOB-RELATED)

Burnout can occur when an individual has experienced a period of prolonged Chronic stress. Once it takes hold it can have a significant impact on both the individual and their loved ones and takes rest, time and lifestyle changes to recover from. The World Health Organisation (WHO) classifies burnout as a syndrome "resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed." Going beyond this definition, factors such as personality and lifestyle choices increase ones chances of experiencing burnout.

Symtoms

The WHO identifies 3 core characteristics of burnout:

1. Overwhelming exhaustion
2. Increased negativity toward or mental distancing from one's job
3. Reduced effectiveness at work

In addition to the above, many people experience a wide range of other emotional, physical and mental impacts including reduced confidence, a desire to escape, reduced immunity, insomnia, an inability to see a way out, withdrawal from friends and family, a loss of motivation and other physical symptoms unexplained by anything other than Chronic stress.

Causes

While external factors definitely contribute to burnout, internal factors also play a crucial role. While it can be hard to hear, individuals who experience burnout have played an active role in developing it.

- Personality - given the fact that stress is a result of our perceptions and beliefs associated with an event, the way we think about a situation we encounter can significant impact our response to it. Therefore, people with perfectionistic traits, who take a more negative view of the world, like to be in control and are high-achieving are more likely to experience burnout.
- Energy management - people who believe that they have an infinite amount of energy are at higher risk of experiencing burnout. Taking on too much, working long hours, not asking for help and deprioritising activities that replenish energy such as exercise, sleep, downtime and healthy nutrition will lead to depleted energy levels.
- Work - roles and workplaces that are more conducive of burnout are ones that do not provide clarity around job expectations, micro manage your work, lack recognition and reward and have unrealistic workloads.