

The Burnout Bible

TIPS & TRICKS TO WIN YOUR WORKDAY WITHOUT FACING BURNOUT!

Introduction

Welcome to the Burnout Bible! This mini book covers how to tackle four critical areas of our lives that are usually responsible for the burnout that we experience in our lives.

Take your time going through this book and make sure to incorporate what you learn into your own burnout-free success strategy.

What you'll find inside:

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People management

Being unable to effectively manage our work relationships is a key contributor to burnout. Effectively working with, leading and managing people mostly comes down to our ability to **influence** others. Here are some key steps on how to develop the ability to positively influence others.

1. **Actively listen first**

a. Leadership starts with listening. The best leaders understand how to make people feel heard.
b. The mistake most leaders make is trying to get everyone to listen to them first. But the best leaders help create a safe space where people can let their guard down and share what matters to them and what they need.
c. A great leader will make the effort to understand how the people around them feel. When people feel that someone is demonstrating true empathy towards them, this will in turn help them build trust in that person.
d. Once a person feels fully heard and understood, they will then be more willing to listen to what you have to say and meet your needs/requests.

Action:

- The best way to actively listen is to **be curious**. Become deeply interested in others, ask "clarifying questions" until you feel like you have gotten the full picture of what the other person is thinking and feeling.
- Once the other person confirms you have fully understood their position, then you can move onto sharing your thoughts, feelings and needs. They will be more open to receiving them and your leadership direction.

2. **Set strong boundaries**

a. You may think being a good worker or leader means constantly saying yes to almost everything asked of you.
b. However, this kind of behaviour is known as people pleasing and can have a negative impact. Always saying yes and never setting boundaries can lead to stress, burnout and lower productivity.
c. The first step to setting strong boundaries is about getting connected to your values and understanding what is important to you professionally and personally.
d. When you are clear on your values and align your life to them through appropriate action, you will become clearer on what you can say yes to and what you can say no to. This not only helps you prioritise what matters to you, but will actually help others build trust in you as you will be seen as someone who is more clear and certain.
e. The second step to setting strong boundaries is to understand why you have a tendency to people please in the first place. Often we people please to seek respect and acceptance from others, which can be known as the "if they are happy, then I'm happy" mentality. This is a way many of us learn to form connections that we believe can be leveraged in future. However, it can actually lead to us being taken advantage of.

Action:

- **Schedule your values.**
    - Once you are clear on what's important to you, you must start to make time for these things.
    - Consciously choosing how you spend every hour of your day will teach your brain to prioritise what's important to you before the other inevitable demands of the workplace are thrown at you. A values aligned calendar is something that can be built slowly over time.
- **Reflect on where and why you find it hard to put yourself first.**
    - Take some time to reflect on whether you people please in certain situations or with certain people, for example, with authority figures (most common).
    - Having some self-awareness around your tendency to please people can help you start to figure out what thoughts, habits or behaviours you need to catch in the moment and work on changing to start setting stronger boundaries.
- **Practice saying no with the people you feel safest with like your friends and family**.
    - This can look like saying no to catching up with your friend on the weekend when you are tired and need to put yourself first. Or saying no to that drink after work and explaining that you're trying to focus on your health.
    - Starting small with the people closest to us will help you see that often people won't reject you for expressing what matters to you. This will also help you build the confidence required to set boundaries in harder environments such as the workplace.

3. Learn to communicate clearly and honestly

a. To be able to effectively manage and lead people, you need to be able to communicate clearly and honestly. Communicating in this way is important because it allows you to establish trust with your coworkers and team members so they will have trust in your ability to lead them effectively.
b. If you are constantly beating around the bush, taking ages to get to the point or not voicing yourself at all, you won't be able to build the trust required to be a person of influence.
c. So why do we beat around the bush? Often it's because we are worried about what other people will think about us/how they will react if we say the wrong thing or people don't agree with what we've said. When we have these worries, our communication may come across as vague, long-winded or passive aggressive.
d. Learning to communicate well will change people's perception of you and allow you to develop strong people management and leadership skills.

Action:

- **Practice being authentic.** People will sense when you are being insincere or just trying to "say the right thing". You need to let who you are and what your value is come through in your communication. Try focusing on worrying less about what others think of you and focusing on being real. Get connected to your values, live in alignment with them and this will translate in your communication.
- **Uncover and address the limiting/disempowering beliefs** in your mindset. You might find that you're being held back from communicating well based on thoughts you have about yourself or thoughts you think other people have about you that might not even be true.
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Time management

Another major reason people experience work stress and burnout is being unable to effectively manage their time, stay productive and create effective routines they stick to. Here are some key tips to adopt to improve your time management skills and overall productivity.

1. **Audit how you invest your time**

a. People often waste time in the two following ways:

i. "External Time Wastage" that is, the ways we procrastinate day to day on things that don't bring value to our lives, for example excessive time on social media/screens, binge eating, porn or "noise work" tasks that keep us appearing busy, but don't actually move the needle forward.

- **Q:** Ask yourself, how much time do you waste on activities that don't bring value?

Action: Put an action plan in place to reduce your time wastage in the areas you choose to focus on, for example:

- Setting a timer when you are doing tasks to draw boundaries on the time you spend on each one
- No social media/no phone after 6pm rule
- Put app blockers on your desktop such as:
    - Blocksite - blocks distracting websites so you can't access them for certain time periods
    - Stayfocusd (also on mobile) - blocks distracting sites
    - Unhook - blocks youtube feed scrolling and suggested videos so you stick to one video at a time.
    - Newsfeed eradicator - blocks your newsfeed on Facebook so you don't waste time scrolling

ii. "Internal Time Wastage", that is, the time wasted in our own minds.

- This is where high performers waste the MOST time, yet it is the most neglected area.
- Time is often spent trapped in our own heads, consumed by intrusive thoughts that cause us to waste time overthinking, doubting ourselves and beating ourselves up over mistakes or perceived underperformance.
- Examples of intrusive thoughts include thoughts that cause us to feel
    - Worry - e.g. What if I don't get this work done on time? I don't think I can do this, this is too hard, I feel like I keep hitting dead ends.
    - Guilt - e.g. I said I would finish this work for my manager by 5pm, but I can't.
    - Frustration - e.g. I feel like I'm putting in all this time and effort and not getting the results I want.
    - Resent - e.g. How is that person doing better than me, why is that person getting more recognition/getting paid more than me? I work way harder/I am way smarter than them. This is unfair.

- **Q:** Ask yourself, how much time do you waste each day, consumed by intrusive, time-wasting thoughts such as the above?

Action: Work on capturing intrusive thoughts as they show up, then choosing not to think them or learning how to reframe the thought.

- Ask yourself "what's a better thought I can have?" or ask yourself what if the opposite is true. For example, instead of thinking I can't do this, reframe the thought as "what if I can do this - how would I go about it?"
- Another way to reframe is to say to yourself "I notice I am having this thought, and it is coming from past experiences that aren't true for me right now. It no longer serves me to think this way, here's how I choose to think instead…. [insert positive thought]"

- *Note:* There are more long-term solutions to combat these thoughts, the above is a good place to start to help temporarily reduce the grip these thoughts have on our daily decision making, attitudes and behaviors.

2. Create a predictable routine

a. The greatest external hack for better managing your time more effectively is to plan AHEAD for your days, weeks, and months.

   i. Get into the habit of planning each day the day before as this will stop you from wasting time thinking about what to do each day, trying to juggle your priorities on the fly, feeling overwhelmed as more unpredictable things inevitably show up on your plate each day ON TOP of all that you already need to take care of.
   ii. Build in the habit of doing an end of day planning session every day where you work out what tasks have to be completed the next day and time blocking (see tip 4 below on this).
   iii. Once comfortable with this process, you can start incorporating an end of week session and end of month session to map out your week and month ahead.
   iv. Remember, there is no such thing as a perfect day. You can map out your entire day from start to finish, but it might not always go to plan. But by planning ahead, you can remove some of the uncertainty from your day.

3. Create an organised to do list

a. Creating a to-do list alone with NO order to the list will cause your brain to feel overwhelmed. The tasks will appear never-ending to your brain and you will develop a "not enough" mindset as a consequence (where nothing you do will never feel enough).
b. You need to put boundaries around your tasks to make sure you don't become a "victim of your to do list" and you instead learn to maintain control of it.
c. Here are some useful ways to control your to-do list:
   i. Estimate a realistic timeframe for how long you need to complete a task
   ii. Write down the day of the week you'll complete the task (so you can make sure you balance each day and don't overload certain days with too many tasks)
   iii. Prioritise each task (to make sure you don't just try do everything at once and the crucial tasks are completed first)

4. **Start “time blocking”**

a. An effective planning tool is to schedule every single hour of your day from the time you wake up to the time you go to bed. The reasons for this include:

   i. It means other people can’t fill your open time with their agendas
   When we leave space in our calendar, we psychologically leave ourselves open to taking on other people's needs and agendas, even if we may not necessarily want to or have time to.

   ii. It gives your brain certainty as to how to the day could go
   The reason I used the word “could” here is because no day will ever go fully according to plan. You should expect that unplanned things will show up and you may have to pivot and readjust your plans. But by having a plan in place already, the adjustments you need to make will be much easier and quicker.

b. Here are some good time block categories I use for inspiration:

   i. Morning routine blocks
   ii. Work blocks
   iii. Meeting blocks
   iv. Meal blocks
   v. Exercise blocks
   vi. Bedtime routine blocks
   vii. End of day planning session/end of week planning session

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Stress management

It's no secret that when stress builds up in our nervous system over time without being effectively regulated, cycling through peak performance and burnout is the long-term result. Here’s what you need to know to better manage your stress levels and even eliminate it long term.

1. **Understand what your stress is**

a. To understand how to reduce your stress levels you first need to understand what stress is and why it happens. Stress is:
   - Your mind and body’s response to any challenges you may be facing in your environment.
   - It is often an unconscious reaction you have to your present circumstances, based on stressful or emotional events you’ve faced before.
   - It is also an internal signal telling you that you are moving in the wrong direction or going about things the wrong way.

2. **Learn to leverage your stress to your advantage**

a. You need to learn how to read your stress signals and interpret the lessons they are trying to teach you. To see your stress as a guide and someone that has your best interests at heart.
    - The lesson your stress is trying to teach you is almost always about learning how to put yourself first.
    - For example, you may be rushing from one thing to the next everyday trying to fit all your tasks and obligations in, but it causes you stress. Your stress is actually trying to tell you that your approach might not be the most effective way to approach things and there is a better way - in this example, being realistic about what can be completed in a day.
    - Keep in mind, your stress won't go away until you figure out the lesson it's trying to teach you, which is to SLOW DOWN, course correct and make better decisions for how you lead your life and approach your performance.

3. Recognise and break your addictions to numbing agents

a. Many people try to seek relief from stress in the form of unhealthy habits and numbing agents that temporarily pacify the pain their stress causes them. Some examples include:
    - Binge eating
    - Social media
    - Porn/sex
    - Drugs/medicines

b. These numbing agents, which can temporarily numb the experience of stress we feel in our nervous system, can also lead to long term addictions as we become more and more heavily reliant on these numbing agents to feel better about ourselves.

4. Adopt a long-term approach to reducing stress

a. People often only apply external solutions to help reduce their stress levels such as meditation, productivity hacks etc. While these all definitely serve a purpose, these solutions used alone can act like temporary band-aid solutions to pacify your stress, without dealing with the ROOT of the stress itself, which lies in your mindset.
b. Only applying external solutions to solve your stress will leave you fighting off the symptoms of stress and burnout for the rest of your life. Not ideal when there is a much easier way. Shifting your mindset out of survival mode and adopting a stress-free approach to performance…which takes us to number #5.

5. Detach from outcomes

a. When we are too heavily focused on achieving goals in our career and personal life, we can become hyper driven to achieve these outcomes instead of being driven by our belief in ourselves, our own effort and acknowledging that we have tried our best to achieve these outcomes.
b. Our attachment to outcomes creates a dangerous gap in our mind between where we currently are and where we want to be. This can leave room for our mind to be filled with thoughts of self-doubt, fear, worries, guilt, frustrations etc. that manifest in the form of stress.
c. The stress is magnified by the feeling that "nothing you do will ever be enough", which happens because the goalpost for success in your mind will always be moving. This "not enough mindset"

can cause you to continue to chase your goals relentlessly, leaving you feeling stressed about achieving them.

d. This can ultimately cost you your health, relationships, happiness and even your career potential. A huge cost to pay for operating the wrong way.

6. Stop comparing yourself to others

a. Hustle culture mentality also opens us up to “comparison syndrome”, measuring our success against everyone else's.
b. This can leave us at the mercy of environments and circumstances, because we will feel good when we're doing better than others, but feeling stressed or worse about ourselves when we feel others are passing us by.
b. Here are some helpful mindset shifts to apply that can help with this:

i. Accept everyone's career path is different from yours
   - Your journey will be different to others, so learn to swim in your own lane. Success will come to you at the right time. Focus on your progress in the meantime.

ii. Define what success looks like to you
   - Success can mean a promotion or salary increase. It can also mean fulfillment, work life balance and spending quality time with your loved ones.

iii. Focus on your strengths and double down on them
   - Not everyone is good at everything. Your unique skills will lead you to your unique goals.

iv. Learn to celebrate others
   - It can feel difficult to feel happy for others when we don’t feel we are winning. But instead of feeling threatened, try to congratulate someone on their success, look at it as inspiration and learn from it.

Health management

Managing your overall health and wellbeing will go a long way to helping you overcome burnout. Here are some tips for improving your energy.

1. Add supplements to your routine

a. Here are some things I take every day which I feel optimise my life. Note that this is just my experience and you should seek medical or professional advice before implementing anything new into your diet.

i. Omega 3
   - Look for something with both EPA and DHA and that is heavy metal tested

- What I take: Nordic Naturals Ultimate Omega

ii. Vitamin D
- Useful to get a blood test first to see if/how deficient you are
- What I take: Natural Factors Vitamin D

iii. Probiotic
- Look for something that has a range of strains. Good strains to have include Bifidobacterium bifidum, Bifidobacterium longum, Bifidobacterium breve, Lactobacillus acidophilus, Lactobacillus rhamnosus, Lactobacillus bulgaricus
- Aim for a higher CFU
- Foods like kraut, kimchi and kefir are good food sources of probiotics
- What I take: Love Your Guts Kraut - 1-2 tsp a day or Lifespace probiotics

iv. Magnesium
- Look for something that has magnesium glycinate, it's a good broad-spectrum form of magnesium
- What I take: Ethical Nutrients Magnesium

v. Tips:
- Have a look at iHerb for a good range of supplements at good prices
- Follow drmarkhyman on Instagram for more supplement tips
- Add bone broth into your diet – it's a rich source of nutrients and highly anti-inflammatory. What I take: Best of the Bone - Bone Broth

2. Implement low tox products

a. Water filter
   i. Any filter that reduces/removes chlorine, fluoride, lead, metals, pesticides
   ii. Recommended brands: Brita, Larq
   iii. Important to replace filters regularly as instructed
b. Cleaning/personal care products
   i. Things to change include laundry powder, dishwasher tablets, cleaning products, personal care products (e.g. soap, shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, deodorant)
   ii. Look for items that are fragrance free, phthalate free, sulphate free, paraben free, aluminum free
   iii. Recommended brands: Ecostore, Moogoo (both available at Chemist Warehouse)
c. Cookware
   i. Use glass, stainless steel, ceramic cookware, utensils and food storage – avoid plastic
   ii. Recommended brands for cookware: Scanpan, Le Creuset

3. Buy the right groceries

a. Fresh fruit and veggies – try to buy at least the "dirty dozen" ones organic (https://www.ewg.org/foodnews/dirty-dozen.php). If you can't buy organic, soak fresh fruit and veggies in baking soda to get rid of pesticides
b. Look for products that have few ingredients – the more ingredients, the more likely there will be ingredients that aren't REAL food
c. Things to AVOID in groceries (as far possible)
   i. Vegetable oils (e.g. sunflower, rapeseed – they are inflammatory)
   ii. Thickeners, emulsifiers, anticaking agents

d. Tip: the ingredients are listed in order of how much they are included in a product e.g. if water is the first ingredient for a product, it'll be the most predominant ingredient. So if there are "bad" ingredients in the product, make sure they aren't the predominant ingredients.

4. Update and track your diet

a. How many people do you know who make new year's resolutions to be healthier but a few months later they fall off track and they're back at square one?
b. What people think takes them out is their external circumstances. What actually takes them out is the excuses and reasons their mindset comes up with to give up.
c. The key is to get help and to track and measure your progress for long lasting change.
    i. Seek out a professional who can help tailor a diet to meet your body and energy goals.
    ii. Track your diet and weight e.g. by taking pictures of your body over time or keeping a food diary otherwise, it will be difficult to assess whether you have made progress.
    iii. When you see progress, it'll make it easier to stick with your new habits instead of reverting back to old health habits when life gets difficult or stress starts to kick in.

5. Create a flexible exercise routine

a. In a similar way to your diet, if you don't track and measure your results from your fitness routine, chances are you'll never stick to it, because fitness is about making small, incremental progress..
b. The difference between those that hit their fitness goals and those who don't is whether they give up or not. Giving up is about not getting back on the horse when you inevitably fall off over and over, or not adjusting appropriately when conditions change. It will be impossible to stick to the same routine over and over when life will throw different challenges, situations, obstacles that are predictable and UNPREDICTABLE every single day. This is why tracking and measuring is so important, it makes it easier for us to pivot and adjust

6. Avoid being sedentary

a. We need to keep our bodies moving regularly each day rather than just sitting at our desks without budging from 9am - 5pm (or even longer!)
b. Research shows that an inactive lifestyle can lead to health problems and chronic disease. Find ways to stay active as much as possible e.g. fit in walks before/after work or on your lunch breaks, do some housework/gardening, use a standing desk when working, do exercises during ad breaks when watching TV

7. Limit blue light exposure

a. Another thing that drains our energy that often goes unaccounted for is the amount of time we spend staring at screens and blue light each day and can make it harder for you to get to sleep at night.
b. Ways to limit your exposure include wearing blue light blocking glasses or using screen filters on your devices.

Final note: Start taking action ASAP!

So many people read information, get inspired, then move on with their life without taking any action.

Information without application is useless. So many people become “knowledge junkies” because it makes them feel like they're doing something about their challenges, when in reality it does not make any tangible change to their life.

It is only by taking action to implement the above steps that you’ll see the changes in your day-to-day life. Take what resonates and integrate it into your day to day. Good luck!