

Using Mindfulness To Reduce Stress and Prevent Burnout



Preventing burnout is often a matter of developing some simple strategies. But first, here's a closer look at these two related, but different conditions:

- **Stress** is a feeling that things are out of control, that too much is going on. During stressful periods, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. However, stress is situational. When the situation improves, the stress eventually subsides.
- **Burnout**, on the other hand, is a feeling of total exhaustion—physical, emotional, and mental. It's caused by long-term exposure to emotionally demanding situations. With burnout, you feel empty. You have nothing left to give. Instead of feeling engaged, you're going through the motions. Every day is a bad day.

Simple Strategies to Prevent Burnout:

Recognize the Warning Signs

Take the time to sit down and check in on mood, feelings, energy levels, and behavior patterns. Notice if any changes in sleep, eating habits, and concentration have occurred. If feeling excessively fatigued, physically and emotionally drained, and losing interest in work and activities

that used to bring joy, these signs may indicate chronic stress and burnout is taking a toll.

Prioritize Sleep and Self-Care

Making self-care a priority includes getting good quality sleep, eating a well-balanced and nutritious diet, finding simple ways to stay active and move throughout the day as well as connecting with friends, family, and community. Establish healthy transition habits and boundaries to leave work at work and feel more present and engaged during personal time.

Identify a Daily Practice for Recharging

Create time and space for quiet, rest, rejuvenation, and mindfulness each day. A few minutes of breathing meditation exercises in the morning, a midday yoga break, or an afternoon walk while listening to music are examples of simple daily practices for recharging.

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