



**BURNOUT:
WHEN
MEDITATION
DOESN'T WORK**

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BURNOUT: WHEN MEDITATION DOESN'T WORK

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WHAT IS BURNOUT?

American Psychiatric Association (APA) defines it as:

- n. physical, emotional, or mental exhaustion accompanied by decreased motivation, lowered performance, and negative attitudes toward oneself and others. It results from performing at a high level until stress and tension, especially from extreme and prolonged physical or mental exertion or an overburdening workload, take their toll.



SOME ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:



- Have you become cynical or critical at work?
- Do you drag yourself to work and have trouble getting started?
- Have you become irritable or impatient with co-workers, customers, or clients?
- Do you lack energy to be consistently productive?
- Do you find it hard to concentrate?
- Do you lack satisfaction from your achievements?
- Are you using food, drugs, or alcohol to feel better or to not feel?
- Have your sleep habits changed?
- Are you troubled by unexplained headaches, stomach or bowel problems, or other physical complaints?

BURNOUT OR DEPRESSION?

- While there are overlapping symptoms of depression and burnout, such as loss of interest, low mood, and difficulty concentrating, there are also differences.
- Depression often involves the internal experience of a person. For most people, the catalyst for their depression is unclear. They may not see anything wrong or that needs to be changed in their life and still feel this way.
- Burnout has a definitive root cause and arises because your external environment has a prolonged negative impact on your physical health and mental health. You can also identify things you don't like and wish would/could change.
- Also, people who are experiencing burnout, especially at less severe levels, can usually continue functioning. In depression, there is interference with functioning and often a loss of hope for the future, as well as suicidal thoughts.

VULNERABILITY FACTORS

- Lack of control- an inability to influence decisions that affect your job (e.g., schedule, assignments, workload)
- Unclear job expectations or job insecurity
- Dysfunctional workplace dynamics (e.g., undermined or micromanaged)
- Extremes of activity- monotonous or chaotic
- Lack of social support
- Lack of acknowledgement
- Work-Life imbalance

HOW CAN WE MANAGE IT ALL?

20 second rule

- created by New York Times best-selling author Shawn Achor who wrote *The Happiness Advantage* and *Big Potential*
- If you want to make a difference, think small and in ways that keep your energy activation low
- In other words, the less time and effort required to start a certain action, the easier it will be to follow through and the more successful you will be with accomplishing it in the long run
- e.g., if you're trying to get into an exercise routine, set your clothes aside the night before. This will already eliminate 20 seconds of the process in the morning and will cue you to go in the morning.

HOW CAN WE MANAGE IT ALL?

Get support from your community!

- Florida Lawyers Helpline
- Florida Bar's Mental Health & Wellness Center

Try Mindfulness, forget Meditation

- Meditation is very hard to master and requires practice
- Mindfulness involves just being present in the moment and turning our attention to something that brings us relief if even for 15 seconds (think the Calm app commercial)
- e.g., looking outside our window for a few moments; taking a lap outside or within the building



HOW CAN WE MANAGE IT ALL?

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)

- Aims to help you accept what cant be changed and pivot to the things that can
 - Being an Attorney is an important and demanding job, which means its going to be stressful
 - Accepting what is outside of our control & committing to making changes that will improve & enrich our lives
 - Its about resiliency, not avoidance
 - Conceptually in line with Buddhist philosophies
- Keep your Values in mind
 - What you have defined is important to you- e.g., Family, Social, Health, Community, Religion, etc.
 - Although we can't attend to them all at once, if we attend to each from time to time, our life will be more balanced
 - They are the map of life, helping to guide our actions. If something moves us towards one of our values, commit to the action. If it pulls us away from our values, then examine before acting.

MANAGING BURNOUT: BE A KID

- Journal
- Music
- Dancing
- Singing
- Drawing
- Laughing
- Hobbies
- **USE YOUR HANDS**
- **BUILD something**



OTHER SOLUTIONS:

- Learn that "No" is a complete sentence.
- Intervene in the beginning when you first realize you're struggling. Don't wait until it gets to the point of "Burnout."
- Combat feelings of guilt by reminding yourself that you taking care of yourself benefits everyone.
- Exercising to provide a mental health benefit is not the same as exercising to lose weight or manage a medical issue. We do not need much to get that boost emotionally (even 5 mins is helpful)
- Little things when done often add up to big improvements.

THANK YOU!

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