



What is burnout?

6 signs you may be experiencing burnout
in any stage of life

Excessive and ongoing stress can lead to burnout – physical, mental, and emotional tiredness. You experience it when you are emotionally or socially exhausted, overwhelmed, and unable to feel satisfied.

Burnout causes you to become less productive and less energetic, making you feel cynical, angry, and helpless. You could feel as though you have nothing left to contribute at some point. The last thing anyone wants is to stop feeling like themselves, so identify your symptoms and take positive steps to keep on being you.

It's important to tackle burnout as soon as you identify it. Sometimes, it can be challenging to notice burnout's symptoms, so Stannah's psychologist Jo Hemmings has shared the common signs to look out for:

1. Feeling lonely

You might feel lonely, despite having little motivation to socialise. Loneliness can also prolong burnout, so if you're struggling to find the right social setting to enjoy company, consider meeting a friend or having a relative to visit on their own, slowly building up to larger social gatherings. You'll soon find that you enjoy spending time with your loved ones again rather than suffering alone.

2. Insomnia and fatigue

These two symptoms may indicate that you are taking on too much. You could feel low on energy and exhausted in the early stages of burnout. One of the first things we do when we are anxious and overwhelmed

is lose sleep, whether deliberately or unconsciously. Even if you go to bed early, you could still feel exhausted when you wake up. You may even discover that getting dressed and leaving the house takes more time and effort.

3. Anxiety

Burnout is frequently accompanied by anxiety. The anxiety may be felt as persistent tension, concern and jitteriness, impairing your ability to pay attention and focus. Eventually, the pressure could get so bad that it prevents you from taking care of your household chores and loved ones or result in panic attacks.

4. Lack of creativity

Losing your feeling of creativity

can be demotivating. Spending too much time indoors can make it more challenging to unlock your desire to be creative and lead to doing very little at all. Our brain is a muscle, and once it's strained, there's only so far you can push it before you suffer from exhaustion. Find solace in activities designed to promote mindfulness, like puzzles or adult colouring books to reignite your brain.

5. Loss of purpose

As the stress mounts, you lose the desire and drive that first motivated you to do the things you love and be sociable. Burnout causes you to become less productive and less energetic, making you feel cynical, resentful, and helpless. Reigniting your sense of purpose and drive to achieve is one of the most important steps in combatting burnout.

6. Short temper

Have you ever had those days where the slightest thing would set you off? You might feel that you're easy to anger, and dealing with an angry outburst is never enjoyable, especially if it isn't your usual demeanour. Although frustration with

individuals around you is a natural emotion, burnout might cause you to experience it more frequently.

“Social burnout – or social exhaustion – is a valid experience that makes you feel like you have done so much interacting and socialising that you just can't face it anymore. While you should learn some self-care and take adequate 'me time' it's important that you don't give up on social interaction altogether, as that can cause its own anxiety and feelings of loneliness. Make small changes to your life – only agree to social events that appeal to you; identify the triggers that leave you feeling socially exhausted and work on those and if you find yourself online too much, step away from the technology and scrolling through social media to reconnect to real life with a more mindful and positive attitude.”

-Jo Hemmings, Stannah's resident psychologist