

Recognize the signs of burnout in yourself and others

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Burnout: It's a common enough concept, but how do you know if you're experiencing it at work and at home?

According to experts at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, a myriad of daily pressures placed on individuals can culminate in [burnout](#).

"Burnout is not a result of one singular thing," explained Dr. Eric Storch, vice chair of psychology at Baylor. "Work, familial responsibilities and everyday stressors can all contribute to a sense of depleting motivation."

Storch lists the common signs of burnout:

- a persistent sense of being mentally overwhelmed and stressed each day
- little sense of satisfaction at work or in the home, even during moments of success
- physical tension and difficulties relaxing
- chronic sleep issues
- fatigue that doesn't ease

There are ways to help prevent or ease burnout. Having honest conversations about issues is crucial, Storch said.

"If you find that you are beginning to show signs of becoming burned out at work, speak with a trusted colleague for their advice or talk to a supervisor about what you both can do to change your [work environment](#) into one that allows for a healthier balance between personal and professional responsibilities," he advised in a Baylor news release.

If you believe that someone else is suffering from burnout, reaching out to them in the correct way is key.

First off, be clear that your intentions are focused on their well-being. Storch advises using "I" statements to let the person know you're worried about them, and to encourage them to share whatever they're comfortable discussing.

The end of these conversations should focus on positive "action points or solutions to work toward," Storch advised.

Mental health remains a touchy subject for many, and Storch urges that conversations stick to more objective, logical points rather than becoming personal. For example, you could stress that the person's mental well-being is important to everyone in the workplace, and leaving issues unaddressed could harm co-workers as well as the individual themselves.

If you're intimidated bringing up these conversations, try a "practice" conversation with someone you trust beforehand, Storch advised.

One common rebuttal to any discussion of burnout: "I'm too necessary to step away from work or family."

When that happens, Storch advises that you tell the person to try taking a break, anyway. In most cases, the sky will not fall in, he said.

"You can go at life at 90 miles-an-hour, but you'll quickly find out that you won't be able to maintain that pace for long," Storch said. "Once you learn effective self-care, which often means stopping for breaks, you'll find out that you're able to go further than you thought possible."

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