

5 STAGES OF BURNOUT

Burnout is a complex and psychological syndrome caused by prolonged chronic stress. There are 5 main stages of burnout. To be professionally successful and avoid burnout you need to ensure you have a resilient mindset and a mental fitness training programme that can get you there. Check out which stage you are at and whether you need support overcoming stress.

Stage 1 – Roaring campfire

- You start a new job or role and feel positive feelings, excitement, enthusiasm
- Life is busy & stressful but you feel motivated, optimistic and establish coping mechanisms
- Want to prove yourself to family, friends, colleagues and/or line managers
- Seek positive reinforcement, praise & reassurance that you are being successful
- Committed to work and sometimes find it hard to switch off, sleep or socialise

Stage 2 – Ignoring the log shortage (stress increases)

- You start to feel heightened stress at work from workload, colleagues or expectations
- Start to feel lapses in focus, concentration and decision making and become intolerant of others
- Work becomes more of a priority than your hobbies and time with friends or family reduced
- Some days feel really difficult to cope with emotionally but not everyday
- Difficulty sleeping due to restlessness (might self-medicate with alcohol or sleep aids)

Stage 3 – Flickering flame (chronic stress)

- Continuous low to medium stress at work is now impacting on your personal life
- You become withdrawn from social situations and are losing the motivation you once had
- You start missing deadlines, feel constantly exhausted both physically and mentally
- The amount you eat and exercise might either increase or decrease dramatically
- Alcohol or drug consumption might increase
- You might act 'out of character' (e.g. resentful, emotional, cynical, fearful or aggressive)

Stage 4 – Glowing embers (onset of Burnout Syndrome)

- Symptoms from stage 3 become more intense and more frequent
- You really don't feel like you and don't know what to do
- You feel depressed and feel pessimistic towards life and work
- You know you need support but you might feel ashamed to ask
- You might experience occasional intrusive thoughts and enjoy the release from self-harm
- You might experience chronic pain, constant illness, high blood pressure and serious sleep disturbances
- You doubt your own ability, feel worthless, empty, emotionless and start to question if you will ever feel better

Stage 5 – Fire gone out (Complete Burnout)

- You feel like you cannot cope any longer and can't remember what true happiness feels like
- You start to believe this is normal and the future looks unachievable
- Moving through the day takes so much energy and feels like a dark cloud surrounds you
- You are likely to experience regular intrusive thoughts and thoughts of suicide
- URGENT medical intervention is needed to treat symptoms & revive your sense of self-worth

