



THE CCW WOMEN GUIDE TO BURNOUT

Burnout hits harder for women.

Burnout, a type of stress response specific to the workplace, is the leading cause of resignation. If you're feeling burned out, know you're not alone. 53% percent of women in 2022 said their stress levels were higher than they were in 2021, and almost half stated that they felt burned out in some capacity. Whether it's because of microaggressions at work, a lack of flexibility, or lack of pay, burnout is real. Use this guide to assess your needs and develop a plan of action.

Things that lead to burnout:

1. **Loss of control.** You have no flexibility, or little say in your schedule or the work that you do.
2. **Lack of guidance or clarity.** You don't know what kind of authority you have or what is expected of you.
3. **A toxic or dysfunctional workplace.** You are discriminated against, micromanaged, or bullied.
4. **Monotony.** You do the same tasks every day.
5. **Chaos.** You wear too many hats and have no predictability or routine.
6. **Lack of support.** You don't feel connected to coworkers, bosses, or peers. There is a lack of trust.
7. **Work-life imbalance.** You work crazy hours or lack boundaries.

Symptom tracker:

1. Have you become cynical or critical at work?
2. Do you drag yourself to work and have trouble getting started?
3. Have you become irritable or impatient?
4. Do you lack the energy to be productive?
5. Do you find it hard to concentrate?
6. Do you lack satisfaction from your achievements?
7. Do you feel disillusioned about your job?
8. Are you using food, drugs or alcohol to feel better or to simply not feel?
9. Have your sleep habits changed?
10. Are you troubled by unexplained physical complaints?

Derived from Mayo Clinic: Burnout



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6 STEPS TO REDUCE BURNOUT:

1 Know your purpose.

"Your purpose," says coach and burnout expert Jill Brown, "is more than just a desire, hope, or wish. It's what gets you up in the morning. It's your WHY." Finding your "why" is the first step in figuring out what fuels you...and what does not. Take out a journal, and reflect on the following questions to help you define your "why":

- **What tasks are your favorite at work? Why?**
- **What accomplishment are you most proud of? What makes it stand out above the rest?**
- **What is your ideal workday? Be detailed. Who, where, what, how, and why?**
- **Which compliments from coworkers have stuck with you the most? Why?**
- **What can't you stop thinking about? What feels effortless to you? Why?**

Use this reflection to generate a short purpose statement. For example, "My purpose is to create community, and be an authentic storyteller in an environment where I am well-compensated and valued."

Train your mindset. 2

Sometimes burnout happens because of circumstances beyond your direct control. But this doesn't mean you have no agency. An internal locus of control means you believe you are responsible for your own success. An external locus of control means you believe that luck, circumstance, or other people determine your success. Research shows that people with an internal locus of control have lower rates of burnout. As Jill Brown says, "thoughts become things." Once you know your why, it's time to cultivate that internal locus of control. This shift will help you better advocate for yourself, your purpose, and your needs. And all it takes is practice!

- 1. Exercise: Write down a list of your personal and professional goals. Begin each goal with "When."**
"When I get promoted, it will be because I ..." "When I start my business, it will succeed because..."
- 2. Challenge: Practice controlled risk taking. Try a new hobby or activity that you have been scared to try. Volunteer to do something you feel is out of your comfort zone. Journal about what you gained from the experience, and how it made you feel to try something that scares you.**

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3 Define your values.

Personal values are your central beliefs. They drive all of your decisions and actions. For example, when offered two positions, your decision might come down to a values question: what do I value more, passion or financial stability? Everyone has core values that define their personality and sense of fulfillment. [Understanding these values](#) is key in making decisions that will bring you the most satisfaction. It's important to note that values can change over time, so continually return to this exercise as your priorities and goals shift throughout your life.

Know Thyself: An Exercise

1. **Values audit: complete an online [Personal Values Assessment](#) or [Values in Action](#) assessment to help determine your core values. Narrow down your top 5-10 values and prioritize them from most to least important.**
2. **Share your values with family and friends. Do these values match who you are? Why? How do they see these values at work in your life? How do you see these values prioritized?**
3. **Keep your values list handy and continually revisit. When you need to make decisions or assess new opportunities, refer to your list for guidance.**

4 Detect contradictions.

Now that you know your "why," have taken control of your thoughts and actions, and have clearly defined your core values, you are equipped to tackle the major cause of your burnout. Many times, burnout creeps in when there is a gap between values and reality. Perhaps your core value is family, and your job is requiring you to put in 12-hour days with little flexibility. The result of this misalignment? Burnout. Jill Brown recommends using an [energy balancer tool](#) to help you track and align your values with your day-to-day life. Another helpful exercise is to graph your values in order to find areas that could be improved or acted upon. Fill out the values graph below for practice:

CORE VALUE ex) Creativity	WHERE DO I SEE THIS VALUE AT WORK IN MY LIFE? ex) In my art classes, and when I get to lead a project.	WHERE AM I SACRIFICING THIS VALUE? ex) I haven't been chosen to lead a project in months.	REALIGNMENT ex) Ask my manager for the opportunity to lead a new project.



5 Align your behaviors.

Meaningful self-reflection is a consistent, time-consuming process, but once you've reflected on your values and pinpoint where your burnout is coming from, you'll feel ready for an action plan. It's your time to create a life that is best aligned with your purpose, values, and goals. And though a lot of this plan will be, well, action, much of the plan is communicating to others how to respect your values and purpose. Jill Brown recommends the following steps for realignment:

1. **Communicate confidently.** Do not ask permission, inform, or apologize for your decision to take control of your life. "I will" and "you will" are your new best friends.
2. **Stop doing other peoples' work.** Women are often expected to do other peoples' work, both in the public and private spheres, often without recognition.
3. **Stop comparing yourself to other people.** Stop competing with someone else's life. You have unique values and purpose, as does everyone else.
4. **Set boundaries.** If you value family time, maybe you turn off Slack and email notifications on personal time. No need to apologize or inform-- put your boundaries in place and stay firm in them.
5. **Take risks.** Sometimes, what you need most is what might scare you the most. But if you practice taking risks, you might find that it can lead you to your very best life.

Embrace community. 6

Knowing you're not alone is the most important way to fight burnout. Join an ERG, or an external community like the CCWomen Membership platform, where we offer year-round events, education, inspiration, opportunities, networking, and so much more. Community is your key to success. With a community of support, you will have people to celebrate you when you realign your life!

About Jill Brown:

Jill Brown is a Life Strategist, coach, and expert on work-life balance and burnout. She helps working women find their purpose...and she is a proud CCWomen community member!

Connect with Jill and learn more about how she is revolutionizing work-life balance for women.



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