



## A CLIENT GUIDE

# Understanding Burnout

*Listening to what exhaustion is trying to tell you*

**Burnout is more than tiredness — it is whole-person depletion.** It builds slowly, in body and mind together, when the demands placed on us outpace our chances to truly recover. It can take root in any role where we give a great deal of ourselves. Understanding the kind of burnout you're experiencing helps you meet it with the right kind of care.

## ● The Many Faces of Burnout

### Work & Occupational Burnout

Chronic stress from your job or career that simply hasn't let up. The World Health Organization recognizes it as an occupational phenomenon — not a personal failing.

**OFTEN LOOKS LIKE** Dragging yourself to work, cynicism or detachment toward a job you once cared about, and the sense that no matter how hard you try, it's never quite enough.

### Parental Burnout

A deep depletion from the around-the-clock demands of raising children, when the load outweighs the resources you have to meet it.

**OFTEN LOOKS LIKE** Feeling emotionally drained by parenting, going through the motions with your kids, a shorter fuse, and a painful gap between the parent you hoped to be and how you feel day to day.

### Caregiver Burnout

The wearing-down that comes from caring for an aging, ill, or disabled loved one — often over a long stretch, with little relief.

**OFTEN LOOKS LIKE** Exhaustion tangled up with guilt and resentment, pulling away from others, and putting your own needs last until there's nothing left.

### Compassion Fatigue

Sometimes called "the cost of caring." It builds in those who repeatedly absorb others' pain — in helping roles, or simply as the person everyone leans on.

**OFTEN LOOKS LIKE** A numbing or flatness where empathy once flowed easily, quiet dread before helping, and feeling depleted by other people's needs.

### Relational & Social Burnout

What happens when constant emotional availability — supporting, smoothing, being "on" for everyone — leaves nothing in reserve.

**OFTEN LOOKS LIKE** Even people you love starting to feel like a demand, craving solitude, and withdrawing from connection just to recover.

## ● Shared Warning Signs

- ✓ Exhaustion that rest doesn't seem to fix
- ✓ A shorter fuse — irritability, tears, or numbness
- ✓ Brain fog, forgetfulness, trouble concentrating
- ✓ Getting sick more often than usual
- ✓ Pulling away from people you usually enjoy
- ✓ Dreading tasks you used to handle with ease
- ✓ Cynicism or detachment from roles you care about
- ✓ Headaches, tension, disrupted sleep or appetite
- ✓ A sense that nothing you do makes a difference
- ✓ Losing interest in things that once brought joy

## ● Restoring Through the Body

*Burnout lives in the body long before we have words for it. Your body is not the obstacle — it is the doorway back to balance. These practices begin with the physical and work gently inward.*

### 1 Listen to the body first

Burnout often speaks through tension, fatigue, gut, and sleep before the mind catches up. Treat these as messages, not malfunctions.

### 3 Protect the foundations

Sleep, nourishment, hydration, and movement are the ground recovery is built on. Tend to one at a time, without overhauling everything.

### 5 Feel your boundaries

A boundary often shows up first as a physical 'no' — a clench, a heaviness. Let your body help you honor your limits.

### 2 Calm the nervous system

Lengthen your exhale, move gently, step outside. Slow exhales and time in nature signal safety to a system stuck on high alert.

### 4 Choose recovery over collapse

Numbing out — endless scrolling, 'crashing' — isn't the same as restoration. Build in rest that genuinely refills you.

### 6 Reconnect mind and body

Grounding, mindful movement, breathwork, or stretching can reunite a mind and body that burnout pulled apart.

*"Healing begins in the body — one breath, one boundary, and one restful night at a time."*

### ⚡ When to reach for more support

Burnout can overlap with depression and anxiety. If exhaustion, hopelessness, or numbness linger for weeks, keep deepening, or make daily life hard to manage, it's worth talking with a professional. And if you ever have thoughts of harming yourself, please don't wait — reach out to someone you trust or, in the U.S., call or text **988** (Suicide & Crisis Lifeline), available 24/7.