

How to cope with Covid-19 Burnout

Between home-working challenges, caregiving and the restrictions on our way of life, it is easy to see why the pandemic is taking such a toll on our mental health. Surveys conducted by LinkedIn, HSE, and Micro Biz suggest that over 20% of UK adults have experienced burnout during the current Covid-19 pandemic, which equated to around 12 million people. Burnout is particularly prevalent in caregiving roles such as ministry, due to its round-the-clock nature.

Unaddressed burnout can be seriously detrimental to both your health and your role. Whilst we are beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel with the vaccination programme, the shadow of Covid-19 is long, and now is the time to take preventative action.

What is Burnout?

Burnout is the feeling of being physically and emotionally exhausted from a build-up of accumulated stress in your life. It could be relationship-related, work-related, or purely situational. The main effects of burnout are;

- Feelings of energy depletion
- Challenges in social interaction. Burnout can result in failure to interact well with loved ones, colleagues, and the wider community caused by feelings like negativity, reduced self-belief or loneliness. This can then become a cycle.
- Release of the stress hormone Cortisol. Whilst cortisol is vital in helping us manage day-to-day risks, overload can cause high blood pressure and increased blood sugar, impacting the digestive, immune and reproductive systems.
- Physical issues. Due to the constant release of Cortisol and the body being in “fight-or-flight mode”, burnout can cause changes in eating habits, weight and sleep.

How can you overcome Burnout?

Acknowledging it is key. Once you have become burnt out, it takes some time to reduce that feeling. There are no quick fixes, so be prepared to spend a few weeks creating healthy habits and altering your routine.

An excellent starting point would be to reset your priorities. Often reaching burnout means you are putting certain aspects of your life above others. Make a list of all the things that are important to you; family, friends, health, hobbies, community, etc. Once a week, pick one of these items and direct your focus to it.

Let those close to you know how you feel so they can offer you the support and grace you need whilst you recover.

Be kind to yourself physically as well as emotionally, listen to your body. eat well, rest when you are tired, exercise lightly, and stay hydrated. Learn that it is ok to say no and do things at a manageable pace.

Should you feel you need more help managing your current situation, please contact our Support team so they can explore the various avenues of assistance available to you.