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Tips for Workplace Burnout

Is work getting you down? Maybe every day is feeling like a Monday for you. This could be a sign of burnout. Though a term we have all heard, it is bigger than you may think and was acknowledged as a syndrome linked to chronic stress at work that is not successfully managed, even before the pandemic. Burnout is serious, it can lead to depression or substance misuse, and it can even be contagious in the workplace.

Dr. Christina Maslach has researched and created a model to help predict and overcome burnout. The idea that these feelings are just individual issues and must be normal, keeps us from addressing the problem.

The following are the three responses to chronic stress:

- **Physical and emotional exhaustion;**
- **Feelings of negativity to work and distancing yourself from work and others, and**
- **Shame, self-doubt, and blaming yourself**

Dr. Maslach also identifies six drivers that can lead to burnout. An imbalance in work load and resources is one of them, but it is not the only one! Lack of control, insufficient rewards/recognition (and not just monetary), positive community support, lack of fairness, and mismatched values could all potentially lead to burnout.

There are things we can do to positively pivot some of these drivers to prevent burnout. For example, you can work to take control of parts of the workday. Checking in with yourself and how you are feeling when something happens and arrange your day to add positives alongside negatives to help buffer the stressfulness.

Preventing burnout is much more than just individual change. Workplace culture has a big role in this positive pivot as well. Dr. Maslach suggests the workplace should enlist the three c's:

Collaborate, Customize, and Commit.

Collaborate with all employees and ask what needs there are. *Customize* your work culture. There is no one size fits all for all workplaces or for all drivers. Finally, don't just make it

temporary, *commit* to changing the culture. This may mean not giving up when something doesn't work completely, review and modify until it does work!

Reducing the risk of burnout by building a toolbox takes courage. Build up your personal and professional support system by having dedicated family/personal time and meeting with mentors to discuss set-backs or strategies. Need some inspiration for your toolbox? Find them here: <https://bit.ly/timetocope>.

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