

Stop burnout in its tracks

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(HealthDay)—Finding the right work-life balance isn't easy. For many people, 9 to 5 has stretched to 9 to 7—or longer. And responsibilities can start much earlier in the day, especially for those with kids to corral in

the morning.

Burnout is nothing new—it was described back in the 1970s as a work-related state of distress, with symptoms like exhaustion and reduced productivity. Even more alarming, without intervention, it becomes chronic—a way of life.

Though burnout stems from work-related pressures, it can affect relationships and every aspect of your life. In extreme cases, you might stop functioning well on any level.

To get back in balance, take your needs off the back burner and take steps to care for yourself.

If you've been neglecting good health habits—like eating well, exercising, and engaging with family and friends—start to carve out more [personal time](#). If you make a plan with a loved one, you'll both be more likely to keep the date.

Re-evaluate your work situation. Resist the impulse to compete with colleagues by taking on more or bigger projects.

If your managers expect you to live for work and be there around the clock, try to re-establish boundaries. Determine what's an acceptable number of [work](#) hours to you and advocate for yourself with your boss.

If you find that you can't make needed adjustments on your own, consider an intervention program that shows you how to combat [burnout](#). They're often run by independent life coaches and business consultants, and might even be sponsored by your employer.

More information: For more on burnout, visit the [University of California, Berkeley](#).

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