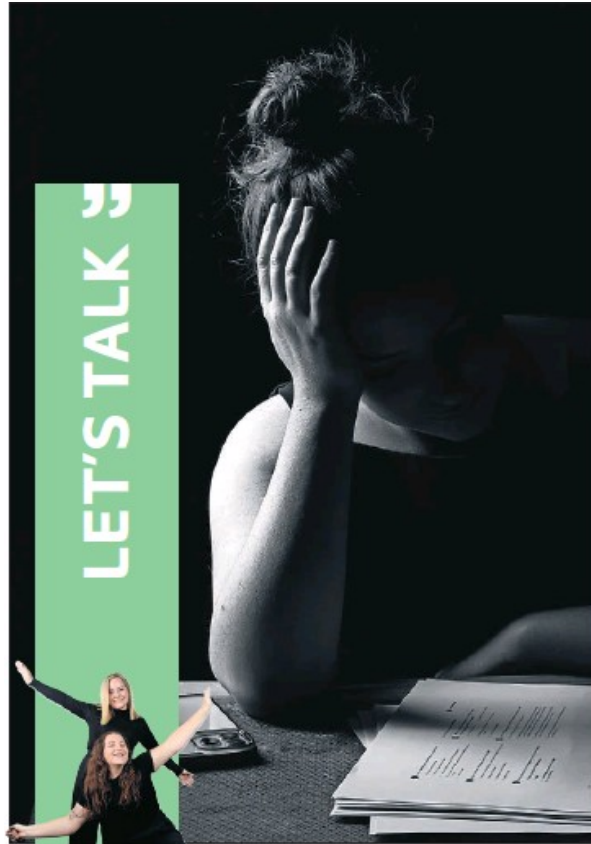


- Burn out (Psychology)

Are you burnt out? Probably

Shepparton News · 3 Mar 2023 · 8 · By Caitlyn Grant

Everyday feels the same, motivation is at an all-time low and getting out of bed is up there with the hardest challenge of the day. Sound familiar?



You might be experiencing burnout. While it's a bit of a buzz-word at the moment, especially with younger generations, the phenomenon can be incredibly damaging in every aspect of life. So how does it start and how does it end? We sat down with women's coach Melissa Rachele to hash out what burnout can really mean.

What is burnout?

While the World Health Organisation has classified burnout as a syndrome wholly based on occupation, Melissa has seen clients reaching the point of burnout in many other facets of their lives.

She said burnout can be caused by excessive stress over a prolonged period of time and can be caused at home, workplace, in parenting, relationships — the list goes on.

“There is a bit of an epidemic at the moment, I'd call it,” she said.

Microsoft Work Trend Index of 2022 depicted Australia as having some of the highest levels of burnout in the world, 62 per cent of Aussies reported feeling burnt-out as opposed to the average global average of 48 per cent.

What does it look like?

While it can present differently symptoms can show up physically, emotionally and mentally, many of which vicariously align with anxiety or depression.

“There's all these subtle signs along the way and they can last for years, but then it can show up in a really significant way, like it did with me,” she said.

As a mum with three boys, the anxiety coach is all too familiar with the notion of juggling.

Three years ago, Melissa woke up with her head spinning, she couldn't move to go to the supermarket or even complete menial tasks around the house.

On top of the vertigo, she experienced headaches, joint pain and panic attacks, eventually realising she was suffering from burnout.

“Especially with society these days, there’s so many pressures for us to be successful,” she said.

“I think as women, we’re just trying to push, push, push.

“One key thing I think to feeling good is we need to listen to our bodies.”

Physically:

- Total exhaustion
- Headaches
- Frequent illness
- A sense of running on empty and depleted energy

Emotionally and mentally:

- Not feeling like going out
- Things you normally do feel like a struggle – Not wanting to go to work/dreading work – No motivation
- A cynical outlook

*Not an exhaustive list

How do I fix it?

Finally, the answer we’ve all been waiting for.

Spoiler: There’s no quick fix. Burnout is a tricky beast, it can present differently in everyone — in different lives, different stages, different symptoms.

And recovery can take time too, dependent on the case, it can take up to months or years.

As trivial as it can seem when you’re literally too tired to function, as a measure of prevention, self-care is integral.

1. Back to basics

Though it’s hard to escape the Instagramable morning routines filled with Shrek green smoothies, 28km walks and solving world peace, Melissa recommends taking it down a notch or two—things don’t have to be so complex.

“It’s just starting out simple, like even when you wake up just taking three deep breaths before you get out of bed and asking ‘what does my body need today?’,” she said.

“That’s just a simple way you can start listening to your body.”

2. Sleep

Melissa emphasised just how critical sleep was to wellbeing with benefits proven in a consistent sleeping pattern.

In a catch-22, a symptom of burnout can emerge as insomnia.

Taking this into account, how time is spent before hitting the pillow is almost equally as important as sleep itself, Melissa recommends at least an hour of no technology.

“If you’re answering emails and things like that at night, then your brain doesn’t switch off and that’s definitely one road to burnout,” she said.

3. Looking after yourself

In the words of our great man Paul Kelly, from little things, big things grow.

“Find little moments throughout your day,” she said.

“I always tell my clients, even popping an alarm on your mobile, just to stop and actually go outside, even in your lunch break.”

Taking a bath, going for a walk or if these are in the too-hard basket, even just have a sit outside as a way of grounding.

4. Lay off the overtime*

*If you can.

It’s a tough world we live in, and widespread staff shortages combined with a heavy workload does not make things much easier.

A study released last year in November from The Centre for Future Work revealed 70 per cent of Australian workers were completing an additional 4.3 hours of unpaid overtime work.

This equated to an average of \$8000 in unpaid work, in other words, way too much.

Moving forward

The effects of burnout can take years to really set in — or it can come hard and fast — but either way, it can be debilitating.

“I honestly would recommend seeing a coach like myself or a therapist, I think that was — that is — key for me,” she said.

“Especially when you’ve really hit burnout, I think just having that support and really getting beneath the layers and seeing what actually is causing the burnout as well.”

While you may not be able to pinpoint exactly what’s wrong, if you’re feeling off, don’t be afraid to take that rest — your job won’t be there if your health isn’t too.

Melissa Rachele can be found on Facebook at Melissa Rachele Coaching or Instagram at melissarachele_coaching

Beyond Blue www.beyondblue.org.au or

1300 22 4636

Lifeline www.lifeline.org.au or 131 114 Sane Australia www.sane.org or

1800 187 263