

Early Warning Signs You're Flirting With Burnout

Have you ever started a new season or position with high hopes and excitement? Then, over time things do not work out the way you thought they would. Projects move forward more slowly than anticipated. There are setbacks in relationships. Unresolved issues out of your control are draining you of energy and creativity. You feel overwhelmed by the demands others are putting on you. Financial strains are tighter than expected. Unrelenting health issues seem to plague you.

I personally experienced some of these challenges over the last year and have learned that if pressures like these are not dealt with in the right way, they can become a recipe for burnout.

Slippery Slope

The simplified progression towards burnout goes like this: For various reasons, your high hopes get deflated, which leads to stress and frustration. When solutions are not found to combat your frustrations, you begin to feel angry. Anger can manifest in various ways, but if not dealt with you will slide down a slippery slope towards apathy. You give up caring. Your once-burning passion to make a difference has now become a smoldering pile of coals. Decisions that used to be easy are now difficult and you prefer someone else make them for you. If you ignore the warning signs of your emotional state, apathy will lead to depression and burnout.

Thankfully I noticed the warning signs and met with my leaders to discuss my need for rest and recovery. This included taking some weeks off from ministry activity and devoting my time to being refreshed in God's presence and re-stoking my inner fire.

Root Cause

I have since learned that introverted, high-achieving type 'A' personalities like myself are most prone to burnout. The single greatest contributor to my downward journey was not the crazy amount of work I was doing (this of course was a factor), but was the amount of work I was doing in areas outside of my core passions. I drifted from leadership into management. I got bogged down in emails, meetings and administrative work and was losing sight of the big picture.

Today everyone seems to be living at a breakneck pace. We think that by "being busy" we should earn a badge of honor and show it off to others so we feel more important. But when we stop—and I mean really stop—and assess all we are doing and why we are doing it, most will find they have settled for the status quo and have given up pursuing the best. According to statistics, a high percent of people are not doing what they love and instead are dissatisfied, overloaded and regularly flirt with burnout.

Can you relate? Are you flirting with burnout? What is the state of your spiritual, mental and physical health? Next week I will share with you five things I did to get my life and inner health back on track. {eo}

This article originally appeared at .