



# Let's Talk About It

## 12 practical ways to combat burnout

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**Focus on what you can control:** When everything feels overwhelming, it's easy to get caught up in what's out of your hands. One thing I've found helpful is narrowing my focus on the things I can control. It's about creating a sense of agency in your life. Once you start seeing which stressors are within your power to change, it gives you clarity—and that's the first step to feeling more grounded.

**Understand burnout is stress-driven:** Burnout doesn't happen out of the blue, it's the result of prolonged stress. Coming to terms with this, it becomes clear the only way to resolve it is to address those underlying stressors. This isn't something quick fixes like "take a day off" solve. It's about understanding how deeply stress impacts you, physically and mentally, and finding ways to manage it better.

**Address stress everywhere—not just at work:** Burnout doesn't only stem from your job. It can come from home, your social life, even your relationship with yourself. Your body doesn't care where the stress comes from, it just knows it's overwhelmed. Start looking at life as a whole and figure out what stressors are creeping in from all corners — then tackle them holistically.

**Set boundaries and stick to them:** One of the life-changing things I've done to fight burnout is setting boundaries. If it's work, family, or social commitments, knowing when to say "no" has saved a lot of stress. I would feel guilty about not being available all the time but I learnt protecting my time and energy isn't selfish, it's necessary. It's okay to prioritise yourself and set limits that keep you from burning out.

**Disconnect from work and social media:** We're in a world that's always "on" and it can feel impossible to truly disconnect. Combat burnout is by unplugging, literally. I've set clear boundaries around work hours and stepping away from social media. Even just turning off notifications or setting time limits has helped reclaim my mental space. Taking regular breaks from technology is crucial for your mental health.

**Recognise both positive and negative stress:** Not all stress is bad—some stress, like when you're excited about a big opportunity, can actually motivate you. But here's the kicker: even good stress, like landing a dream job or getting married, can be draining. Just because something is positive doesn't mean it isn't stressful. Recognising this helps us better manage our energy during big life changes.

**Shift your mindset on stress:** One of the most powerful changes I made was reframing how I thought about stress. I used to treat it like a badge of honour — working long hours and constantly juggling tasks like it was something to be proud of. But the truth? That mentality only pushed me further toward burnout. Now, instead of glorifying stress, I focus on reducing it and finding balance.

**Accept that some stress can improve performance:** Not all stress is harmful — sometimes it pushes us to do better. For example, prepping for a big presentation might make you anxious but that extra energy could also drive you to perfect your slides and practice until you're confident. The key is making sure stress stays short-term and doesn't evolve into chronic burnout.

**Stop trying to multitask:** Here's a hard truth: Multitasking doesn't work. Many of us think we are pros at juggling a million things at once, but in reality, it only increased our stress and makes us less efficient. Try to focus on one task at a time, it's made a huge difference in productivity and stress levels. Trust me, give it a try!

**Don't isolate yourself:** When you're feeling burnt out or overwhelmed, it's easy to feel like you're the only one going through it. But you're not. Talking to others can help us recognise that we are not alone, and nor are our feelings. Burnout thrives in isolation, so reaching out to others for support can help break that cycle.

**Practice real self-care:** "Self-care" has become a bit of a buzzword, but real self-care goes beyond bubble baths and spa days. It's about addressing all areas of your well-being—mental, physical, emotional, and even spiritual. For me, it means paying more attention to my mental health, which helps me reduce stress and start feeling more balanced.

**Reconnect with your passion:** When burnout sets in, it's easy to lose sight of what you're passionate about. Reconnecting with the things that bring joy — whether it's a hobby, a long-term goal, or something as simple as spending time with loved ones — helps us regain a sense of purpose. Finding that spark again can be a powerful tool in fighting burnout.

Burnout is tough, but you're tougher. It's not about eliminating stress altogether but learning how to manage it better, both mentally and physically. By focusing on what you can control, changing your mindset, and reconnecting with what truly matters, you can regain your balance. And remember—you're not alone on this journey. Contact Gateway Health on **1800 657 573** or [gatewayhealth.org.au](http://gatewayhealth.org.au)

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