7 Tips to Avoid Burnout When Growing a Business

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One of the great advantages of working for yourself is the freedom it gives you. When you're a business owner, you get to make your own rules and set your own hours. Unfortunately, in today's "always-on" culture, this can also mean that you get to suffer from crippling stress and exhaustion too. Between meeting clients' needs at the highest levels and keeping up with the pressure of all the other day-to-day responsibilities of running a successful business, many entrepreneurs are increasingly suffering from burnout.

Defined as the exhaustion of physical or emotional strength or motivation, burnout is often described as the "high achiever" illness, and it's a real problem in today's hectic and fast-paced world. According to a recent survey by Indeed, burnout is currently on the rise, with over half (52%) of survey respondents reporting experiencing burnout in 2021.

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From fatigue to the inability to concentrate on a task, to anxiety or even depression, the symptoms of burnout vary and often come on slowly over time. Here are seven ways to put a stop to burnout before it gets out of control.

1. Stop working excessive hours

When you work for yourself, putting in long hours is often perceived as just part and parcel of the business. However, if

you find that you're always taking work home with you, you're unable to ever switch off or down-time is simply non-existent, you might be on the road to running out of steam, and that, in turn, can easily lead to burnout.

2. Don't let yourself get overwhelmed

All business owners have to-do lists that can seem never-ending, but if your workload is consuming you to the extent that you can't get a handle on the tasks you need to, then you could be close to burnout. As the leader of your business, you have to have the ability to step back and take a broad overview. If your to-do list is a mountain you feel you just can't climb anymore, you need to reassess.

3. Consider how often you're making mistakes

Everyone makes mistakes – they're part of life and can actually be great learning opportunities. However, if you continually find that you're making more errors more often, it's time to re-evaluate. What do you need to do to get back on track and return to optimum performance?

4. Set office hours

Many small-business owners believe they have to be "on" 24 hours a day if they are to succeed. If they do less, they fear that they won't seem committed or that they'll lose business. The reality is, when you set specific work hours – and stick to them – you can achieve far more with your day. Humans are designed to work optimally when they follow the rest-run cycle. Give it your all during your designated work hours and then take some time off to spend with family and friends,

pursue other interests and have some fun!

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5. Take breaks

As an entrepreneur, you're naturally wired to work hard, but it's vital that you schedule breaks during your day too so that you can continually reset and recharge. Why not set a reminder on your phone to get up and away from your desk at regular intervals? Stretching your legs, getting some fresh air or taking the time to chat with colleagues are all great ways to revive yourself and come back to your to-do list feeling more energized, focused and ready to win.

6. Establish priorities

When you're trying to juggle an enormous number of tasks, you can lose sight of what's really important. To achieve what you really want to, make sure you take time to figure out your true priorities and a roadmap to get you there. Working with a good coach is a powerful way to establish better habits, effectively manage your time and energy and clearly understand your priorities so you can achieve all you want to while living the good life.

7. Set goals

Sometimes we all need a shot in the arm and a reminder of what we're working towards. If you can't see the wood for the trees, then you need to set some short-term goals to motivate and reward yourself for your hard work and dedication. Book some time off and take a well-earned vacation – even the promise of a weekend getaway will remind you what you're working towards.

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Burnout can creep up on you, but if you can spot the warning signs early, then you can head it off at the pass and get back on track before it’s too late. If you feel as if you’re running on empty, you need to step back and reassess. Remember, taking good care of yourself means you’re taking good care of business.

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