

AND BREATHE...

The benefits of incorporating breathing exercises into your daily routine are wide reaching. Some well-researched advantages include:

Enhancing listening skills

Improving focus - helps to reset and spot new solution

Supporting resilience

Enhancing our capacity to embrace change and manage stress

Enabling us to consider before we react

A simple breathing exercise to get you started...

Get comfortable in your chair, make sure your feet are flat on the floor so you are grounded to the earth and your back is straight but not rigid. You could rest your palms in your lap if that feels relaxing.

Take some normal breaths in and out through your nose and begin to feel relaxed. Try and relax your shoulders and if you feel comfortable you can close your eyes. Take a few moments to check in with what is going on in your body. Do you feel any sensations or tension anywhere? Consider your chest, belly, legs, hands, feet etc. If you do, bring your awareness to that area, and continue to breathe into the sensations you feel. Allow the breath to flow freely to any area you may feel tension in.

Once your awareness is with your breath try this short exercise:

1 Draw long slow inhales through both nostrils for as long as is comfortable.

2 Relax the shoulders and encourage the movement of the breath to be in the lower abdominals and ribcage

3 Soften the jaw

4 Hold the breath - for as long as is comfortable - at no point should this feel difficult

5 Consciously relax your jaw, throat, neck, shoulders, diaphragm, and abdominal muscles

6 The more relaxed you are the easier it will be to hold your breath.

7 Exhale through both nostrils for as long as comfortable

Repeat 5 rounds.

Preventing & Overcoming BURNOUT

Burnout is a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion. It was redefined in 2019 by the WHO as a medical diagnosis resulting from work related stress. If not properly addressed, burnout can lead to depression, anxiety and affect relationships in and out of work.

HOW TO RECOGNISE IT

Physical

Feeling tired and drained most of the time

Lowered immunity, frequent illnesses

Frequent headaches or muscle pain

Change in appetite or sleep habits



Behavioural

Withdrawing from responsibilities

Isolating yourself from others

Procrastinating

Using food, drugs or alcohol to cope

Taking out frustrations on others



Emotional

Sense of failure, self doubt

Feeling helpless

Detachment

Loss of motivation

Negative outlook

Decreased sense of accomplishment

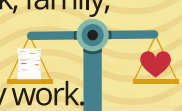


HOW TO ADDRESS IT

Take time off



Find balance in your life – work, family, friends, hobbies, voluntary work.



Be sociable with co-workers



Reach out to those closest to you. Open up.



Set boundaries



Limit contact with negative people and self-talk



Nourish your creative side



Take regular breaks from technology



Find value in your work



Connect with a meaningful cause or community



APPROACH TO WORK

DIET & LIFESTYLE

Long term stress calls for a diet that supports energy production throughout the day and is rich in nutrients needed to produce our stress hormones

Minimise sugar and refined carbs to avoid crashes in mood and energy



Reduce caffeine it triggers our stress response causing further energy dips



Eat regularly and don't skip breakfast – avoid fasting when burnt out



Include protein with every meal and snack – helps keep energy levels even



Include fats from natural whole foods, they are a great source of energy



Avoid processed foods, trans-fats and chemical additives to reduce the toxic load on the body and minimise empty calories



Eat more omega-3 fats shown to reduce burnout



Stay hydrated dehydration affects cognitive function and triggers fatigue



Replenish your gut bacteria they directly influence symptoms (the 'gut-brain axis')



Support digestion and nutrient absorption:

Eat mindfully and chew well

Include easy to digest soups, bone broths, smoothies



Foods rich in **B vitamins, magnesium and zinc** which are all depleted by stress



Whole food diet: wholegrains, green leafy veg, nuts and seeds



Vitamin C rich foods help to produce stress hormones



Peppers, kale, broccoli, watercress



Set aside relaxation time



Minimise alcohol – it causes anxiety as it wears off.



Get plenty of sleep



Aim for at least 30 mins exercise per day but avoid over-exertion



Avoid nicotine – this powerful stimulant can increase anxiety

