

Stress Free!

Key Tactics To Tackle Stress, Burnout Or Overwhelm At Work And At Home

Stress Free!



Francisco Bujan

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Burnout, stress and overwhelm - Coaching

Check this:

<http://vitalcoaching.com/coaching.htm>

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Your life is under attack!

Work, family, demands!

Demands! Demands! Demands!

Sometimes, it just gets too much!

That's when it hits you!

You don't have enough time and energy to provide for all these needs!

You want to perform well but no matter how hard you try you keep being flooded by more!

It's a strange world because our material wealth should lead to more freedom.

Instead, it is often the opposite: alienation.

See your life as an energy reality.

It's a sphere of energy!

A sphere of actions, thoughts, emotions, personal space, connections and much more.

When you are burned out or on the edge of it, there is a huge imbalance.

Your system is depleted!

You can look at it and wait for this imbalance to go away but it won't.

Why is it that burn out doesn't simply disappear?

It is because the dynamics that lead to it are still there.

It's like a recipe.

You put a certain set of ingredients together and you get burnout!

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Always!

Now, some people will develop positive coping mechanisms and be able to successfully deal with stress.

Of course, most people do.

Now, in some cases, you cross the line.

Whatever coping system you have is no longer enough and you fall on the other side.

I am not a doctor.

I am not a psychotherapist.

I am a life coach and the core quality I want to deliver in your life is extra power!

I believe this is the exact quality you need to protect yourself and get your life back.

What does extra power give you?

It gives you the energy to set new boundaries with whoever is crossing the line with you.

It could be your boss, your associates, your life partner, your kids, your in laws or simply yourself.

So many people in your life might not fully realize the negative draining impact they have on your existence.

Even if they realize it most of the times, they don't stop.

Why is that?

Why is that even when you give them warning signs, they keep on pushing your limits?

Because they don't know how to stop!

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Do you have a boss?

Let's take the example of a boss.

Imagine that you work for a company.

The goal of this organization is productivity and profit!

That's their core agenda!

Smart management would be to protect the staff, right?

Not so smart management pushes everyone to the limits!

Why is that?

Because it's their agenda!

They think short term and don't see the consequences of pushing you too far.

What does that mean?

It means that a boss will often push you as far as they want unless there is a boundary somewhere that puts a limit.

This boundary can come from a union or yourself for instance.

In today's world, most of the times, this boundary has to come from you!!!

You have to learn to say "No", "Enough", "I can't", "I would love to but I have another commitment tonight", etc.

These are all different ways of saying "No".

I guess you already experienced that... It can be quite challenging to say "No".

Why is that?

Because you want to perform well.

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In fact, you don't want to disappoint anyone.

On top of that, there is always the risk of getting fired if you don't comply and this is a scary thought.

When a boss pushes you to the limits, they often use coercive power.

In other terms, threat!

The untold story often goes: "If you don't do it, I will find someone who will".

A boss will test you and in their inner scale, they know EXACTLY when you are underperforming.

When they ask you to stay late hours or require you to show up weekends, they know they cross the line.

What is strange is that it is just a test!

Really!

If you say yes to everything, they actually lose respect for you!

I know... Weird!

But that's the way it works.

To be good for your company you need to express your power and know exactly what your limits are.

If you cross the line and have to take a 3 months sick leave, it's not just you who loses, it's your company and your boss as well.

In other terms, pushing beyond your limits is a self destructive pattern for companies, not just you!

You educate your boss!

You have constructive discussions and limits negotiations.

Most importantly, you stick to what you are paid for!

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Are you overdoing it?

In the 10 years successful experience I have coaching people in burnout and overwhelm situations, I am surprised to see that in the vast majority of cases, the pressure overload comes from the person itself, not the boss and not the partner.

In other terms, people tend to create burnout themselves by feeling responsible for certain things that don't belong to them.

Here are some examples.

You work for a big company.

You have a boss.

You work with 9 other people in a team.

Well, it's not really a team because you work independently from each other.

Now, you feel that your boss is underperforming in some areas.

You feel that some of their decisions are strategic mistakes.

You feel responsible for the success of the company.

You start taking steps to educate your boss and your colleagues.

See what happened right there?

You took responsibility for something that is not yours!

In your mind, you think: "I will be the perfect employee! I will change this! That's what a good employee would do! I will be rewarded and recognized for my efforts!"

In 90% of the cases, this approach fails!

Here is why:

No one asked you to take that responsibility.

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Your boss has more power and when you challenge them or criticize them, it often backfires.

The hierarchical structure of the company doesn't give you the power to take that kind of responsibility.

By invoking change, you challenge everyone and create resentment and hostility.

In other terms, this decision to take responsibility for the company leads you to a dead end.

After months of effort, you end up with zero results and lots of frustration.

Your frustration arises because you realize that from the position you are in, you have little control over your boss's or the company's strategic decisions.

In other terms, you are bothering everyone!

I know I am being direct here and if you are in that position and I offended you, sincere apologies.

However, if that's the type challenge you face, what I am saying will help you keep your sanity.

Realize this: from the position you have, you are not given the power to shift certain things.

What's your real sphere of influence?

That's usually what you are paid for.

You are not being asked to restructure a company or change things you have no control over.

So, what's the answer?

Let go!

Stick to what you are paid for!

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You are not responsible for your company's success or failure!

Take your energy back and invest it in what you are responsible for.

Exactly what is written in your contract, not more!

If in your mind, you go: "But I want to do more! The way my job is now is not fulfilling enough!"

Well, that's another question.

The point is that going to war against some organizational structures or behaviors is a tough battle.

Unless you are empowered by the organization to do so, you will most likely waste your time and energy!

Stop!

Don't go that way!

It's not a battle you can win because the organization you want to help doesn't want you to win!

Even if you see easy ways to run this company or optimize certain aspects of what you or your boss does, most of the times, there is only one way to respond: "Not my responsibility!".

If the changes concern just you and it's all about optimizing or streamlining your own operations in the company, that's another story.

You have 50/50 chances to succeed if that's the case.

But, if the changes you have in mind involve more than you, my advice is simple: let go or you'll get hurt!

It is that simple!

Are you a perfectionist?

Another common burnout and overwhelm mistake!

Being over perfectionist.

The difference between doing a good job and doing a perfect job is huge in terms of time and energy you need to invest.

Suppose that you need to write a report.

Doing it well might require half a day of work.

Doing it perfectly (according to YOUR standards) might require 5 days of work and LOTS of stress!

The thing is that in most cases, nobody really cares about the details.

I am not kidding!

Your boss might jump to the last page and read only the few last lines of your conclusions.

They won't even be bothered to see the design, the font, the carefully chosen wording, the quotes or who knows what else.

You can spend days perfecting details no one cares about!

This is REAL!

Listen to what I say and it will save you lots of time and trouble!

Perfectionism often leads to burnout!

It is NOT needed!

No one asks you to be perfect with most things you do.

In most cases "good" will do!

Aim for good, not perfect!

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What's good?

Good means a score of 80%.

Perfect means 100%.

Check the different aspects of your life, tasks or jobs.

Give yourself a mark between 0-100% to most of what you do.

You will notice that in most cases, to go from good to perfect, you don't need just a bit extra, you need 5x to 10x more time, effort and energy to achieve that result.

It is like the difference between going for a light trek or deciding to climb the Everest.

What makes it worst is that your perfectionism is usually not validated!

It is simply not recognized financially or emotionally.

Again, you can spend days perfecting the graphics of a document when a simpler clearer design would have been perfect enough.

Here is another example:

You invite 15 family members to a thanksgiving dinner!

Stressful!

You want everything to be perfect!

You could spend a couple of days organizing and preparing for things to be good or 2 weeks stressing up and adding pressure to everyone's life!

See how it works?

How much you invest in a project is REALLY up to you!

Nothing needs to be perfect.

In most cases it's just in your mind!

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It is a target that you set up for yourself!

Why do you do it?

Why is it that you often choose for perfection?

You do that because of the achievement emotional reward!

What do you feel when you win a challenge?

You feel this sense of inner gratification!

It's like an exam you pass or a job offer you win!

The chain reaction of biochemical processes you get in your brain when you win is like a flow of pleasure.

It makes you feel good!

This is why so many people choose for perfection.

It is because they like the feeling of winning.

Now, you must put things into perspective.

Preparing for a marathon might mean neglecting your partner or family life.

Deciding to stay long evening hours at the office means that you feel exhausted when week end comes.

Repeating the same pattern for months leads to burnout!

It's simply not worth it!

It's a matter of finding the right measure.

If you analyze your life and what takes too much energy right now, you will pin point easily the exact areas where you are wasting too much energy.

Letting go of aiming for perfection is like letting go of a short term juicy gratification.

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But, the long term reward is priceless and way more valuable!

It means life balance! Life hygiene!

More time for family and friends!

Positive states of minds!

Health and vitality!

See what I mean?

When you add up all that in the equation, you see instantly that the short term perfectionist gratification is usually not worth it!

Your will power is like a weapon that can turn against you

If you have been practicing sports, you know that when the body is exhausted you can keep going with pure will power!

Will power or ambition are extremely effective at getting things done.

The thing is that your body or mind can sometimes collapse before you reach the target.

That's burnout or physical exhaustion!

It happens in sports all the time.

In business, the same can easily happen if you don't watch out and know your limits.

Will power is one of our core mind tools and what makes us powerful human beings.

It's through will power that we achieve so much.

But it's a double edge sword.

The best way to find out your limits is to test them.

Obviously if you got this book, it means that either you or someone you know is in trouble and crossing their limits.

If you feel imbalance, the first step is to stop and listen!!!

The signals are simple: physical exhaustion, appetite loss, poor sex life, little social life, no enthusiasm or energy, emotional vulnerability, etc.

If any of these are your symptoms, step back and accept the fact that you went one step too far.

It will take you usually a few weeks to get back to your true self.

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But you must take action and start doing less in one area or another of your life!

90% of the burnout cases I witness with my clients are centered around too much pressure with work and family life.

Protect yourself!

Now is the time!

Key strategies to get your power back before you burn out

Burnout happens for one reason and one reason only: you give too much and don't get back enough in return.

You end up drained and exhausted!

If you think that a few pills from your doctor will solve a burnout you are dead wrong!

Pills tackle the symptoms, not the cause.

This means that they might give you temporary relief but they don't tackle the real cause.

What's the real cause?

You give too much time and energy.

You do too much!

Why do you too much?

Because you want to!

Part of the pressure comes of course from the organization you work in but most of the responsibility is in your hands.

If you want to change things around it is in your power to do so.

You are the main player in any form of stress, burnout or overwhelm situation.

Unless, you do something about it, you are done!

Put it this way: your life is under attack!

What kills you is the fact that you take a passive or victim role.

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You want to shift this.

You want to wake up and design a new way of standing in your professional environment!

By the way, this works whether you are your own boss or if you work for someone else, for instance in a big organization.

You always have some amount of freedom and this is what you want to start applying in your life right now.

What is the goal?

Find a long term balance + attitudes which do really empower you without draining you.

We talk about long term, here!

These are not some quick fixes. While most of these strategies will give you instant relief from stress, you need to stay focused to really establish them long term.

Here are some of the key strategies you must start applying in your personal and professional life right now:

- **Take charge!**

I know it is easy to believe that the organization you work for or people around you will solve your burnout. It is simple! They won't. Your burnout is your business. Do something about it rather than giving this responsibility to someone else!

- **Drug free!**

Taking anti depressants, sleeping pills or any other form of drug is an emergency solution, not a long term strategy! The real victory comes from behavior and attitude changes.

- **Say "no"**

This is the number one strategy when dealing with burnout. Set up new boundaries and reinforce them. Never cross the line! If you can't say "no", negotiate!

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- **Creative stress and burn out are two very different things**

Creative stress gives you a boost! Burnout totally drains your energy! Don't confuse these two!

- **Respond early!**

The longer you wait, the harder you have to climb back. The best way to tackle burnout is to prevent it rather than heal it. Listen to early warning signs and take action. Action means: rest, new boundaries, attitude shifts, delegating, prioritizing, value shifts, etc.

- **Get your energy back!**

The guidelines for health and vitality are always the same. When you burnout you need extra will power and focus to implement them. Get 8 hours sleep! Eat healthy! Exercise!

- **Rest!**

Take time off! This is not optional. When you get burned out, you are on a self destructive spiral. You want to break the cycle!

- **You first!**

When you burnout, you give too much to your work and not enough to yourself. Shift priorities! You come first!

You might realize straight away that there is no magic pill here!

When you use these strategies, you tap into your own survival instincts and decide to win this battle.

Your fighting power is the first resource you want to use. You want to defend your life!

When you get burned out, you lose the battle!

You don't want to be a loser; you want to be a winner!

When the organization you work for or your own business take over the totality of your energy, you end up lost!

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There is only way to go: fight to get your power back.

The only true way to get your power back is to establish new boundaries.

The most spectacular secret about this is that when you do establish these new boundaries, everyone and everything wins, including any organization or business you are involved in.

Remember: it is in your hands!

You are the designer of what happens next!

Key strategies to limit professional stress

If you want to limit professional stress, create new boundaries.

Here are a few strategies to get you started:

- Never take work home
- Keep your week ends free
- Leave early
- Once at home, don't talk about work
- Don't take responsibility for other people's actions
- Stick to what you are paid to do
- Aim for good, not perfect

These are essential behavior and attitude changes.

The goal is to establish these new attitudes within a month.

How to say "No"

No matter how you put, saying "No" does break the cycle.

It means that the first reaction when you say "No" is resistance.

Now, what is magical is the after effect of saying "No": it creates respect!

Respect for yourself and respect from others!

Why is that?

Because when you say "No", you use extra power.

The natural reaction to extra power is respect.

It is simple and almost magical.

Before you please others, discover how to please yourself.

You educate your environment on how to best work with you.

Never take work home

Of course, if your life is highly balanced and you love what you do, work is not work: it is rather a creative empowering flow of energy.

Now, obviously if you come to the point where your life is highly stressed and you feel you can't step out, this is where you can start.

Refrain from taking work home.

Don't do it!

Remember that your life, wellness and even survival of your family are at stake!

You are no longer in a position where you can negotiate with that one!

Shift gears the moment you step out of the office.

Free time is relaxation time!

You might have other demands, sure!

But at least stop thinking or doing anything work related!

You'll be amazed of how fast you get your power back!

Protect your week ends!

Same here!

Your week ends are sacred!

Protect them!

Focus on energizing and relaxing activities instead.

Absolutely everyone needs a break and needs to rest every now and then!

Rebuild your connection with your partner and your family.

This is a time for fun and quality time.

If you don't know where to start, go for a little step.

It is okay to keep your time space empty!

Use this as a time for reflection and simple fun.

Leave early!

And arrive late!

Of course, as long as it stays within the limits of what is legally acceptable by your organization standards.

You want to limit the time you spend at work.

Will you produce less or be less effective?

Of course not!

You can maximize the time you spend in a professional environment.

Money buys your freedom!

You are given a certain amount of professional freedom.

Use it!

Once at home, don't talk about work!

This is the next simple strategy you can apply right now.

Shift your focus as soon as you step out of your office!

Your partner wants to hear another story anyway.

Focus on light, fun topics which will relax you both.

If you are in a relationship or married, the time you spend with your partner is precious. It does create harmony and gives you a powerful energy boost. Protect that time and make sure you forget about work until next day.

This is a gift for both of you.

If you are not in a relationship, you can apply the same strategies to your dating or love life.

Shift gears and start thinking about something else the moment you step out of the office.

Don't try to control other people

You are responsible for your own actions and so is everyone else.

You can spend valuable time and energy worrying about what other don or don't do!

This is where you can waste huge resources of power and energy.

You are not responsible for other people's actions!

Of course if you are at the head of a team, you have some responsibilities. However these responsibilities are very precise.

In most cases, what you worry about has nothing to do with your own actions or even something you can influence.

So drop it!

Let the organization take care of it!

Don't take responsibility for other people's actions!

It is a simple boundary which will decrease your level of stress instantly!

Stick to what you are paid for

This one follows up along the same line.

Very often you will start taking responsibility for aspects of the organization which are out of your hands or influence.

What's even worse is that everyone tends to resent it!

This tends to happen when you want to increase your impact on the organization.

What you don't know is that very often, the management will be working against you! This happens a lot if you work in an organization.

You want to change things, reshape them!

As soon as you step into a new position, you see the imperfections of the organization and want to do something about it?

Big mistake!!!!

An organization is a complex structure.

Often, it has a high level of inertia and tends to resist any form of change.

The ones who can perform significant shifts are the one who are given the power to do so.

In many cases, this does not involve you.

When you start stirring things, you tend to attract negative attention and even resentment from others.

Let go of what you can't control and stick to what you are paid to do.

This is itself will immensely shift your energy balance.

It might even mean keeping a low profile; especially when you just start in a new position.

To quit or not to quit

Should you leave?

Is your burnout the alarm bell which tells you that it is time to go?

Maybe!

If you consider quitting, start with a small step.

Explore the employment environment.

See if a career shift might be appropriate.

Now, here is an essential tip: don't quit until you learned everything you could learn from the challenge you face right now.

Simply shifting position to transfer your problem to a new location can be a waste of time.

Sometimes, the challenges you face in a given organization are very common and you will find a similar situation wherever you go.

If the challenges you face are related with inappropriate skills, effectiveness or communication skills, you need to gain new tools first.

This is why often, quitting does not help and it simply delays the taking of real action.

Ask yourself sincerely:

"Is what I am facing unusual?"

"Is the work load unusual?"

"Will a different boss have a different attitude in this matter?"

Etc.

Sometimes, you need some fresh air, your boss is a real jerk, the team you work in is toxic and the only way through is to give up and start over.

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Consider both options carefully and take small steps in both directions: staying or leaving.

This will give you valuable information and tell you what to do next.

Once you look at the logical aspects of all this, drop everything and trust your instinct.

How to deal with a toxic boss

Here is a strategy you can apply straight away: dialogue!

The best thing you can do is to find out what is happening in your boss's mind.

If you receive systematic negative feedback, you want to get answers.

The best is to set up a meeting, walk into your boss's office or invite him or her for a chat.

You need answers and you will get them!

The first step is to be open for constructive criticism.

Here is what you can say:

"Hi, Look... I noticed that lately you seem disappointed by my performance at work. I would like to take this occasion to ask you a couple of direct questions so that I can get better results in the future..."

Then follow up with some key open ended questions:

"What do you feel is my level of performance right now? (0-100%)"

"What do you feel I could do to improve this level of performance?"

"Is there any other feedback you want to give me?"

As you can imagine, these questions do ask for answers.

Your boss might have something in mind.

As long as you keep the communication channels open, you are on the right track. If you let division rule, you'll end up with greater resentment and conflicting energies.

Now, taking that step does require extra guts and courage.

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This is the number strategy which can truly shift everything around.

The reason a boss can be abusive or challenging is because he or she feels that you work against their interest.

It can of course as well be a pure abuse of power.

That's the other option of course!

Even in this instance, be confident that you can shift things around.

The key is communication.

Now, you don't have to be all agreeing.

You can set up limits and clear boundaries.

Here is another strategy:

Don't take responsibility for your boss's choices or actions.

I know this can be a tough one to accept, but you have little or no power over their decisions.

It's simple: drop it!

Accept once and for all that they are ones in charge.

Conclusion:

Stick to what you are paid to do and forget about the rest.

Unrealistic expectations

Okay, this is the big chunk!

Unrealistic expectations are the number one force which drives you to potential burn out.

These high expectations are often coming from you.

They are related with a quest for perfectionism, highly competitive attitudes and the desire to be totally responsive and reliable.

It is simple: an organization will use you and press you until you say "Stop!".

It is your role to protect yourself.

This might be the number one skill you want to learn when joining an organization: it is the art of saying "enough" when you want to.

On one hand you can be a burnout victim for the rest of your life or you can learn this skill now!

Which one will it be?

Which one will give you real long term life victory?

By the way, you are at high risk if you are your own boss and have your own business for instance.

If you go that way, you won't just burn yourself; you'll take your family and those who care for you all the way to edge.

The end result is that everyone loses.

Give yourself healthy professional boundaries and respect them!

Every time you cross the line, you drain your resources.

If you are on the burnout edge, it's obviously because you did go too far already.

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What if these expectations come from the organization or your boss.

In that case, go the "How to say "no"" section.

If you end up in a 6 months burn out leave, everyone loses!

Nobody wins!

This is not what your boss or the organization wants.

It is your right and role to ring the alarm bell when you are pushed too far.

Develop a real winning attitude now and implement it in your life straight away!

You'll be amazed by what happens next!

The real battle

When you burn out, you lose a life battle!

You lose because you did not use your power.

Your right is to protect your life and this is what you must do on the spot.

The battle is between an organization and your being.

Organization forces will always push you to the edge because they that's their nature.

An organization is an energy reality.

Your business is an energy reality.

When you push yourself to the limit and burn out, you respond to the needs of this energy reality.

An organization or your business wakes up your conquering drive. It wakes your creative skills with a source of endless energy.

This energy pushes you to take action, work extra long hours, worry and get stressed.

Your role is to fight these forces and create a new set of professional boundaries.

These new boundaries are new priorities:

Your health and personal balance matter more than the organization or the business your work in!

Now, this is a radical shift!

You, as an individual have more value that the business your work for!

Repeat this to yourself and let it sink!

This is your new guideline and your new battle strategy!

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You are priority number one, not the business, not the organization!

You are priority number one!

A business is a passionate organic entity.

It is a spirit and energy which flows through being.

Now is time to master this environment and stay on top of it!

If you burn out, it miss that you are the slave of your business or organization.

The goal is to reverse all that:

You want to stay on top!

Without you, it's simple: there is no organization!

You are the most important core value in all this!

Your wellness and personal balance are number one priority!

Establish this new value in the core of your being and respect yourself!

Burnout will never happen again!

Shift priorities!

This is probably the most important shift you need to make right now: your well being and balance are more important than any business or professional target!

You come first!

Your body, mind and wellness are your most important assets!

If you loose them, you loose the ground you live on!

This part is often forgotten in education.

You are taught to perform and invest your whole being.

No one ever tells you to be selfish and think of yourself first.

However, this is your number one priority right now.

This is where you can make a massive change and get rid of any burnout pattern forever.

The forces which bring you to exhaust your resources are self destructive.

It is a lie to believe that you are helping anyone or anything by pushing yourself down this road.

The reason you go that way is because you conditioned yourself to believe that this is what gives you validation and rewards.

No way!

There is a limit and if you cross it, you break your number one survival rule:

You lack respect for yourself!

Take care of yourself

Again, shift priorities!

You need to take care of yourself and there is only one way to do this:

- Eat healthy
- Get 8 hours sleep
- Exercise

The guidelines for health are always the same.

Now, when you burn out, you need extra focus and will power to establish basic attitudes which will energize you long term

Remember, the only reason you get exhausted is because your body and mind do not regenerate enough.

You use too much energy and don't resource enough.

To shift this balance, you need to shift habits and attitudes.

You need to make regeneration your top priority.

Love yourself!

Give yourself the respect you deserve!

Your mind and body are doing all the work. They need to be rewarded and treated accordingly.

In a way, a burnout is an inner rebellion. Your body and mind scream "Enough!" until you listen.

Do not ignore this call!

Listen and do something about it!

You are the most important person in your life.

If you collapse, everything collapses! Not just you!

Stress Free!

Family, children, partner, friends, work!

Everything goes down with you!

This is why it is essential to shift priorities and start giving to yourself first.

Self sacrifice is no longer needed!

You can have it all + Total respect for yourself

When you burn out, you cheat on yourself.

You pretend that your well being does not matter or comes later.

However, your body, mind and well being are your responsibility.

They were given to you and to no one else!

This means that it is your responsibility to stay on track.

You are the one who can do something about it and shift things around.

You are the designer of what happens next.

Will you need to fight to get your balance back?

Probably yes!

Will you need new tools?

Maybe!

Is it within your range?

Of course it is!!!!

You deserve this, so give it to yourself.

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Should you take anti depressants?

You probably know this:

A burnout is a not a sickness!

A burnout is a misbalance related with ineffective actions or attitudes.

You simply ask too much from your being.

If you are on the emotional and physical edge, it is of course okay to use emergency tools.

Your MD can certainly be of support.

However, you already know that this is only a temporary patch.

The real solution comes from key attitude shifts.

You know that!

The way to implement these attitude shifts is to connect with extra sources of power in you.

You can call these your survival instincts.

What are your key sources of stress?

Here are some examples of key possible sources of professional stress:

- **Relationship to boss**
- **Personal Effectiveness**
- **Lack of information or direction**
- **Conflicting orders, guidelines or directions**
- **Unrealistic expectations**
- **Relationship to colleagues**
- **Non adapted attitudes or mind sets**
- **Lack of skills**
- **Organization's culture in general**

How high is your level of stress in these different areas?

What are your top 3 sources of professional stress right now?

You probably realize that for each one of these challenges, there is an effective strategy to tackle it.

What you want, is to bring back the level of stress to 0% - 20% on all these areas.

(0% = inexistent 100% = maximum)

The goal is to take effective action to shift things around.

Suppose that you are bothered by some aspects of the organization's culture.

What are your options?

You can worry about it, try to change it, or find your way around it.

Stress Free!

If this specific area creates a high level of stress for you, there is only one way to go: drop it!

Realize that whatever this issue might be, it will take you lots of energy to try and shift it. You might get burned and loose the battle anyway.

Look at it differently:

It's not your responsibility!

No one is asking you to do something about it!

So, it is simple: drop it! Let go of trying to change it!

As soon as you do, you'll feel a weight taken out from your shoulders.

What about the other sources of stress?

Same story: there is always a key effective strategy you can apply for any of these challenges.

All you have to do is focus on it, identify the best strategy and take action or shift your attitude accordingly.

Give yourself 30 days to get back to a minimum level of stress (0% - 20%) for all these areas.

Burnout causes – 1 minute assessment

This is your next step.

In the previous chapter, you checked possible source for stress and saw simple ways of approaching a given challenge.

In this chapter, you take this one step further and give yourself a mark between 0% and 100% for these different areas of your work.

(0% = not stressful at all 100% = totally stressful)

	Your mark
Internal / External factors	____ / ____
• Internal – Self inflicted	_____
• External – Outer pressures	_____
<small>(How much stress are you creating yourself? How much comes from external factors like someone else's attitude, etc)</small>	
Effectiveness	
• General overwhelm	_____
• Lack of effectiveness	_____
• Lack of specific skills	_____
Boss	
• Bad relationship with boss	_____
• Toxic boss	_____
Team	
• Pressure or demands from colleagues	_____
• "Not fitting" issues	_____
• Draining colleague	_____

Bullying issues

- Boss _____
- Colleagues _____
- Patients (health care) _____
- Students (teachers) _____

Organizational cause

- Organizational pressure _____
- Unrealistic organization's expectations _____
- Aspects of the organization's culture _____

Atmosphere at work

- Lack of validation or recognition _____
- Lack of support _____
- Lack of direction _____
- Lack of information _____
- Lack of decision making power _____
- Fear of getting fired – Doubts over job security _____
- Poisoning office politics _____

Internal causes

- Workaholic or work addicted _____
- Very high own expectations – Being super ambitious _____

Emotional challenges

- Successive challenging emotional experiences _____

(Very frequent in health care for instance)

Family demands

- Children and parenting issues _____
- Relationship / Couple / Partner _____

Other factors

- Health issues _____
- Unsolved emotional issues _____
- Commuting (traffic jams, long driving hours, etc) _____

All other issues

- _____
- _____
- _____

By now, you should have a clear picture of your burnout sources.

The “map” you did draw is a clear and simple assessment of what really brings you to the edge.

For each one of these stress areas there is a very specific solution or strategy.

The goal is to build up new empowering behavior or attitudes to tackle the top 3 sources of stress.

Stress Free!

Take the top three sources of stress and write them down again with the according score:

Source 1

Mark

Source 2

Mark

Source 3

Mark

Now the goal is to get back to a level of stress of 0% to 20% in these 3 areas.

The target is to do this within a month period.

You tackle one challenge at a time and establish a clear distinctive strategy for each one of these areas.

In this book, you will discover some guidelines for most of these topics.

It is a battle no matter what.

The goal is to recover a sense of control and ownership over what happens in your life right now.

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Stress Free!

If things feel out of hands, it is now time to get them back.

Focus on what you can change and control first.

Of course certain key sources of stress are out of your hands.

It might be for instance difficult to change some of the organization's policies or a one of your colleague's attitude.

You can however shift the way you respond to it.

This is where most of the solution relies: the way you respond to or deal with a given challenge.

Very often, it has do with improving a simple communication skill or shift the way you look at a given situation.

I agree that sometimes, you might be faced with a situation where the only solution is to quit.

We cover that one as well of course.

But before you take a decision, sit down and assess all your options.

Many challenges can be solved that way.

Core tactics to tackle stress

In the next few chapters, I will give you essential mind sets to with the stress challenge!

Successfully stepping out of the burnout zone means behavior or attitude change.

These are some of the core tactics I use all the time.

They keep my life in check.

I see my clients integrating these core tactics and getting fantastic results almost instantly.

We have a session one day.

I suggest one of these tactics.

They decide to start implementing it and by the following week, 80% of the challenge is gone.

Finding the right posture and attitude is one of the keys to succeed with any project you are engaged into, whether it's a new business or the education of your kids.

You will notice that one of the core following tactics applies to YOUR situation!

You don't have to implement all of these strategies at once.

The best way to go is to choose one of the following tips and start practicing it on a daily basis.

Suppose that you choose "Learn to say no", simply practice this one for a week until it becomes natural.

You will see instant results!

After one week of training that skill, if needed, choose another tactic and so on.

Stress Free!

See how it works?

Time to win!

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Don't take responsibility for someone else's actions

This is simple and direct!

The truth is that you tend to naturally worry a lot about other people's needs, problems or demands.

Stop right now!

No need to!

This is over!

You can't worry about what you don't control.

There is one simple quality to increase in your mind. It is called trust!

Right now, this is what you can do!

Trust!

You are not responsible for someone else's actions.

There is no "but", no "if".

This is a clear and direct statement.

Stop worrying about your boss's actions and beliefs! It is out of your hands.

In most cases you have 0% influence over what happens there.

Stop worrying about your partner's actions, it's their responsibility, not yours!

The total alternative to worrying is called trusting.

Sit back and focus on what you can influence and control instead.

Stress Free!

Most of the times, you have little or no control over someone else's actions, so stop worrying about it.

You are not responsible for someone else's life. You are not responsible for what you can't control.

Your sphere of influence is very well defined: it is what belongs to you!

That's it!

Investing worries, time and energy in the rest is a waste of time.

Pressure wakes up the second you accept a responsibility for something which is not yours.

Wake up and let go!

You have no excuse if you cross the line.

Disinvest emotionally from what is not yours!

You can do that right now.

Whoever told you the opposite was wrong.

It is a misunderstanding and a mistake to believe that you can in any way be responsible for someone else's actions.

You are not!

You are only responsible for one thing: Your own actions!

That's it!

Aim for good, not perfect!

Perfectionism is a top source of stress.

The funny thing is that most actions don't need to be perfect.

In fact, most of the times, no one cares.

You can reach the exact same result with only half the energy input.

Have you noticed how perfectionism works: you work on a project for half a day and reach 80% of the expected result in no time.

This is the high energy part.

After that, you might spend 2 or 3 days perfecting the project without actually multiplying its value.

This imaginary increase of the value by heading for perfection is just an illusion.

Aim for good not perfect!

Don't fall in the perfectionism trap!

It simply takes you down!

Aiming for perfection is draining.

It is time consuming.

It is energy consuming!

When you aim for perfect, you believe that life will somehow reward you with a special medal.

Forget it! In most cases, it does not happen!

Perfectionists are often a pain for those who work with them.

They aim too high in the belief that they will be rewarded for it.

Stress Free!

It is not worth the hassle.

You can achieve almost the same result with only 30% of the effort, energy or focus.

Wake up!

Your battle to reach this level of supreme perfection is no longer needed.

You can drop it right now and use the extra energy to relax and take time to flow through life without worry.

You can do this right now!

Perfectionism is an addiction.

Everyone suffers from it!

Your friends, family, colleagues and yourself!

The reward is so insignificant that it is never, absolutely never, worth it!

What matters now is flow!

You can achieve 300% percent more if you shift your target and aim for good rather than perfect.

This goes for everything.

The moment you drop your level of expectations and focus on a frictionless, easy flow of activity, you remove 80% of the pressure associated with perfectionism.

Design a new way of acting which looks at your results from another angle.

The way you get your results matters much more.

You want to enjoy your creative process and to enjoy it, all you need is to aim for good, not perfect.

Destroy your “to do” list!

Use your instincts instead!

A “to do” list is a flow killer.

It is a rational decision!

The truth is that rationality is limited.

You want to replace rationality by synchronicity.

You do something in the right place at the right time.

“To do” lists kill that flow.

They create expectations and rigidify your actions when the only force you should listen to is passion!

Passion, inspiration, emotional fuel are the energies which feed your actions.

Emotional fuel is your engine.

Drop a rational, linear way of looking at it and take action because you want to, not because you wrote about it yesterday on a piece of paper.

It takes courage to destroy a “to do” list.

It takes vision to realize that this external pressure enslaves your day and turns your actions into a linear, rational decision.

A “to do” list is boring.

Destroy it right now and use your instincts and emotional fuel instead!

Change one thing at a time!

Change creates stress.

Your mind has only so much free energy to handle change.

The rest is based on habits and maintained structures.

If you are shifting career, don't decide to break up with your partner at the same time.

If you are moving house, keep your job exactly the way it is.

Maintain a level of security in one area while the other is being shifted around.

This is a very powerful way of destroying stress in your life.

Shift one thing at a time and keep the rest as it is.

Learn to say "No"

Your life is your territory.

External pressures are an attempt to dominate what belongs to you.

If someone wants to control your time, agenda, actions or beliefs, simply say "No!".

It is simple and direct and the most effective way to drop the level of pressure in your life.

This is called "redesigning boundaries"!

You were born with the right to control over what is yours.

Now, people do fight for control. They fight for power.

The moment you do express your power, you radically shift the way you stand in life and dare to protect your territory.

It takes guts to say "No" the first time but very soon, it gets addictive!

... And so incredibly empowering!

No one has the right to decide for you!

You are in charge of your existence at all times.

Simplify EVERYTHING!

Imagine how much stress this creates:

- You own 3 cars
- Have two houses
- Deal with 3 different insurance companies
- Have 5 business
- A dozen credit cards
- 5 computers
- Or have a vast set of clothes you never use!

All these things take energy from you!

All of them!

What's more important is that usually, you don't need them!

It's not just about having them! It is about maintaining them and dealing with the paperwork.

This is a simple way to lower your stress level instantly.

Keep only what you REALLY need!

Get rid of the rest!

Don't add complexity to your life!

Simplify everything!

Declutter!

If it takes you more than a few seconds to find something you look for when you need it, that's not a good sign.

Have you ever been on the phone with someone and hear them say: "Hang on a sec... I know it is here somewhere but can't find it... Let me call you back"

What do they do next?

Spend a few minutes or even longer stressing up or trying to remember where this piece of information is.

This is more than organizing your space.

It's is about getting rid of what's on the way, stuff that you will never need.

Declutter your personal AND virtual space.

This includes email, files and pictures for instance.

Use HELP!

It can be very rewarding to do EVERYTHING yourself.

That's one of things that can make you proud, right?

Well it's even 100 times more rewarding to relax while someone does it for you!

Delegate!

We are not saying to "use" people, ok?

I am saying that if you are stressed out or trapped in the burnout zone, being able to ask for targeted help is the way to go.

You can hire someone for:

- Cleaning
- Helping you with the kids
- Paperwork
- Fixing stuff
- Etc!

Get help when you need it!

It is that simple!

Do it now!

Get all the info your need!

Making decisions when you don't have all the info IS stressful!

You get the feeling you could be making mistakes because you miss knowledge!

Knowledge IS power!

You don't need to guess!

Make a couple of phone calls and get it sorted!

You will see what a relief it is when you have all the information you need in your hands!

Conclusion

I hope you enjoyed this material!

Feed back? Questions? Success stories?

Email me at francisco@vitalcoaching.com

For coaching:

<http://vitalcoaching.com/coaching.htm>

For more:

<http://vitalcoaching.com>

To your power!

Francisco Bujan