

# Understanding Academic Burnout

Academic burnout is a very real condition that is possible to address by taking the right measures. Try to take a step back and look at everything in your life and your academic work that might be contributing to your academic burnout and make the necessary changes. Don't feel shy to ask the help of friends, teachers, family and peers to get you out of your rut, and always seek professional help if you feel you can't kick the burnout on your own.

## What Is Academic Burnout?

Academic burnout can be defined as a negative emotional, physical and mental reaction to prolonged study that results in exhaustion, frustration, lack of motivation and reduced ability in school.

It is the culmination of many weeks or months studying the same material or working on the same project, or from continuous years of schooling. This is not to be confused with the occasional feeling of frustration when you have been studying for hours on end, or tiredness from pulling an all-nighter. It is rather more of a chronic condition from long-term study or schoolwork.

## Academic Burnout Symptoms

Academic burnout symptoms are manifested in much more than just tiredness and feeling like you can't attend another class. Burnout can cause real, psychosomatic problems such as headaches, insomnia, and depression, which is why it is important to start taking steps to reverse burnout as soon as you recognize the symptoms.

Some common ways you can know if you have academic burnout are:

- Feeling exhausted no matter how much sleep you get, resulting in fatigue and insomnia
- Lacking motivation to attend classes or start assignments
- Lashing out at others and increased irritability due to frustration
- Lacking inspiration and creativity to bring to projects and class discussions
- Loss of confidence in academic abilities
- Incapability to meet important deadlines
- Increased pain and tension in your body, which can be manifested as headaches, sore muscle aches, or jaw tension
- Higher frequency of illness due to stress and exhaustion
- Increase in bad habits such as overeating, staying up too late, nail biting, or any other habit you tend to acquire when you are stressed or not taking care of yourself
- Inability to concentrate on schoolwork or lectures
- Feeling bored or uninterested in aspects of school or areas of leisure that you used to enjoy
- Feelings of anxiety or depression

## How to Prevent Academic Burnout

If you start recognizing some of the symptoms above in yourself, it's time to make changes before you experience full-blown academic burnout. There are many easy ways you can change your habits and lifestyle to prevent burnout in school.

### 1. Make Time for Enjoyable Activities:

Dedicate time on your calendar for things you love to do throughout the week, and you'll feel start to feel more motivated to start your school days.

### 2. Get Plenty of Physical Exercise:

Try to move your body with intention, stay hydrated and eat diverse and balanced meals to keep your mind and body active and healthy.

### 3. Get Outside:

Studies have shown that time spent in nature can reduce stress levels so spend some of your free time in some greenery!

### 4. Make Time for Social Activities:

Not only do friends and family provide you with a positive support system, but time spent in fun social environments will make you happier and give your mind a break.

### 5. Develop Good Relationships with Professors & Classmates:

This will make it so that you don't feel like going to class or study hall is a chore.

### 6. Set Reasonable Goals:

And stick to them — use a calendar and daily reminders to stay motivated to achieve deadlines.

### 7. Avoid Procrastination:

When you are feeling stressed, putting off assignments and projects is tempting, but ultimately this will lead to sleep deprivation, frustration and end in more stress.

### 8. Get Better at Time Management:

This is a key factor in making sure you stay on track with deadlines, avoid procrastination and end up with a more positive relationship with your studies.

### 9. Enjoy Your Off Time:

Take a real break from work and school on the weekends if possible. Try to rearrange your schedule to give yourself at least a day off every week.

### 10. Work-Life Balance:

Work-life balance is just as important for students as it is for workers. Set up your schedule for equal parts school and fun or social activities. And don't forget to make time for just YOU.

Have questions? Contact the Senior Manager of Student Learning Support & Disability Resources.

Phone: 604-528-5884

email: [studentresources@jibc.ca](mailto:studentresources@jibc.ca)

New West CL201

## **How to Recover from Academic Burnout**

### **1. Seek Help:**

You may need the help of a professional. Speak to a guidance counselor, mental health counselor, school counselor or other professional to help you overcome school burnout. You may also enlist the help of friends, family and teachers.

### **2. Recognize Symptoms:**

Get to know the symptoms of student burnout and don't ignore your mind and body. If you know you have the symptoms, it's time to make changes.

### **3. Don't Ignore:**

Academic burnout will only get worse if you just keep pushing yourself forward and don't get help.

### **4. Manage Stress:**

Manage your stress levels and make big changes to reverse the burn out. Set aside time for yourself to decompress and reduce stress.

### **5. Make Important Changes:**

Practice mindful breathing, eating, socializing. Try meditation breaks throughout the day as well. Rearrange your schedule for a better work-life balance.

Remember, it took you months or years to develop academic burnout and recovery will take time and commitment. Follow the above steps consistently and don't give up and you'll be on your way to a full recovery from student burnout.