

October 2017

## How Better Boundaries can Prevent Burnout



When we lack boundaries we end up doing things we don't want to or we overcommit ourselves. We ultimately neglect our needs in favor of trying to make other people happy, leaving us burnt out. We all have limited amounts of time, energy, and money. Therefore, we have to make mindful decisions about how we use our resources. We must refill our "tanks" by getting enough sleep, eating healthfully, exercising, practicing our spiritual beliefs, socializing, having fun, asking for what we need, and setting limits on things that drain us. Boundaries help ensure that we don't deplete all of our resources, and help us create a balance between expending and recharging.

### Signs of Burnout Include:

- Feeling unappreciated
- Being tired and low on energy
- Dreading what's on your calendar
- Not wanting to get up in the morning
- Feeling resentful or angry
- Apathy or no longer caring about things
- Trouble concentrating
- Physical aches or pains

**It's Impossible to Please Everyone** As people-pleasers we spend most of our time meeting other people's expectations. This increases the chances that others will be happy with us, but it doesn't necessarily mean our own needs are being met. We can't neglect our own needs indefinitely; eventually our needs will demand to be met. It's best to do this in an on-going way. If we don't, we'll end up burnt out – at work and/or at home.

**Boundaries at Work and Home** It would be nice if we could say "yes" all the time and never disappoint others. We simply don't have the resources to meet everyone else's expectations all of the time and take care of our own needs as well. If you don't set boundaries at work, you may end up taking on more than you prefer. This may initially feel good because you're making your supervisor or clients happy, but someone or something in your life is going to suffer. Your family will miss you at family dinners or you'll be exhausted from long hours. Eventually your work may suffer and your enthusiasm for work will dwindle. Saying "no" or setting boundaries at work means you're less likely to get burnt out because more of your needs are being met. The same principles apply in our personal lives. If you're doing and giving all of your time (housework, carpool, volunteering, etc.) and not refilling your tank, you're also going to get burnt out. Most of us do a better job managing our emotions at work, but are quicker to anger, protest, and yell at home.

**The secret to being able to continue to help others, be a good employee, or take care of your family for the long haul is to set boundaries when needed. Boundaries safeguard your resources and your physical and emotional well-being. Without these, you'll inevitably burn out.**

Modified from: <https://blogs.psychcentral.com/imperfect/2017/02/how-better-boundaries-can-prevent-burnout/>

### HOW TO USE YOUR EAP:

**ERC** is your company's Employee Assistance Program (EAP). For additional information, visit our website [www.ERCincorp.com](http://www.ERCincorp.com) or simply call 1-800-222-8590.