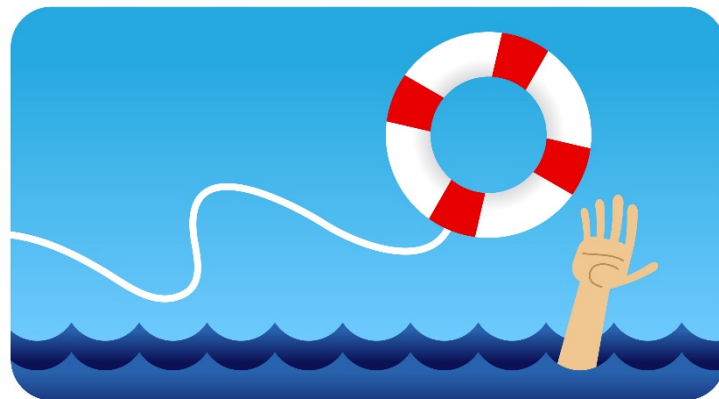




Burnout First Aid: What To Do First

by Dr. Marnie Loomis, ND
and
Beth Genly, MSN



You Are Not Alone

You are not alone! Burnout happens to strong, dedicated people who are very used to getting things done, and making a difference. It happens to hard working people who care deeply about others. It often sneaks up on us, gradually, and we may not recognize it's arrived until we are deeply embedded in it.

In part, burnout stems from stressful, unrewarding work environments that are too demanding.

Burnout also happens because we use short-term methods to respond to these stresses. In fact, short-term responses such as these can be quite effective – that is, until you burn out completely. Have you tried these already?



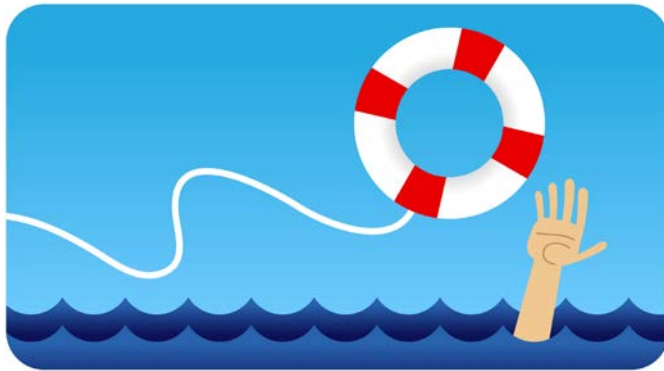
- Getting a minimum amount of rest, and going straight back to working long hours
- Pushing through, no matter what the cost
- Risking your own health and neglecting your personal life in pursuit of success
- Forever and always putting others' needs before your own

It's time to try something different. Consider the questions and suggestions on pages 2-3, and use your answers to fill in your First Aid Action Plan on page 4.



What are your stress warning signs? What happens to you when you push yourself too hard? Examples: Nervous habits, body pain, insomnia, snapping at others.

If you need ideas, think of the people who work closely with you or know you the best. How would they answer this question? How do they know when you are feeling stressed or overwhelmed?



If you notice one of your stress warning signs: STOP! Pause your activity as soon as it is safe to do so.

Do a self-scan. Identify any additional warning signs you're feeling. Do you need immediate care?

Rewind. Have you recently stopped doing something that had been protecting you?

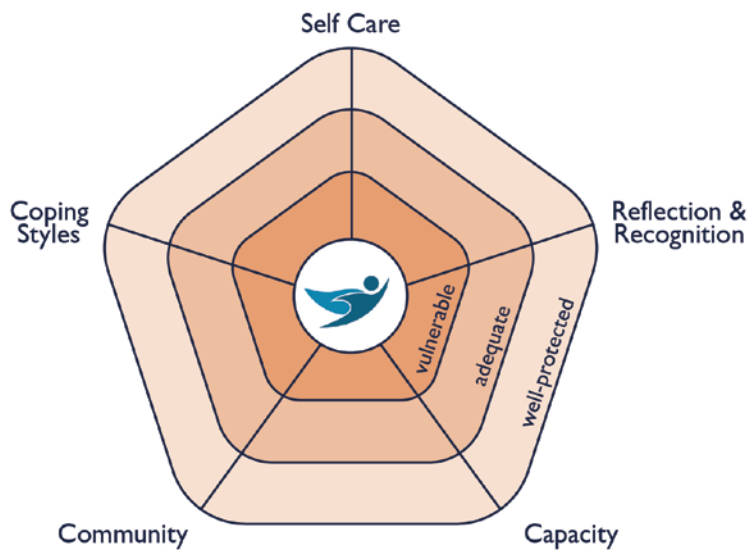
Recognize your accomplishments. In what ways are you continuing to take good care of yourself?

Review duration. If there are new stressors in your life, are they short-term or long-term?

Review control. Do you have control over any of these new stressors? Identify what you can do to increase your protection or decrease risk against burnout.



Assess your Burnout Shield



How are you doing in your 5 areas of vulnerability and protection: Self Care, Reflection & Recognition, Community, Coping, and Structure? Estimate how protected you feel **right now today**, in each of the 5 Burnout Shield areas.

Use your area estimates to place a dot along each of the axis lines (*vulnerable*: put a dot in the dark orange band, *adequate* protection: put a dot in the middle orange band; *well-protected*: put a dot in the light orange band.) Then connect the dots to draw your Burnout Shield on this diagram. Which areas need immediate reinforcement? Where are you doing well?

If you're still having trouble managing stress, **do at least one of these key basics:**

- **Self Care:** *Breathe. Rest. Sleep.*
- **Reflection & Recognition:** *Reflect: What personally meaningful things have happened today?*
- **Community:** *Seek perspective and support from a trusted person.*
- **Coping:** *Express gratitude.*
- **Structure:** *If possible, apply one of the three D's: Delay, Delegate, or Drop. Or find another aspect over which you have or can take control.*

If you haven't already, take the time now to jot some quick notes in your Burnout First Aid Action Plan on the next page.



Your Burnout First Aid Action Plan

Remember:

Start small, be gentle with yourself, and recognize your accomplishments.

My burnout/stress warning signs:	
Burnout Shield area(s) where I am already doing well:	
My <i>specific</i> plan and commitment to get more rest:	
My cue for doing my daily reflection:	
Purpose and Meaning: What do I live for? What do I work for?	
My cue for expressing gratitude:	
People I can ask for help (delegate work to, ask for support or guidance, gain perspective from):	
What I will Delay, Delegate, or Drop:	



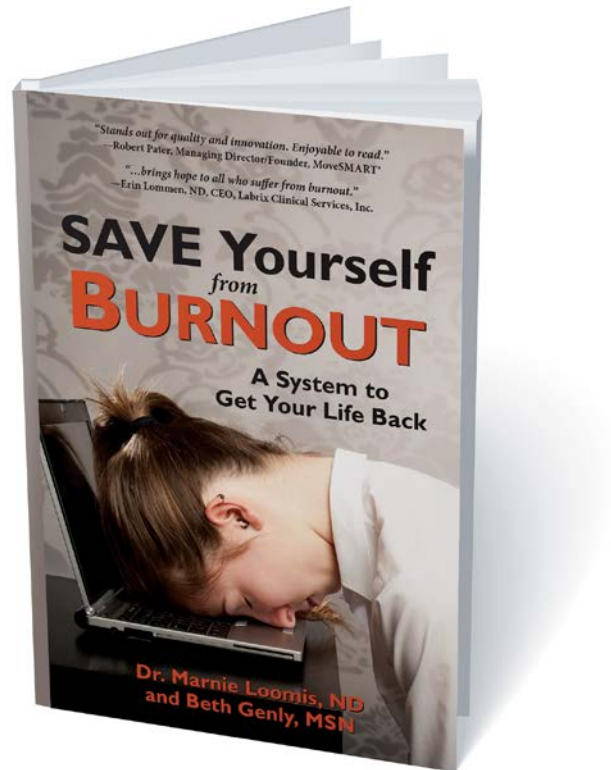
The Authors

Thank you for reading this Burnout First Aid Action Plan. We wish you full freedom from burnout.

Our shared experiences with burnout drove us to build a research-based way out of burnout and back to productivity.

Our book guides you through our complete, life-changing anti-burnout system. Read the book, put the Burnout Shield system, into action, and get your life back.

www.saveyourselffromburnout.com



Dr. Marnie Loomis, ND (right.) Dr. Loomis is a naturopathic physician in private practice, as well as a speaker known for her witty and engaging style. She has been a natural medicine expert for television, radio and print news outlets and has presented scientific lectures and comedy shows on the topics of health and burnout since 2001.

Beth Genly, MSN (left.) After earning her master's from Yale University, Beth served on the graduate nursing faculty at Oregon Health & Science University. Beth understands how it feels to work in a high-pressure, high-stakes field, and how empty you feel when burnout robs you of your passion.

