Totally Burned Out

When you're so tired you feel like you have nothing left to give

August 31, 2015 By Kate Ferguson

Psychologist Herbert J. Freudenberger first used the word "burnout" in an article he wrote called "Staff Burn-out," published in 1974 in the Journal of Social Issues. In 1980, he published his book Burn Out: The High Cost of High Achievement. The psychologist developed his theory based on his work with exhausted mental health workers.

But burnout can happen to anyone, "from stressed-out careerists and celebrities to overworked employees and homemakers," explains PubMed Health, an online service that offers medical information to U.S. consumers and clinicians.

When the stress of any job is excessive or prolonged, we can quickly begin to feel hopeless and helpless, overwhelmed by and unable to meet the demands of our job.

One immigration lawyer in private practice in New Jersey, New York and Virginia regards burnout as an unavoidable risk of his profession that requires he remains constantly on guard.

When he feels threatened by burnout's shadowy presence, he turns to simple coping strategies he says work for him: He walks for exercise and won't accept any new clients, even though this means losing income.

The busy barrister says if he takes on more people than he can handle, he'll be too fried to do his best for the clients he already has.

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