

Burnout: a modern *malaise*

Burnout is a *term* easily *tossed around*, the way somebody might claim to be starving when they're simply hungry, or freezing when cold. That's harmless if a person is describing a tired day or week. But somebody who is actually burned out should be prepared to take serious action because it's a condition that needs attention.

malaise 不舒服

term 术语; 学期; 条款

toss around 泛滥

The big three symptoms are emotional exhaustion, *cynicism* and feeling ineffective, according to the Maslach Burnout *Inventory* (MBI), a survey designed to measure employee burnout in the workforce. Other symptoms can include frequent colds or sicknesses, *insomnia* and a tendency to alleviate stress in unhealthy ways, such as with too much alcohol or online shopping.

cynicism 玩世不恭; 愤世嫉俗

inventory 存货清单; 详细目录

insomnia 失眠

Part of the difficulty of *pinpointing* true burnout may be because burnout is a nonmedical term—at least in the United States. The *Diagnostic* and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders doesn't list it as an illness. But other countries including France, Denmark and Sweden, do recognize burnout syndrome and consider it to be a *legitimate* reason to take a *sick day* from work.

pinpoint 准确描述

diagnostic 诊断的

legitimate 合法的; 合理的

sick day 病假

For those who suspect they might be on the road to burnout, there are practical tools to *mitigate* it. Among others: physical exercise, sleep and positive social connection (the real kind, not the Facebook kind). The importance of balance and self-care to prevent burnout likely isn't surprising to most.

mitigate 减轻; 缓和

"There's nothing fancy about what it would take to turn things around," says Ziegler, the "Mommy Burnout" author. "But it's a huge shift in the cultural *mind-set*. That's the challenge."

mind-set 心态; 思维定式