

## Burn-out

Stress is increasingly becoming a common problem amongst students. Combining a full-time study with for example a part-time job often turns out to be a challenge. Let alone having enough time left to enjoy a social life, hobbies or relaxation.

Stress is both a physical and mental reaction to tension and strain. Fundamentally stress is healthy: it often pushes us to perform just a little bit better on an important task. However, when stress is present for too long and there is too little time for the body to recover, it can result in burn-out. After a phase of physical and mental tenseness, strain and possibly crying fits and sleeplessness, exhaustion will follow. By that time the consequences of long-term stress are undeniable.

Although every one of us will get to cope with stress and tension, not everyone will develop a burn-out. It depends on personal circumstances, work environment and personality traits. For instance high study or work load, many responsibilities, a busy agenda, perfectionism, loyalty and difficulty feeling or listening to your own limits and taking enough time to relax and have fun, are all risks for developing a burn-out.

### QuickScan

- Are you experiencing fatigue, tension and/or headache?
- Have you lost the energy to do things you used to do?
- Are you reluctant to go to the lectures of your study or do you feel like studying is pointless?
- Are you increasingly often avoiding contact with other people?
- Do you have a feeling of strain, like everything you do requires more than your body can currently handle?
- Do you feel tense and on edge?
- Do you experience crying fits without really knowing why?
- Are you having trouble sleeping because you are worrying about your study or what you still have to do?

### Approach

#### What can you do yourself?

The earlier you notice the signs of exhaustion, the better you can prevent your exhaustion from turning into a burn-out. The longer you ignore the signs, the more likely this becomes. First of all, it is important to figure out what's important to you and find balance between work and relaxation (e.g. sports or sleep). For this it is very helpful to ask others for help; others can help you keep to your schedule.

#### What can we do for you?

We generally make use of interventions from cognitive and behaviour therapy. When supporting you with a burn-out we will help you to learn how to balance out work with relaxation and to find counterproductive thoughts underlying or maintaining the symptoms. Through your learnings your energy level will slowly be built up. We offer both short-term individual consultation and courses (e.g. Mindfulness). Visit <http://psychologists.tudelft.nl>.

### More information

- <http://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/preventing-burnout.htm>
- <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/recovering-from-burnout.htm>
- High octane women (Sherry Bourg Carter), ISBN13: 9781616142209
- Fried: why you burn out and how to revive (Joan Z. Borysenko), ISBN13: 9781401925512
- The joy of burnout: how burnout unlocks a better, brighter future (Dina Glouberman), ISBN13: 9780955545603