

Beat Digital Burnout

The science behind rest and recharging in an always-on digital world

DR KRISTY
GOODWIN

You can't be fully 'on' if you're never 'off'.



BURNOUT

The World Health Organisation classified burnout as an occupational phenomenon "resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed." It is characterized by three dimensions:

1. feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion;
2. increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job; and
3. reduced professional efficacy.



WHY DIGITAL BURNOUT IS A RISK TO HYBRID WORK-

We're biologically designed to cope with short, complete stress cycles. However, in our digital world we're constantly bombarded by micro-stressors and we don't close the stress cycle. Our stress levels have increased substantially in recent years because (i) we've removed some of the natural buffers which counteracted stress (predictable start and end of the day, sleep and physical movement, breathing all helped to bring us to a natural baseline) and (ii) we've added to our stress load because of our digital technology use.



STAGE & SYMPTOMS OF BURNOUT-

Honeymoon- where we need to catch people & provide preventative coping strategies.
Onset of stress-our demands outweigh our coping resources.
Chronic stress- acute stress left untreated
Burnout- the above symptoms experienced simultaneously.

Symptoms include headaches, insomnia, exhaustion, digestive issues, physical tension, foggy, forgetfulness, cynicism, social withdrawal, emotional blunting, detachment, irritability, loss of motivation, neglecting personal needs.

DIGITAL BURNOUT

One of the biggest threats to modern teachers is digital burnout. Why? Our digital load has increased substantially in recent years thanks to advances in digital technologies (especially emails, virtual meetings & digital communication tools), we're working in ways that are incongruent with our neurobiology (multi-tasking, having constant virtual meetings, working for long stretches of time) and we've perpetuated an 'always on' culture, where employees feel they need to be seen to be instantly responsive to emails and messages, as they see this as a marker of productivity. Digital burnout is fatigue, frustration, or apathy resulting from prolonged stress, overwork, or intense activity from overuse of digital devices. Digital burnout can result from excessive or unsustainable digital habits. This is why it's imperative that teams establish their digital guardrails- explicitly stating the norms, behaviours and principles around digital tool usage and hybrid habits. Take Dr Kristy's **Digital Burnout Barometer Assessment**.

About Dr Kristy

Having personally experienced how our always-on digital culture is compromising people's wellbeing and is counter to optimal and sustainable performance, award-winning researcher and speaker Dr Kristy Goodwin is on a mission to promote employee wellbeing and bolster workplace productivity in an always-on digital world.

As one of Australia's digital wellbeing and productivity experts, she shares practical brain-based hacks to tame tech habits and the latest evidence-based strategies to decode the neurobiology of peak performance in the technological era.

Senior business leaders and HR executives from the country's top organisations engage Dr Kristy to help them promote employee digital wellbeing and performance. Her roster of clients includes Apple, Westpac, Deutsche Bank, Bank of Queensland, DLA Piper, Westfield, Randstad, the Reserve Bank of Australia, NSW Health, Cuscal, State Street, National Broadband Network and Fortel.



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INSTAGRAM

Beat Digital Burnout

Boost your performance and wellbeing with unplugged time

DR KRISTY
GOODWIN

*Rest is a responsibility,
not a reward.*



TYPES OF BREAKS TO BEAT BURNOUT

1. **Micro-** regular, short daily breaks (5-10 minutes). Your body has an ultradian rhythm meaning that it naturally goes through peaks and troughs roughly every 90 minutes.
 2. **Meso-** at least 2 hours/week at predictable times off; and
 3. **Macro-** half to full days off each month.
- Research shows that micro-breaks are most effective in terms of beating burnout.



COMPONENTS OF 'GOOD REST'

REMNAc- rest by closing your eyes for 10 seconds, **exposure to light** to help boost focus and minimise eye damage, **movement**, to boost neurotransmitters like dopamine and noradrenaline, get a dose of greentime as 40 seconds in **nature** can reduce your cortisol level, have some **autonomy** as to what you elect to do in your rest period and **connect** with others (even if it's a conversation on the phone).



INDIVIDUAL MICRO-HABITS

1. **Reduce micro-stressors**-find ways of working that are aligned to your neurobiology (identify your peak-performance window based on your chronotype, mono-task, establish communication hours, work in 90-minute sprints according to your ultradian rhythm) & manage your digital load (manage notifications & video calls).
2. **Increase your biological buffers**- by optimising your sleep (have a digital curfew 60 minutes before sleep, wear blue-light blocking glasses (Baxter Blue use code 'DRKRSITY' for 10% discount) and get natural sunlight within 30-60 minutes of waking) and increase your incidental movement (have walking meetings & movement breaks).

ORGANISATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Teams need to clearly articulate their 'digital guardrails'- the norms, behaviours, practices and principles surrounding digital tools. For example, what's the expected response rate on internal emails? How will communication channels be managed? Do you have a communication escalation plan in the case of an urgent situation? What are your virtual meeting protocols? Communicate your 'tech-pectations' to your colleagues and clients so you have peace-of-mind that you can switch off. Organisations also need to create a culture where rest is revered by having leaders openly share taking time off. Let me know if I can help your team create your Digital Guardrails.

Let me help you to thrive in the digital world

I share regular tips and tricks on social media (the irony isn't lost on me) and in my newsletter. Access my FREE eBook Five Essential Digital Productivity Hacks here (& I promise not to add to your email overwhelm). I also have two eCourses that you can access at your own pace to help you thrive online.



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