

Academic Burnout: A Silent Killer

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Photo by Amanda Solimando from Women's Fiction Author

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Academic Burnout is defined as chronic stress over an extended period of time. It includes feeling mental, emotional, and sometimes physical exhaustion, as well as a severe lack of motivation. It is also very easy for the signs of Academic Burnout to go unnoticed in its initial stages. So, here are 6 signs of academic burnout that can occur in any student:

1. Consistent exhaustion or feeling fatigued, regardless of the amount of sleep you have gotten
2. Lack of motivation or interest in doing things, especially regarding assignments, classes, and other school-related activities
3. Lack of concentration or creativity, especially regarding assignments
4. Apathy or lack of care, especially regarding your education
5. Increased irritability, typically due to your own frustration
6. Loss of confidence in your academic ability

Many of these signs, if gone unnoticed or left unchecked, can lead to much more severe consequences if not managed in an efficient and healthy way. If you recognize any of the symptoms above in either yourself or a friend, here are some things that you, as a GGC college student, can do to help combat them:

- Take breaks and allow yourself to relax

While it may seem counterproductive, taking breaks and allowing yourself to relax is very important for your mental health. Try to take at least 2-4 15-minute breaks throughout the day and eat a snack, go on a walk, lie on your bed/couch, or talk to a friend. Anything that would take your mind off of school and the stress it can bring is an excellent way to take a break for a few minutes.

- Break up your large tasks into smaller pieces

Oftentimes, it can be very overwhelming when faced with a large project or assignment all at one time. So, to help reduce your stress, try writing out each of the steps you need to do in order to complete the assignment, then slowly work on these steps one by one until they are all finished. These tiny pieces will help the project not feel so overwhelming and stressful.

- Avoid procrastination

As is often the case, many students tend to put off school work and projects until the very last second in hopes of reducing the stress that often comes with them. This, however, usually only causes much more stress in those last few days than there would have been in the beginning. Try to avoid this by using the strategy mentioned above of breaking the project into smaller pieces and starting as early as possible.

- Exercise

Staying active is one of the best ways to keep your body healthy, both physically and mentally. Some small ways you can exercise are by taking a walk around campus, visiting the GGC Wellness and Recreation Center, or engaging in some simple stretches in your room.

- Know how to say “No”

While it is tempting to say yes to every outing with friends, study sessions, or after-class activities, it is important to know how and when to say no in order to prioritize your physical and mental health. Try not to spread yourself too thin and make sure that you set aside personal time to work on school assignments, exercise, and relax.

- Do not ignore your symptoms

Do not ignore what your body is telling you; there is a reason you are feeling different or out of sorts. Taking immediate action when you first start to feel the signs of academic burnout will help you more in the long run than ignoring them and allowing them to grow.

- Know when to seek help

Additionally, it is important to know when you need to seek professional help for your symptoms. While discussing your feelings with friends and family is always beneficial, talking to a counselor or other health specialist can give you more insight into your symptoms, what they may mean for you, and how you can help combat them. GGC offers many services to students, including Counseling and Psychological Services, which can be found through this link: <https://www.ggc.edu/student-life/student-services/counseling-and-psychological-services>

If you think you may need professional help with any signs relating to burnout or any other concerns you may have, please do not hesitate to reach out to GGC's services. As said before, do not ignore the

initial signs of Academic Burnout, as it is a silent killer and the results can be much more damaging the longer they are ignored and allowed to grow.