

# Teacher Burnout: What Is It and What to Do About It



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Teacher burnout. Every teacher and educator is at risk of experiencing it. Julie Mason, TeacherVision's Head of Curriculum and an 8-year teacher veteran, shares her tips for what to do when you realize you're experiencing teacher burnout so you can find the joy in teaching again.

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## How to identify if you are suffering from teacher burnout

Wondering if you are burned out or just having an off day in the classroom? Merriam-Webster defines burnout as "the exhaustion of physical or emotional strength or motivation usually as a result of prolonged stress or frustration". Does this describe how you've felt as a teacher lately? Here are some clear signs of teacher burnout based on my teaching and coaching experience:

- Emotional exhaustion;
- Physical exhaustion;
- Going through the motions;
- Reactivity.

If any of these best describe you, you may have teacher burnout.

Google "teacher burnout" and you will find numerous articles and studies. More teachers are leaving the profession than ever before, and when asked why, [the number one answer is burnout](#).

From large class sizes, to unsupportive administrators, to teacher **evaluations** and state testing demands, there are no shortage of reasons why teachers feel overwhelmed, overworked, and under appreciated.

It is likely that at some point during your teaching career you will experience burnout. Here are some tips for how to cope and move forward.

### **Know You Aren't Alone**

When we keep our stressors and worries to ourselves, they fester and grow. We often feel guilty for experiencing burnout. We chose to be teachers. We know what challenges we face in this profession. We've got this, right? Wrong. I have never worked with a teacher who didn't at some point feel isolated and stressed in their classroom.

One of the most effective things to do when you are experiencing burnout is accepting that you are burned out, and giving yourself permission to feel what you are feeling. Once you have named your feeling, determine how you can take ACTION. Do you have a colleague you can talk to? A therapist? A family member? Voicing your feelings will likely result in feeling seen, heard, and understood as you learn that you aren't alone.

### **Turn Classroom Chaos Into Calm**

Teacher burnout often results from chaos. Because our profession demands so much, we often feel like we can't get everything done or do everything well. Developing systems for your classroom can alleviate some of your stress and burnout. Rather than taking each day as it comes, having clear routines and procedures for everything from grading to time-management can help you establish boundaries. Boundaries protect us from burnout because when we develop boundaries, we name what we need to be healthy. Learn new systems and strategies our [time-management workbook](#) and [grading and assessment workbook](#).

### **Take Care Of Yourself**

Teachers put others first. It's in our nature. While we find joy in helping others, we often forget to help ourselves.

**We are better teachers when we make time for rest and self-care.**

If you are experiencing burnout it is essential that you change your routines. This might mean [becoming more organized on Sundays](#) for the week to come. It might mean that you need to improve your physical and mental health by [planning healthy meals](#) and getting more sleep. Learn new ideas for self-care in our [workbook](#).

Burnout is usually temporary, and will pass if you have the courage to name it and take action to make changes. From setting boundaries to developing systems and routines to making time for rest and relaxation, there are many steps you can take to beat your burnout and find joy in teaching again.

How do you fight burnout in your teaching practice? Share with us on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Pinterest](#).

## About the Author

**Julie Mason** is the Head of Content and Curriculum for TeacherVision. She brings expertise in blended and personalized learning, instructional coaching, and curriculum design to the role. She was a middle and high school English teacher for eight years and most recently taught at Dana Hall, an all-girls school in Wellesley, MA. She was a blended and personalized learning instructional coach for K-12 teachers at BetterLesson for two years and she has presented at The National Principals Conference, ISTE, and ASCD where she shared her expertise on how instructional coaching builds teacher capacity in K-12 schools. She has extensive experience designing and facilitating professional development for teachers, and she oversees the TeacherVision advisory board.

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