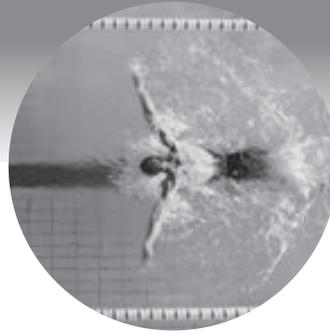


GREGORY L. JANTZ, PhD  
WITH KEITH WALL

# Beyond Burnout

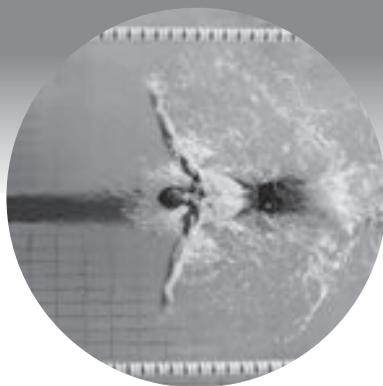
Regain Your Passion and Energy





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## KEY 2

# Reclaim Your True Self

*“I’ve lost touch with the things that used to help me feel alive and energized. In fact, I’ve lost my true self—who I am down deep in my heart and soul. Why am I doing all of this and running myself ragged? I’ve become a ‘human doing’ instead of a ‘human being.’”*

That honest admission came from Maya, the owner of a small café my wife and I have frequented over several years. She went on to describe the pressure bearing down on her as she performed the duties of a small-business owner: paying bills, managing inventory, repairing equipment, opening the shop at dawn’s early light, and cleaning after closing.

Plus she was having trouble finding reliable employees.

Plus business was down after customers discovered the trendy chain bistro that opened around the corner.

Plus she was a single parent raising a fifteen-year-old daughter. Sadly, her husband died in a construction accident several years before. If anyone was a prime candidate for burnout, it was Maya.

“Many days, I just want to climb into bed, pull the covers up, and sleep for an entire week. But I’ve got a business to run by myself and a teenager to care for.”

Maya paused to compose herself when tears formed in her eyes. Then she continued, saying, “I used to have a grand plan for my life, a dream of what I wanted to accomplish for myself and my family. Now I just wonder why I’m doing all of this. I’m ready to give up.”

## | Getting to Know You

You can likely relate to Maya’s heartfelt comments, though your circumstances are probably different. You know the pain. You know the struggle to press on. You know the desperation.

Maya used the phrase “I’ve lost my true self.” I have heard that description, in various words, from numerous friends and clients struggling with burnout. Most of them struggle with a sense of being lost, derailed from their dreams and detached from the people and activities once important to them. Feeling worn down for an

extended time can cause them to question their purpose in life, their abilities, and their future. Therefore, an essential part of burnout recovery is regaining a sense of your true self—understanding who you are and where you want to go.

With these challenges in mind, let's explore five ways you can actively become reacquainted with the person you have lost touch with as burnout has overtaken you.

**AN ESSENTIAL  
PART OF BURNOUT  
RECOVERY IS  
UNDERSTANDING  
WHO YOU ARE  
AND WHERE YOU  
WANT TO GO.**



## **1** Focus on What You Do Best

While working through burnout, you might feel a bit disoriented about where you're headed, and that's okay. Even if you feel "wobbly," in time you will regain your steadiness. In the aftermath of burnout, you can build resilience one small step at a time by returning to and concentrating on what you do best and enjoy the most.

Perhaps it's time to take a fresh look at the skills, experiences, and partnerships that you've already built and the successes you've achieved, both professionally and personally. In other words, play to your strengths. Let's say the boss wants the final sales report on her desk

in twenty-four hours. If you're not great on compiling the data but are awesome on layout, go for the design and try to find someone else who can run the numbers.

Think about it: Even the world's most elite Olympic athletes don't compete in several different sports. A highly focused sprinter doesn't also take on boxing, water polo, and fencing. The athlete must train and aim for gold in his or her *best* sport.



## 2

## Prevail over Perfectionism

We all admire people who strive to be their best, maximize their potential, and pursue big achievements. But for many, the quest for excellence crosses the line

into obsessively trying to perform flawlessly. One definition states that a perfectionist is “a person who refuses to accept any standard other than flawlessness and regards anything less as a failure.”

It’s no surprise, then, that the majority of burned-out people also have a perfectionistic streak. After all, perfectionism can often breed guilt, anxiety, depression, sleep problems, and low self-esteem—damaging conditions associated with burnout.

As stated by Julia Cameron, best-selling author of *The Artist’s Way*, “Perfectionism is not a quest for the best. It is a pursuit of the worst in ourselves, the part that tells us that nothing we do will ever be good enough—that we should try again.”<sup>11</sup>

This is why self-acceptance is so essential. The key to contented and balanced living is the recognition that perfection is never the standard for having worth and value. Accept your shortcomings, and realize that everyone has areas that need work. No person’s self-worth is determined by their degree of perfection or imperfection.

Reclaim your true self by finally admitting that you can’t do it all flawlessly. What a relief!

### 3

## Clarify What Counts as Guilt

**FALSE GUILT IS  
CLOSELY TIED  
TO A FEAR OF  
DISAPPROVAL  
FROM OTHERS.**



When you're burned out, you often feel guilty, even when you've done nothing wrong. This leaves you emotionally confused. Your conscience is prone to questioning your motives or chastising yourself for things you haven't done. You berate yourself for not "keeping it together" or failing to live up to your own or someone else's ideals. Often false guilt is closely tied to a fear of disapproval from others.

A sense of healthy guilt, however, helps redirect your course when you've truly made an error and need to ask for forgiveness. Part of regaining your footing after burnout is knowing where you stand with false guilt and healthy guilt. Here's one simple question to ask yourself: *Do I have a legitimate reason for feeling guilty about this situation, or am I believing lies?* Your honest answer and counsel from trusted friends will help you wisely discern what counts as true guilt.

## 4

### Change Your Thought Channel

When your tank is empty after running on overdrive, it can seem like the world has it out for you. Your thoughts may sound like a streaming app set on repeat:

- *I never catch a break. Nothing ever turns out in my favor.*
- *No one really cares about me. I always have to look out for myself.*

Your thoughts can quickly send you spiraling downward into self-pity and depression. And that's truly unfortunate, because broad "woe is me" statements are rarely true. According to psychiatrist Neel Burton,

People with low self-esteem tend to see the world as a hostile place and themselves as its victim. As a result, they are reluctant to express and assert themselves, miss out on experiences and opportunities, and feel powerless to change things. All this lowers their self-esteem still further, sucking them into a downward spiral.<sup>12</sup>

It's important to change your negative thought channel by giving yourself a mental fact-check. Remember the good things that have happened: Did you receive a good health report from your doctor? Pay your bills on time?

Enjoy quality time with your loved ones? Make it a habit to mine your thoughts for the positives in life.

## 5 See Yourself as God Sees You

You are a one-of-a-kind reflection of God’s image, whether you realize it or not. God designed you with fathomless creativity and enduring emotional tenacity. Artificial Intelligence could never come close to imitating the masterpiece that you are! As you recover from burnout and rebuild balance in your life, it’s crucial to align your view of yourself with God’s view. God doesn’t need corrective lenses. His eyesight is infinitely beyond perfect. Through Jesus Christ, he sees you as blessed, chosen, holy, blameless, loved, adopted, accepted, redeemed, forgiven, wise, and so much more (Ephesians 1:3–8). Day by day, as you practice seeing yourself the way that God sees you, you are strengthening your spiritual and emotional resilience.



Earlier I told you about Maya, the café owner and single parent facing extreme burnout—and struggling to reclaim her true self. In time she realized she needed to make major lifestyle changes that included many of the steps in this chapter:

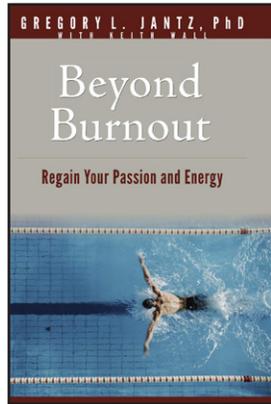
- She focused on her strengths and recognized that performing perfectly in every area of her life was not only impossible but also toxic.
- She recognized how the difficulties in her life had been a breeding ground for false guilt.
- She realized she had the power to resist negative thoughts, and she accepted that her circumstances did not dictate her identity.
- She embraced God's truth about her incredible worth, giving her peace for the present and hope for the future.

In time, these changes strengthened Maya's confidence in her true self, the Maya that God created and loves. Operating from this fresh awareness, Maya decided to shorten the hours her café stayed open each day, took an entire day off each week for self-renewal, and asked family members to pitch in a few hours each week to help with duties at home and the café.

These were all positive steps toward healing, though Maya knows that recovery from burnout takes careful lifestyle monitoring over a long period. But Maya is well on her way to reclaiming her true self and the dreams she once had.

## BURNOUT BUSTERS

- 1. Think about how burnout has been a positive part of your journey.** This might sound absurd when you're in the depths of burnout. But reflecting on the recovery process might help you rediscover what you've lost sight of along the way—your passions, dreams, and God-given strengths.
- 2. Focus on what you're good at.** Engage your strengths by participating in at least one activity that leaves you feeling empowered.
- 3. Identify one distorted thought and replace it with the truth.** Write out self-critical thoughts that come to mind. Choose one and replace it with a positive truth. For instance, exchange *I'm a failure* with *God made me in his image. He has a specific purpose for me that is good.*
- 4. Read the Bible.** The Bible is a written record of the quest that leads us back to our true selves—and to a loving, nurturing, healing God.



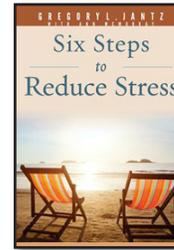
 Learn More

## ***Beyond Burnout***

Life is hectic, stressful, and exhausting. It's no surprise that millions of people feel depleted and unmotivated. Burnout can even lead to depression, insomnia, anxiety, and addiction. Dr. Gregory Jantz experienced the black hole of burnout when he faced the demands of his quickly growing mental health clinic.

*Beyond Burnout* features real-life stories and practical strategies for navigating the path to recovery. Readers will be coached to reset their pace, reclaim their desires, revive their purpose, rediscover the power of fun, and more. With trusted advice from a mental health professional who has been there, this book will resonate with a frazzled generation that is seeking relief.

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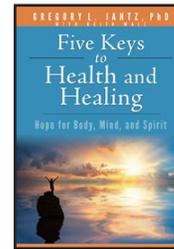


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## ***Six Steps to Reduce Stress***

Stress. Everyone has it. But what can you do about it? Maybe you feel like you're ready to blow up, check out, or simply resign yourself to the idea that nothing will ever change. Dr. Gregory Jantz shows you a better way. You can't avoid all stressors in your life, but you can change how you deal with them. This book will show you how to manage your stress in a way that breathes life and joy back into your daily routines.

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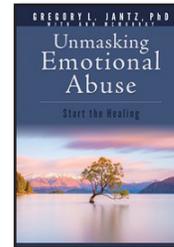


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## ***Five Keys to Health and Healing***

Everyone struggles with a challenge that can lead to hopelessness. Chances are there is an obstacle in your life you desperately want to overcome and you are tired of it weighing you down and holding you back. But how can you move forward? Dr. Gregory Jantz's biblically based advice will give you courage and tenacity as you take the first steps on the path toward wholeness and wellbeing, sustained and strengthened by a foundation of hope.

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## ***Unmasking Emotional Abuse***

Not all abuse is physical. The wounds of emotional abuse may not be visible, but they still leave scars. Whether a stabbing comment or constant putdowns, most people face emotional abuse at some point in their lives, so how can you learn to detect it and stop the cycle of abuse? How can you heal after enduring it? This practical and handy guidebook examines the different descriptions of emotional abuse and includes stories from people who have found healing in Christ.

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