



## Recapturing the Joy of Your Job

I dedicate these thoughts to those who are considering changing jobs, have lost the motivation at work you once had, and those who truly need to recapture the anticipation and enthusiasm you initially brought to your position or career.

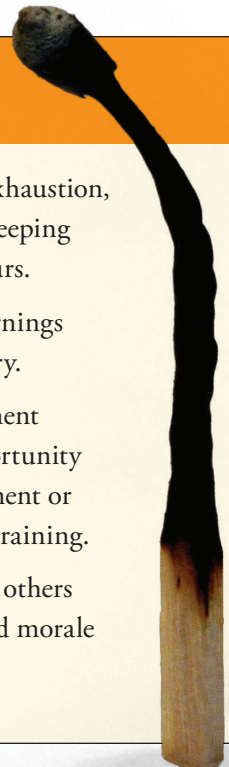
Before we go any further, I have a “Burnout Inventory” to assist you with a personal assessment. If you answer yes to more than a few statements I would anticipate your joy of work is possibly eclipsed.

Some of these we can all experience from time to time, but if the feelings are chronically consistent in more than a few areas it might be you are burning out or suffering from compassion fatigue.

### Burnout Inventory

*(check the statements which represent your thoughts/feelings)*

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> An increasing desire to change careers.  | <input type="checkbox"/> My joy/passion for work is gone. There is a loss of motivation and spark. | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional exhaustion, even when sleeping adequate hours.                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chronic complaining about work hours with remote responsibilities, meetings, or going to work.         | <input type="checkbox"/> An overwhelmed feeling that never goes away.                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Monday mornings are a drudgery.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of memory with commitments and/or appointments.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Hopelessness: No apparent change on the horizon.                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Discouragement over no opportunity for advancement or educational training. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm increasingly more suspicious and skeptical of administration and/or cynicism with staff's motives. | <input type="checkbox"/> Detachment from staff and management.                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Gossiping to others increases, and morale is down.                          |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Increasing absenteeism; or taking advantage of all of my sick time        |  |



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Whatever the circumstances, there IS a way to recalibrate your approach to a less-than-attractive workplace.

Of course, it makes a ton of sense to rekindle the fire of what was once there at work since we spend 30%-40% of our professional life at the “salt mine.” It makes no logical sense to work within a company you hate every day!

### Develop A New Perspective

The first step in recapturing joy is to realize change is initially uncomfortable for everyone. Usually, the cause for this professional discomfort is having to face and deal with the unknown. Our sense of security in the workplace is frequently based on the comfort level of predictability in our role, and the familiarity of our skills and responsibilities. When that is threatened, many begin to panic about their place, or their success in the future, within the organization.

However, embracing a new perspective and seeing the challenge from a different angle can offer fresh motivation.

For example, many of us have been forced to work more remotely. And that has brought on some new technical challenges and a sharp bump in the flow of what was normal. Why not see this as an opportunity to expand your knowledge and technical skills?

I have always enjoyed doing training live and felt awkward with going online with my consulting and workshops, but it has forced me to prepare for a new approach to my career.

In reality, this opens the door to reach more people and organizations, travel less, adds more convenience and even mobile access. For me, I can now train, consult or plan with individuals and groups from our RV, enjoying a camping trip at the same time!

Embracing new possibilities can be key to where you go from here if you are dissatisfied with your current responsibilities.

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I had a friend whose company was purchased by a larger firm. It was a stressful transition because it came with entirely new protocols, computer programs, different styles of leadership and less benefits.

She told me the first year of the transition was difficult because she fought the change daily. She said it finally dawned on her that she needed to “Drink the Kool-Aid.”

Simply put, she decided to be all in with the new direction of the company, and when she let go of her resistance and changed her perspective, the joy of her job returned. In addition, management saw the change, and within a year promoted her to supervision.

There are also assessment questions you can ask yourself to evaluate and pin point if you should tweak your perspective or start planning to make a change.

### Good Questions to Ask Yourself

- Can I learn in this position how to go home without everything being done for that day?
- Am I called to this vocation or is it simply a job?
- Will the work go on successfully without me?
- What can I do to develop a life outside my work?
- What changes can I make to divide up the workload?
- What prevents me from feeling marketable somewhere else?
- Is it possible to promote change within my job?
- Are my expectations of management too unrealistic?
- Can I remain loyal to my organization in the current situation?
- Is there a way to enjoy my job once again?



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There are some practical steps that can be useful to become unstuck in your present role. Candidly talking with someone you trust who understands your situation, and asking for their perspective, can open up different ideas and angles to consider going forward. Sometimes admitting your dissatisfaction to another for input helps clarify what you should do next.

Perhaps it is time to consider if you still really belong in your current situation. Maybe your time has run its course and there is another type of career or job that would be more suitable for your personality.

On the other hand, if you are just bored or becoming increasingly discontented, maybe it is time to ask for updated training or seek professional educational opportunities from your employer. Being candid with your boss about losing passion for your job may motivate them to offer additional incentives such as further training.

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Finally, maybe it's more of a personal growth issue. Maybe "lowering the bar" on your personal expectations and not trying to do everything so perfectly will help you be more realistic with how much you take on and what you should let go.



Perhaps it's about unresolved conflict with a co-worker or management that needs to be addressed and resolved. It's unreasonable to feel joyful and satisfied at work if you can't stand the person in the cubicle next to you.

Maybe you are overworked and exhausted and there is a need to learn how to say no, or delegate some of your responsibilities to someone else, or be open to a new learning curve that is not so stressful.

### A Final Word for a New Beginning

Lastly, a practical exercise might be helpful in recalibrating a fresh way to approach your job. Ask three questions that can help you refocus your responsibilities:

1. What should I start doing new at my job?
2. What should I stop doing at my job?
3. What should I continue doing at my job?

Life is too short to work in a dissatisfied environment. However, when we truly enjoy the job we do and the people we work with, we can push through anything as a team and organization!

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Bill Gallagher has been counseling and working with professionals since 1980. His emphasis in the workplace is to help develop both relational skills and professional standards among administration and staff. He has worked in multiple organizational settings and of recent has spent most of his time addressing workplace issues in healthcare and city government.

Bill formed TeamWorks in 2001 to help organizations achieve their goals for establishing high morale and client satisfaction. TeamWorks currently specializes in offering one-on-one surveys and evaluations for management and staff to assess the current culture's needs and recommended trainings going forward.

In addition to conducting a variety of workshops and in-services on workplace issues, Bill mediates conflict among partnerships and staff relationships, speaks at conventions, facilitates management retreats, and offers personal consultation and counseling for staff.

Bill's strengths are in public speaking, mediation, and understanding the complexities of relational dynamics in the workplace. He lives in Medford, Oregon, with his wife Jenny, and enjoys spending time with their five children and five granddaughters.