

Symptoms of Caregiver Burnout

Other than paid work, the people most prone to burnout are caregivers. Caregivers devote themselves, sometimes unpaid and at their own expense, to the care for chronically ill or disabled family members, friends, or patients. This role often comes with a change in family dynamic, household disruption, and financial concerns. The work involved with caregiving is often overwhelming and factors such as inadequate support, poor management and planning can lead to caregiver burnout. When caregiver burnout occurs, the caregiving experience is not healthy for the caregiver or the recipient.

- Powerlessness
- Hopelessness
- Emotional exhaustion
- Detachment
- Overreacting to criticism
- Inability to handle more than one problem or crises
- Isolation
- Irritability
- Frustration
- Failure
- Despair
- Feeling trapped
- Cynicism
- Apathy
- Feeling tired
- Feeling sadness or doom
- Crying frequently
- Not feeling joy
- Easily angered or annoyed
- Worthless and guilty
- Change in eating habits
- Change in sleeping habits
- Back pain, headaches
- Harmful behavior to care recipient
- Panic attacks and anxiety
- Impatience
- Resentment

Along with these symptoms, one might turn to escapist behaviors such as drinking, drugs, or shopping binges to escape negative feelings. With these symptoms a caregiver can become depressed and lose trust in others, which leads to detachment in relationships and even could cause them to fall apart.

The symptoms of burnout can take months to surface and often are discovered by other people. If someone points out symptoms, listen before harm occurs to the recipient or you.