

Burnout Is Not a Character Flaw

The science of what actually happens when your work no longer matches your truth.



Dilakshini and Kumar (2020) identified that burnout is not a sudden event. It is the accumulated result of chronic misalignment between who you are and the role you are being asked to play. Three dimensions emerge: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment.

In plain terms — you stop caring, you check out, and you stop believing your actions matter.



In the Absolutely Balanced Framework, burnout lives at the friction point between Soulful Truth and Aligned Action. When what you do every day is disconnected from who you actually are, the gap becomes a drain. Not a motivation problem. A misalignment problem.



One of the most significant findings is that burnout strips you of your sense of agency — the neurological belief that your actions actually change outcomes. When agency is lost, you stop initiating. You stop moving. You start surviving instead of living.

This is what the research calls Reduced Personal Accomplishment. And it's not weakness. It's your nervous system protecting you from a path that was never yours to walk.



Depersonalization — feeling like a robot at work — is a survival mechanism. When your environment consistently ignores your values, you check out to protect yourself. The body knows before the mind admits it.

Somatic movement and Pilates create the conditions for checking back in. Not by adding more to your plate — by helping your nervous system find safety in alignment.



Burnout is your body's honest review of the life you've been living. The question is whether you're ready to read it.

Source: Dilakshini, V.L. & Kumar, S.M. (2020). Cognitive Dissonance: A Psychological Unrest.

Start with a Pilates class — in New Haven or virtually. Or go all in. Join me at Finding Your Next — Canyon Ranch Lenox, November 5-8, 2026. Eleven people. The full framework. Lived out together.