

# AM I REALLY OK?

## BEWARE OF HOW SERIOUS BURNOUT CAN BE, WRITES DR. NADIA ALAM



DR. NADIA ALAM  
Column

I burned out. Many others across every industry, including health care, are in the same boat.

No doubt, the suffering, uncertainty, loneliness, lack of safety and economic losses we all faced from the pandemic played a role. What I saw in my corner of the health-care system left scars on my heart.

It also made it that much harder to bear any stress from other equally important factors, including family and friends.

Burnout is insidious. It took me a year to identify it.

It started with fatigue, then continued with difficulty sleeping, not eating well, not exercising, emotional exhaustion and disinterest in, well everything.

At first, I chalked it up to the pandemic, being a busy mom, having a hard job and stresses facing my extended family.

But I knew I was in trouble when all I could think about was quitting. That's when I reached out for help.

This is not a plea for sympathy. It is a call to pay attention.

Listen when that voice inside tells you how you really feel. Don't rationalize the emotional exhaustion, the lack of interest in the things you once loved doing, the feeling that nothing you do matters anymore.

Don't look away if your coping mechanisms are failing and everything feels like a massive effort of will.

Ask yourself, "am I really OK?" And if you hesitate, seek help.

Untreated, burnout leads to loss of identity, detachment from what makes us whole, lack of compassion for the people we care for and, at its worst, death by suicide.

For those who are in positions of power and authority, you are not exempt from dealing with your staff's burnout. It is your job to create a work environment that promotes wellness, teamwork, safety, recognition, autonomy and purpose.

Happy, healthy people are far more able, effective and productive at their jobs.

Expecting an individual to "fix" their burnout alone is like expecting a tree to survive in contaminated soil. If you see burnout in your staff, know that something bigger needs fixing.

This is not a "you" problem. This is an "us" problem. We survived a pandemic together. We can survive this together too.

*Nadia Alam is a Halton physician and past president of the Ontario Medical Association. Her columns also appear on www.drna-diaalam.com. She can be reached through her website.*



Lori Martin photo

A pair of ducks take up temporary residency in a swimming pool on Nader Street. Do you have a great local photo you'd like to share? Send it to sleblanc@metroland.com, along with a brief description.

## NEW RULES BENEFIT INVESTORS



PETER WATSON  
Column

Investor confusion on selecting a person to help with your finances should now be greatly reduced, as Ontario has started regulating who can use standard industry titles.

The titles "financial planner" and "financial advisor" will now be regulated, and those who use these titles will have to be qualified.

The Financial Professionals Title Section Rule is now in force, as of March 28.

I have two comments.

First, regulation of important financial titles will assist investors in selecting

someone from whom they seek advice. Someone representing as a "financial planner" without the necessary qualifications seems fraudulent. (Only individuals who have obtained a credential from a body approved by the Financial Services Regulatory Authority of Ontario can use the titles of "financial planner" and "financial advisor.")

Successful management of personal financial affairs is one of the most important foundations for many of us. It is money that pays the bills.

Many financial decisions affect quality of life, and getting bad advice from someone not qualified can be costly and potentially harmful for that quality of life.

I strongly support this new regulation.

Second. Without being too disrespectful for those responsible for the new regulation, what took so

long?

At the beginning of my career, there were stories of financial planners who stole from their clients. As it turned out, most dealt with financial planners who were not qualified.

The financial world evolves quickly. We need safety measures, including regulation, that evolve to protect investors.

*Peter Watson is registered with Aligned Capital Partners Inc. (ACPI) to provide investment advice. Investment products are provided by ACPI. ACPI is a member of the Investment Industry Regulatory Organization of Canada. The opinions expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of ACPI. Watson provides wealth management services through Watson Investments. He can be reached at www.watsoninvestments.com.*

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