

Your Phone Battery is Not the Only Thing that Needs Recharging

You may hear “comments over coffee” about who has jobs that are easy and who has jobs that are hard. I have. They often seem to get quickly connected to levels of fatigue.

I think there is more to it than that.

Most jobs are not hard or easy by themselves; it’s context and perspective that makes the difference.

You can name teachers, plumbers, sales associates, pastors, and business owners that work very hard and some who barely work.

Each of us has a unique context and perspective that makes all the difference.

Your *unique context* is about your environment and circumstances.

For example, do you work at a healthy place for a boss that cares about you? I don’t mean a perfect workplace, there is no such thing, but a place that you enjoy. Or do you work in an organization (church or business) that is toxic, difficult, and drains you more than fulfills you?

Your *unique perspective* is what you bring to the mix, and how you see things.

For example, how well do you handle stress? How’s your family life? Are you generally a glass-half-full and grateful person? Are you in the right job? How’s your health? Do you consider yourself self-aware and secure?

These kinds of things have a significant impact on your level of energy and ability to rest and rejuvenate for the next day, next week, etc.

We need a brief set of definitions:

These are not meant to be comprehensive or clinical level definitions, but only to give a comparative framework so this post is practical and helpful.

Level 1 – Natural fatigue

This is a normal and healthy response to a day’s work. With a little chill time and a good night’s sleep, you are fresh, re-charged and good to go in the morning.

Level 2 – Over-tired

You are consistently drained more than energized, often feeling stressed, work is starting to be no fun, and you have difficulty starting your next day fresh and ready to go.

Level 3 – Approaching burnout

You almost always feel exhausted and experience little joy. You have difficulty maintaining a healthy perspective, and relationships are beginning to suffer.

This post focuses on Level 2 – Over-Tired.

So, let's look at examples of unique context and perspective for the over-tired leader.

Your context may be pretty healthy, but your perspective is off.

For example, you work at a church you love and respect, but you try to do too much yourself, and you struggle with people pleasing.

Your perspective may be in good shape, but your context is problematic.

For example, your general self-awareness is mature, and you and your family are happy, but you work for a micro-managing boss in an environment that lacks trust.

Either one of these two examples can drain you and can cause you to be consistently over-tired. Of course, if you are in a difficult situation and you have personal struggles, that will significantly impact your ability to rest and recover.

The basics of a healthy balance for work and rest are the same for everyone. But because each person's situation is a little different, each solution is a little different.

So rather than giving you a one size fits all list, I'm offering some options that you can choose from according to what may help you most.

The last thing I want to do is give you a list of 10 things *to do* when you are over-tired, so choose the options that are right for you.

The good news is that rebounding from being over-tired is very doable! And the important thing is to arrest being over-tired before you hit soul level exhaustion and burnout.

10 options that will help you prevent and recharge from being over-tired:

1) Build in some margin.

If you are like me, your days are full, and there always seems to be more to do than time allows. The solution? Pack the day even fuller! Wrong. That's a mistake.

Instead, create some margin, a couple of short breaks during your day that allows you to catch up. And block one four-hour space during the week to handle the unexpected or get some time to be quiet and think.

2) Take a complete break from your work on your day off.

If we are honest, it isn't always practical to completely shut down for your whole day off, but usually, a full day off needs to be a regular experience for you. This doesn't mean you do nothing, but your day off is different.

You probably have a few errands and a to-do list of some kind. Most of us do, but that's a different feel and rhythm. It can help energize and recharge you! Make sure to include some chill time, maybe a hobby you enjoy.

3) Raise up more volunteer leaders.

This is indeed not the primary purpose of developing volunteers, but it's a real and needed benefit.

Even recruiting just one or two new key leaders can make a big difference. Don't make this a chore, but part of progress and moving forward toward your vision, which also adds breath and energy to your life.

4) Empower and delegate to your volunteer leaders.

Empowerment is important enough to list separately from raising up new leaders. **It's important to trust your leaders with real responsibility, train them, communicate expectations and let them lead!**

5) Establish healthy boundaries.

This is a tough one. Learning to say no at the right times to the appropriate people can be difficult.

Lack of boundaries is not always about fear, people pleasing, or insecurity. Sometimes a large number of relationships in most church leader's lives can be too much. And occasionally specific requests are unreasonable.

Saying no can be difficult, but it's necessary.

6) Invest "fun" time into your family and meaningful relationships.

Friends and family are core to a healthy and rested lifestyle. **You can increase your skill level at work to get things done faster, but you can't rush a heart level connect with family and friends.**

Make some time for the people you love the most.

7) Reduce the number of ministries the church carries.

We who are church leaders can be our own worst enemies. We can create our over-work

situations by starting more ministries than any one church can do.

No single church can do every ministry. That's not possible or smart.

So be wise and discerning about the ministries you choose for *your church*. Eliminate ministries that are not effective and add ministries very slowly if at all.

8) Take care of yourself physically.

I'm not going to "preach" at you about proper nutrition and exercise. You know what to do. But if this is a need for you, I do want to encourage you to take small steps in the right direction toward better overall health.

Do something that you enjoy. Do something simple like take a brisk walk after dinner. You'd be surprised at how big a difference a modest but consistent effort makes.

9) Lighten up some and laugh often.

I have a little rock on my desk that has the word "laugh" painted on it. It's a good reminder for me.

Sometimes I get so consumed in solving problems and focused on "serious stuff" that I can go too long without lightening up, smiling, and laughing!

The good news is that I work with a bunch of awesome people who make sure there is plenty of laughter going on! That's important!

10) Invest consistent and quality time in prayer.

We know that prayer is life-changing. The Holy Spirit brings peace, joy and rest for your soul.

Don't make prayer a job or a task to do, sometimes all that's needed is to sit quietly with God. Just thank Him for who He is and listen for His voice. Ask God to give you peace and rest at a soul level.

God answers that prayer if we take the time needed to slow down in His presence.

> [Read more from Dan.](#)